

Sweet Communion

When you woke from sleep this morning,
 Though the hour was rather late,
 Did you stop to speak with Jesus,
 And His benediction wait?
 Did you thank Him for His mercy,
 For His care through all the night,
 That no evil had befallen,
 That no tears now dim your sight?



Did you ask Him for the blessing
 Of His presence through the day,
 For His leading safely onward,
 For His guiding, lest you'd stray?
 Did you tell Him that you'd gladly
 Go wherever He would lead;
 That you'd try to do His bidding,
 Helping every soul in need?

If you go without these blessings
 As you start another day,
 Be assured your strength will fail you,
 And you'll faint along the way.
 O, live closer to the Master;
 For unless you're very near,
 Words of love He whispers to you
 Will not reach your listening ear.

—Selected.

TO THE CHURCH ELDERS AND PASTORS

By THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE

THE ANNUAL Week of Prayer presents an opportunity for the believers in the third angel's message, around the circle of the earth of all lands and climes, to unite their hearts in seeking the Lord as one body for an outpouring of His blessings and power to supply their needs. As we advance into the troublous times in approaching the end, we shall feel deeper need of divine help for our insufficiency, and shall come to depend more and more upon the power of the Holy Spirit to guide, to comfort, and to sustain the faith and courage of God's people.

The years pass, one after another, in swift succession, crowded with events of greatest magnitude in world affairs; and our hearts should lay hold of the advent message with increasing fervor. The Lord is the hope of His people. Man's boasted bulwarks of civilization are crumbling. They cannot be depended upon to save from destruction and ruin. As foretold in the Holy Scriptures, there is perplexity among the nations and men's hearts fail them for fear. As thickening troubles and regulations make the way more difficult for commandment keepers, and make less secure the exercise of conscience and faith, the children of the Lord will learn more and more to lean on God's everlasting arms, and to stand trustfully still, and see the salvation of their God.

In the deliverance from Egypt, God led Israel out "with a high hand," and we may expect Him to signally save His people in the midst of these last-day oppressions and turmoil. To His people in their perplexity, the Lord directs the prophet Zachariah to say, "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee; . . . The Lord of hosts shall defend them. . . . And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon His land." Zach. 9:12, 15, 16.

What a triumphant portrayal is here given of the ultimate victory for His faithful and chosen people!

So in this annual Week of Prayer let us as a people and as churches come to

God in full confidence that He will hear us, as we kneel before the throne of grace petitioning Him in behalf of our need for cleansing from sin and for the preparation of heart to meet Him when He comes. Let us bow our hearts to Him in supplication for His children who are oppressed for conscience's sake, or who may be caught in sad need because of war conditions. Let us pray for those who sit in great darkness, that their souls may be illumined by the love of God and the hope of His kingdom restored. Let us pray for peace and tranquillity among nations. Let us pray for the finishing of the work of God in the world.

To make the Week of Prayer a successful experience for the church, will require careful preparation. Well laid plans will do much to insure the benefits sought. Encourage the believers well in advance to lay aside ordinary affairs and clear the Week of Prayer as much as possible of business or social activity. Let all devote themselves wholeheartedly to the service of the week. Plan to hold meetings daily. Arrange beforehand for readers who will present these lessons in a clear, intelligent, and inspiring manner. Follow the readings with a prayer or testimony meeting. Endeavor to conduct all meetings in a thoughtful, devotional spirit.

Encourage the members to pray in their homes, and to gather, if convenient, in groups for prayer. Lay plans to visit any whose experience has grown cold or wayward. Especially remember the young people, to encourage and cheer them on. Let there be inspir-

ing and soul-stirring singing of the hymns of faith and prayer by the congregation. Arrange also for special music of deeply devotional character, as occasion may provide.

Remember the children. Leaders for separate children's meetings who have ability to teach them should be chosen, and definite effort should be put forth to uplift the spiritual life of the children and to lead such as are of proper age and are prepared to do so to be baptized and join the church.

The Annual Offering is received on the last Sabbath of the Week of Prayer. How fitting that in this week of deep, earnest devotion we find outlet for consecration in giving to the work of God. The central interest of our lives as Christians is to advance His work. The task left by the Lord Himself for His disciples and followers is to carry the gospel to all the world. The purpose of the church is found in the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

The needs of the work in all the world increase as we near the end of time. The war conditions in some countries result in funds being cut off for use elsewhere. How urgent, therefore, in the lands from which funds can be sent to aid the work, that our believers give liberally. Doubtless a dollar now will be worth ten dollars later, if money in all lands is compelled to submit to restrictive regulations.

On the first Sabbath and at appropriate times during the week, call attention to the Annual Offering, and appeal for a sacrifice to be made by all toward our unfinished work in the world. Urge all to have part in giving. The Lord will reward those who have part in this offering to hasten the message onward in mission lands.

We pray that this Annual Week of Prayer shall prove to be one of great spiritual refreshing to our people in all countries, and that our hearts will be drawn toward each other in the bond of Christian fellowship and in consecration to the finishing of the work. May it also result in a faithful habit of prayer in personal life, and in our homes.

"Every day is a new day for us. Every sunrise brings opportunity. The wrong doing of yesterday is gone with yesterday. Today is come wherein we may do right."—*The Classmate*.

KEEP
THIS PAPER
for the
WEEK OF PRAYER
December 7-14

THE WEEK OF PRAYER

By G. A. ROBERTS

"THE DAY of Peter's execution was at last appointed, but still the prayers of the believers ascended to heaven; and while all their energies and sympathies were called out in fervent appeals for help, angels of God were watching over the imprisoned apostle.

"Remembering the former escape of the apostles from prison, Herod on this occasion had taken double precautions. To prevent all possibility of release, Peter had been put under the charge of sixteen soldiers, who, in different watches, guarded him day and night. In his cell, he was placed between two soldiers, and was bound by two chains, each chain being fastened to the wrist of one of the soldiers. He was unable to move without their knowledge. With the prison doors securely fastened, and a strong guard before them, all chance of rescue or escape through human means was cut off. But man's extremity is God's opportunity."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 145, 146.

What a wonderful lesson comes to us in this experience of Peter! Could any circumstance have been more discouraging so far as hope of freedom to continue his work was concerned? Could conditions have been more unfavorable to any continuation of life or work than the conditions then surrounding Peter? Let us notice further:

"Peter was confined in a rock-hewn cell, the doors of which were strongly bolted and barred; and the soldiers on guard were made answerable for the safe-keeping of the prisoner. But the bolts and bars and the Roman guard,

which effectually cut off all possibility of human aid, were but to make more complete the triumph of God in the deliverance of Peter. Herod was lifting his hand against Omnipotence, and he was to be utterly defeated."—*Ibid*, p. 146.

It was prayer alone that brought defeat to Satan then; and this was written for our encouragement in these last days. Satan seemingly has bound the work of God hand and foot today in many parts of the world. He will seek to do so in every part of the world. He seeks to bind us personally with the cords of sin that we may be helpless in his hands. The extremity of our perplexities as we seek to advance the cause of God, may assume proportions that are, to human vision, appalling. Satan is to be defeated in all his schemes: and we shall bring about his defeat, and also bring about deliverance for God's work and for our own souls in the same way the church wrought these things in the case of Peter back there. It is to be done by prayer. It may seem that we are beaten in our present battles, with Satan the victor, but these inhibitions and the present world disturbances will give way to the united cry of faith from the remnant.

Our Week of Prayer this year gives opportunity for our people of all nations round the earth to make this united cry in these times of human extremity. May God bless us as we pray, and may He bless us as we make our gifts to His cause at the close of this Week of Prayer.

As I left this humble home, I thought of the work which Wesley had done, of the great Methodist Church, numbering now several millions in different parts of the world. And then I was led to contrast Methodism today with the Methodism of Wesley's time, I said to myself, "If John Wesley were to be brought back to life, would he recognize in the great, fashionable Methodist Church the humble people which followed his leadership during his lifetime?" In this church today there are thousands of earnest Christians who deplore the spiritual falling away which is taking place. And then my thought went further. I said to myself, "Will the church with which I am connected lose their simplicity, their first love, and follow in the steps of the great popular churches of the world around us?"

Israel of Old

Sad to say, this experience has been that of other religious movements through the centuries. It was the experience of Israel of old. After the death of Joshua, we have this sad record: "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that He did for Israel. . . . That generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel. . . . And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroh." Judges 2:7-13.

The Lord in His infinite mercy did not forsake His people. By judges, by prophets, by other godly leaders, He called Israel back to the faith of their fathers. But again and again they separated from Him.

Loss of First Love

Christ brought into existence a comparatively pure church. They suffered many persecutions, and this served to drive them nearer to the Lord. But the early disciples had scarcely retired to their graves before a new generation arose who knew not the Lord. They lost their first love. They became engrossed with the cares and pleasures of this life, and lost out of their hearts the spirit and power of the gospel.

I ask again: Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church go over the same road as have these religious movements of years gone by? I make the question more personal: Will I do this? Will I

(Reading for Sabbath, December 7)

PERILS OF THE LAST DAYS

By F. M. WILCOX

SEVERAL years ago, I visited, in the suburbs of London, the church of John Wesley. It was interesting to climb up into the pulpit and stand for a moment where he had stood many times, addressing the early Methodist believers. A little way from the church I visited the humble home in which John Wesley lived. On the second floor, as we passed

a little room, the guide said, "This was Wesley's prayer room." Evidently divining my thought, the guide passed on, and I entered the room and knelt in prayer. I asked Heaven to give me and the people I represented the spirit of earnestness and simplicity which characterized the life and labors of this man of God.

lose out of my heart the simplicity of faith, my first love for the Lord, and grow careless and indifferent? Will you do it? God is calling out from the nations of men a people who will meet Him at His coming. The church will triumph. But the question is: Who will constitute the members of that church in the day of triumph? Will those who read these words be among that number? or, will they fall out by the way and others take their places?

Just before his death, Moses gave the Israelites this faithful admonition: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments, or no." Deut. 8:2.

Israel failed to heed this warning. The things of time and sense became more important in their estimation than eternal verities. The honor of men, worldly position, the love of money, the cares of life, social contacts with their heathen neighbors, creature comforts, eating and drinking, fun and frolic, crowded God out of their consciousness. In their prosperity they lost the Lord. "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry." 1 Kings 4:20. They forgot the way in which Heaven had led them, forgot the Source of their blessing, and in consequence turned from God's worship to the worship of heathen deities.

Our Safety

A similar admonition was sent to us. From the messenger of the Lord come this earnest word: "In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."—*"Life Sketches,"* p. 196.

Will we forget the path over which God has led the Seventh-day Adventist Church—the path of simple faith, of consecration, of humble devotion, of sacrifice, of separation from the world? The Spirit of prophecy admonishes us to remember. We are glad to believe that a great multitude—let us hope the large majority—are the remembering. God recognizes the thousands of loyal

believers in many lands who have not bowed their knee to Baal, nor departed from their allegiance to the God of Elijah.

But, sad to say, there are some—many in the aggregate—who are forgetting. They have turned their backs upon Canaan, and are facing toward Egypt. What proof do we see of this? We see it in their evident aims and objectives, in their love of money, in their conversation and deportment, in their dress and diet, in their worldly association, in their pursuit of pleasure, in their neglect of private and family prayer and study of the Word, in their absence from the house of God, in their violation of the Sabbath. They are permitting the cares and pleasures of life to eclipse their hope of heaven. They are saying in their hearts—and they express their unbelief in their actions—"My Lord delayeth His coming." These sinister influences constitute the perils of the last days.

Oh that in this solemn hour those who are following Christ afar off may realize their lost and undone condition, and while the gate of mercy still stands ajar, renew their covenant relationship with God!

This week of prayer is set apart as a special time for seeking God's blessing. Would it not be profitable in this first service, to consider our personal relationship to the Lord? to take account of our own experience? to see wherein we may have separated from Him? and the steps we need to take to obtain His special help and blessing? As an aid in doing this, may I submit to you a series of very personal questions. Be assured that as I ask these questions of you, I ask them also of my own heart, because I, with you, need a deeper and fuller experience in Christ's saving grace and keeping power.

Examining Our Own Hearts

Have you confessed every known sin? and do you believe that God for Christ's sake has forgiven you, and accepts you as His child? Do you hold daily communion with God in the study of the Bible, and in private prayer? Do you daily gather your loved ones around the prayer altar in family worship? Are you seeking the gift of the Holy Spirit for divine guidance, and for endowment for service? Are you endeavoring to bring others to Christ? Are you a missionary in your home, your church, your neighborhood?

It has been truly said that the proof of one's religion is the life he lives in his home. Here, shut within four walls, he acts out his own natural self. Are you a Christian in your home? Do your wife, your husband, your children, your parents, your neighbors, have faith in your religion?

We may well test our Christian experience by what some unjustly estimate as the small things of life. Do we cherish envy, jealousy, or malice against others? Do we indulge in gossip, in light and trifling conversation? Are we honest in our business dealings? Do we permit the cares of life to crowd Jesus out of our hearts? Have we lost our first love, our early zeal and devotion?

There are imposed upon us two tests, as relate to our income of money and to our observance of the Sabbath. Are we rendering to God His own in these particulars? Are you faithful in the payment of tithe? Are you generous in your freewill offerings? How do you observe the Sabbath? Is it a day of idle chitchat, or social visiting, of pleasure riding, or one of prayer and meditation and the study of the Bible and religious themes, of visiting the sick, of spiritual labor for others? Do you observe the day as you would if Christ lived in your home?

Called Out of Egypt

As Israel was preparing to go out of Egypt, Moses declared to Pharaoh, "We will go out with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go." There is a lesson in this noble answer for us. Are we heeding the instruction that has come to us through the Spirit of prophecy in placing our children in our own schools? The Lord has called us out of Babylon into the light of present truth. Shall we leave our children in Babylon under delusive teaching and in worldly association?

Sad to say, some of our young people are marrying unbelievers, and are thus led to forsake the Lord. Such unions are the subtle snares of the enemy. Are you as parents encouraging your sons and daughters to form such unions? If so, great is your responsibility, and serious indeed will be your accountability.

Our social life is an index always of our Christian experience. It illy becomes one who realizes that he is living in the hour of God's judgment to attend the theater, the movies, or worldly parties of pleasure. Nor will such hold

social gatherings in their homes of such a character that they would be ashamed to invite Jesus as their guest if He were on earth, as He was 2,000 years ago. And while we refrain from attending worldly places of pleasure, let us be careful not to bring the spirit of the theater into our homes over the radio. There is great danger in this.

Christian living pertains to our attire and to the food we eat. Declares the apostle: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31. Recognizing that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the follower of Christ will conscientiously seek to feed and clothe his body in such manner as will honor and glorify God, presenting it a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

Surrounded as we are by delusive error, with voices sounding from every quarter, saying, "This is the way, follow me," the advent believer should acquaint himself with the teachings of God's word, and thus be able to withstand these deceptive influences and be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within him. We are entrusted with a gospel message for every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. We can give this message only as we keep out of our hearts all racial and national and class hatreds.

And, finally, the one who is seeking to prepare himself for translation, that he may appear without spot or blemish as his case is brought before the judgment bar of God, will be at heart what he professes to be outwardly. He will not cherish secret sin.

As you consider these vital and important questions, do you feel that you have failed, that you are separating from Christ, that you are following the Lord afar off? If so, may this day and this hour be one of sincere repentance. Dedicate yourself anew to Christ. Confess to Him your sin. If need be, confess to others you may have wronged, to wife, to husband, to children, to parents, to your bretheren and sisters, to your neighbors. Make your confession as broad as the knowledge of your sin. "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you."

Why We Failed

We failed in the past either because we did not make a full surrender, a complete consecration, or we withdrew from the altar that which we had placed thereon. Notwithstanding our failures, Christ invites us to return to

Him. If we will accept the invitation, He will impart to us overcoming power. He will impute to us His own righteousness to cover the past, and His own indwelling life to save us from falling back into sin.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. In this cleansing, there will be wrought in us a change, a transformation, a new creation. "Saith the Lord: I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; . . . I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 8:10, 12. Then we shall be able to say in the words of the psalmist, "How love I Thy law. It is my meditation all the day." We shall obtain the victory over every sin and besetment, and be able to exclaim with the apostle Paul, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57.

The Spirit of Christ, cherished in the heart, will create in the believer a love of righteousness and a hatred of iniquity. We quote from the writings of the Spirit of prophecy: "When a man is converted to God, a new moral taste is created; and he loves the things that God loves."—*Review and Herald*, June 21, 1892.

