

he Better Home



APRIL MAY JUNE 1941



Southern Baptist Convention Series



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How do you nourish your mind?

By what standards do you choose your reading these days, when never-ceasing presses bear out the biblical observation that "of making many books there is no end"? Do you recognize the beauty, the value, the strength, the necessity of true Christian literature? Would you expect Jesus to read all the things you read?

THE BETTER HOME

Vol. 7

APRIL, MAY, JUNE, 1941

No. 2

Who Would Not Love the Springtime?

ALICE
CROWELL
HOFFMAN



Who would not love the spring-
time

With flowers in its hair;

The gleam of it,

The dream of it,

That sparkles everywhere?

Who would not love the springtime

With music in its heart,

The melodies

And symphonies,

That with its coming start?

Who would not love the springtime

With laughter on its lips,

Its miles and miles

Of dimpled smiles,

As summerward it trips?

CALLING ATTENTION TO . . .

FAMILY ALTAR MEMORIES

What are your memories of the daily family devotions in your own childhood home? What contribution are you making to such memories for the children in your present home? Here is a responsibility that many may have refused to accept or may have neglected without thought. Having it called to our attention should be enough to start us thinking; and the thinking should lead us to establishment of daily worship in whatever we call home—whether the home consists of one, two, or many individuals. That worship need not be elaborate, need not take a great deal of time or research, but with THE BETTER HOME comments and suggested prayer thought, the service may be simple, brief, yet entirely pleasing to our Master. Besides helping the whole family with the Uniform Lesson for the next Sunday, the devotional period exerts a sweetening power in the course of the day and of the life.

Miss Lillie E. Case tells us of some of her memories of family prayer and religious training in her childhood home. We welcome other accounts of similar experiences for our mutual help and inspiration. Miss Case has written:

"I read Col. York's article in THE BETTER HOME with great interest. If only one family shall determine to have at least a short family prayer at the bedtime hour because of the memories of my childhood, I shall be amply repaid for writing them."

PAGES OF POEY

Such excellent poems on greatly varied subjects come our way! Thinking our readers will enjoy and appreciate them as much as we do, many of them find their way into THE BETTER HOME files. Four entire pages are devoted to them in this issue, on as many different general subjects. You will note that page 6 carries seasonal songs, as artistic in word pictures as you could ask, as glowing and colorful as language could express.

Page 7 is filled with encouraging, strengthening, inspiring messages—that bolster us when downhearted, energize us when weary, inspire us when lacking in vision.

The thoughts of parents and loved ones for the children occupy page 11. How precious they are and

how many appropriate and poetic rhymes about them are written!

Thinking of those whose lives have known full years and many experiences we present the three poems on page 16. Beautiful tributes they are, linking us with beloved characters in our own contacts to whom we will bear silent tribute at least as we read.

CONTENTMENT

Perhaps "Incentive" will give us a picture of real contentment, shame us if we have failed to appreciate our home treasures, and give us a new zest for living.

NEIGHBORLINESS

The spirit of friendly, thoughtful neighborliness should pervade every home. Indeed, how could a home be a better home, a true Baptist home, without sincere concern and wholesome interest in its neighbors? So here and there through these pages you will find items on the subject which we hope may prove interesting and suggestive.

ANOTHER JOY BOOK

The Joy Book idea is original with this writer, we understand, who has written several out of her own experiences. We hope you will like this one—full of suggestive material for singing joy to occupy our hearts at all times, even though the present situation may seem quite despairing and distressing. A happy and trusting heart, plus encouraging industry, and a hopeful outlook will win the day every time. "My Joy Book Among Strangers" is well worth the time of reading.

THE WRITER OF OUR EXPOSITIONS

Dr. E. C. Routh, the expository writer for this quarter, has been editor of our Oklahoma Baptist paper, The Baptist Messenger, since 1927. He has served widely and acceptably in this capacity, and is recognized for his careful work and loyal devotion to the causes of God's kingdom everywhere. Before beginning his Oklahoma state duties Dr. Routh was editor of the Baptist Standard, state Baptist paper of Texas, for fourteen years. Previous to that time he had served in Texas in various editorial capacities as well as ministering to several churches as pastor and as evangelist. We are sure you will agree that we are fortunate in hav-

ing our devotional comments for this quarter prepared by him. He has been eager to be used of the Holy Spirit in this writing, with the same Spirit being sought by our readers in securing the greatest possible blessing from reading them, we are confident these devotional studies will bring maximum benefit and contribution to kingdom advancement.

Dr. Routh has also prepared the manuscript for next quarter's daily Bible reading comments—writing the complete series of lessons for a period of six months.

OUR BIBLE LESSONS

With April we begin a six-month course of weekly lesson studies in the Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation, under the general topic, "Christianity Reaches Out." Of course, at least once in every six- or seven-year cycle of lessons the life of Paul as well as many familiar incidents in the Acts have been listed in our lesson courses. But in this present series many passages will be under special consideration which have either been listed heretofore only in the larger lesson material, or, as is the case several times, have never before been assigned for study in the Improved Uniform Lessons course. For instance, we are to have seven lessons from the Epistles alone, besides four from the Revelation. Let us begin this new course with the determination to obtain the most from it by real study and attention, knowing that we will reap the finest, surest assistance for real everyday living, and a knowledge of true Christian ideals as laid down for our pattern in God's Word.

THE BETTER HOME

ELIZABETH DENMARK, Editor
HICHT C. MOORE, Editorial Secretary
NAMES VAN NUNE, Managing Editor

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Memories of

Family Prayer and Religious Training

in My Childhood Home

LILLIE E. CASE

My father was a faithful Christian, cheerful and patient through many years of suffering. Although unable to attend church, he established and maintained a family altar in his home, and his children have the most blessed recollection of it.

A few nights before his death I was sitting up with him. It was about three o'clock when he said "Lillie, have we had prayer tonight? If not, let's have it now." I at once knelt down and was about to begin the prayer when he began in a steady voice to pray. He prayed for us all and, with no reference to death, offered one of the most earnest and uplifting prayers I have ever heard. He then asked me to call my brother. When he came, we talked of many things, but not of death. My mother joined us. In about an hour, while we still sat there, he fell into a deep sleep from which he never awoke. We then knew that he felt the end was near and wanted his family with him. My father said the day his son was converted was the happiest he had known for many years, and I know that Mother felt the same way. They had been more deeply concerned about this in rearing their children than about any other one thing.

Often at burials I had wondered how I could ever stand to see one of my own laid away. That day as I stood by the open grave I looked up at the blue sky and great joy came into my heart as I said in my heart, "He is not here but yonder." My brother's face was radiant as they sang, "How Firm a Foundation," and he said afterwards he felt he could have joined in the singing.

In our early childhood we had lived far from a church and Sunday school, but my mother told us Bible stories, taught us to love the Saviour and to read the Bible, and to sing the sweet old hymns and to pray. Owing to my father's failing health, she had many cares and burdens but she was bright and cheerful, and found time to be neighborly and kindly and ever thoughtful of those in distress. Instead of complaining or murmuring, she taught us to count our blessings and to give thanks to our Heavenly Father for his marvelous love and care of us. She believed

that all things work together for good to those who love and trust the Lord.

We would often find her kneeling in secret prayer, and when she came back to us she would usually be singing in a sweet low voice one of her best loved hymns. My sister recalls, "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds" and "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" as sung most often, while I was deeply impressed by snatches of others: "O how Happy are they who their Saviour obey, and whose treasures are laid up above." I wondered how my mother could be so happy amid life's cares and trials, but she sang right out of her heart, and I knew that her cheerfulness was real. "Though sundered far by faith they meet around one common mercy seat" gave me the sweetest comfort when any of us were away from home. When she would sing to my baby sister, "Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber, holy angels guard thy bed: Heavenly blessings without number rest upon thy precious head," a great peace and feeling of security would come upon us all. I was next older, and it had a most lasting effect upon me. Heaven seemed so very near and the Saviour's presence almost felt, as she would continue, "Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, once became a child like thee."