"When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin: for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God."—*Review and Herald*, March 18, 1890.

Bible Study and Prayer

How may we obtain this experience? The Bible contains "exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4. To this precious promise we may add this comment from Mrs. E. G. White:

"The Word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.

"He who by faith receives the Word is receiving the very life and character of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 38.

Victory will come to us through prayer. We are exhorted: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" and, "Pray without ceasing." We are told by the messenger of the Lord: "While engaged in our daily work, we should lift the soul to heaven in prayer. These silent petitions rise like incense before the throne of grace; and the enemy is baffled. . . . Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved."—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 254, 255.

"When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God, the power of the evil one is broken."—*Review and Herald*, December 3, 1889.

Today you are to give yourselves to God, that He may make of you vessels unto honor, and meet for His service. In closing, may I appeal to you in the following words from the Spirit of prophecy:

"Today you are to give yourself to God, that you may be emptied of self, emptied of envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, strife, everything that shall be dishonoring to God. Today you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work today to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit."—*Review and Herald*, March 22, 1892.

This is our most important work for today; "today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 3:15. May Heaven grant that in this, the first service of our Week of Prayer, everyone may respond to this earnest call to consecration. This will prepare for greater fulness of blessing in the services to follow through the week.



Swift gratitude is sweetest; if it delays, all gratitude is empty and unworthy of the name.



The value of a grindstone is in its grit—a sense in which a man is like a grindstone.

(Reading for Sunday, December 8)

YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH

By W. G. TURNER

"AND WHEN these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

It was Jesus who uttered these words in response to a question raised by His followers regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. No one was able to return an answer with fuller understanding or clearer prophetic vision, for He was the Redeemer, whose imminent advent in glory shall mark the end of this world with its sin and sorrow, and whose redemptive power has been made possible through His sinless life, His atoning death, and His resurrection from the grave.

The need of redemption arose through the tragedy and fact of sin, wherein Adam, created in the image of God, communing with God, and having access to the tree of life in the garden of God—and yet withal on probation—yielded to the tempter, and sold himself for nought to him who was a murderer from the beginning, and thus became separated from God and subject to death.

Christ Offered to Redeem Man

Having created man to inhabit the earth, Christ, the Son, had already entered into a covenant with the Father whereby should man sin, Christ the Son would offer His life a ransom in order to redeem, or rebuy the sinner, thus reconciling him again to God, and all willing to accept the provision thereby made. When Christ came to earth, and during the years of His ministry, He said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

His sole purpose in leaving His Father's presence was in order that man, separated from God through sin by his own deliberate act, sold unto the devil and made subject to eternal death, might be redeemed, restored to communion with God, and ultimately given right to the tree of life and immortality.

This redemption plan was demonstrated as possible and successful on Calvary, where Jesus, after living a sinless life, shed His precious blood, died,

and later rose from the grave a conqueror over death, to be a Saviour and a Redeemer. The price for the rebuying of man was there paid in full, and all who will accept His gift are assured of salvation through Christ, "in whom we have redemption through His blood." Eph. 1:7. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30

Respecting the human race we read, "There is none righteous, no, not one: . . . for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:10, 23. "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. These terse statements make it clear that we all need the operation of the plan of redemption in our behalf, if we are to be given life eternal.

The Science of All Sciences

Conscious of our need we should understand the plan and rightly apply its provisions. Redemption is a science. We are told that "The science of redemption is the science of all sciences; the science that is the study of the angels and of all the intelligences of the unfallen worlds; the science that engages the attention of our Lord and Saviour; the science that enters into the purpose brooded in the mind of the Infinite,—'kept in silence through times eternal;'" the science that will be the study of God's redeemed throughout endless ages. This is the highest study in which it is possible for man to engage. As no other study can, it will quicken the mind and uplift the soul."—"Education," p. 126.

Redemption's Plan Completed at Christ's Second Advent

Being of such value and importance we do well to consider and apply the plan that we might share in its fruits, which will become ours in fullness at the second advent of Christ. It is at His second coming that the full measure of the blessedness of the plan will be revealed. While on Calvary Jesus paid the price essential for our redemption. We can only realize the sufficiency of this great sacrifice and enter into the experience of being re-

deemed, at Jesus coming, when He appears to reward those whom He has already purchased with His blood. The crowning event of redemption is witnessed at the second coming of our Lord.

He longs for the coming of that day, for in His prayer recorded in John 17, did He not say, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou has given Me, be with Me where I am"? Verse 24.

They can only "be with Him" where He is, when He comes to open the graves of those who sleep in Him and to translate the living righteous, that all, both raised and translated, might meet Him in the clouds and there be forever with Him, their Redeemer.

We, Too, Should Long For It

How we, too, should long for our redemption! As John, the Revelator, caught in vision the glory of the kingdom of God, seeing the city with its foundation of precious stones, its walls of jasper, its gates of pearl and its streets of gold, its angel hosts, its river of life with the tree of life and its glorious fruit, the throne of God and of the Lamb, its inhabitants having the name of God in their foreheads, the light streaming from the throne, the absence of tears, of sorrow, pain or death, how naturally we find him crying, "Come, Lord Jesus."

There is nothing in this world that can in any way measure with the thrill of Christ's return, and so we hear Him saying in the prophecy briefly noted at the beginning of the reading, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." The attitude of looking up and of lifting up the head is evidence of confidence and victory.

There is no topic so emphasized in Scripture as that of the second coming of Christ, which links the eternal restoration of the earth made new with the saints of the Most High.

This coming of Jesus, this completion of redemption's plan is called "the blessed hope," "a glorious appearing." Through the centuries of time, God's faithful servants have prophesied of it and earnestly longed to experience it.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, spoke of it. Jude records what he said. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints." Verse 14. Job rejoiced as he said, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

... [and] in my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:25, 26.

David declared his hope as he prophesied, "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: . . . Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Ps. 50:3, 5.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets all join in expressing their hope in His coming, while New Testament writers rejoiced in the knowledge of His appearing. It was Martin Luther who said, "I ardently hope that amidst these internal dissensions on the earth, the Lord Jesus will hasten the day of His coming."

John Wesley believed this truth, for he said in his comments on the closing verses of Revelation, "The Spirit of adoption in the bride in the heart of every true believer says with earnest desire and expectation, 'Come, and accomplish all the words of this prophecy.'"

It was the prayer of Richard Baxter, "Hasten, O my Saviour, the time of Thy return." With what joy it inspired the believers of 1843 and 1844. Of this time we read, "All classes flocked to the Adventist meetings. Rich and poor, high and low, were, from various causes, anxious to hear for themselves the doctrine of the second advent. . . . Sometimes the instrument was feeble; but the Spirit of God gave power to His truth. . . . As the evidences of Christ's soon coming were repeated, vast crowds listened in breathless silence to the solemn words. Heaven and earth seemed to approach each other. The power of God was felt upon old and young and middle-aged. Men sought their homes with praises upon their lips, and the glad sound rang out upon the still night air."—"Great Controversy," pp. 369, 370.

Events That Proclaim Jesus' Coming Near

We who now live stand almost a century nearer the coming of the Lord than did those faithful saints who in 1843 thrilled at the thought of Christ's return, where do we find ourselves in our personal relationship and attitude to His coming, now so imminent? Do our hearts respond with the glad cry, "Come, Lord Jesus," to His promise, "Behold, I come quickly?" Or do we say, "My Lord delayeth His coming"? The question is well worthy of serious and personal consideration.

Things Seen Upon Earth

Jesus referred to seeing certain things, then He said that after seeing "these things" we are to "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." What are some of these things, which, when seen, cause His disciples to look up, and lift up their heads? We shall briefly note but a few.

"Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Luke 21:10.

During the past twenty-five years the world has witnessed its most destructive war, wherein millions of men went to untimely graves, cities were destroyed, and countrysides laid bare. Navies went to the bottom of the sea, and thousands of ships were sunk.

As this article is being written, not less than thirty million armed men are again at actual war, and once more destruction and death are abroad in the lands, of both the Occident and the Orient. We have seen "these things."

"And great earthquakes shall be in divers places." Verse 11. Within the past twenty-five years at least four terrific visitations have been noted, when scores of thousands of souls went down in sudden death. In West China, about 1920, thousands died in a disturbance that shook much of the continent of Asia. In 1923 Japan lost thousands of her people in an earthquake which virtually destroyed the cities of Yokohama and Tokyo.

In January, 1939, Chile lost in a disastrous earthquake not less than 30,000 lives in six minutes. At the close of 1939 Turkey was reported to have suffered the loss of 40,000 of its population in death through earthquake and flood. We have seen "these things."

And there shall "be famines." In Russia in the early twenties, what has been stated to have been the world's greatest famine, took millions of lives. Failure of the wheat harvest, and other causes, contributed to this unprecedented tragedy. Great loss of life by flood famines in China have been experienced in recent years, as well as depression bread lines seen in many other lands.

And there shall be "pestilences." The year 1918 was marked by the peoples of all lands as the year of the great influenza epidemic. Within a few months upwards of ten million people perished. Few countries failed to contribute to this appalling death roll, for the epidemic swept the world as did

no other such pestilence ever recorded in human history.

War, earthquakes, famine, pestilence—unprecedented in the records of men, have all occurred within the span of the last twenty-five years. We have seen "these things." It is for us who now live to look up, and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh.

Things Seen in the Heavens

Then Jesus spoke of "signs in the sun, and in the moon." Luke 21:25. May 19, 1780, marked an unusual occurrence in the heavens, when for no apparent reason the sun was mysteriously, but completely darkened. This darkness covered the New England States and portions of Canada. Much has been recorded of this "mysterious phenomenon" that created panic and alarm in many centers, and was looked upon as the day of judgment by a frightened populace.

The night of May 19, 1780, was as mysteriously darkened as had been the day. The moon was almost at the full, and yet we read, "Nor was the darkness of the night less uncommon and terrifying than that of the day; notwithstanding there was almost a full moon, no object was discernible but by the help of some artificial light, which when seen from a distance appeared through a kind of Egyptian darkness, which seemed almost impervious to the rays."—"Independent Chronicle," Boston, June 8, 1780.

"And there shall be . . . signs in the stars." It was in November, 1833, that this third remarkable heavenly phenomenon came to pass. Seen in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and the West Indies, much has been written relative to the sight. One writer in commenting on this mysterious, magnificent sight says, "The stars fell 'even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Here is the exactness of the prophet. The falling stars did not come as if from several trees shaken, but from one. . . . They were cast like an unripe fig which at first refuses to leave the branch."—New York "Journal of Commerce," Vol. 8, Nov. 14, 1833.

Great Distress Among Nations

"And there shall be . . . upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear." Luke 21:25, 26. Almost daily national distress is being borne to our

minds by the fearful things now taking place in many lands, and conditions are by no means improving in the passing of the years. *The New York Times*, of July 2, 1939, says, "Last week the anniversary of the Versailles Treaty's signing passed almost unnoticed. The world was too worried about the prospects of another war to think about the last."

A writer in the *Christian Century*, of July 5, 1939, says, "A world has been destroyed, never to return. Security has vanished from human life. The pillars of society have crumbled, or opened terrifying fissures. There is no peace."

H. G. Wells of England said, "To me, to put it plainly, it is as if I were watching a dark curtain fall steadily, fold after fold, across the bright spectacle of hope with which the century dawned. I do not see any adequate efforts to prevent it from falling."

Felton Sheen, in his work "The Prodigal World," page 22, writes, "Our age is what might be called the penumbra of Christianity, that line where light fades out and shadows begin."

Men are fearful and perplexed today as never before. The human race peers into the darkness unconscious of its future, and the thoughtful wonder and wait knowing not what the coming months may produce in these changing, momentous times.

There are many other perplexities bearing upon these days in which we live. To be noted in "the last days" when "perilous times shall come" are statements in God's word, telling of men who are "lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness; but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3: 2-5. These conditions are manifest today as never before. These are simply more of "these things," all of which should cause the people of God to "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

Abundant Evidence Christ's Coming Near

Is there need for further evidence that the coming of the Lord is near, even at the doors? Those who profess

to be His disciples, and within the circle of the remnant church, must be blind or indifferent if they fail to sense the seriousness of the times in which we live. It is for every true follower of the Lord who, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep," to "cast off the works of darkness, and . . . put on the armor of light," and "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Rom. 13:11-14.

In the midst of all the perplexity that everywhere surrounds the human family, the fears that haunts the human heart, and the hopelessness that seems to fill the human mind, God's people can stand courageous, confident, and joyous, with eyes upturned and heads uplifted, knowing that their redemption draweth nigh.

These are days when we should reveal the measure of our sincerity and the soundness of our faith. Times when with open hearts, obedient lives, and submissive wills, we should demonstrate the presence of One who is able to keep us triumphant in the hour of temptation that is to come upon the world.

Appeal—Be Ye Also Ready

Let us notice a few promises sent us by the Spirit of God:

"We are on the very verge of the time of trouble, and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of are before us. . . . At this time—a time of overwhelming iniquity—a new life, coming from the Source of all life, is to take possession of those who have the love of God in their hearts."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 43, 44.

"In visions of the night representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen. . . . Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. . . . Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844."—*Id.*, p. 126.

"Before the final visitation of God's judgment upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic

times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children."—*Great Controversy*, p. 464.

"O, that we as a people might humble our hearts before God, and plead with Him for the endowment of the Holy Spirit! If we came to the Lord in humility and contrition of soul, He would answer our petitions; for He says that He is more willing to give us the Holy Spirit than are parents to give good gifts to their children. Then would Christ be glorified, and in Him we should discern the fulness of the Godhead bodily. For Christ has said of the Comforter, 'He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.' This is the thing most essential to us. For, 'this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'"—*Review and Herald*, Nov. 29, 1892.

Conscious of the imminence of our Lord's glorious advent, sensing the day of opportunity that is ours, the question arises—are we individually prepared for the Lord when He shall appear? Is there anything in our life that is not of Him? Has self been yielded at the cross of Calvary? Have we died to sin, to the flesh, and to the world? Have we been crucified with Christ, being "baptized into His death, . . . that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:3, 4.

He who paid redemption's price is soon to claim His purchased possession. Have we accepted the provision made in Him? Do we daily die through surrender, and daily live through the reception of His life imparted to us by His Holy Spirit, thus preparing for His appearing in the clouds of glory?

May the Lord give us grace to play our part in daily living, that when He shall appear to redeem His people, "we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28), remembering His word: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your head; for your redemption draweth nigh."



"We have a greater and more solemn truth than was ever before committed to mortals, and we are responsible for the way we treat that truth. Every one of us should be intent on saving souls."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 307.

(Reading for Monday, December 9)

REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATIONS IN OUR ISLAND MISSION FIELDS

By A. G. STEWART

"HEAR the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattereth Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock." Jer. 31:10.

Reviewing but briefly the extension of the advent message to all parts of the world, it seems that as we approached the year 1900 the "messenger of God" was led by vision to place special emphasis upon the need of the vast south Pacific island field and to bring repeatedly before the brethren the obligation resting upon us as a people to extend the work in that direction. It may be well for us to recall some of the stirring appeals as they were then presented, and subsequently emphasized:

"Now, just now, is our time to work in foreign countries."

"Sound an alarm throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Tell the people that the day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly. Let none be left unwarned. We might have been in the place of the poor souls that are in error. . . . According to the truth we have received above others, we are debtors to impart the same to them."—*"Testimonies,"* Vol. 6, pp. 18, 22.

"God's people have a mighty work before them, a work that must continually rise to greater prominence. Our efforts in missionary lines must become far more extensive."—*Id.*, p. 23.

"The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God's truth. The light is to shine to all lands and all peoples."—*Id.*, p. 24.

"The truth comprised in the first, second, and third angel's messages must go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; it must lighten the darkness of every continent, and extend to the islands of the sea."—*Id.*, p. 133.

"In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly

to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest-day, these faithful ones, 'blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,' will 'shine as lights in the world.' The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine."—*"Prophets and Kings,"* p. 198.

In the Pacific Ocean

Like every other phase of this advent message, our work in the South Pacific ocean has from its "small beginning" made consistent progress, until today it is an inspiration to contemplate its ever-widening influence and strength.

It was during the year 1902, and while residing in Australia, that Sister E. G. White addressed the leaders of our work in the following words:

"The missionary work in Australia and New Zealand is yet in its infancy, but the same work must be accomplished in Australia, and New Zealand, in Africa, India, China, and the islands of the sea, as has been accomplished in the home field."—*"Life Sketches,"* p. 338.

At that time our work had just commenced in the eastern part of the South Pacific ocean. The missionary ship "Pitcairn," kindly provided for this work by the brethren in the United States, had landed missionaries on a few of the islands, including Pitcairn, where the entire population had accepted the Adventist faith. But in many, or most of the islands of the South Seas nothing had been attempted. Today, however, we rejoice to be able to report a large number of islands entered by this message, with our workers using sixty or seventy different languages and dialects, and having organized 347 Sabbath schools, with a total membership of 14,498.

Pioneer Missionaries in South Pacific

There is perhaps no mission field in the world quite so romantic as the Pacific. It certainly possesses a natural charm and beauty, and its very geography gives us unusual poetic words. As one writer has said, "These island children have been undoubtedly wicked and vulgar at times, but because they are children we find it easier to forgive, and their manifest contrition makes a tender appeal to us." Still quoting:

"Romance, too, has had its place in the evangelization of the Pacific. The history of Christian effort in these islands has given the world some of its most thrilling tales. Great names leap before the memory at the mere mention of these lands, and the roll of honor is a long and lustrous one. The keynote of that evangelization, as compared with that of other people, is rapidity. In some islands, in a few brief years, the most startling and the most rapid change has taken place, and there has been furnished a unique apologetic for the Christian faith."

It has been my very great privilege during the past thirty-three years to have stood upon the places made historic by the tragic death of several of these noble men and women who have given their lives in service for these island people, and to receive the inspiration that comes from a brief review of those dark and tragic days. Among these we can mention such noble men as John Williams, who with his colleague Harris, was massacred on the unfriendly shores of Erromanga, New Hebrides; to be followed later by Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Gordon, then the younger brother of Mr. Gordon who volunteered to take his place.

As it has been stated, "There is perhaps no place in the Pacific where there has been on the one hand less seeming success, and on the other hand greater sacrifice of life, than in these islands. Not only were the white evangelists slain and eaten, but scores of brown servants of Christ have laid down their lives for Him."

As one stands beside the rusty iron railing surrounding the tomb of the sainted John Hunt of Fiji, who died praying, "God bless Fiji; God save the heathen in Fiji," he is profoundly impressed with the courageous and self-sacrificing spirit of this man of God. As J. W. Burton writes:

"No mention of the evangelization

of Fiji can be complete without reference to that man of God—John Hunt. He did a work that is impossible to estimate. He lived a remarkable, holy life, and the influence of his character made itself felt even among those barbarous tribes. His translations of the Scriptures are a monument of industry and thought, and remain still fine specimens of idiomatic Fijian. Ceaseless toil wore out the man after only ten years of service, and the coffin which carried his frail remains to the grave bore the pathetic inscription 'Aged thirty-six years.' But in those ten years he pressed a lifetime of self-sacrifice and devotion, and others reap today from the fields wherein he sowed."

Converts are not easily won from among a superstitious and cruel people. The ostracism and ridicule they are subjected to in breaking away from their heathen customs is almost more than they can endure. However, as their numbers increase, and the benefits of the new life appear, large accessions to the Christian faith are often the results, and in a short space of time whole communities are transformed as in the early days of Christianity in Eastern Polynesia and in Fiji.

Among Our Early Missionaries

The same wonderful change, and in fact with greater demarcation, was seen in our work, particularly in the Solomon Islands, when Pastor Jones and his few assistants commenced their labors there some twenty-five years ago. Within a few months hundreds of primitive natives relinquished all heathen vices and said in no uncertain tone, "Beta uka"—"Finished wholly," as they joined in worship in the "Lotu Vina Zuapa Rane"—"Church of the Seventh Day." The same remarkable results are still being obtained at the present time in other parts of that group. Only recently, while visiting our missionaries in the islands of Guadalcanal and Malaita, the writer saw scores of these people who have given up during the past few years devil worship, sacred charms, tobacco smoking, eating unclean foods, heathen dances, and licentious habits, as they have identified themselves with the "clean church." From far inland today the calls are coming for more teachers to instruct those who wish to leave the darkness of heathenism, and come into the light. On mountain sides up to 4,000 and 5,000 feet high, they are sending out the call "Come over and help us."

Rennell Island Providentially Entered

Then from the island of Rennell, which lies about 120 miles beyond Guadalcanal, comes this word from Pastor A. L. Pascoe, the superintendent of the Solomon Island Mission:

"You have been interested in the work on Rennell Island. We, owing to the war restrictions, have been delayed in visiting this place, but very good news was received last night. The 'Hygeia' [government medical ship] has just returned from a trip to Rennell on her medical survey. Guso Piko [an Adventist native practitioner] went on this trip with the European doctor, and did a great deal of good on the trip. He told me that when the people saw him they said, 'Where did you come from? from Batuna?' [our training school and headquarters]. When he replied in the affirmative and said that he was a Seventh-day Adventist, they all crowded around him and shook hands. Men, women, and children, were all alike delighted to see another Adventist. They were full of questions, but the one thought uppermost in the minds of all was, 'When can our Seventh-day Adventist missionaries come and help us?'

"During the day Guso treated their sick, and at night they plied him with questions about the Bible. Guso repeats that they are hungry for the truth. Moa [one of their young men who spent some time at our training school] is the apostle to these people. We did not appoint him, but he felt the call of God to teach the truth as far as he knew it. Large numbers of them have accepted all the light they have received, have built churches in which to worship God, faithfully hold their morning and evening worship, and keep the Sabbath to the best of their knowledge.

"When Moa had the work well established on Rennell Island, he felt the call of God to go to the heathen on Bellona Island some twenty miles away. Immediately he began to preach and to teach the message as far as he knew it. The people accepted the truth, and all on that island are adherents of this message. They await fuller light."

This is surely another fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, who said, "The isles shall wait for His law."

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and

crooked things into straightness [marginal reading]. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Isa. 42:4, 16.

Transformation in New Guinea

Not only in the Solomon Islands, but also in New Guinea have these remarkable transformations been seen. While sitting with Pastor W. G. Turner in the office of the government district officer some five years ago, we were told by this gentleman that the change which had come to the people of Mussau and Emira islands was altogether too drastic, and that they would never hold to their new standard of living. The sudden discarding of lifelong habits, especially betelnut chewing, tobacco using, the eating of swine's flesh, also the giving up of heathen customs, was so revolutionary that there would be a reaction which would reflect very badly on the mission work. However, we told him we had no fears as to the consequences, but fully expected that these people would greatly improve physically, mentally and morally by their acceptance of the gospel, and the giving up of their former customs.

Now we have just received a letter from the superintendent of the New Guinea Mission in which he says:

"Mussau is a place of wonderment to the government officials who cannot understand how they gave up their old ways so rapidly, nor how they maintain their experience. Neither can we understand it outside of the working of the Holy Spirit. It is truly marvelous.

"The villages are well set out and scrupulously clean everywhere. The government rest houses and teachers' houses are in fine positions in certain villages. The gardens are numerous, island coconut have been planted in profusion in every village. The large playgrounds are conspicuous and well patronized. The churches, too, are commodious, well preserved, and well filled.

"Our general meeting was exceptionally well attended. The whole program, complete with song services, children's meetings, question meetings, special items, devotional gatherings, baptismal classes, were followed through without a hitch. Morning prayer bands commenced at daybreak. Everyone came along to the meetings.

"There were those who, before the mission came, were noted for their devil practices and evil ways. These people were a thorn in the side of the

government in those days, and were always antagonistic and rebellious, causing endless fighting and trouble. Some of these people were baptized. They related many instances of how the mission had brought new life to them. Sickness does not now sweep through their villages decimating the population. One pointed out to me the number of children running about. He said that before the mission came it was not so, but now 'altogetar ples 'im 'e full up along picaninny.'

"While there, we baptized forty-two people. These were all men and women of mature years who certainly knew what they were doing. We now have reached our first thousand baptized members in this territory. Let us go forward encouraged to reach soon the second thousand mark."

Light Penetrating Into New Hebrides

Nowhere in the South Sea islands is the contrast between the depraved heathen and the truly converted native more apparent than in the New Hebrides, and that along the Malekula coast where our work commenced over twenty years ago.

Well do I remember the word of a government official whom Mrs. Stewart and I met when we arrived in the group back in the year 1916. This gentleman, in meeting us, said with some degree of abandon in his attitude, "And where are you bound for?" When told that we were going to Atchin on the coast of Malekula, he said, "Well, good luck to you. If you make any impression on those people in twenty years time you will do well, for they give the government more trouble than any other natives in the group."

We will never forget the scene of human depravity that met our eyes when we landed on that shore, notwithstanding that our noble pioneers, Pastor and Mrs. C. H. Parker who now sleep, had been working there for some three years. And for several years after we commenced it seemed as though that wall of heathenism would never be broken. But it is "not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit saith the Lord." And from that very stronghold of devilism has come the most remarkable transformation that human eyes have ever witnessed. The Spirit of God has done wonders there.

In the place of heathen ceremonies of the most licentious and diabolical nature, taking months to accomplish; and in the place of brutality inflicted upon

heathen women who were bought and sold as chattels for so many pigs; and in the place of hard, fierce looking savages, there now can be found a transformed community. The lewd, suggestive heathen chants are supplanted with the singing of the songs of Zion from hearts that have been entirely changed. The church bell takes the place of the heathen drum, summoning the people to worship which is enthusiastically entered into by men, women, boys and girls. Fear and hate have been displaced by happiness and laughter, cheerful service and Christian courtesies. A cleanly dressed people with bright eyes, white teeth, robust bodies and happy countenances, greet you whenever you visit these parts; and a number of the young men and women are actively engaged in definite missionary work. How faithfully do the words of the apostle Paul describe this condition as found in 2 Cor. 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are

passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Conclusion

In closing this reading we can only say in the words of the prophet, truly "This is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous in our eyes." However, there are many places still unentered by the heralds of this "everlasting gospel" message, and the urge for reapers is still pressing upon us. In the book "Acts of the Apostles," we read on page 109, these solemn words of counsel which are given to God's remnant people:

"All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in."

May God speed that day when these also shall be within the fold is our sincere prayer.

(Reading for Tuesday, December 10)

PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCES

By A. V. OLSON

BECAUSE of sin, our world is full of danger, hardship, and trial. Man is in peril on land, in peril at sea, and in peril in the air. Wherever he dwells, and wherever he moves, man is constantly exposed to countless dangers and difficulties. This is true of the Christian as well as of the man of the world. God has not promised that those who accept Christ as their Lord and Master will no longer be exposed to danger, and will no more experience hardships, trials, and afflictions on earth. On the contrary, the Lord has told His followers plainly, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." John 16:33. As long as the curse of sin continues to rest upon the world, saint and sinner will have to taste the sorrows and woes of earth.

Certain hardships and suffering we must endure because of the curse which rests upon the earth as a result of Adam's transgression. But much sorrow and woe we bring upon ourselves by our carelessness, and often God must apply the rod because of our sins, for "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." Heb. 12:6. God must also

lead us through the furnace of affliction in order to develop our characters, and to fit us for the work which He desires us to do in this world, and for a place in His kingdom. In his epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul tells us that Jesus, "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered," and that He was made "perfect through sufferings." If it were necessary for Jesus, the pure and sinless Son of God, to learn obedience, and to reach perfection as the Captain of our salvation, through suffering, how much more so for us who have been ruined and defiled by sin? Then, too, as Jesus had to suffer and die in order that others might live, so His followers must also suffer at times that others may be saved from sin and death.

While it is true, as pointed out in the foregoing paragraphs, that the children of God must taste the sufferings and sorrows of earth, it is also true that God has promised to be with them in every dangerous and trying experience. "Fear thou not," says the Lord,

"for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa. 41:10; 43:2. What a comfort, what a blessed assurance, to know that we need not face life's dangers alone, nor pass through the fiery furnace unaccompanied! Every hour, every moment, in every trial and in every sorrow, Jesus is with us. Not only is the Saviour with us to temper the winds that blow, and to sustain us in such tribulation as He must permit to come to us, but He is also with us to deliver us from dangers seen and unseen. "The angel of the Lord," declares the psalmist, "encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Ps. 34:7. Could our eyes be opened, we should see these heavenly messengers round about us, protecting us from the wicked schemes and horrible devices planned for our destruction by the devil and his agents. Most of these dangers and sorrows, from which we are daily shielded, being hidden from our view, we are not conscious of the intervention of a divine power in our behalf. But many times we have all been made to realize that an unseen hand has miraculously delivered us when we were face to face with danger from which we could not possibly save ourselves.

Heaven's Miraculous Deliverances

The Bible abounds in records of miraculous deliverances experienced by the servants of the Lord in ancient times. There is the captivating story of Joseph, who in his tender years was sold into bondage by his jealous brothers, and carried far away from his father's home into a strange land where he soon was cast into prison for refusing to violate his conscience by transgressing the commandment of God. Locked within those mighty prison walls, young Joseph committed his case into the hands of his father's God, who was also his God. Though the future looked dark and hopeless, he patiently trusted in the Lord, and cheerfully went about his duties. From his prison cell he was called before the king, who arrayed him in a royal robe and

elevated him to the highest office in his kingdom. "He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: to bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom." Ps. 105: 21, 22.

Equally interesting and inspiring is the story of Daniel. Like Joseph, he was a captive in a foreign land. Because of his fidelity to principle, he had been promoted to prime minister of Persia, which at that time ruled the world. Wicked men, because of his religion, sought to find some fault in his work for which they might have him removed from office. Unable to discover fault or weakness in his administration, they intrigued the unsuspecting king into signing a decree that cast Daniel into the lions' den. But did God forsake his faithful servant? Ah! no. An angel accompanied him into that den to close the mouths of the hungry lions.

Just as striking and marvelous was the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who, under the protecting care of the Son of God, walked unhurt and unharmed in the midst of the flames of the fiery furnace, until invited by the astonished and frightened king to come out; of Peter, who, the night before he was to be executed, was aroused from his slumbers in the prison cell by a shining angel who freed him from his chains, and led him, unnoticed, past the Roman guards to a place of safety; and of the apostle Paul, who again and again was miraculously delivered from danger and death.

All who have read the history of the Christian church have discovered that, just as God frequently wrought in a miraculous way to deliver His people in Bible times, so has He often, down through the centuries revealed His mighty arm in behalf of His faithful, trusting children. The church of God has not been permitted to travel over a highway strewn with roses. The true followers of Christ have often been hated and persecuted. The work of the church has had to be carried forward against bitter opposition. Many times the people and the cause of God have been threatened with extinction. But how often, when the enemy seemed about to triumph, has God intervened and brought deliverance!

Our minds immediately turn to Luther, the great German reformer. How our hearts are moved within us as we

think of this noble servant of the Lord courageously defending the cause of truth before the Diet of Worms! Before him, in that august assembly, sat a large number of the greatest dignitaries of church and state. Many of them had come there determined to silence the reformer forever. But God restrained the forces of evil, and Luther left Worms unharmed. Soon after his departure, Emperor Charles issued an edict against him. In this decree, Luther was denounced as Satan himself. It commanded that measures be taken to stop his work. All persons were forbidden to harbor him, or to give him food or drink. He was to be seized, wherever found, and delivered to the authorities. His writings were to be destroyed, his adherents imprisoned, and their property confiscated. Immediately they prepared to rid the world of the hated reformer and his writings. But once again God intervened. On his way home, Luther was overtaken by men sent out by Frederick of Saxony, separated from his company, and hurriedly escorted through the deep forest to the castle of Wartburg, an isolated mountain fortress. From this safe retreat, when his enemies thought him dead, there began to flow a stream of tracts and pamphlets that soon shook all Europe, and helped to bring about one of the greatest and most far-reaching, religious awakenings recorded in history.

Missionaries in Dangers Protected

The history of missions is replete with stirring incidents and experiences of divine protection and providential deliverances. Think of that noble missionary, John G. Paton, toiling away alone among the cannibals on the island of Tanna in the far-away southern seas. By day and by night savage cannibals were lurking about him, bent on taking his life. More than once he was surrounded by wild, bloodthirsty murderers crying for his life. Calmly he looked at the weapons aimed at his heart, and committed his case into the hands of his Master, whose angels delivered him. Paton lived to see the savages of Tanna transformed from fierce cannibals to friendly, peace-loving Christians.

God is working just as manifestly in behalf of His people and His work today as formerly. In every land where the message is preached, God watches over His own. Here are two recent experiences.