Sixteen years after my father's death and after an illness of some months, she told us that she was soon going to be with the Saviour and our father, and only felt sad about leaving her children and grandchildren. My father had told his pastor in my presence that the only thing that troubled him about death was separation from his family. There seemed to be not a cloud in the sky of either one as they passed to the heavenly home.

When we laid her beside our father, heaven seemed to come down again and touch the earth, and instead of a crushing sorrow, there came a calm peace and a radiant hope of family reunion in the heavenly home.

While for many years our parents did not have the privilege of joining in public worship and in the activities of the church, which they so loved, we feel that their work in their home was most effective and enduring.

FULFILMENT

DOROTHY DE VILLENEUVE

My arms have never known
The warmth of my own child,
Nor held it close. Perchance
When mothers' names were filed
In God's accounts, mine fell
To earth and lost its place
Midst the teeming millions
Of God's human race.

Then again this may be
The way that God's plan reads.
Perhaps he saw in me
More love than one child needs.
I will not hoard this wealth—
I'll spend it every day
On any little ones
Who chance to pass my way.

The New Family

LALIA MITCHELL THORNTON

"Mr. Hopkins should never have sold a house to that Biggs family," Jane Smith shook her head until all her curls were dancing. "Mother says we ought all of us to sign a protest and send it to him."

"But he built the houses to sell, and Mr. Biggs had the money. I heard Father say he makes more in his secondhand store than the average lawyer."

"Why, Belle Hobson," a tall, frowning girl interrupted, "I do believe you're taking up for them. The boy smokes and swears, and the two girls aren't even clean."

"But there are a dozen of us," Belle insisted. "We'll be going to school on the bus every morning and to Sunday school. Miss Hill says the girl is a grade ahead in her studies and she only put her in the fourth because that was her age group and it's so nearly time for vacation."

"And the boy is just what the baseball team needs," Jane suddenly came to the aid of the defense. "Coach is going to let him pitch, and that means, of course, that he will have to stop smoking. No boy who smokes cigarettes can play baseball."

The tall girl was not convinced. "My mother says that we might as well move away. You can't put even a few drops of ink in a bowl of water and have clear water again. Mother says we'll be acting like the Biggs family. In the bus

yesterday they saw something you are not supposed to see and nudged each other, and one of our boys grinned. I saw him."

Someone must have reported the conversation to their Sunday school department superintendent for at the next meeting she asked the children who lived in Rosedale suburb to stay and talk to her a few minutes after the rest had left.

It wasn't easy at first to make them see that the Biggs family were really nice children, but they had grown up in a rough, careless neighborhood. She even asked the boys and girls of Rosedale to shut their eyes to some things and by their good example and friendliness make it possible for the newcomers to fit themselves into the life of the suburb.

"But my mother says—" the tall girl began "something about ink." The superintendent interrupted her, "I'm glad she said that. Come with me."

The boys and girls followed her over to the water tap, watched her as she drew a large cup of water and then dropped a few drops of ink in it from her fountain pen. The water showed first a dark spot, then streaks, then the whole cup was clouded. The tall girl nodded her head. Then the leader held the cup under the tap. Clean pure water ran into it, and very soon all the ink had disappeared and the water was as clean and pure as at first.

"You see," she said, "all the black things that we dislike will disappear if we put in clear, pure ones. There are enough of you to change the three Biggs children into nice little girls and a fine manly boy. You can't do it by acting as though you thought you were better than they are, but you can by being just yourselves and trusting them to see the difference."

"I'll ask the girl to come to Sunday school with us," the tall girl offered, "but if she hasn't a handkerchief, and she never seems to have, can I just say, 'Do take my handkerchief, I have two?'"

The superintendent laughed. "I think you can say anything to her that you would say to any other girl, but remember: no preaching. We must depend upon the good example you set and your real friendliness."



The Better Home

What Do You Count Most Important In Your Home?

What will your children remember when they are grown?

REVAH SUMMERSGILL

It takes so much of our time and energy to keep house that we sometimes forget our higher duty is to build a home. Yet not all the pieces of furniture and linen we spend hours caring for mean half as much to our children as the memory of happiness we can give them. Oh, it is necessary for us to maintain certain standards, there is no argument about that. But in doing so we must not forget more vital things. Do we watch our boys' and girls' table manners so painstakingly that we neglect their conversation? At mealtime, interest and pleasantness are every bit as important as the food. Do we spoil our children's joy in guests by overzealous warnings about behavior? Do we discourage informal parties for the young people?

The most charming and homelike place I know has worn floors and shabby chairs. Its curtains are of plain material, cut straight for easy laundering and kept pushed well back from the glass. There is usually a young face peering out from one window or another and young voices laughing or singing somewhere inside. The tables are piled with books. The fireplace glows every evening with wood the boys have cut, and around it gather young and old to read and talk and enjoy each other. In that house a party is the work of a few minutes. Someone says, "It's a cold night. Let's make taffy!" and off one boy

ing room table. They all play some instrument, too, and have family orchestra sessions. On winter nights there is a chess tournament going on, with good-natured rivalry about the championship. Father brings home his business friends, and the children gain a wide-awake interest in politics, economics, travel, and the worth-while topics of the day. Everyone is courteous to everyone else's friends. There is never embarrassment nor uncertainty about bringing a new child home from school or asking someone who has happened in to stay to dinner. Each child has his chores—and does them. But no one minds if he is in the midst of some work when a caller comes. In fact, callers often help. Busy hands are a great aid to conversation.

Though there is no hired help, no one seems to be overworked because of all the hospitality. I cannot think of once when the Stuarts could be said to "entertain." In that house, "bests" are used almost every day and are simple, lovely, shining things—wearable, all of them. Company to a meal means only an extra plate and napkin and a hearty word of greeting. Often they gather up the sandwiches and fruit to picnic in the back yard or hike down to the creekside. Or maybe they serve steaming soup in the breakfast nook. But somehow, just being there, surrounded by friendliness, and sitting talking later by candle or firelight is an experience to remember.

When we think of the different homes we know, what do we recall? The brick or wood or stone of which they are built? The carpet and sofas in them? What the people who lived there were? We never do. It is the intangibles that

come to mind, always. Is a home a place of happy hearts or dullness? Of beauty or frustration? The folk that live in it make it what it is. And a mother has the largest responsibility, of course. Let us put spiritual values first when we measure and order our days! Let us make homes in the finest sense of the word!

DEBT

ELSYE TASH SATER

Debt is a tiny, tempting word.
With meaning that's tremendous:
Depletes your purse.
And what is worse—
Its penalties are endless!

Perhaps they tell stories, or take turns reading aloud their favorite poems. But there is always the feeling of welcome and of something exciting and interesting about to happen.

The mother has gathered a folder of clippings about parlor games, and many's the gay evening that household spend together around the din-

LADY APRIL

BRENA SOWELL

April is a lovely lady,
Blue and gold and amethyst;
Wears a gown of peach blown satin,
Queen Anne's Lace at throat and wrist;
Dancing feet in emerald slippers,
Dewdrops in her pansy eyes,
Looking out upon the morning
In a maze of glad surprise:
Spangles on her dainty fingers
Bluebells on her silken hair,
Oh, when April comes to visit:
I forget my every care.