A colporteur working among the people along the banks of the mighty Amazon, having sold a book in a home he stepped into his little canoe to go to the next house, about two hours' distance down the river. Weary from his toil under a tropical sun, he decided to drift with the stream. He knew about half way down he must avoid dangerous rapids, but unintentionally he fell into a deep sleep. Suddenly he was awakened by men calling excitedly from another canoe. He asked what they wanted. They responded, "We have watched your canoe from the other side of the river. We saw it go into and through the rapids. We expected that it would be hurled under and never be seen again. How did such a miracle ever happen? We have known some who tried to row their canoes through the rapids, but all met sure death. And here you did nothing, even slept while your canoe passed through the dangerous rapids. We have never heard of such a thing, and would not believe it now had we not seen it with our own eyes." To the astonished men, our brother explained that he was a child of God, and that the Lord had sent His angel to deliver him while he slept. The men gladly bought a book, and are now interested in the truth.

A leader in our field, writes: "While one of our colporters was working, he noticed an unusual excitement, and soon saw the villagers rushing along the streets armed with pitchforks and clubs. Suspecting that they were looking for him, he tried to escape; but some had already seen him, and began to shout to the others. From all sides the enemies were crowding in, hedging up the road. As he was looking for a way of escape, he suddenly noticed an open space between two houses, the way leading to the swift flowing river. There he saw an unknown man standing on the bank motioning to him. The man was standing by the side of a boat into which he urged the colporteur to enter. Before the mob could reach him, the colporteur was quickly and safely rowed across to the other side. On jumping from the boat, he turned to thank the man for having delivered him from the cruel mob, and what was his astonishment to find both the man and the boat had completely disappeared, and were nowhere to be found! Some of the people who had bought his books learned of this providential deliverance, and soon an interest de-

veloped in that village. Even some of the people who had planned to harm him became interested, and soon a group of new believers was organized. Both the colporteur and these people are convinced that it was an angel who appeared at the right time in the form of that unknown man to save the life of God's servant."

Destruction Turned Into Victory

Sometimes it is not only an isolated individual who is providentially delivered from the wrath of the enemy, but a whole church in a village, or the whole advent movement in an entire country. Such experiences have been rather frequent in certain parts of Europe. In our division we have often seen threatened destruction turned into a glorious victory through the mighty power of God.

In the beginning of the year 1939, when I visited one of our fields, I found more than five hundred of our churches closed, with large government seals across the doors. Many of our ministers and members were behind prison bars. By government decree we were forbidden to proclaim our message. The gathering of tithes and offerings for the support of the cause was prohibited. The enemy was fully determined to annihilate our work in that land. Humanly speaking, the future looked dark and impossible. It seemed as though we had reached the end of the way. But the God who opened a way of escape for His people of old through the deep waters of the Red Sea, heard the cry of His oppressed and persecuted children, and delivered them. The principal leaders bent on destroying God's people, today have lost their power. Some are in their graves. At the time these lines are being written, our churches are all open again. Tithes and offerings are flowing more abundantly than ever into the conference treasuries; our ministers, colporters, and members are actively at work for the Lord; and a steady stream of new converts is coming into our churches. Difficulties there still are, but with humble, grateful hearts our dear people are praising God for this wonderful manifestation of His infinite love and mighty power in their behalf. This experience has brought new faith and courage into many hearts.

When we contemplate what God has done for His people down through the ages, and especially for us, our hearts

are led to exclaim with the psalmist: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." Ps. 107:8, 1, 2.

The Greatest of All Deliverances

Wonderful and precious as are these deliverances from apparent destruction, we must never forget that the greatest, the most blessed, and the most miraculous deliverance that can come to a man or woman in this world is the deliverance from sin. Sin is a terrible master from which no human power can deliver. It holds the sinner in a grip as firm and relentless as death. In this bondage, man is absolutely helpless. The most determined effort on his part can never break the fetters with which he is bound. Unless help can come to him from some power outside of himself, he is hopelessly and eternally lost.

Some seem to believe that all the enslaved sinner needs is forgiveness. But this is a mistake. True, the sinner must obtain forgiveness in order to be saved, but this is not enough. He must also be set free from the power and bondage of sin. If not, he will always remain in the prison house of sin, chained to his master the prince of darkness. But, thank God, there is one who is both able and willing to deliver from this wretched bondage. That one is Jesus. He did not only die to pay the penalty for man's transgression, but He rose from the grave to become our living Saviour from the thralldom of sin. What a precious boon it is to know that Jesus is ever ready to liberate every soul that will cry to Him for help! To all those who have experienced the joy of this freedom, God says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. 5:1. To those who have strayed away unto forbidden ground and become entangled once more in the chains of sin, the Lord declares Himself ready to rescue again if they will but turn unto Him. And to all who have never known the sweetness there is in freedom from the gall-ing yoke, Jesus extends a most urgent invitation to come to Him to be set free. To all who read these lines, or who hear them read, who are not free

and happy in Christ, I appeal in the name of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, Come now, just now, and receive pardon for your transgressions, and this promised deliverance from your bondage!

Entering Upon the Final Contest

The final deliverance of God's people from the wrath and the destructive power of the enemy is soon to take place. It will be the climax in the great struggle between the forces of good and evil. Burning with rage against God and His saints, Satan is now preparing, with grim determination, to destroy with one mighty blow all of God's people who are left in the world. Stealthily, but industriously, he is at work sowing the seeds of hatred in human hearts against those who keep the commandments of God. Rulers and law-makers are gradually being influenced to enact laws against the remnant church. Soon the storm will break in all its fury. It is then that God will appear in great glory to deliver His children.

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof. The people of God—some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains—still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen."—*"Great Controversy,"* p. 625.

It is at midnight, so the servant of the Lord tells us, that God will manifest His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun suddenly appears shining through the rifts in the dark, heavy clouds that clash against one another. There is a great earthquake "such as was not since men were upon the earth." Mountains shake like reeds in the wind; islands disappear, seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the raging sea. The roaring hurricane shrieks like the voice of demons as it passes on its mission of destruction. The fairest cities of the earth are laid in ruin. Con-

fusion and terror are everywhere. The wails of the wicked are heard above the roar of the elements. The devil and his angels look on in amazement and fear. But the people of God, who a little while before were fleeing before their persecutors, now calmly look with solemn joy upon the evidences of their deliverance.

In the midst of this terrifying upheaval and confusion, the attention of all is arrested by an approaching cloud in the eastern sky. Small and dark at first, it grows larger, brighter, and more glorious with each passing moment, as it draws nearer the earth. As this living cloud of shining angels comes nearer, Jesus is seen in the midst of it seated upon His throne. He comes now, not as a man of sorrows with a crown of thorns pressed upon His brow, but as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." The wicked multitude, crying for rocks and mountains to fall upon them to hide them from the face of Him whom they have scorned and rejected, are smitten and consumed by the brightness of His coming. Now the voice of Jesus, like the sound of a

trumpet, rolls throughout the earth. Graves are opened, and the sleeping saints come forth, clad in immortality. The same instant, the living saints are changed, and together with the risen ones are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Friends and loved ones long separated are now united, never more to part. Little children are carried by angels to their mothers' arms. With Jesus at their head, and escorted by the angels, the redeemed ascend to their eternal home. No human mind can now comprehend the indescribable joy and the holy rapture that will fill every heart as the glory of the celestial city bursts upon their view. At the command of Jesus, the pearly gates swing back, and He leads the glorified throng, triumphantly, into the new Jerusalem. With a look of satisfaction upon His blessed face as He beholds His purchased possession, He says, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The conflict is ended. The deliverance from sin and sorrow, hardship and suffering, danger and death, is complete.

(Reading for Wednesday, December 11)

LOOK ON THE FIELD

By E. D. DICK

We as Seventh-day Adventists by reason of our belief and hope are missionary-minded. Holding dear as we do the hope of the imminent return of Jesus, and recognizing as prerequisite to this grand event the preaching of the gospel to every kindred, nation, tongue and people, we are impelled in a program of missionary activity which belts the globe.

Our Saviour's great commission is a solemn charge to all who love and serve Him. Human methods are imperfect and must needs vary with altering conditions, but the command is clear and unequivocal—"Go," "into all the world," "preach the gospel," preach it "to every creature." Each of these four clauses is a charge of supreme importance and must be heeded. This gospel commission is the great missionary character of Christ's kingdom, and all who love Him will hasten His appearing through joining in the proclamation of the glad tidings of the kingdom.

But this charge is not met in the proclaiming of the good news in only the more favored places of earth easily reached by modern and comfortable transportation facilities and surrounded by the amenities and conveniences of modern life. It must carry His messengers on to the remote places of earth, to the byways and the hedges; over desert and plain; from the high mountains of the Andes to the frozen, wind-swept plains of the far North; to the steaming Amazon, the Belgian Congo, or the flooded plains of Bengal; and to the peoples on the thousands of remote islands in the broad Pacific. All must be reached. "The field is the world," said the Master who gave us our marching orders, and His commission is not fulfilled until all have heard the good news.

Nor is it the plan of God that this work should be done by a chosen few. All are to have a part. Says the servant of God, "Every one who has re-

ceived Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellowmen. . . . When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned, and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory."—*Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 110, 111.

God is going before His people in these tempestuous times. His work is onward. While in places material losses have been sustained, yet the work marches on to larger success. In places where restrictions and persecutions prevail, our people gather new courage. Recounting of these successes should cheer us all, particularly those of us in favored lands, to renewed endeavors for God in the closing work.

Progress in the China Division

Our work in China marches on in spite of the ravages of war. True, we have suffered institutional losses and the work of other places has been disrupted. Our membership in large areas has been forced to flee from their homes and find refuge in remote sections. Transportation and communication have been dislocated, yet in spite of this the work goes forward.

W. H. Branson writes: "The total output of the *Signs* Press last year amounted to \$209,967.21. In view of the very great difficulties that are experienced in transporting literature from one part of China to another at the present time, and of the fact that in so many places our colporteurs are not able to do active work, we consider that this report is really an excellent one."

Encouraging results are likewise seen in the evangelistic efforts. S. L. Frost, secretary of the division, writes:

"Notwithstanding the difficulties that sent political upheaval, we are finding it possible to carry on aggressive evangelistic work in most sections of the field. Even in those provinces difficult of access the brethren who are living there are going forward with regular evangelistic efforts. A large number of strong public efforts are in progress. Here in the city of Shanghai seven separate efforts are in progress, and are well attended. The brethren are trying to reach all classes. Besides work for the Chinese, efforts are being conducted for the Russian, German, and Jewish refugees.

"The very trouble through which China is passing at the present time seems to have sobered the minds of the people and many are thinking more seriously of Christianity and the work of Christian missions than ever before. The people seemed ready to give. The sum of \$108,000, national currency, was received as the result of this year's Harvest Ingathering work."

One Chinese worker, D. D. Djang, tells of experiences in an interior province:

"Huang An-nu, for three months had not been able to leave his bed. Prayer offered for this man was answered, and he was healed. Still another, a woman demon-possessed and a great sufferer from rheumatism, through the ministry of these humble workers learned to believe in God. When her husband saw that she was attending our meetings, he cursed her; but when, unlike her former custom, she suffered his anger and rebukes patiently, he was astonished and touched by the change in her attitude. Through her patient witness he was later led to the Lord. Another with an illness of long standing had spent all his money in seeking help for his distress, but without avail. His money, and his prayers to the gods had alike proved futile. Now he is rejoicing in restored health and the converting power of the Holy Spirit."

Work in War-Torn Europe

In spite of the cruelties, destruction, and chaos imposed by the war, evidences of progress of our work, and courage of our workers in Europe, continue to reach us.

Of our work in Yugoslavia we learn that in spite of the war, last year was one of the very best ever experienced. They had more baptisms than the previous year, and encouraging increases in the tithes and offerings. Colporteur sales were a third higher than in 1938.

A. V. Olson writes: "1939 was by far the most difficult and trying year that we have ever experienced." Summarizing, he says: "In spite of the closed chapels and persecution in Rumania, the practically impossible situation in Spain, the disruption of the work in Ethiopia, the upheavals in other parts of the field caused by war, the number added to our churches by baptism was nearly as large as the previous year."

Of Poland, Brother Szembor writes: "In spite of the war, last year was the best year in baptisms of any year in the

history of our work in the Polish field."

The Spirit of God is moving on the hearts of men though found in prisoners' camps. From Finland we have the following:

An experience is related by Brother L. . . . president of a Swedish Conference in Finland, who had the privilege of visiting a Russian prisoners' camp. Four times he was permitted to speak to about six hundred men. These men who for years have been spiritually starved to whom the name of God is strange—have been listening with great eagerness to the wonderful message that Jesus is coming again. Brother L. . . . reports that after he had been speaking for some time, telling them of the coming of the Lord, these men fell to their knees and made the sign of the cross with their hands over their breasts. They seemed spellbound as he unfolded the wonderful truth of a coming Saviour, as they drank eagerly of the blessed message of salvation.

Onward in South America

In less tense surroundings than prison camps and battlefields, victories for Christ are also won. From the stillness of dense tropical jungles, far from the rush of civilization, the Spirit of God is speaking to the hearts of men as made clear by this story which comes to us from N. P. Neilsen, the president of the division:

"Last June I was attending an annual meeting held in the city of Maues in the Lower Amazon Mission. This city is about one thousand miles inland in the heart of the great Amazon jungle basin. Here a person does not need to be afraid of crossing the streets for fear of automobiles, for there are none. Not even a wagon, nor an oxcart did I see in that city. All travel is by boat or canoe.

"In such a place as this we held our annual meeting for eight days. Nearly three hundred of our people came together to enjoy this feast. We had excellent meetings, and many gave their hearts to God. On the last Sabbath sixteen were baptized by Pastor Halliwell. Among these were an old couple and their daughter in whom I became especially interested. The man was eighty-six years of age, and his wife was eighty-two. He was nearly blind, and so weak that he had to be helped in order to walk. This aged couple with their daughter had recently found the truth, rejoicing in this message. They

were buried together in the waters of baptism.

"As old Brother Amaral arose from the water he clasped his hands together, and looking upward toward heaven, praised God for the blessed light which had come into his soul. It almost seemed as if his face shone, so happy was he! A few weeks after this the wife, after brief illness, passed away and was laid to rest in the 'blessed hope.' She rejoiced in her God, and seemed ready to go to sleep.

"About a month later, one of our brethren visited old Brother Amaral, who spoke of the death of his dear companion, and of how she is now sleeping in the 'blessed hope,' awaiting the voice of the great Lifegiver. He also told how glad he was that they had found this truth, and how they had longed for something like this for years. Then he said that soon he, too, expected to be laid away by the side of his wife to await the resurrection morning. He said that he was feeling very weak, and that perhaps he would not see the missionary any more. He asked our brother to thank Elder Halliwell for bringing them this blessed truth. Finally he said: 'Please tell him to thank our dear people everywhere for giving of their means to send us this message of salvation.'

"That same night this dear old brother fell asleep to awake no more until Jesus comes. Now he is at rest. His work is done; but his farewell words should ring out in all the earth to encourage us to greater faithfulness in giving for the advancement of this blessed truth, which brought such peace to his soul. Yea, his last words should remind us that, like this old couple, there are thousands and still other thousands in the great Amazon region alone who are waiting, still waiting, with open hearts, seeking for something that can satisfy the longing of their souls!"

Dawn of New Day in the Near East

From Egypt, so long the symbol of spiritual darkness, come reports which betoken the breaking of a new day. This the land of the Pharaohs, proud for its treasures of history, is poor in the wealth which the gospel alone can bring. After forty years of diligent effort, the total membership stood at 195. Forty-four were added by baptism in 1939. A public evangelistic effort is being held by the mission superintendent,

E. L. Branson, assisted by national workers. Prospects for a substantial baptismal class are favorable.

The ancient Bible land of Persia, too, is not forgotten, for from her a remnant is being gathered. During recent persecutions of Christians in South Russia a large colony of Russian refugees sought shelter in Persia. To these one of our ministers was sent to teach them the advent message. This they received with great eagerness, and a goodly group has been baptized. God does not fail to remember the people from atheistic Russia even in exile. Indeed their exile became the avenue leading to the kingdom of heaven.