DESIGN

MARION E. THORPE DILLER

A wasp
Crossing a new
Hazel-nut leaf is as
Purposeful as a plane roaring
Through fog.

SPRING

HOPE TURNER

Spring brings so many lovely things—
The gardens' marvelous blossoming,
The new-leaved willows bright array
That gleams so like a fountain's spray;
The scarlet buds of stately trees,
The plum tree's breath upon the breeze,
The far-off, sundrenched, green-clad hills,
The songs of clear, swift-footed rills,
The wonder of the earth in spring
Should bring frail faith to blossoming.

GOD'S AUTOGRAPH

ETTA MAI SCOTT

I saw God write his autograph
Upon a moving stream
While I, a lump of human clay,
Sat idly by to dream.

I saw God write his autograph
Across a stormy sky;
The pen he used was dipped in fire,
I did not question why.

I saw God write his autograph
Upon a dew-kissed lawn,
Surrounded with tall, stately trees
Aquiver with the dawn.

But where I saw his magic hand
The plainest, on my part,
Was when he autographed his name
With love across my heart.

OLD IRISH LACE

STELLA LAVINA OLSON

The treetops are old Irish lace
Against the rain clouds' gray,
With meshes formed by half-grown leaves
These days of early May.

Be grudgingly I'll watch them turn
From adolescent grace
To green of full maturity;
I love old Irish lace!



SPRING PASTEL

ELLA WATERBURY GARDNER

The sky is chalked in cobalt blue
That sunshine rays are slanting through,
Inside the orchard, tinted green,
We see pink apple blossom sheen.
A butterfly is lurching near:
The redbird whistles, shrilly clear.
The cattle grazing on this sight
Are sharply sketched in black and white.

A poet tries in vain to say
How God puts pastels on display.

COURAGEOUS ROAD RUNNER

CLARE JOHNSTON PIERCE

The road runner can whip a rattler:
When fighting lust and sinful word
You needs must be as brave a battler,
Untiring as this plucky bird.



RESURRECTION

LAURA ALICE BOYD

"There is no life but this," he said,
"How could I think that this my body dead
And laid away in earth's dark bosom
Could blossom forth in fairer guise
And find a home in some bright paradise?"

He shook his head, and turned about
And went into a flower shop
And bought a lily blooming in a pot.

DUSK

ETHEL BARNETT DE VITO

Ah, had I known that all I struggled for
Would be here in your hands held out to me,
I could have stopped to look at sunsets, or
To help the ones I had not time to see.
Ah, had I had the sight to trust in thee,
These paltry wants that kept my heart so sore
Could not have filled my days so utterly
As to efface all things beyond my door.

Heedless went I of all that was not I,
Too steeped in self to pity, love, or give;
Not caring that my roof shut out the sky.
My life was gone, before I learned to live.
How clearly now thy message: "Trust in Me,"
Shines from the stars I had no time to see.

UNDERSTANDING

MARJORIE McMAHAN

I never thought of heaven much before
Until you went away—
Except as some far place of shining streets
And everlasting day.
I knew they said the gates are made of pearl,
That streams of crystal flow,
And that no storms can beat upon their shore,
Or tempests ever blow.
I thought of glory as a distant land
With skies forever fair,
But heaven seems much nearer to me now,
Since one I love is there.

LAUNDRY . . .

OLIVE ZIPPERER

Walking home through the city's cool and wooded park
Today,
Away!
I washed the grime that had made a fresh day dark,



WHICH ARE YOU?

NORITA WILSON

Together they traveled the pathway of life
From the morn till the setting of sun,
Yet the one was so joyous, the other downcast
When the journey of life had been run.
They went hand in hand o'er a desert of sand
To reach that far land fair and sweet,
The one saw the grandeur of mountains afar,—
The other, the sand at her feet.
They must needs cross a rill which their pathway
traversed
As they left far behind them the ridge.
The one had the song of the brook in her ears,
The other but looked for a bridge.
A child near their pathway, intent on its play,
Was baking mud pies spread in view.
The one saw the smile, the other the grime
As the friendly tot waved them adieu.
They passed through a gateway, on nearing their
goal,
And entered a flowering mart.
The one felt the kiss of a rose on her lips,
The other, a thorn in her heart.

SCHOOL REPORT

REDA BAY

Erase the words that leap to reach my lips,
Becalm the heated fiery reprimand.
To rightly judge this happy active child,
Let wisdom guide the strength of my demand.

Is there a gauge to measure heart and mind,
His struggle to work honestly and right?
If outdoor friends and sports have called to him,
Will angry words have potency or might?

Let me encourage, gently urge new hope,
For wrath and anger, lashing like a rod,
May warp the sweet young fabric of his soul,
And I be marked a failure by my God.

Mr. Carter's Way

GRACE HELEN DAVIS

John Carter was surprised to hear sounds of scuffling as he neared his small shop. A man was dragging a boy through the open doorway.

Mr. Carter recognized the man as the town constable, Mr. Kessler, but he didn't know the poorly dressed, frightened boy, who looked as if he were trying hard not to burst into childish tears.

"Hi, Carter! Look what I found coming out of your shop—a young thief making off with a piece of your valuable cabinet wood." The constable, jerked the boy roughly about, and with his other hand held up a valuable piece of unvarnished wood.

"I didn't know it was worth anything, honest I didn't, sir!" wailed the boy.

"Oho, you didn't know it was worth anything, you didn't! Then why did you watch until Mr. Carter went out for a moment, leaving his door open, and then sneak in and help yourself to a fine piece of expensive wood? Answer that!"

"I didn't know Mr. Carter was out. I went in to the shop to ask for a scrap of wood, and when I saw that one on the floor I thought it was just an endpiece and picked it up."

"A very likely story indeed, eh, Carter?"

But the cabinetmaker was frowning. "We may as well let the boy tell his story, Mr. Kessler. What is your name and address, son? And what did you want with the wood?"

The boy seemed to relax a little and gain new hope under the pleasantness of the shop owner's tone.

"I'm Jackson Wayland, sir, and I live over at the edge of town, on Moyer Street. I wanted a nice piece of wood to carve a boat from for my little brother. It's his birthday tomorrow, and he wants a boat, and—and I don't have any money, so I thought I'd make him one. I can use my jackknife nice. I met Mr. Turner on the street, and he said I could get all the ends of wood I wanted at his lumber yard, but when I went there a workman chased me off. I was passing your shop and I saw the wood inside. Then I saw this piece lying on the floor, and I thought it was only an end and you'd throw it out, honest I did, Mr. Carter. That's all."

"Yes, that's all, except that what you picked up was an expensive piece of cabinet wood, and you can tell the judge about it," sneered Kessler. "Don't bother with him, Mr. Carter. I know what to do with boys like him."

"But you see, Mr. Kessler, I have my own way of treating boy culprits. I refuse to prosecute Jackson here for going into my shop, and will deal with him myself," announced the cabinetmaker in final tones.

The constable relaxed his grip on the boy's arm. "Well, in that case, of course, Carter—But I was only trying to serve you."

"Yes, I know, Mr. Kessler; thank you," answered Mr. Carter. "Come inside, lad, and we'll get this settled."

Jackson followed him into the shop, still with a worried and apprehensive air. He was wondering a good deal what Mr. Carter's way of dealing with him was going to be.

John Carter laid down the piece of valuable wood which Mr. Kessler had handed over, and kicked thoughtfully at a pile of shavings on the floor.

"Well, son, this is a pretty untidy old shop, isn't it? Cobwebs on the ceiling and a litter on the floor. Odds and ends of wood everywhere! It certainly isn't surprising that you thought the piece of wood had been thrown away, seeing it on this floor of mine. So let's talk business. If you'll come and give the whole shop a good cleaning up I'll pay you what I think it's worth, a dollar. I wouldn't be surprised but that I could let you help me now and then afternoons after school and on Saturday, too, running errands and delivering small pieces of work. How about it, Jackson?"

"Why, why, I'd be awfully glad to, Mr. Carter! I could take the dollar home to my mother, and she'd be so pleased," burst out the boy.

"Settled, Jackson. I'll expect you to come in and clean up the shop this coming Saturday. Now let's see about this boat matter. Here's an end of ordinary lumber. Could you carve the toy for your little brother from this, son?"

"Yes, that'd be dandy, Mr. Carter! I can carve a small boat and put sails on it."

"I'd like to see your toy when it's finished, Jackson. Do you like using your jackknife on wood?"

"Yes, sir, I do sort of. I like making things," answered the boy.

"Well, well, Jackson, I wouldn't be surprised but that as you grow older I can likely teach you the cabinet trade, if you show aptness for it. But that's all in the future. Here, take your piece of wood, and remember that there's a dollar in it for you if you come on Saturday and make my shop tidy."

A Product of the American Home

STEPHANIE HALL

She is sixteen. I would not say merely a "sweet sixteen." That would scarcely do her justice. Rather, I would describe her as a clean, healthy sixteen with eyes so sparkling, hair so shining, that she seems to reflect the look of the woman that she will some day be.

I doubt very much if she will ever be beautiful. That is, in the usual sense of the word. However, that will not trouble her. Other things and events will, no doubt, because behind those laughing eyes is a seriousness; albeit she is still a child in many ways. She takes things to heart—when she has the time; her family, friends, school. Particularly, she is serious about fudge-making, cooking, watching, beating. When the candy turns out right she is very happy, but when it is, in her words, "a flop," she is very disconsolate but says something to the effect, "I'll do better next time."

She has her disappointments. They are as serious as any encountered by the adult. Recently, she faced a severe setback in her plans. After reaching home, part of the young heart sort of wept itself out, but young hearts fill back up with the buoyancy of living. When telling me about the "whale of a disappointment," she said, "I wanted to 'bawl,' I was so heartbroken, but I had to wait until I got to my room." This characteristic is commonly called, "self-control."

"Thank you so much, Mr. Carter. Only—only, is that all? You haven't said anything about punishing me for taking the expensive wood, like you told the constable you would."

"I didn't tell him I would punish you, Jackson. I said I had my own way of dealing with boy culprits. This is it—I give them another chance. Of course, if they disappoint me, and try to cheat and thieve after I've been fair and given them an opportunity to show what's in them, that might mean a different story. But I have faith in you, son."

"Gee, thank you, Mr. Carter. I won't disappoint you, honest I won't."

The cabinetmaker smiled as he watched the eager boy go down the street, hugging his precious board end. "There are ways and ways of dealing with boys, but this is my way, and I've found it to work," he observed to himself.

No sin has met her eyes. However, when it comes in the line of vision, she will look at it and dismiss it as something not for her.

This girl has not just grown perchance, because behind her and with her are two who love her with every beat of their hearts. They realize that, although they may draw the leash too tight for her own comfort at times, she must be disciplined if she is to grow into a calm, wise woman. They know that, too, much play will make her selfish; too much work will make her old before her time. So they stand not too close, not too far away, realizing the wisdom of counsel, recognizing the worth of laughter.

One day not long ago she said to her mother, "know what I am mother?" Thinking that she was being faced with one of those popular riddles, her mother said, laughingly, "no, what are you?"

"I am an American product, so my teacher said."

Her "teacher" was correct. She is an American product. A product of the American Home in all its glory, in all its greatness. And aside from being a "love" herself, she is the result of a great love. A love, nurtured and fed within the four walls of the greatest institution on earth today, the American Home!

Some Things I Can't Afford

JANET RICHARDS

As a parent who must be thrifty and look well to the future, I can't afford not to do all in my power to maintain my children's interest in their Sunday school and church, because the right sort of lives are almost sure to be builded upon the deeply laid foundations of the Christian home and on church and Bible school teachings.

✓ I cannot afford not to provide ways and means whereby my children can earn or have a small allowance so they can take an interest in and give on their own account to suitable benevolences and worthy objects. In this way the spirit of service is developed, self-respect maintained, and unselfishness cultivated.

✓ I cannot afford to send my children to Sunday school, thus giving them the idea that grownups are exempt from interest and participation. The only safe pathway to follow is that which is broad enough that parents may travel along it also, while they say in one form or another, "Come: this way lies real manhood and noble womanhood."

✓ I cannot afford to make every decision promptly and arbitrarily for my children, for then I must expect to have grown-up leaners and weaklings. It is the province of parents rather so to establish in the minds of their children an understanding and appreciation of right principles that little by little they will learn to make wise and safe decisions for themselves.

✓ I cannot afford to be so engrossed in social affairs that I leave my children to select their own friends, reading, and spare time amusements, without my knowledge or interest. It is the duty of parents to safeguard immature youth by wise use of the greater wisdom and experience garnered through the years.

✓ I cannot afford to jeopardize my child's willingness to give me his confidence by being ready always to moralize. Parents should understand that to hold the confidence of youth there must be sympathy, understanding, and a genuine desire to help to get the finest possible results.

This calls for patience, tact, never violating a confidence, and the placing of the responsibility for wise decisions on the shoulders of youth itself. It calls for firmness when a principle is at stake, and yielding at times when no principle is involved. Young people are comparatively safe as long as they take the real and vital perplexities of their lives to father and mother.

✓ I cannot afford not to recognize that a time inevitably comes when the man and the woman, individual and independent personalities, are ready to step forward alone; a time, as a great religious leader once pointed out so truly, when even the mother must step aside, for the soul of her child is communing with its Creator. To try to force confidence when this time comes is to invite a breach most difficult to bridge.

PRAYER FOR AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD

GRACE STILLMAN MINCK

Tonight when the roll is called in heaven,
A new voice, the voice of my child,
Will answer, "Here."
Dear God, may one of your angels
Hold his hand
To calm the tremors of uncertainty?
Not openly—please, God,
And please don't tell him I asked:
He wouldn't be a sissy—
But the vastness,
The glory of heaven,
Might be confusing
To an eight-year-old arriving alone.

BELATED PRAYER

MRS. PAT POE

Dear God, I realized today that I hadn't prayed in a long, long time.
Now, at this milestone of a woman's life
When she has need to pray
For guidance, strength, and courage,
I have been remiss.
I never once have doubted that you sent him,
This little son who came to me
A year ago.
I'm sorry that I haven't found the time each day
To get down on my knees in gratitude to you.
But I wonder if you do not know
That this bright bubbling joy
Which wells up in my heart each busy hour
Of his too-fleeting babyhood
Is a prayer of thanks
To you.

SEWING

AZALETE BOLGER WELLS

With face serene and dark eyes glowing,
A woman bends above her sewing.
Each tuck and seam holds her caress,
As she stitches on a baby's dress.

An autumn breeze sweeps through the door;
The years have past—five or more;
O'er a bit of gingham a mother sings,
And for a girl the school bell rings.

Roses blooming in the month of May,
Oh, happy, glad commencement day!
Tender pride the mother heart fills,
All finished are graduation frills.

Gentle yearning in her eyes,
As back and forth the needle flies.
A tear slips from those eyes cast down,
As mother fashions a wedding gown!

ALIBI

HELEN T. ASCHMANN

Oh, I could paint a masterpiece
Or write the world a book,
If I'd a maid to mind the babes
And clean the house and cook.

Mayhap the idle millionaire
Claims he could do the same,
Had he the lash of poverty
To drive him on to fame.