From the unentered land of Kurdistan comes evidence that God has not forgotten these people. Dr. H. E. Hargreaves, superintendent of the Iran (Persian) Mission, relates:

"Not long ago two patients came to my clinic from Southwest Kurdistan, and inquired particularly as to the reason for the notice over my door which tells its readers that we are closed on Sabbath, except by appointment. On learning of our Sabbathkeeping, they informed me that in Kurdistan such Sabbathkeeping Christians are to be found. I have never heard of such before, but if opportunity offers, I hope to pay a visit to that district and see them. No doubt God has reserved to Himself a people in the fastnesses of Kurdistan."

From the land of ancient Greece, long buried by the ruins of time, comes evidence that God has a people there:

"The leader of the missionary volunteer society related the experience of one of their members who was serving as a soldier in the Greek army. This young man would not labor on the Sabbath and was, therefore, brought before the commanding officers week after week. He served prison sentences a number of times, and finally was told that if he did not report for duty on Sabbath he would be punished until his own family would be unable to recognize him. Still the young man trusted the Lord and, not yielding on any matter of conscience, prepared for the worst, even death.

"A Greek Orthodox priest was called to persuade him to give up his peculiar religious views. The result of this effort was that the priest himself was convinced of the correctness of the young man's attitude, and became his sympathetic friend. Weeks and months

passed with every Friday evening a test as to loyalty to God, instead of to man. At last when the military officers saw that this young man could not be diverted from his observance of the fourth commandment, they took his name off the list of arrested, and silently consented to his absence from duty on God's holy day.

Light in the Far East

Few places show records of greater growth than in the Philippines. In this archipelago of 7,000 islands a mighty work has been accomplished. During scarcely thirty years of effort in this field, the membership has grown from nothing to more than 20,000, at the close of 1939, the results of faithful efforts of evangelistic colporteurs and lay members. This has not been done without our great sacrificial effort, as is illustrated in the following:

"A few years ago, while travelling in the mountains of Northern Luzon, our faithful colporteur, Felipe Corcoro, was murdered by a group of pagan mountain people. A part of his head was carried off as a trophy, his body cast into the river. Some distance below, his body was discovered and identified. On a hill overlooking that needy and benighted mountain region he now sleeps. His death was a distinct loss, but with no discouragement. Other colporteurs pressed on over the trails he trod, going where it was forbidden him to go, continuing the work he was forced to lay down. Recently, we had our first baptism in that region toward which our brother had set his face. Eight have been baptized. Word has just come that five more are now ready, with many others interested. The government is also offering as a piece of land there for a church school. So despite opposition in many different forms, the work of God moves forward to certain victory."

Advance in Inter-America

Over a wide range of the territory of the Inter-American Division comes reports of phenomenal interest and progress. The Bahamas, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, Jamaica, and the French Islands of the West Indies send encouraging reports of growth. The aggregate report for the division shows a growth of twenty-seven and one-half per cent in Sabbath school members, and thirty seven per cent growth in church members from 1934 to 1938—a truly gratifying report.

A close-up view of the efforts which beget such results is seen in the following which comes to us from Mexico. Superintendent C. E. Wood writes:

"Number One is the name of one of our churches in the State of Chiapas. Its name is significant as it has the largest membership of any Seventh-day Adventist church in Mexico. The large proportion of the members of this church have never seen a city, an automobile, a railroad train, or many of the modern inventions; but their members are real missionaries, and some of them travel great distances to carry the message to the surrounding villages. During the month of May, 1939, I met some of these missionary workers a day's journey from their home church, where they had organized a Sabbath school of about 100 members.

"Recently one of the members at the church at Number One desired to visit his parents who lived at San Isidro, Chiapas. While there he aroused such an interest that he called for another member of the church to assist him. This brother understood how to give hydrotherapy treatments to the sick, and by means of this ministry many souls were won.

"In September this medical missionary layman wrote:

"I have just returned from San Isidro where a remarkable interest is developing. This Sabbath school, which started with a membership of thirty now has eighty-six. Before the close of the year the enrollment reached 114."

"The majority of these souls were won by means of medical missionary work. At first the brother treated the people in his vicinity. Now the sick come to him from afar."

Triumphs of the Gospel in Southern Asia

From India come omens of the dawn of a new day for Christian missions. Says one, "In some centers where formerly we could secure no attendance at meetings we now have hundreds who attend night after night. It is most interesting to see the Mohammedan fez, the Hindu puggeri, and the Parsee hat all in the same meeting."

N. C. Wilson, the president of the division, writes: "We are not in any way terrified by the enemies of the truth of God although they may be many and strong. We know that God whom we serve, and He is leading this movement on to victory. The same God

who led and gave success to Israel of old is with us today.

"Wonderful opportunities face us in many parts of Southern Asia. An ordained minister of a large mission society has recently written us regarding a movement toward Christianity on the part of Hindus in his district. He states that his society cannot respond to the call for help from these people, and earnestly appeals to us to try to minister to them. There are many thousand souls involved in this appeal. We are now making some investigation, and hope to be able to follow along as God opens the way.

"One of our ordained Indian ministers in South India has just written of his evangelistic work in a purely Hindu village. At first severe opposition was experienced, and there was grave fear that there might be trouble between village factions. With true and anxious heart our brother kept faithfully at work, and now God has abundantly rewarded him. Fourteen men, besides some women and children, all of whom have until recently been orthodox Hindus, have now openly taken their stand for the advent message.

"In the huge city of Bombay our Indian evangelists have just closed a half effort. God has blessed and we all rejoice in the goodly number of people, many directly from hinduism, who have decided to obey the commandments of God and have asked for baptism. Such an experience greatly cheers the hearts of our workers in this 'Gibraltar of Heathenism.'"

Africa Responds

From east and west, central, north, and south, come reports of the onward progress of the work in that once dark land. In no country has such phenomenal progress been recorded as is seen in the central sections of Africa. In other places, tribes long known for their ferocious and warlike habits are stretching out their hands for the gospel. Elder and Mrs. Herbert Hanson, missionaries recently returned to Ethiopia, where our work has been so bruised and torn by war, writes from Addis Ababa:

"We have a place for weekly services, and about fifty gather from week to week. We are happy for this. We also find that among the natives that belong to our mission, as well as to other missions, a spirit of thoughtfulness and seriousness in regard to spiri-

tual things is very evident over here."

May there not yet be an abundant harvest of souls from old Ethiopia? And so the story of courage and victory could be lengthened indefinitely.

"From the North, from the South,
All the ransomed shall come,
And worship our heavenly King."

But the day of conflict is not yet ended, and not until the church is triumphant can we lay aside the armor. We must go on to new heights in Christian living and in conquest for Christ, spurred on by the great commission and the cherished hope of His soon return. This courageous word comes to us for this hour from God's messenger:

"The church is God's agency for the proclamation of truth, empowered by Him to do a special work; and if she is loyal to Him, obedient to all His commandments, there will dwell within her the excellency of divine grace. If she will be true to her allegiance, if she will honor the Lord God of Israel, there is no power that can stand against her."—*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 600.

May the Lord stir our hearts to renewed devotion and service, and through us quickly finish His work.



"Jesus Himself, while He dwelt among men, was often in prayer. Our Saviour identified Himself with our needs and weakness, in that He became a suppliant, a petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, that He might come forth braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, "in all points tempted like as we are;" but as a sinless one, His nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with his father, and if the Saviour of men, the Son of God, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary, in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 97.

(Reading for Thursday, December 12)

COVENANT WITH GOD THROUGH SACRIFICE

By W. E. NELSON

WHEN Jesus went away He gave to every man his work. The plan of this work is summed up in the gospel commission given to His disciples, and recorded in Matt. 28:19, 20, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Not only was this commission given to His followers nineteen hundred years ago, but it is equally binding on His followers in 1940. In view of this responsibility placed upon us, we have a definite work to do. Every age since the creation of man has had its problems, and every generation its work. We who live in this last generation have a very special work to do. We must therefore cooperate fully with Him who said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." We must not ask if the task given us is a pleasant one, or whether it is good policy, or whether it will pay. If there is any doubt about our duty, let us go to God and ask Him what we must do, and we shall find the way made clear to us.

God's chosen agents for the doing of His work are characterized by the psalmist:

"Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Ps. 50:5.

Protected in Discharge of Duty

The spirit and method of God's work are made plain to us in these words:

"The work of God is to be carried forward in self-denial and self-sacrifice. 'Whosoever will come after Me,' Christ said, 'let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.' Christ became poor that we might be partakers of the 'far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' We are to practice the same self-sacrifice that led Him to give Himself up to the death of the cross to make it possible for human beings to have eternal life."—

Mrs. E. G. White, in "Review and Herald," May 5, 1904.

The atmosphere of duty is one of self-sacrifice, and he who breathes it must be above self-seeking and self-glorification. God's greatest men have been those who work not for pay, or place, or glory, but to do their duty to God and mankind. The gospel teaches us that if we are in the midst of the discharge of duty, the Lord clothes us with an armor that no weapon of the enemy can pierce. He says, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday," for Jehovah's "truth shall be thy shield and buckler," and the Almighty will "cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." Ps. 91: 5,6,4.

Not until Jonah ran away from his work, did he get into trouble. If we are working in an unselfish way, we are safe, for God is with us. Nothing is really done worthily until we would gladly do more than we could. The true spirit of working for God is indicated by David when he says, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God;" and our Heavenly Father says He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

In our sacrificial service for God, we must remember that that for which we are responsible is in the honest attempt, and not necessarily in achievement. The 'well done' was spoken alike to the man who had gained the five and the man who had gained the ten talents. One who engages in worthy service for God must pay the price. No one can accomplish that which benefits the cause of God and not do it in the spirit of sacrifice.

We Are Debtors to the World

Paul, in writing to the Romans, said that he was debtor to the Greeks. This was not an ordinary debt, for Paul had received nothing from them that he was bound to pay back. He was not a student of their art, or philosophy.

What then constituted this debt? Paul had received a glimpse of the Master, and had heard the voice of Jesus sending him to the Gentile nations as their special missionary. It was his knowledge of Jesus and the plan of salvation that made Paul a debtor.

We here today owe the same debt as Paul did. Each individual who knows God owes this same debt to the entire world. But it is not possible to pay a debt without sacrifice. The linen cost the flax; the furniture in the home cost the trees in the forest; the heat in the house cost the coal in the bin; character costs the long, fierce conflict with temptation and sin.

In "Historical Sketches," pages 291-293, from the pen of the Lord's servant we read:

"Heaven is indignant at the ease of men and women in Zion, while souls are going down to ruin in their ignorance and their sins. If the members of the church were to see themselves as God sees them, they would be overwhelmed with self-reproach. They could not endure to look their responsibilities and delinquencies in the face.

"The work must not stop for want of means. More means must be invested in it. Brethren in America, in the name of my Master I bid you wake up! You that are placing your talents of means in a napkin and hiding them in the earth, who are building houses and adding land to land, God calls upon you, 'Sell that ye have, and give alms.' There is a time coming when commandment-keepers can neither buy nor sell. Make haste to dig out your buried talents. If God has entrusted you with money, show yourselves faithful to your trust; unwrap your napkin, and send your talents to the exchangers, that when Christ shall come, He may receive His own with interest. . . . Did they but realize how near is the end of all work for the salvation of souls, they would sacrifice their possessions as freely as did the members of the early church. They would work for the advancement of God's cause as earnestly as worldly men labor to acquire riches. Tact and skill would be exercised, and earnest and unselfish labor put forth to acquire means, not to hoard, but to pour into the treasury of the Lord.

"What if some become poor in investing their means in the work? Christ for your sakes became poor; but you are securing for yourselves eternal riches, a treasure in heaven that faileth not.

Your means is far safer there than if deposited in the bank, or invested in houses and lands. It is laid up in bags that wax not old. No thief can approach it, no fire consume it.

"As new fields are opened, the calls for means are constantly increasing. If ever we needed to exercise economy it is now. All who labor in the cause should realize the importance of closely following the Saviour's example of self-denial and economy. They should see in the means they handle a trust which God has committed to them, and they should feel under obligation to exercise tact and financial ability in the use of their Lord's money. Every penny should be carefully treasured. A cent seems like a trifle, but a hundred cents make a dollar, and rightly spent may be the means of saving a soul from death. If all the means which has been wasted by our own people in self-gratification had been devoted to the cause of God, there would be no empty treasuries, and missions could be established in all parts of the world."

The plan of salvation was laid in sacrifice in which all heaven participated. Jesus did not send His angels to this world while He remained in heaven, but He Himself entered first into the plan of redemption, and made the supreme sacrifice of the ages. He left all the glories of heaven and identified Himself with us, that He might become our sacrifice. Do we not often magnify our little crosses and sacrifices that we make for the Lord? It will never be possible for any of us to earn a home in heaven by any sacrifice we can make for God. The apostle Paul stated that "ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." This and many times more, Jesus did for us. As we contemplate the love of Christ, which is so broad and deep and full, it should surely awaken in our hearts a response that will out-weigh every earthly consideration. When we get a vision of the cross of Calvary, we are constantly reminded of our Saviour's love and interest in us.

Jesus prayed for us: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." John 17: 24. In view of such love on the part of the Saviour, how can we count any earthly sacrifice we may make to help others into the kingdom of God as too

great? Everyone truly united with Christ will surely feel the same love for souls that caused Jesus, the Son of God, to leave the glories of heaven, and to become our Elder Brother.

World Made Specially Attractive to Remnant Church

In "Early Writings," pp. 266-269, we are given a view of how Satan works to keep the professed people of God from doing their part in cooperating with Christ in the salvation of souls in the last days:

"I saw that Satan bade his angels lay their snares especially for those who were looking for Christ's second appearing, and keeping all the commandments of God. . . . 'But,' he said, 'the sect of Sabbath-keepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects, to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ's kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in a most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it. We must keep in our ranks all the means of which we can gain control. The more means the followers of Christ devote to His service, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects. . . . Present every plausible excuse to those who have means, lest they hand it out. Control the money matters if you can, and drive their ministers to want and distress. This will weaken their courage and zeal. Battle every inch of ground. Make covetousness and love of earthly treasures the ruling traits of their character. As long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back. Crowd every attraction around them, and they will be surely ours. And not only are we sure of them, but their hateful influence will not be exercised to lead others to heaven. When any shall attempt to give, put within them a grudging disposition, that it may be sparingly.'

"God requires a constant doing on the part of His people; and when they become weary of well-doing, He becomes weary of them. I saw that He is greatly displeased with the least manifestation of selfishness on the part of His professed people, for whom

Jesus spared not His own precious life. Every selfish, covetous person will fall out by the way. Like Judas, who sold His Lord, they will sell good principles and a noble, generous disposition for a little of earth's gain. All such will be sifted out from God's people. Those who want heaven must, with all the energy which they possess, be encouraging the principles of heaven. Instead of withering up with selfishness, their souls should be expanding with benevolence. Every opportunity should be improved in doing good to one another, and thus cherishing the principles of heaven. Jesus was presented to me as the perfect pattern. His life was without selfish interest, but ever marked with disinterested benevolence."

The foundations of the advent message were laid in whole-hearted and voluntary sacrifice, and we believe it will close with the same spirit. In fact the times call for the same great zeal and self-denial that was seen in the beginning of the message. A consuming love for Christ must burn all covetousness and selfishness out of our lives. Intensity is taking hold of the world in its effort to solve the great financial problems of today. Likewise a greater intensity must take hold of the people of God who are looking for the imminent coming of Christ. God calls for faithfulness in tithes and offerings. But giving is not the only phase of the Christian life. It is just as vital that those intrusted with these funds use them in any efficient and economical way. The curse of God rests upon those who fail in this respect. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully [margin, "negligently"]." Jer. 48:10. In gospel finance we must be rigidly honest in the handling of God's money, and not a dime be wasted, or spent on non-essentials.

The Transfer of Our Treasures

As a people Seventh-day Adventists have done much to support the work of God both in the homelands and in mission fields. Love and self-denial were pillars of the advent movement in its early days. Yet had everyone done his full part, much more could have been accomplished. Have we not now reached the time when we should not be satisfied unless we do much more for God than in former days?

During the last two decades the inhabitants of the earth have been transferring their gold and silver from one

country to another in the hope that they may find a safe place for these treasures. Gold which has been used as a medium in the transfer of wealth is now hoarded in vaults heavily guarded by armed men. We know by the word of the Lord that soon the gold of the earth will be worthless. "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." Jas. 5:2,3. "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats." Isa. 2:20. Jesus taught His followers the folly of such hoarding. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matt. 6:19-21.

God has promised to supply all our temporal needs, if we serve him with the whole heart. We need not fear. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Ps. 37:25.

God needs you. Worldly ambition may offer temporary rewards for your service, alluring inducements may meet us many times, but the glory of these will pass with the day, while the rewards of the higher service in sacrifice for God are as enduring as eternity. The prophet Daniel expresses this thought forcefully: "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."

The call of God today is for a full and complete consecration of the entire being and all we possess to the finishing of the work of God in this generation. The Holy Spirit is a safe guide to follow, and will guide us in all our endeavor.

In the closing service of the Week of Prayer, there will be given opportunity for us to express our love for Christ by making a material sacrifice in giving of our money to the advancement of the advent message in all the world.

(Reading for Friday, December 13)

THE CHALLENGE OF THE HOUR TO OUR YOUTH

By STEEN RASMUSSEN

THE responsibility of preparing this Week of Prayer message in behalf of our world-wide army of youth is of such import and far-reaching consequence that we tremble at the thought of addressing those whom God has chosen as "His helping hand," fearing lest we should fail to say just what the Master would wish to have conveyed to His youthful followers in such an hour as this; an hour when we are standing on the threshold of eternity, an hour when the rallying call is being sounded by the nations of earth to its young men and women for loyal undivided service and sacrifice; an hour of such momentous challenge to the Adventist youth to dedicate their talent and present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1.

Young people are on the march everywhere—thousands, millions of them! How many millions, no one knows. It is difficult for our minds to comprehend the size of this great host of warriors as they tramp through the lands of earth. But we think of another army, our army of missionary volunteers moving about all over the world as soldiers of the cross, wrestling "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12. And "with such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"—"Education," p. 271.

While the privilege of contacting our young people around the world is a rare and sincerely appreciated one, it must nevertheless be considered a most solemn and deeply serious charge. But as we reflect upon the shortness of time in which to finish the task committed to our care, and being conscious of the fact that the Adventist youth have been called for just such an hour as this, we shall speak frankly and unhesitatingly of those things which stir

our hearts as we contemplate the possibilities wrapped up in this mighty, valiant host of youthful zeal, vigor and enthusiasm for advancing the kingdom of our Lord.

A Complete Surrender to Christ

Life, with its vivid realities, its passing responsibilities, its perplexities, its enticements, and its dangers, should make a tremendous appeal to young and old alike for that complete surrender to Christ which will make us determined to do our duty at all hazards and show unwavering loyalty to our heavenly Leader. Our best should be given to Him who has given, and still gives, His best to us. "God calls for young men with hearts uncorrupted, strong and brave, and determined to fight manfully in the struggle before them, that they may glorify God, and bless humanity."—"Messages to Young People," p. 21.

Integrity, unswerving integrity, constitutes one of the principles which we need for all the relations of life. Remember that character is *developed* by the way we meet the every day events and experiences of life, but it is *tested* by the way we meet the crises of life. How vividly this truth is expressed in the lives of such illustrious, inspiring characters as Joseph, Queen Esther, Daniel, Timothy, and a host of others too numerous to mention. Principles lived up to, make strong characters. Fidelity in little things is one of the surest tests of character. Keep faith with yourself.

All through life choices are made. We choose our reading matter, our studies, our recreations, our food, our clothes, our associates, and to some extent our occupation. We believe, however, that more than along any other line we should choose to have God to be our counsellor and guide in all our life work. Choices are the hinges of destiny.

This calls for uncompromising principle also as regards courtship and marriage. Modesty in dress and deportment in a woman always adds to her

charm. Dress does not make character, but it often proclaims it. The matters here referred to are all elements in character building. Remember the divine injunction, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." 2 Cor. 6:14. If you "choose to follow your own inclinations, unchristlike habits will bind you with bands of steel."—*"Messages to Young People,"* p. 212.

God's Purpose for the Youth Today

Writing to the Galatians, the apostle Paul states briefly, "Ye did run well." Gal. 5:7. These four one-syllable words were deeply impressed upon our mind when, on a visit to Berlin, a friend showed us the great arena where the Olympic Games were held in the German capital a few years ago. Chiseled in deep, gold-laid letters on two towering pillars at the main entrance to this gigantic amphitheatre are the names of the Olympic winners—young men and young women from every continent, who carried off the laurels in peaceful competition to obtain a perishable crown. Only those who did run well, and did their best and better than their rivals, reached Olympic fame, and thus had their names inscribed on these columns of honor.

A beautiful lesson may be drawn from these columns to commemorate our earthly achievement. The psalmist of old, in thinking of youth and their accomplishment, exclaims: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Ps. 144:12. We are not striving for earthly honor or fame; we have no greater desire than to bring glory to our Redeemer's name, and to have our names forever written in the Lamb's book of life.

Another object lesson may also be taken from the torch race of the Olympic year referred to above, when a young man in old Greece, on a certain day and at a definite hour, picked up a lighted torch and started for Berlin. All along the more than sixteen-hundred-mile route were stationed young men of the countries to be traversed. The torch was carried night and day, a new one being substituted as soon as one burned out, each youth carrying it for a distance of one kilometer, until, after a few days, it appeared at the portals of the Olympic Stadium on the day and hour set for its arrival. There

it was placed in the hands of an old Greek runner, more than sixty years of age, who, on a similar occasion forty years before, had won the great classic marathon race in his native land. This man carried the torch the last lap of its long journey, and handed it to the leader of the games at the exact moment previously planned. Again a striking symbol of the fitting relationship between young and old in unitedly advancing the Kingdom of God, and at the journey's end placing at the feet of the Master the torch carried for Him through life.

The Christian life is a race with and against many forces and odds. How important that we run well in this great race; that we carry aloft the torch of our great Leader and Commander. May we, like the psalmist, say: "I have chosen the way of truth: Thy judgments have I laid before me. I have stuck unto Thy testimonies: O Lord, put me not to shame. I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." Ps. 119:30-32.

Standing in the midst of life's stern realities, we realize to some extent the strength of the evil forces arrayed against us. This hour is the supreme, the last hour. There never has been, and never will be one like it. Fidelity to principle, unswerving loyalty to God, deep conviction, consecrated willingness and supreme sacrifice alone will meet God's purpose for the youth of our day. Cultivate sincerity in little things, and you will be sincere in the big tests. The divine counsel for measuring up to the high standard set before the true Christian, reads: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Eph. 6:13.

Steadying Influences Needed

Just as the destiny of a people was in the hands of Queen Esther, of the Persian court in her day, so the destiny of mankind is in the balance at this very time. Shallowness and superficiality characterize our day. The call and challenge in this hour is for a renewal and a restoration of the pioneering spirit. Nothing will galvanize the church out of its perplexities, but the old heroic spirit of venture for Christ, such as prompted youthful leaders in God's cause in the days of old, and which actuated the early pioneers of this message. Naught will suffice but

a return by our youth to apostolic devotion, apostolic prayer, apostolic power, apostolic service, and apostolic sacrifice, and bringing forth apostolic fruitage.

Living for Christ constitutes the greatest opportunity that comes to us in this day. No amount of intellectual equipment, and no reputation for cleverness in the estimation of our fellow men, will take the place of soul culture, if we are to be used mightily of God in such an hour as this. The times challenge us to find some steadying influence in our lives that will make us sober, thoughtful, serious-minded, yet joyful, and sensitive to our responsibilities. "It is a fearful thing to use God-given abilities in such a way as to scatter blight and woe instead of blessing in society. It is also a fearful thing to fold the talent intrusted to us in a napkin, and hide it away in the world; for this is casting away the crown of life. God claims our service. There are responsibilities for every one to bear; and we can fulfill life's grand mission only when these responsibilities are fully accepted, and faithfully and conscientiously discharged."—*"Messages to Young People,"* p. 37.

Strength for the Conflict

What marvellous accomplishments God has made possible in ages gone by through devoted youth who have opened their lives to meet His purposes for them in the time in which they lived. But all the story of part achievements has not fully told what He is able to do, and will do, in these last days, in and through young men and women of this movement. He will work through those who throw open their hearts to Him in a manner very much out of the ordinary. "We are living in an unfortunate age for children [youth]. A heavy current is setting downward to perdition. . . . By earnest prayer and living faith, great victories will be gained."—*Id.*, p. 337.

Perhaps there is no force in this world which the arch enemy fears so greatly as consecrated, well-trained Seventh-day Adventist youth, who are lending their influence definitely on the side of right. What power, what energy, what strength, what possibilities are therein wrapped up. The devil, with all his diabolical forces and ideas, shudders at the very presence of such youth in a time like this.

Abraham Lincoln said: "I am not

bound to succeed, but I am bound to be true; I am not bound to win, but I am bound to live up to the light I have." It was as if he had said, with a paraphrase of a familiar poem,—

"It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged with circumstance the goal;
God is the Master of my fate,
Christ is the Captain of my soul."

Preparation for the Life Work

Sometimes it is suggested that the ideals in education placed before us by the Lord's servant, are now out of date. Such assumption is preposterous. We are more convinced than ever that the instruction received along every line of education, through the Spirit of prophecy, is so up-to-date that we have not yet caught up with it. That instruction calls for high intellectual attainments, but it also calls for moral and spiritual strength of large dimensions. The best training fits best for the performance of every task.

Dr. Cortland Myers makes the striking statement: "Our civilization is now one in which the golden calf is being substituted for the good of God, one in which selfishness and materialism rule as an unholy combination,—a civilization robbed of spiritual treasures and ideals. A civilization made foul by the now quality of its thinking and its every day habits."

In the writings of the Spirit of prophecy, we are told that "True education means more than taking a certain course of study. It is broad. It includes the harmonious development of all the physical powers and the mental faculties."—"*Counsels to Teachers*," p. 64.

"True education is the preparation of the physical, mental, and moral powers for the performance of every duty; it is the training of body, mind, and soul for divine service. This is the education that will endure unto eternal life."—"*Christ's Object Lessons*," p. 330.

The Challenge to Service

"The world does not so much need men of great intellect as of noble character. It needs men in whom ability is controlled by steadfast principle."—"*Education*," p. 225.

Not because of lack of knowledge, but because of lack of character, the world goes down to destruction, declares an internationally known educator sensing the dangers and the need of the times. Character is greater than

career. It is the poor man's capital. In order to meet God's ideal and purpose fully, all self-seeking, self adoration, self-will and self-consideration, must be set aside and replaced by self-abnegation, self-subordination, self-effacement. Forget yourself if you wish to be remembered. The world offers the service of business, the service of sport, the service of lasting, eternal value is the service offered by God. It is your privilege, dear youth, to choose that service in response to God's appeal and challenge. "Time is short. Workers for Christ are needed everywhere. . . .

The Lord calls upon our youth to labor as canvassers and evangelists, to do house-to-house work in places that have not yet heard the truth."—"*Fundamentals of Christian Education*," p. 488.

Let us ever bear in mind that this advent movement has not just happened. It has been brought into existence by God for just such an hour as this, to accomplish a work that could be done at no other time; and it can not be substituted by anything that is, that ever was, or ever will be. It has been prophetically prescribed. And because it has been so called, it is here to accomplish a work that belongs to no other time, and can be done by no other movement or by any other group of people. Neither can any of the offshoots from this movement substitute for it. Intellectualism can not substitute for it either.

A Challenge to Right Thinking and Right Action

Paul's challenge to young Timothy, about being an example of the believers, is a challenge to the youth of every age, and especially to the young people of today. Timothy lived at the beginning of the Christian dispensation. We live at the close of the Christian dispensation. Timothy helped proclaim the message of a crucified Saviour; we proclaim the message of His imminent return. Timothy lived in the days of decadent civilization's broken-down religious cults and unsatisfying systems of philosophy. Our days are similar to those of his. If ever there was a time when the church needed the whole-hearted consecration and support of its youth, it is today.

The hour is a challenge to right thinking and right action. Character is the result of thinking, and character determines an individual's usefulness, happiness, and destiny. Too many peo-

ple live little lives, when they might live large and useful lives.

It matters little whether or not we shall win in this world, so long as we stand among the victors who have been true to their calling. Let us be true, therefore, to our call. Fight the good fight, keep the faith, and finish the life course. Never be defeated by defeat, nor grow careless by success. The summons which thunders down the corridors of time is of God. It is high time that the last renaissance of the advent movement be ushered in.

The Zero Hour Has Struck

Young friends, this is a wonderful, auspicious hour in which to live, to train, and to toil for God. The world is in agitation; it is on tip toe of expectancy and of dread for the future. It is in such a time as this that the kingdom of God has need of personalities such as an Elijah, a John the Baptist, a Paul. It calls for the utmost, the supreme, which we can bring to it.

The challenge of the hour to our youth is for a faithful study of the Word, for daily communion with the Lord, for high and noble standards in the choice of reading and recreation, in the selection of dress and companionship, and a determination to get that preparation of mind and heart that will fit for service anywhere in the great harvest field. And with it all, a willingness without hesitation to say, whenever the call comes as to whom to send and who will go, "Here am I; send me." Isa. 6:8.

The zero hour has struck. The program of God calls for speedy accomplishment of His work. The bugle call is sounding. Are you lending added strength to it's rousing call? Run well! Run in the strength of God for the accomplishment of His glorious purpose in this hour and generation. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." 1 Cor. 16:13. Soon the race shall be over, a glorious crown won, and an imperishable crown placed upon the head of each faithful soldier of our Lord.

Let those who in the fear of God sense the importance of the challenge, seize this renewed opportunity to give their hearts to God, place their hand in His, and by arising testify to their willingness to place all upon the altar, and be ready to be used of God for the finishing of His work in this generation.

(Reading for Sabbath, December 14)

POWER FOR FINISHING THE WORK

By J. L. McELHANY

THE startling fact is set forth in the Scriptures that the day is coming when God's work upon earth will be finished. "For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:28.

This will be the day when all of God's efforts to bring salvation to those lost in sin will forever cease, the day when those who choose to remain in a life of ungodliness and disobedience, will find no opportunity to repent, the day when the despisers of God's grace will forever find the door of mercy closed, the day when appeals to the lukewarm and world-loving who profess to serve God will no longer be heard.

Reign of Sin Soon to End

The day is stealthily approaching as a thief in the night. No argument is needed to prove this solemn truth. Unmistakable evidence is amply provided by the events taking place in the world today. The reign of sin has almost run its course. Soon God will cut it all short in righteousness, and His work upon earth will be finished. Human language utterly fails to express the seriousness and importance of the coming of that day. Try as we may, we cannot tell it as it deserves to be told. Inspired writers have described it in the following language:

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. . . . And the Lord shall utter His voice before His army; for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" Joel 2:1,2,11.

"The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the

voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness." Zeph. 1:14,15.

"And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:12-17.

Yes! the day is coming when the Lord will finish His work. He has unlimited ways and resources with which to carry it through. He can have recourse to means and special providences now unknown to any of us. But there is one outstanding fact of greatest importance that must ever be remembered, namely, *that He has made His church the channel or instrument through which He works out His plans.*

Accomplished Through the Holy Spirit

The very last words uttered by Jesus before His ascension laid squarely upon the church the responsibility for carrying on His work. Poor, weak, finite human beings though they were, lacking in fitness, strength, or resources, nevertheless they were bidden to undertake a work that God Himself was capable of doing. They were to undertake this work and carry it through to final success with the power that He only could provide.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8.

The apostolic church was commissioned to go forth as witnesses for God. They were to evangelize the world. That was the divine plan. As the church responded to His call and went forth cooperating with Him they were baptized with the power of the Holy Spirit. For the finishing of that great work, He planned that the church shall cooperate again with Him. In order to do this, the church today must be provided with the same equipment. Only by being baptized with the power of the Holy Spirit can she do the work that only the Lord Himself is capable of doing.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28:18-20.

As the church goes forth to the very end of time, the Lord will make available His power. That He plans for the power of the Holy Spirit to attend His people in these days, is strikingly stated in the following words:

"Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His people 'to will and to do of His good pleasure.' But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train.

It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive."—*"Desire of Ages,"* p. 672.

"The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative."—*"Acts of the Apostles,"* p. 50.

Jesus outlined the work of the church down to the very end of time. Within the period for doing the work, God will cut it short and finish His work in righteousness. Cooperating with His efforts to this end, will be the consecrated zeal and activity of the church. But the church today can no more depend upon her own strength and resources than she could in apostolic times. It is only by divine power—the power of the Holy Spirit—that the work can be done.