HAVEN

ETHEL BARNETT DE VITO

Tune your ears to inward sounds
That life is daily bringing,
Scurrying little footsteps
Can fill a home with singing.

If spring is long in coming,
Unmindful of her duty,
Bright dirty little faces
Can fill a soul with beauty.

Ah, turn your footsteps homeward
In harsh or bitter weather.
The touch of sticky fingers
Will hold a heart together.

THE FATHER

CLARENCE EDWIN FLYNN

Sometime when your own flesh and blood has spurned
The love you bear it, and has gone its way
With sneering words; and you have sadly turned
A gray, set face back to life's workaday:
When you have sat for hours remembering
Soft fingers on your face, the lisping speech
That fell from childish lips, the offering
Of toy or trinket little hands would reach:

When your heart cries: "Come back. I cannot live,
My child, without you. I would rather die.
Come back to me. So gladly I forgive."
And through the silence there is no reply—
Then you who spurn the love divine and true
Will understand how God's heart yearns for you.

TEDDY threw his untasted bread and strawberry jam to Quiver. The dog snapped it up greedily, cocking his head at the boy inquiringly. Teddy always gave him the last bite, but it was usually on the small order. Quiver gave a short happy bark and looked at the boy expectantly. He was ready for the afternoon romp which always started their playtime after kindergarten and lunch. Teddy let the bark go unnoticed. Even a romp with Quiver couldn't take his mind off the problem which he faced.

The seriousness of the situation seemed finally to be sensed by Quiver who stopped barking and lay down quietly at Teddy's feet. He looked up wistfully into the thoughtful little face cupped between sticky hands. One of the sticky little hands reached down absent-mindedly and patted the dog's head, thus starting a happy thumping of his tail on the ground.



The hot cement step and the warm sunshine sent pleasant little shivers up and down Teddy's back. He decided to share his troubles with Quiver. "It's First Lady's birthday today. Course you don't know it, but birthdays are 'portant."

Just about as 'portant as Christmas. Somehow you don't count the days till a birthday, and you don't talk about them like you do Christmas, but they are just as nice. You forget about birthdays till one morning First Lady wakes you up and says 'Happy birthday, Ted.' Sure 'nough it's your birthday again, and there are always s'prises. You were my s'prise when I was four. Last birthday I didn't think there was going to be any s'prise, and then there was the party. You 'member the children all knew to come at one time, and they all brought presents. We played games, and had funny hats to wear, and there was a big white cake with candles, and I blew the candles, and cut the cake myself."

It had been such a lovely party. It had made him feel all singy and happy inside. It had been that night while First Lady was putting him to bed that he had suddenly remembered that she must have birthdays, too. He had asked her about it.

"My birthday is on the sixteenth of May," she had told him with his goodnight kiss, "and I'll be five times as old as you were today, my Teddy Bear."

S'prises

"Tell me when it's the very first of April," he had requested Miss Bernice at the kindergarten the next morning. Then he forgot all about it because he knew that Miss Bernice could be trusted. One day she had reminded him, "Today April begins, Teddy."

It was then that Teddy had meant to start saving his allowance; but in some way it had slipped his mind. Easter came, and there were all the lovely eggs that he had helped Julie dye. There had been cunning little chicks and bunnies in baskets in the toy shop to take his pennies. Then he had been chosen to be Boy Blue in the operetta which the kindergarten was practicing now to be given before admiring parents. It was only that very morning when Billy Simpson had proudly distributed the invitations to his birthday party that Teddy had remembered.

"What day is it in May, Miss Bernice?" he had asked shyly.

"It is the sixteenth," she had told him pleasantly, and had wondered at his sudden woe-begone expression.

Teddy felt sick. Today was the very day, and just that morning he had spent his last cent for jelly beans. First Lady had no one but him to look out for her birthday surprise, and he had forgotten. And his father had told him always to look after First Lady.

The day on which he had told him that was so long ago now that it was just a blurred memory. His father had been lying on a bed. His face had been very white, and his eyes had been very blue. "Come and kiss me, Teddy Boy. I'm going on a long journey, and I want you to look after our First Lady while I am away." His mother had been crying. It hurt him to see her cry. He had never seen her cry before, but he had seen her cry often after that.

Every time he had asked her when his father was coming back, she had cried. When she cried, he always climbed up into her lap and kissed her; and begged her not to cry because he was going to take care of her until his father came back. Then she always hugged him hard

until it hurt; but he never let her know that it hurt. Just so he had never told her that he hated being called Teddy Bear. It was such a silly name for a boy, but she liked to call him that, so he let her call him Teddy Bear. That was part of looking after a mother; never doing anything to hurt her. That was why he had stopped talking about his father, because it made her cry. Now he hardly ever thought about him. He could hardly remember him, but the charge he had given him he regarded more seriously every day.

The last time he had made his mother cry had been about the ugly, black dresses which she wore. "What's the matter, First Lady?" he had asked, "are you saving all your pretty dresses until Father comes back?" She had looked at him and burst into tears. After that she had started wearing her pretty dresses again. Sometimes now she wore one of the ugly ones to the office, but she always took it off and put on one of the pretty ones when she came home.

Tonight she would come home and there would be no birthday s'prise for her because he had forgotten. Miserably Ted kicked his foot against the step. Slowly there came a glimmer of hope. He jumped up so abruptly and banged into the house so quickly that Quiver was left standing outside the screen.

"Julie, Julie."

"What you wan' Julie asked from the pantry where she was putting clean papers on the shelves.

"Julie, you've got to bake First Lady a birthday cake. It's her birthday and we have got to s'prise her. Bake it big, Julie, this big, and white all over. Thick white. And candles, five times as many as I had."

Julie's enthusiasm failed to kindle. "Yo' maw ain't tell me to bake no cake. Ain't hardly eber no cake gets baked round here, 'til I s'pects I done lost my hand over makin' a cake. Yo' maw don't like it specially, an' she think it ain't good for you."

"But, Julie, it's her birthday."

"Well, birthday or no birthday, I ain't got no time for bakin' cakes today. I got all the ironing to do fo' I cooks dinner; an' I gotta get through early case there's a meetin' of the Daughters of Ruth tonight."

Teddy gave up. He knew that Julie could be wheedled into giving him bread and preserves between meals, but not into upsetting her plans for work, especially when there was a Daughters of Ruth meeting on hand.

Teddy kicked an imaginary ball into the dining room. "Stop that scuffling up dat flo' I jest polished," warned Julie.

Teddy gave up his game and sat down on a chair. Then he saw the blue teapot on the big mahogany sideboard. The blue teapot was the place where First Lady left the money for Julie to pay the little household bills and for any emergency which might come up. Teddy had made his mother explain the word emergency to him. Suddenly his face lighted. This was indeed a 'mergency. He dragged a chair over to the sideboard and reached for the teapot. There was only one crisp new bill in it. He put the bill in the pocket of his blouse, and soon he and Quiver were leaving the house.

It was only three blocks into the business section, and Ted was quite familiar with the way. He and his mother often went window shopping on Sunday. Without any trouble he found the florist shop. First Lady must have some flowers because she loved them so. "I want this much worth of flowers," Ted told an astonished clerk, thrusting the bill at him, "except I want enough left for a cake."

"Where did a little boy like you get so much money?" asked the clerk suspiciously.

"It's my mother's. It's her birthday, and she loves flowers."

"Oh, I see. What kind of flowers does she want?"

"What are those over there?"

"Those are sweet peas."

"That's what I want. They smell awfully good."

"And you say that you want enough out of this bill to pay for a cake? How much will the cake cost?"

"Oh, about fifty cents," Teddy said grandly.