"The preaching of the word is of no avail without the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit; for this Spirit is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit, will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. A minister may be able to present the letter of the word of God; he may be familiar with all its commands and promises; but his sowing of the gospel seed will not be successful unless this seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Without the co-operation of the Spirit of God, no amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light. Before one book of the New Testament had been written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying disciples. Then the testimony of their enemies was, 'Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.'

"It is the Spirit that causes to shine into darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness; that makes men's hearts burn within them with an awakened realization of the truths of eternity; that presents before the mind the great standard of righteousness, and convinces of sin; that inspires faith in Him who alone can save from sin; that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the eternal inheritance. The Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies human beings, fitting them to become members of the royal family,

children of the heavenly King."—*"Gospel Workers,"* pp. 284, 286-7.

The Church Established for Missionary Service

The church is a missionary organization. It was founded by Jesus for missionary service. Its primary, fundamental objective is to win souls from sin and prepare them for the coming of Jesus, and for a place in His eternal kingdom. Jesus is the great Leader in all the enterprises of the church. He has emphasized the purpose that souls are to be won to Him in all parts of the world. We cannot expect Him to baptize us with the Holy Spirit unless we carry out His commission to go into all the world. His gifts and blessings are for all parts of the world, not for any one favored section or country only.

As we follow our Leader we will go into all nations carrying His message of salvation. The special truths for this generation of mankind must be proclaimed. People everywhere need to know the meaning of the events that are taking place in the world today. The meaning of prophecy in relation to these events must be made clear. The coming of Jesus must be made known. The call to keep God's Sabbath must be sounded to a world that for the most part is trampling His law under foot.

The winning of souls for His kingdom is a spiritual work. It cannot be done without spiritual power. This work means much more than merely changing the opinions of men. Jesus spoke to the hearts of men, not merely to their intellects. There must be a change of heart and life in those who are won to the Lord. They must become new creatures in Christ Jesus. To become children of God requires the operation of divine power—the power of the Holy Spirit. This message is sent us:

"We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world, and make us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world. But it is the life of Christ in the soul, it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make our words fruitful. The love of Christ is the force and

power of every message for God that ever fell from human lips."—*"Id.,* p. 288.

The apostolic church faced her task with centuries of time and opportunities before her. The church today faces her task with but a few short hours, as it were, that are left before time shall close. Past endeavors will not suffice for this important and urgent hour. We must place a new and vital emphasis on evangelism—on soul-winning endeavor. Every resource of the church must be utilized to this end. There must be a renewed interest and zeal in behalf of foreign mission work. More and more there must be a willingness on the part of men and women to respond to the call to go into the uttermost parts of the earth. More and more our home conferences must be willing to release those who can go. All our members in the home bases must do their utmost to assist in pushing forward, at home and abroad, every interest of God's cause.

Unity in All Lines of Endeavor

In all our activities for God, in our church work, conference endeavors, public evangelistic efforts, personal missionary work, in all our institutions, we must ever maintain a deeply spiritual background. Let it be emphasized over and over again that all our work will succeed only as it is carried forward in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The influence of those who would discredit or set aside our organized endeavors, should be resisted. As long as we face the responsibility of carrying out the great commission, as long as God's work is still unfinished, we must proceed with our work in an intelligent and cooperative way. The difference between a mob and an army is in organization, training, and leadership. If we would be a well-trained army, to do the Lord's work, we must organize and train all our forces for more powerful and effective service. Individual effort is of the greatest value, and must be encouraged and directed. The church as a whole must organize and coordinate its efforts in carrying on God's work. The principles underlying this need is stated in Rom. 10:13-15.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call in Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear

without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

Some will hear the preaching of the word and be saved. Some must go and preach the word. They must be sent. Here is a perfect picture of the church in action. Whether those who are sent go to America, Europe, Asia, or Africa, or any of the uttermost parts of the earth, it is the same, the church is responsible for it all. Consequently it is a part of God's spiritual work to plan the finances of the cause so that all parts of the world can be evangelized. Our means all belong to the Lord for His use in all parts of the world.

The workers must be trained before they are sent, so schools and training centers are a very essential part of our endeavor. Institutions are an important factor in the work, and must not be overlooked or set aside. But the great and vital thing is that the whole organization shall be directed and vitalized by the power of the Holy Spirit. Flowing out through the lives of individual members, this spiritual power must be revealed in the entire organization of the church and in all its institutions. The preacher in the pulpit, the evangelist on the platform, the teacher in the school, the physician and the nurse, the editor and the printer, the colporteur in the field, the lay member in his home missionary work, all

need above everything else the endowment and power of the Holy Spirit. There is no substitute for this power. Without it souls cannot be converted and prepared for Jesus' coming. Our own lives cannot be prepared for that event without the working of the power.

Crowded Are the Hours of Setting Sun

There remains for the church today only the last crowded hours of time. Our need for the power of the Holy Spirit is far greater than that of the apostolic church. The Lord has promised to give this power freely and without limit. But it is bestowed only in answer to prevailing and earnest prayer. There is something in the experience of praying for this power that prepares one for its reception. We read:

"You who have long lost the spirit of prayer, pray, pray earnestly, 'Pity Thy suffering cause; pity the church; pity the individual believers, Thou Father of mercies. Take from us everything that defiles, deny us what Thou wilt; but take not from us Thy Holy Spirit.'"—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 435.

"Every church is in need of the controlling power of the Holy Spirit; and now is the time to pray for it."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 266.

"We are called to proclaim the special truths for this time. For all this the outpouring of the Spirit is essential. We should pray for it. The Lord

expects us to ask Him. We have not been whole-hearted in this work."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 512.

"The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His blessing. It is time we were more intense in our devotion. To us is committed the arduous, but happy, glorious work of revealing Christ to those who are in darkness."—*Id.*, pp. 511, 512.

Ever since the day of Pentecost the church has lived and worked, as it were, in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. From the day that He came upon those praying disciples in Jerusalem and fitted them to do what otherwise they were incapable of doing, He has been in the world. He is here as Christ's representative. He is just as ready now as then to endow men with power.

The appeal today is that as individuals and as churches we enter into importunate prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. His presence will lead to confession of sin, to turning away from the world, to a closer fellowship and spirit of unity. The church will be cleansed, the work will move forward with power. Backsliders will be reclaimed, sinners will be converted. Thus the work of God will be finished.

Who today will enter upon such an experience, earnestly and constantly praying for the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit's power?

LET THE
ANNUAL OFFERING
BE TAKEN

WEEK OF PRAYER READINGS FOR THE CHILDREN

General Suggestions to Leaders

THIS should be a time of most earnest prayer for and with the children. If possible have daily meetings. Have prayer bands. Pray for and with each child alone for help and victory in specific things. Teach each one how to pray. Plead with the Father for each one. Then lead him to definite decision. The personal touch is the Master's way, and its power cannot be estimated.

The leader should be one who has much influence with the children, one whom they respect and love.

Choice of songs is important. They should emphasize the theme, and exalt Jesus. Those chosen are only suggestive.

If possible place the themes and texts on the blackboard. Use very simple illustrations.

(Lesson I, Sabbath, December 7)

WE NEED JESUS

Theme song: No. 170, "Missionary Volunteer Songs;" or No. 316, "Christ in Song."

Text: Ps. 19:14.

Blackboard theme: "Lord take my heart; for I can not give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I can not keep it for Thee."—"Christ's Object Lessons," p. 159.

I. Sensing Our Need

How many times, boys and girls, have you awakened in the morning thinking, "Today I shall say kind words, I shall think pure thoughts; I shall be prompt in doing what father and mother ask; I shall not be angry when they speak to me, or be unkind to them?"

We run downstairs thinking that today we shall be really just what we should be; and then, before we know it, we have become angry and fussed and have said unpleasant words to father when asked to pull the weeds in the garden, or to be more particular when sweeping the floor. And so it goes through the day.

We may try very hard to keep sweet; we may try very hard to think pure thoughts and use clean words; we may try very hard to be good. Down deep in one part of our hearts we want to do right, but we fail. In another part of our heart Satan whispers his evil thoughts and suggestions. Jesus, when here with his disciples, said, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, mur-

ders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Matt. 15:19. The prophet Jeremiah knew all about the heart, too, for he wrote, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17:9. Young's translation reads, "Crooked is the heart above all things, and it is incurable. Who doth know it?" The answer is only One—Jesus.

II. Jesus Knows Our Need

Jesus knows just what is in the heart. Only Jesus can change our hearts. He knows our need of Him better than we know it. He knows that we can not make ourselves like Him. He knows, too, how badly we feel when we have been thoughtless, or disobedient, or untruthful.

III. His Invitation

Because He knows our need of Him, He invites us to come to Him. "My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways," He pleads. Prov. 23:26.

Let Jesus come in. Ask Him to fill

the heart with clean, kind thoughts. Ask Him to keep the tongue from cross, wicked words. Ask Him to make us willing to be sweet tempered and obedient. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness," is His promise. 2 Cor. 12:9.

The story is told of a little girl who was always happy, who seemed to have no trouble being cheerful and obedient every day. Some one asked her about it, and she replied, "Jesus lives in my heart now. When Satan comes with his temptations of wrong thoughts, and of doing wrong things, I just say, 'Jesus, will you please go to the door?' And Satan says, 'Oh! Excuse me, I've come to the wrong place!'"

Boys and girls, shall we today let Jesus clean out all the wrong from our hearts, and then let Him come in to stay as this little girl did?

IV. He Is Coming Soon

Jesus is coming very soon. To be like Him then we must be like Him now, each day, each hour. With Him in our hearts, in His strength we shall be pure and kind and true. He will fill our hearts with the beautiful flowers of His grace. Let us come to Him now, asking Him to forgive every sin, and to make us like Him.

(Prayer song: No. 316, "Christ in Song." Earnest prayer. Benediction. Ps. 19:14.)

JESUS WILL BE NEAR

(Continued from page 27)

fill the heart. This is what it means to be like Jesus. This is what it means when He dwells in our hearts. This is what it means to be truly happy, for we shall want only to please Him.

A little girl once told the story of Enoch this way. Enoch was God's friend. Every day they walked nearer together. Every day they walked nearer God's home till, one day, God said, "Enoch, you are almost to where I live. Come home to stay with Me."

It will be the same with us. The longer Jesus dwells in our hearts, the more real He will be to us and the more like Him we shall be. Then, one day very soon, He will take us home with Him.

(Prayer—that Jesus has done all this for us; and praise and thankfulness to Him that He is willing to do it for us. Song: No. 295, "Christ in Song.")

(Lesson II, Sunday, December 8)

JESUS WILL BE NEAR

Theme song: No. 30, "Missionary Volunteer Songs;" or, No. 295, "Christ in Song."*Text:* Phil. 4:8.*Blackboard theme:* "Lord, take my heart; for I can not give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I can not keep it for Thee."—"Christ's Object Lessons," p. 159.**I. Signs of Jesus' Coming**

JESUS is coming very soon. The great signs that He gave are past. The sun and moon have been darkened, and the stars have fallen. There have been terrible earthquakes. Every day we hear of troubles—wars, accidents on land and sea, dreadful sicknesses, severe storms, destroying many lives. We hear of these things so often that we sometimes forget that they are signs that Jesus is very soon to come.

II. Other Signs

Other signs have been given to us. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

III. Need of Being Ready

Only those with whom Jesus lives daily will be ready to meet Him when He comes. David, the psalmist, wrote, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. 66:18. That is, if we prefer to hold sin in our hearts, Jesus will not hear our prayers. He listens to those who want Him with them, who truly want to be like Him.

Last spring I planted some flower seeds. Before I could plant them, I had to spade the ground and rake it. I had to pick out the stones and crush the hard pieces of dirt. When the soil was fine and smooth, I planted the seeds. After that, I had to watch that no weeds grew. Then the good seeds grew into plants with beautiful flowers.

IV. Letting Jesus Into Our Hearts

It is just that way with our hearts. The weeds of wrong thoughts which grow there must be uprooted. The hard

clods of unkind words and the stones of anger must be removed. But we cannot of ourselves do this. Isaiah tells us: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:5, 6, 18.

We can give Jesus all of our heart gardens. We can will to let Him tend them. We can give Him the temptations, and the feelings that so often are all wrong. We can give Him all there is of us. Say to Him, "Here, Lord, I abandon myself to Thee. I have tried in every way I could think of to man-

age myself, and to make myself what I know I ought to be, but have always failed. Now I give it up to Thee. Do Thou take entire possession of me. Work in me all the good pleasure of Thy will. . . . Here you must rest, trusting yourself thus to Him, continually and absolutely."—"Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," p. 39.

V. The Result of Letting Jesus Into Our Hearts

Just as surely as we try to care for our heart gardens alone, we fail. The weeds of sin will grow in spite of all we can do. When we allow Jesus to take charge, He will sow the seeds of truth, of honesty, of purity, and of beauty there. Our part is to plan with Him in the daily study of His word, and in daily prayer. Not plan just once in awhile, but every day.

Jesus will be very near and very dear to us. Kindness, instead of cross words and unkind deeds; patience, instead of angry ways; love for friends and enemies, instead of hatred, will

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(Lesson III, Monday, December 9)

THOSE WHOM JESUS HAS CHANGED

Theme song: No. 34, "Missionary Volunteer Songs."*Text:* Col. 1:13, 5, 6.*Blackboard theme:* Thy will be done in us.**I. Changing Lives**

JESUS is changing lives every day not only here for us, but in lands far away. He has come into our hearts this week to change them into gardens bearing the lovely flowers and fruits of the Holy Spirit, for what the Spirit produces is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. He has done the same glad work in the hearts of boys and girls and older folk, too, in places of this earth where only a short time ago they had not heard of Jesus' love. They have learned to love Him above everything else. They have opened the heart's door to welcome Him, so that now their lives reflect His love and goodness to others.

A chief characteristic of a true Christian is unselfish love for others, and these missionary volunteers of other lands joyfully follow Jesus, and witness for Him in their homes and among their neighbors.

II. Changed Lives

Down in Inca land in South America a young boy was selling books that tell the story of Jesus. He stopped to see the village blacksmith, who became very angry, threatening to burn the boy with a hot iron. The young colporteur went away, but he left a tract. That night the blacksmith could not sleep. All he thought about was the kind words of the boy, and what he had read in the tract. He could think of nothing else the next day as he tried to work. At last he left his shop to find the colporteur. The boy was kind to him. He talked with him of Jesus. When the blacksmith returned to his shop, he carried a magazine. He could not work, so he read the magazine. Then he wanted to know more of Jesus, and began to study the Bible. He learned about the Sabbath. He learned of Jesus' great love for him. He gave up his evil ways and became kind and good. But that is not all of the story.

This blacksmith who was so cruel and wicked is now a real missionary, telling those who come to his shop of Jesus' love for them, so that now a number are keeping the Sabbath, waiting to be baptized.

How many of you remember the story of Ratu Meli from the South Sea islands? Jesus' love came into his heart, changing his wicked, cannibal life to one that was clean and happy and good. Every where he went, he told the story of God's cleansing power. Jesus is changing many lives in these far-off islands. Think of one hundred twenty young men and their wives on the island of New Guinea where only a short time ago white people were not safe. Now these young men and women have so learned to know Jesus and His

power to save them, that they are going to many others in New Guinea to tell them of this power that has changed their lives.

III. Jesus' Will

Jesus' will is done when the message of His love is carried to others. His will is done in greater measure when those who hear let him dwell in their hearts, uprooting the hateful weeds of sin, and planting in their place the graces of His character.

(Prayer—that His will may be done in the hearts of the boys and girls here today, that His power may be manifested in their lives to bless others. Suggested songs: No. 29, "Christ in Song;" or No. 34, "Missionary Volunteer Songs.")

Elder F. A. Stahl, who worked for so many years among the Indians of South America. Here is a little story of how the Lord delivered him when going over the mountains to visit a sick child one stormy night. He had a guide to show the way, but even he could not lead the way in this storm.

"Have you lost your way?" the missionary demanded.

"Yes, the rains have washed out the path," said the Indian.

"Let me go ahead, then," said the missionary.

Elder Stahl hurried on, trying to go in the right direction through the wind and storm. Suddenly there was a flash of lightning which showed a sheer precipice about six feet ahead. He stopped the horse at the very edge of a chasm hundreds of feet deep. Then he thanked the heavenly Father for His care in keeping him from death.

Jesus was very real to the ones who had these experiences. He will be very real to us if we want it so, and trust Him. He will supply all our need, for He has all power, and He has promised. "My God shall supply all your need."

"The little brown sparrow is watched over by Providence. The flowers of the field, the grass that carpets the earth, share the notice and care of our Heavenly Father."—*"Desire of Ages,"* p. 313.

"Our Heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing."—*"Ministry of Healing,"* p. 481.

(Prayer—that we may constantly trust God's never failing provision for our every need.)

(Lesson IV, Tuesday, December 10)

THOSE WHOM JESUS HELPED

Theme song: No. 68, "Missionary Volunteer Songs," or No. 505, "Christ in Song."

Text: Matt. 6:25, 34.

Blackboard theme: "All who have chosen God's service are to rest in His care."—

"Desire of Ages," p. 313.

I. Jesus Never Fails

WE WHO have chosen to serve Jesus never should worry. We have learned to trust Him every day, yes, every hour, to keep our tongues from saying wrong words, our hands from wrong deeds, and our minds from evil thoughts, but do we know, deep in our hearts, that we can trust Him to supply our daily needs? That does not mean that we are to sit down doing nothing, for He has given us the opportunity and strength to work, and so in that way He also supplies our lack.

II. He Will Supply Our Need of Food

It is often very hard to obtain food in war-torn countries. This story shows how God once provided for the needs of His trusting children.

"A man and his family, whom I knew, were starving. They had not had a bite to eat for two and one half days. Then they saw a miserly man, hurrying up with his little cart. He pulled out a sack of flour, threw it on his shoulder, and rushed up to the house and set it down, then hastened away as fast as he could. The father hurried out after him and said, 'What do you mean? What about the flour?'

"The man replied, 'I don't know what I mean. I had planned to sell the flour, but have not had any peace for two days. I couldn't sleep at night. I had to come—I don't know why—and put the flour outside your kitchen.'

"So the family thanked God and were saved."

III. He Will Supply Our Need

Surely all of you have heard of

(Lesson V, Wednesday, December 11)

OUR PART IN HELPING JESUS

Theme song: No. 83, "Missionary Volunteer Songs," or No. 559, "Christ in Song."

Text: Matt. 28:19, 20; Isa. 52:17.

Blackboard theme: "All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow-men."—*"Desire of Ages,"* p. 822.

I. Jesus Prayed for Us Long Ago

After the last supper, Jesus and His disciples walked together in the moonlight to the Garden of Gethsemane. He talked with them of the Heavenly Father, and of the work He had given them to do for Him. "Herein is My

Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples," He said. Then just as they reached the garden with its olive trees, He prayed for them, and for us who are living now. "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Matt. 17:18.

II. What Many Are Doing

Jesus' command, "Go work today in My vineyard," is for boys and girls, as well as for fathers and mothers. There are so many places where the story of His love must be told before He can come. There are so many ways in which we can tell it. Here are just a few of the ways by which missionary volunteers are telling it now.

III. In China

A young woman attended the Missionary Volunteer Week of Prayer meetings in the city of Shanghai. Day after day she came and listened eagerly. Jesus became so real to her that she gave her heart to Him, and her life to be used for Him. Then she brought two friends to Sabbath school with her. Now they want to know Jesus because she knows Him.

IV. In India

One little girl whose name means "Conqueror," attended Sabbath school and the missionary volunteer meetings. She learned to love Jesus so much that she wanted to do something for Him. She brought her mother and little sister to the meetings. Now they, too, love Jesus, and have joined the church.

On Sabbath the missionary volunteers go to the village to tell the story of Jesus. They want others to share their joy in the Saviour who died for them.

V. In the Far East

There are many missionary volunteers in Korea, in Japan, in the Philippines, in Borneo, and in Siam. They go through the villages, leaving a paper or a tract in each home, and speak of Jesus' love and soon coming. When they are ready to go home, they thank Jesus for this opportunity to witness for Him, and ask that some will want to learn more of Him.

The missionary volunteers in our schools in the Philippines study their Bible lessons very carefully every day. Then they go out to many places holding Sabbath schools, and teaching the Bible lessons they have learned. In this way many learn of Jesus, and of His dying to save them.

VI. In Africa

The missionary volunteers in Africa are very busy. In one place they found an elderly man and his wife who were sick. They gave them food and water, cut firewood, pounded their corn, and

kept them alive during the rains. This kindness caused the old couple to inquire as to their religion. They were given Bible studies, and soon both accepted the truth. They began to work for their wayward son. Today this son is a deacon in a local church of forty-two members which he has been instrumental in raising up. A church as the result of kindness of the missionary volunteers to two elderly people!

We do not have space for more stories of what our missionary volunteers are doing. But they are busy, in

South America, in Alaska, and right here in the United States. Think of it! With those who are older, we as volunteers, have a real place to work. It is our privilege to help tell the story of Jesus, and so hasten His return. Let us ever remember that "Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 327.

(Prayer of consecration to the finishing of the work.)

(Lesson VI, Thursday, December 12)

GIVING FOR JESUS

Theme song: No. 32, "Missionary Volunteer Songs;" or, No. 500, "Christ in Song."

Text: II Cor. 5:14, first part. "It is Christ's love that controls me," one translation reads.

Blackboard theme: "Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 327.

I. Living For Jesus

JESUS has been very real to us during these days that we have learned more of His love for us, and we have invited Him to live in our hearts. Now, because we have learned to love Him we long to live as He lived; we long to do something to show our love.

"What the world needs today is evidences of sincere Christianity. Others are watching us, and it may be that the only gospel they will ever know about is what they read in our lives. . .

. . . We should be wide awake, earnest, and enthusiastic in bearing our testimony upon the side of right. . . . Words and works must go together. Christ has given to every man his work; and regardless of our vocation, that work is to witness for Him. God's work on this earth is going to be done, and it is going to be done by willing human agents who consecrate themselves wholly to Him. Can He count on you to do your part faithfully?"—*Adventures in Christian Living*, p. 135.

II. A Place For Us

You remember that Jesus, just before He left His disciples to return to heaven, told them that they were to begin working for Him in Jerusalem. They were to begin at home. That is the place where Jesus would have us begin. We are not yet old enough, nor

have we learned all that a missionary to some far away country must know, nor have we learned how to do all that a missionary must be able to do. But we do have many, many opportunities to work for Jesus, and to give for Jesus right where we are and while we are young. And while we are doing what we can now, we are getting ready to do greater work for Him later on, and perhaps farther away. Jesus desires first our hearts, and then willing service.

"God does not want us to wait for opportunities to witness to come to us. He wants us to make opportunities, and to be so impressed with the need of those about us that that very need will draw us to individuals in a helpful way."—*Id.*, p. 137.

III. We May Give Courtesy

Sometimes, boys and girls, we think that courtesy is quite unnecessary, but that is wrong. True courtesy is consideration for others. I Peter 3:8 reads, "Be pitiful, be courteous." "The essence of true politeness is consideration for others. . . . The Bible enjoins courtesy, and it presents many illustrations of the unselfish spirit, the gentle grace, the winsome temper, that characterize true politeness. These are but reflections of the character of Christ."—*Education*, p. 241.

IV. Kind Deeds

There are so many ways where we may help. There are the errands for others. Perhaps the neighbor's baby is fretful. Entertaining it so the mother can prepare dinner quickly, is a golden deed. Perhaps some elderly person needs a strong boy to pull the weeds in his garden. There are so many things we may do to serve. And never forget that while we are thus serving we are "God's helping hand." More than that, "We are the human agencies through whom angels accomplish their mission." Angels speak through our voices, and work through our hands. Is it not a wonderful thought that when we cheerfully serve Jesus in these little things that it is an angel serving through us! That is just what it means to be a co-worker with Jesus—to be like Him.

V. Our Offerings

Part of our giving for Jesus is in the offerings we place in the envelope at Sabbath school, in the church ser-

vice, and in what we bring on Investment Day. While we are boys and girls we may not have large gifts. It was just a penny or two that the poor widow gave which Jesus blessed. It is our small offerings given because we love Him that He sees.

VI. Our Investments

There is not space to write of them, but surely each one of you can think of ways to earn money for missions. And think of the many who will learn of Jesus because of what you have done!

In all our giving, of courtesy, of kindly deeds, of offerings, let us remember that the giving that counts is the giving of self. When we have done that, Jesus blesses the outward deed and work and offering to the good of others. Our very lives will witness for Him, and "others will want to know Him because they know us."

(Prayer—that we may be willing channels through which Jesus can minister to others.)

(Lesson VII, Friday, December 13)

LIVING FOR JESUS

Theme song: No. 32, "Missionary Volunteer Songs;" or, No. 319, "Christ in Song."

Text: "Let no one look down on you because you are young, but set those who believe an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, purity." I Timothy 4:12, Goodspeed.

Blackboard theme: God is counting on us to live that "others will want to know Him because they know us."

I. Jesus Is Counting On Us

Jesus could send angels to tell the story of His love and soon coming, but that is not His plan. He is counting on you and me to do it. He is counting on you and me so to live that our very lives will witness for Him.

He is counting on us to witness in our daily lives. "Be thou an example," He bids us. He is counting on us in speech.

It is not easy to control our words. Someone does or says something we do not like, and we retaliate by doing or saying something worse. That it not all. When we are with others we so often use silly words; we use slang expressions that are better left unused; we say things that we would not think of saying were Jesus with us in person.

"By idle talk, evil-speaking, or neglect of prayer, we may in one day lose the Saviour's presence, and it may take many days of sorrowful search to find Him, and regain the peace that we

have lost."—"Desire of Ages," p. 83.

"You may never know in this world the mischief you have done to some soul by your little acts of frivolity, your cheap talk, your levity, which was wholly inconsistent with your holy faith."—"Messages to Young People," p. 201.

"Christ spoke gracious words. He was always sympathetic, never harsh, never contentious, and He never spoke unless He had something of importance to say. We may cultivate the habit of just such speech. The Christian should talk good sense, God does not want us to be long-faced Christians. There is nothing wrong about smiling, or saying something that causes others to smile, if it is a sensible saying."—"God's Challenge to Youth," p. 13.

II. He Is Counting On Us In Conduct

We sometimes think that what we do is no concern of others. "None of us liveth to himself," Rom. 14:7 reads.

Everything we do affects those about us, for each one has an influence for good or for evil. Before our Heavenly Father we are responsible for what this influence shall be.

Does our conduct represent Jesus? Are we honest and fair? Are we patient when things do not go as we wish? Do we waste time when working, and so steal from God and from those for whom we work? Is our work done well, or in a careless manner? Are we careful of the money we have, or do we spend it for things of no value? Are we friendly, or grouchy and unpleasant? Do we choose friends who will help us to live better lives? Are we careful of our conduct in church services, or do we grieve the attending angels by our inattention and irreverence? These are ways by which we witness for Jesus or against Him. Not one thing that we do but influences some one to do the same thing. The world needs the light of Jesus' pure life. Does it see it in us? He has no other plan. Oh, let us yield our lives to His guiding from this very hour!

III. He Is Counting On Us In Love

Love in the heart is a serving love. Remember, too, that as we make others happy we shall be happy, for "There is no greater joy than the joy of true service." Let us not be in such a hurry to please ourselves, or be so busy with our own affairs, that we have no time to manifest the love of Jesus in kindly words and deeds. There is danger that it will slip from our hearts. The love that we keep is the love we give in service.

IV. He Is Counting On Us In Faith

Sometimes the word "faith" bothers us. We do not understand just what

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it means. When father tells us that the ice is strong for skating, we believe him. We trust his word. We have faith in our parents. It should be just that way with our heavenly Father. As we use faith in Jesus every day it will grow and become strong, until it is as natural as faith in our parents. It is our faith in Jesus that enables Him to live in our hearts, and the result is a happy Christlike life that blesses others.

V. He Is Counting On Us In Purity

The Bible tells that the heart is deceitful in all things, and desperately wicked. We cannot cleanse it, nor make it pure. Jesus can and will if we let Him. That means that He must have all of our hearts all of the time. It means thinking clean thoughts. It

means pure words and acts. Only those who are pure as He is pure shall walk the streets of gold with Jesus.

Grains of sand left in the eye would very soon damage it severely. Impure thoughts will harm our lives far more. Our minds, as well as our bodies, are the temples of the Holy Spirit. How very careful we should be that nothing mars them. Oh boys and girls, let us be more careful of these minds and hearts which are God's temples!

Jesus is counting on us. If we fail Him, what then? But we will not fail Him, for His strength is our strength. Through Him we shall be an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.

(Prayer of consecration in daily living.)

(Lesson VIII, Sabbath, December 14)

POWER TO FINISH THE WORK

Theme song: No. 40, "Missionary Volunteer Songs;" or, No. 480, "Christ in Song Text: Luke 19:13; Matt. 28:18-20.

Blackboard theme: "In the humblest duties and lowliest positions of life, we may walk and work with Jesus. . . . The sweet savor of Christ will surround us, and our influence will elevate and bless."—"Steps to Christ," pp. 82, 83.

I. Working For Jesus

JESUS has given to each one work to be done for Him. That work is to represent Him in all we do and say. It is to tell the gospel story in word and deed.

"Occupy till I come," He bids us. What an honor and privilege to work with Jesus and angels! And He never asks us to do anything impossible. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. . . . Go ye therefore, and teach all nations. . . . And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He has sent us, not for a day, or a month, or a year, but until He comes. He has given the power in the promise, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. He will be with us, for again the promise, "I am with you alway." We have only to ask, and His power is ours to honor Him.

II. Where Shall We Work?

We as missionary volunteers have opportunities for service all about us. Thirty years of Jesus' life were spent at home and in the carpenter shop. Can you not see Him as He fashioned a yoke for oxen to wear, talking with

those who came of God's love and goodness?

"You are not to wait for great occasions or to expect extraordinary abilities before you go to work for God.

. . . The humblest and poorest of the disciples of Jesus can be a blessing to others. They may not realize that they are doing any special good, but by their unconscious influence they may start waves of blessing that will widen and deepen, and the blessed results they may never know until the day of final reward."—"Steps to Christ," p. 83.

We learn to do well such tasks as washing the dishes and planting a garden by doing them over and over. We gain power to do them better. So it is with everything in life.

It is the power of Jesus that helps us to live unselfishly that the loveliness of Jesus may shine through us.

Here are two stories from India:

"A patient was brought into the hospital in a serious condition. But loving service did wonders, and as the patient recovered, he spent much time in contemplation. A nurse noticed his intent expression fixed upon her as she moved about the ward. Something impelled

her to go to his bedside and speak to him of Jesus. 'Yes, I have heard the missionary speak of Him; so how can I worship Him?' he responded. 'I have been watching you. I have seen you go from bed to bed. I have seen your acts of kindness, and I have heard the living words you have spoken. Let me worship you!' When it was made plain to the poor man that such acts of kindness and words of love were but the evidence of the Christ who dwelt within, how could he help but offer his allegiance to the King of kings?"—"Review and Herald," Dec. 14, 1939.

"One time a Hindu man brought to the hospital his little girl, who was so badly burned that the doctor thought she would not live. Mrs. Clark, who was a nurse, took the child and attended her in every way she could. All the medical aid that could be provided was given her. Mrs. Clark took that child in her care, and tenderly treated her. She endeavored to soothe her by kind words, and when her words would not help, she would lie down beside the child and weep. The sympathetic feeling of Mrs. Clark, was very noticeable. . . . The child was finally healed of all those terrible burns.

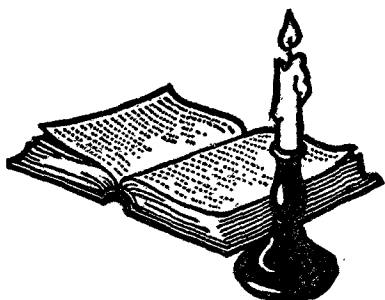
"One day the father came to the mission. He said, 'You have told me about your God, Christ. I know Him. One of His angels must be Clark Mem-sahib. I understand Him. Oh, what a wonderful God you have, so full of love and sympathy and kindness. I can understand your God.'"—*Id.*, Feb. 9, 1939.

Each one of us, boys and girls, may live through the power of God, just such lives as these nurses did. Day by day we are to know this power in learning to speak kind, helpful words, in learning to work as He did, in learning to live as He lived.

How wonderful it would be were He to stand here and say to each one, "All power is given unto Me. . . . I am with you alway. . . . occupy till I come." How our hearts would thrill at His words! How we would resolve to live and work in that power until He comes! Some day He will speak to us face to face. What shall His words be? May He say to each one, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,"—the joy of seeing others saved.

(Prayer—that Jesus' power may be very real in the heart and life to save and to serve.)

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