The clerk lost some of his poise. "You mean that you want four dollars and a half's worth of sweet peas?"

Teddy nodded.

"Are you sure that it wasn't roses or carnations that she sent you for?"

"No, it's sweet peas. They are her favorite flower."

"What's the name? Where are they to be sent?"

"My name is Theodore Barton, but everybody calls me Teddy. I wish they'd call me Theodore, though. My dog's name is Quiver. But I don't want the flowers sent. I want to take them. They are a very special surprise."

Some minutes later Teddy struggled out of the shop with a huge box, leaving a rather uncertain clerk behind.

David Abrams, standing moodily at the window of his real estate office, came to life as the big box followed by the boy and the dog came along. He watched them curiously for a minute, then followed them.

He met Ted just as he was coming out of a small bakery shop. Ted's face was very red.

"Hello, Ted."

"Lo, David."

"Seems you have been shopping. Want a lift?"

"They said in there that a real birthday cake, one with white all over and candles costs more than fifty cents, and has to be ordered ahead," Ted volunteered in an indignant rush.

"And what do you want with a birthday cake? It can't surely be your birthday again?"

"No, it's First Lady's and I am having such a time surprising her."

"So it is First Lady's birthday." He indicated the box. "Is that part of the surprise?"

"Yes, it is flowers."

"You must have been saving a long time to be able to get such a big box of flowers."

Teddy's face grew red, but he met David's eyes bravely. "That is just it," he said miserably. "I forgot. I meant to save my allowance all April, but I didn't remember till this morning when Billy started giving out his invitations. I had spent my last cent on jelly beans. Julie was too busy to bake a cake, so I just got the money from the blue teapot, 'cause this is a 'mergency."

"I see," David said gravely, "and you spent so much for the flowers that there isn't enough for the cake. I tell you what you do. Take the flowers on home and put them in water; and suppose you trust me to get the cake." The look of relief on Teddy's face touched David's heart.

"I surely would thank you," Teddy said in a most grown-up way. "You see on account of I have to look after her all by myself, it keeps me kinda busy sometimes."

The flowers filled all the bowls and vases that Ted could find, and were also stuck in tight little bunches in peanut butter mugs and fruit jars. The dining room was a flower garden when David finally arrived with a wonderful cake, which was put in the center of the table.

"Now you hide, David, 'cause you're a surprise, too. I'm going to meet her and sing 'Happy Birthday' to her. Then I'll bring her in here."

Margaret Barton had watched the clock all day, and hatefully it had stood still. The work in her typewriter was full of mistakes, but she would not stay after time to rewrite it. She would get to that in the morning. She wanted to go somewhere now where she could cry her heart out. All day the white face of David had come between her and her work. All day she had thought of the things they had said to each other:

"I've made up my mind, David. I'm not going to marry you."

"But, Margaret, we love each other. There is no doubt about that."

"No doubt, darling. It would be easier if there were some doubt. I am not going to give Ted a stepfather. He would resent you. He has always talked so much about his own father coming back. Of course, he will soon be old enough to understand. Don't you see, David, I am afraid to run the risk of having the two people I love most in the world hating each other? It would tear my very life in two. It is better to break my heart this way."

David's face had gone white. "In short, you don't trust me, Margaret." Without another word he had turned and left her.

As Margaret walked home, she tried to ease her pain. She had lived on without Theo when she had felt that she could not go on. Now he was a beautiful memory that she could think of without being sad. It wasn't that loving David took anything away from the memory. David was so strong, so splendid; it made her happy just to be around him. Now she must make a memory out of David. Was life always to go on handing her one hurt after another?

Slowly she went up her own walk. She must put a smile on her face for Teddy. For a few more hours she must be brave, then after Teddy was in bed she could cry.

Teddy hurled himself through the front screen, singing:

Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday, First Lady,
Happy birthday to you.

"Why, it really is my birthday," Margaret said in surprise, stooping and giving him a stout hug. "I had not remembered. How nice of you to think of it, Teddy."

Teddy started pulling her toward the dining room. "There," he said triumphantly.

"Oh, Teddy, how lovely."

"And look behind the door, too," Teddy commanded, his eyes dancing.

Margaret peeped behind the door, and then looked from David to Ted in speechless amazement.

"Ted, run and ask Julie for a match to light the candles," David suggested, taking the situation firmly in hand. "And ask her if I may stay for dinner."

As soon as Teddy was out of the room, he explained, "Don't be surprised, Margaret, when you learn that most of the surprise came out of the blue teapot."

"You mean that Teddy took — But he wouldn't do a thing like that."

"But he did, and you must understand why he did it."

A look of distress came over Margaret's face. "Don't think that," David warned severely.

"He did it because he is living up to a trust, a trust that is entirely too big for such a child."

"But how could Teddy take money that didn't belong—"

"It was what Ted considered an emergency. You must understand. He has plenty of time to learn the difference between mine and thine; and as a stepfather—"

Ted rushed back into the room. "I'll light them for you, and then you can blow them out," he cried happily, striking a match. "And, gee, I forgot to tell you, David's 'sponsible for the cake. The 'mergency money wasn't enough. It certainly is nice to have somebody like David to help me take care of you, First Lady."

Bravely Margaret lifted her eyes from the beaming face of Teddy to meet the eager questioning eyes of David.

"David, Julie said course you could stay for dinner. There's plenty such as it is, but she said it wasn't any company dinner."

"Tell Julie that's fine, Ted. That just suits me. From now on I am not going to be company."



INCENTIVE

MARION R. ADDINGTON

I guess a man don't need to mind
How hard he's worked, or tired feet,
When he comes home at night to find
The place so shiny-like and sweet,
With Mollie in a span new dress
All ruffled neatly round with white.
And hear her say, "You'd never guess—
We're having dumplings, dear, tonight!"

Then even if the stumps were tough
That I've been grubbing at so long,
It's rest and happiness enough
To hear her hum a little song.
The while she's sitting here and there,
Yet pauses, as she moves about,
The lamplight falling on her hair:
"The lilacs, Ben, are almost out!"

So while I stand there washing up,
From out the corner of my eye
I watch her set each plate and cup
And put the ham steak on to fry;
Soon as the gravy bubbles thick
She stirs it briskly with a spoon,
And turns to me so birdlike quick:
"Oh, Ben, the chickens hatched at noon!"

Then when I've scrubbed hard as I'm able
And plastered down my hair all wet
So I'm fit company at table,
I wait her gentle word to set,
And lifting serious look to mine
With sweet expectancy in her face,
She says, her blue eyes all ashine,
"All right now, dear, will you say grace?"

Love isn't words, I think; love's deeds,
And making happiness around
That gives a man just what he needs
To keep his day all safe and sound.
I feel as strong as Atlas when
Each morning I go out the door:
And glad, to get back home again
To someone worth the working for!

SEVENTY AND FIVE

SALINELLE ROYSTER

Grandfather was past seventy when I was barely five.
I thought that he must surely be the greatest man alive,
For on a springtime afternoon he'd take me by the hand
And together we'd go walking over acres of his land.

We were rather slow together, yet our paces seemed to fit,
For we'd walk and talk a little while, and then we'd rest a bit.
I'd ask a thousand questions, and he'd patiently explain
And punctuate his sentences by pointing with his cane.

We'd sit beneath his favorite tree and hear the robins sing,
"The leaves are grown May tenth," he said, "or it's a backward spring."
The world was fresh and young then. I'm glad I was alive
When Grandfather was seventy, though I was only five.



LINES ABOUT MY MOTHER

ANNIE DEE DAVIS

I started out
To write a poem about
My mother,
And, delving in
Among my memories
Of her,
I found
That little things of small
Account I treasure most of all.

I love the old, old songs
She used to sing until
We fell asleep;
And walks we took together
In autumn weather—
She always liked to walk!
She gave us hot, baked beans,
And sweet, brown bread
For lunch on winter days—
And Christmas wasn't right
Unless she stayed up late at night
To put the gifts
Around the tree
After we'd gone to bed.
I loved her letters,
Long and full of talk,
She put herself into them all.

I started out
To write about
My mother,
But now I know,
That words can never tell the whole
Of any mother's soul.

UNEVENTFUL?

LILITH SHELL

That day Ruth died,
The day her cold form lay
So still and white,
A holy man came there and prayed,
And softly spoken tribute paid
To her dear life.

"How uneventful was her life,"
He said, "how smooth and still
The clear stream flowed,
Without a ripple to disturb its calm."

But I, who knew her heart so well,
I knew when love first came to her,
I knew with what a vivid flame
It burned.

I saw her on her marriage day
Transported with the joy of it;
I held her hand when first she woke
To find a baby's downy head
Upon her breast.

Three times she walked the fiery path
Into the vale of throbbing pain,
That three new lives might see the light;
I knew her then.

And one black day
A little life was swept away
From her, into the dim unknown;
I stood by then, my own heart torn
To see her stretch out tragic hands
To bring it back;
I read the look of agony
Which meant she knew that could not be.

Oh, was her life, then, commonplace?
I ask the women of the race.

My Joy Book Among Strangers

BY A YOUNG-HEARTED OLD WIFE

January 1, 1941

Whenever I am in trouble I keep a Joy Book.
It is an antidote for fear, doubt, anxiety, and
other spiritual ailments. It centers my mind on
things of good report and brings me light in the
dark days of uncertainty. It reminds me over
and over that the keynote of the Christian reli-
gion is Joy.

At present our affairs are in chaos; we have
had one trouble after another. Ned was months
getting well after his operation, but finally went
back to work. A few days before Christmas he
came home and told me that his position had
been given to a younger man. Now he is ill
again, without a position, and the business fu-
ture for a middle-aged man is hazardous in these
times. Well, we have courage left, enough for
one day at a time, faith that a way will open
for us, and we have each other, and an in-
vincible determination to look for a joy in every
package of trouble.

March 28, 1941

Here we are—but where are we? I am still
bewildered over the rush of events. Who ever
would have thought that Ned and I would be
settling today in this old-fashioned house in
a tiny town among the hills, as headquarters
for Ned's new business, several hundred miles
away from home? Although we cannot be
"away" from home, because we brought home
with us. We have learned to make it out of
whatever circumstances we have on hand. That
is my Joy for today, that love and ingenuity
can make a home anywhere.

We've been through much in the past months.
Ned got another position, but with half his usual
salary, and had to buy a car out of that; we felt
badly about leaving our former home and
friends, and going further away from our three
children and grandson; it was hard getting
moved with both of us tired out and we dreaded
going to a strange place to begin life again.
We counted our joys over and over this morning
—we are young in heart if not in years, we have
work to do, and we are together.

March 29, 1941

My first visitor was the postman. Three of
my friends timed their letters to be my morning
greeting on my first day here, and was I pleased!
To be tired, discouraged, lone-
some and fearful, and then to
be greeted with gay and loving
letters, made it easy to smile
and carry on. Why don't we all
do more things like that? I
promised right then that every
letter I write shall be full of
warm friendliness, show under-
standing of another's need, and
take the best and gayest part of
me through the mail. A creative letter-writer
sends joy on swift wings.



April 2, 1941

Isn't it queer how one's little wishes held
through the years are sometimes gratified! Ever
since I can remember I have wanted to live where
I could see the sunset. It is here, in this little
strange town, that I can stand every evening
at my pantry window and watch the slow un-
folding of the sunset glory. I look across miles
of green fields, gently sloping hills, and pleasant
valleys dotted with white houses, and read the
story of the skies told in divine words written
in gold and crimson, aquamarine and violet,
turquoise and pearl.

April 3, 1941

Such a nice surprise yesterday! The doorbell
rang in the evening and we looked at each other
doubting our ears. Surely it could not be a
caller!

"I saw a light in the window and realized I
had a new neighbor," said a big man in a hearty
voice, "so I just dropped in to welcome you and
get acquainted."

He was a minister who lives down the street.
He told us about our community, and assured
us we had fine neighbors. He promised to get
in touch at once with our own minister, and
sure enough, early the next morning the other
minister called and was very cordial. We felt
we had fallen among friends.

April 10, 1941

I took out four magazines on my new library card today. When she had checked them, the librarian slipped the magazines into a large Manila envelope and handed them to me with a smile, neat, efficient, and thoughtful. The modern magazines are amazing. We may travel all over the world in them, and find nearly everything from catfish to culture. With a little discrimination we may find articles and stories to fit our own particular mood or need, for they offer amusement, entertainment, and education for any age. A vital, wholesome magazine is an inspiration and a joy; one of the many we take for granted nowadays.

April 17, 1941

Romance goes rumbling by us when the long freight trains cross the far fields back of the house every day and night. From my kitchen window it looks like magic; a puff of smoke appears and then one car after another comes suddenly from behind the trees. I like to think about what they carry and where they are going. In the night I hear their warning whistle as they approach our little town and sense the flow and movement of life in all prosaic things, the undertones of romance and adventure surrounding us in the long lines of gleaming steel crossing this great country that the trains may connect the lives of its people.

April 24, 1941

It must be very satisfying to cook with plenty of materials and no thought of expense, but I am finding quite a thrill out of the challenge given me to cook with few materials and as little expense as possible. There is a sense of real achievement in preparing abundant and nourishing meals without exciting the temperature of the grocery bills. To make a meal look pretty and palatable at the same time, to cause teasing, pleasant odors to drift through the kitchen, to plan unusual and tempting dishes with mere leftovers, changing them into left-overs-de luxe, is a daily joy. Ned thinks I'm a genius at it—and does he eat!

April 28, 1941

"Take up thy bed and walk," Christ said to the sick man, and many a person now, sick with

A VICTOR OF CIRCUMSTANCE

ALETHA M. BONNER

Command your circumstances now
Be they adverse, or fair;
Yes, use the good and bad alike,
Go forth, to do and dare.

"A victim of sad circumstance?"

Let this be never said
Of you; but may the vibrant word
Victor, be voiced instead!

mental or spiritual ills, worried, troubled, and despairing, might profit by the same command—take up your burden and walk. Get away from four cramped walls, no matter how richly decorated; go out into the rain and the wind, the sun and the dark when the goblins threaten to get your sense of humor and proportion or to devour your courage. Every day I take my own prescription. Walking briskly through the town, gazing in shop windows, watching for the first leaves on the trees, looking up at the sky, wondering about the people who pass by, swinging along in rhythmic step, savoring the joy of motion, becoming part of the out-of-doors, away go the blue moods and back come sanity and serenity.

April 30, 1941

I have a new title. I am the New Neighbor. Most of the people on this street have lived here about fifty years or so, and have known each other since school days. Several of the "girls," as they designate themselves, are at least seventy years old. They do not wait for me to be introduced, but say, "Oh yes, my dear, you are the New Neighbor. Come over and see us. You must have some of our rhubarb. Here are some mayflowers I thought you might like. Now you use our telephone anytime you wish." And everywhere I go there is a welcoming smile for the New Neighbor. My new title is an honor and a joy.

May 1, 1941

Ned works too hard. It makes me feel badly to see him get so tired, but I am proud of his pluck and perseverance and he is pleased that he is making good in this new position. He got this position by answering a want ad while he was ill in bed. He went to be interviewed by the manager the first day he put on his clothes after a week's illness and he started to work when he was hardly able to walk. The

second week he was at work he bought a car, practiced driving (it is ten years since we had a car), took his tryout, and got his license. He simply does not know what the word "defeat" means. What a spirit! What a joy to find that unbeatable, unbreakable spirit among men and women of all time!

May 3, 1941

Modern metals have become part of the beauty of our workaday world. I am especially fond of chromium and copper, for they glow and shine with beauty and brilliance wherever they are placed. In the dining room my copper coffee service, tray, and water pitcher delight my eyes, and in the kitchen I have arranged a chromium corner. On a table, grouped conveniently, stand the streamlined electric iron, sandwich toaster, graceful coffee percolator, tiny electric grill, and lordly automatic toaster with its funny pop-up arrangement which absolutely prevents my burning toast no matter how absent-minded I become. Arranged on a green, white, and red cloth, near the green and white ruffled window curtains, the array of shining chromium presents a pleasing and artistic picture of useful modern beauty.

May 5, 1941

Very downhearted today. The water pipe sprung another leak and I have been waiting all morning for the plumber, with the water shut off. Ned is away on business and as we have no phone I feel isolated among strangers in a strange land. I have been playing one of my games with myself the last hour. I repeat over

OUR WEDDING DAY

ALICE WHITSON NORTON

Within your heart and mine this day shall be
Forever hallowed as a sacred thing;
And out across the years when echoes ring,
We'll hear again today's sweet melody.

Abiding peace lies in a love that holds
Two hearts together in a close embrace,
And beauty, like the magnitude of space,
Envelops those who watch the stars unfold.

Life will move on, but with a sweeter tone
Since you and I, united, stand as one
And strive to hear God's blessed word, "Well
done,"
Through joy and pain we'll never taste alone.

and over to myself words that I love; words like *staunch*, *steadfast*, *shining*, that bring bright pictures to mind, or words like *vital*, *enduring*, *illimitable*, words with bigness breathing through them; joyful, strong words to stiffen weak backbones.

May 8, 1941

We named our car "Sandy" because of its color. Sandy behaves well in spite of its age, for though new to us it is second-hand in fact. The right mudguard has a bent for trouble; in fact, several dents, and Sandy has a few rheumatic ailments but manages to keep going steadily and sturdily. We have not taken many pleasure trips with Sandy yet, but we like to run out of town together into the hills for an hour, dawdle near the blossoming trees or ramble along beside a blue lake. One good companion plus one old car and one ever-new springtime equals joy.

May 10, 1941

Just because I told the librarian that I liked the bookplate in one of the library books, I am the proud possessor of three new bookplates for my collection. For a long time I have made it a rule to praise openly and admire fluently anything which pleased me, because there is little enough appreciation in the world. The librarian took me to the Children's Room and showed me the big fireplace which had been photographed with a child reading in front of it and reproduced in a bookplate for the children's books. We found a congenial interest in bookplates.

May 13, 1941

Almost in the center of this busy town there is a little white house set near the sidewalk with a hedge in front of it, and almost on the sidewalk in front of the hedge is a beautiful row of blossoming violets. The incredible, joyous part of it to me, coming from a big city, is that the violets run in a straight row, right on the edge of the cement sidewalk for fifty feet, within reach of everyone day after day and remain untouched and unharmed.

May 15, 1941

I like people. They are a continual joy and adventure. The nice old man from next door

sunning himself in the yard and telling me about his horses that took prizes at the State Fair years ago; the jolly postman who likes my penny bank which I bring out when there is overdue postage; the big blond grocer boy who was so amused because I didn't know that parsnips had to be dug up in the spring; the census man who discussed very interestingly the strange derivation and changes of names; the children who sit on my back doorstep and say "Hi!" when I appear. One little girl I unwittingly insulted. She was wheeling her doll in its carriage and I said, "What a nice dolly!" She looked at me scornfully and said firmly, "It isn't a dolly, it's a baby." I hastened to agree.

May 17, 1941

At the top of this old house are three small finished attics. Each one has a couch in it so the children and other guests may come at any time; but the personality of each room will be different. The back attic with the wonderful view of the sunsets will be the Overflow Studio. Here I am putting books and papers that I want to keep and yet do not need at hand. On the wall are my travel posters. The front attic is the Give-Away Room, where I can keep all the odds and ends that have accumulated, but that we do not want as permanent possessions. Only last week a young friend visiting us was delighted with the gift of two vases from this room. The middle attic is the Christmas Room where I am storing holiday decorations, pictures, and gifts that I plan and make all through the year. I never have had so much spare room before so I am revelling in my three roomfuls of joy.

May 18, 1941

Such a laugh as I had today! In looking over some things that had been packed away I came across two old magazines of the year 1888. The advertisements were very funny to modern eyes. There was one of the Paris bustle—"Fashion Magazines indicate that instead of less, more of a bustle is to be worn this year. The Paris bustle has more shelf than formerly, to support the drapery—"

Every little while I go to some second-hand store or rummage sale and buy a few old magazines or books and always get treble the price in good laughs, and every good laugh is a joy.

May 19, 1941

It has been so cold that our living room has been closed, but at last spring has arrived and

today I went into the sunny big living room and played the piano. It was like greeting a long lost friend. The whole house seemed to awake from lethargy and a buried part of me came to life, too. Why is it that so few women keep up their music through the years? Thousands take piano lessons, but after a few years of marriage or business their music is neglected. It is good to keep music in one's life, to play the piano or other instrument for, and with, one's children, gather friends for singing together, and bring rest and appeasement to weary hearts by simple melodies. I have never astonished the world with my music, but for forty years playing the piano has been one of my big joys. When Ned was a little boy he said he was going to get him a wife who played the piano.

May 20, 1941

A gold cross on a white steeple gleaming against a deep blue sky etched with the blossoming branches of a tree. A lighted cross on top of a church, shining in the dark side streets of a city. A white cross on an old church lifting its head amid squallor and ignorance. The delicate, gleaming cross on a red brick building on a university campus. These are among my precious memory pictures, the joy of remembered beauty holding the great symbol of sacrifice and love.

May 21, 1941

One of the loveliest and most poignantly sorrowful passages in the Bible has been running through my mind these last few months, like a strain of haunting minor music. It is the lament of exiles singing among strangers (Psalm 137):

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down. . . . We hanged our harps upon the willows. . . . For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

Ned and I have learned to sing the Lord's song in a land of strangers, in a time of testing and trial; we have learned to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord," and drown the voices of doubt and discouragement, to live our song of joy, our Lord's song, by walking fearlessly into the pathway ahead, be it dark or bright, carrying ever with us as a shield the faith, the proved knowledge, that "Joy cometh in the morning."

ALTAR FIRES

Recommended for Daily Worship in the Home
Prepared by Eugene Coke Routh

SECOND QUARTER, 1941 — CHRISTIANITY REACHES OUT

Studies in the Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation

LESSON FOR APRIL 8, 1941

Christ Promises Power

Acts 1:1-12

Printed and explained in Daily Reading for Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: 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 Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:8.

MONDAY, MARCH 31

God's Promise Through Joel—Joel 2:28-32

28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.

32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

This is the Scripture passage which the apostle Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost. At a session of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dr. F. B. Meyer preached a memorable sermon using as a text, "This is that," Peter's introductory words to the quotation of this passage from Joel. In his book, *The Major Messages of the Minor Prophets*, Dr. J. W. Storer says of this prophecy: "This is that! Joel, God has indicated his word, the hour has come of which you spoke,

and as the stroke of his timepiece begins to sound the destined moment's consummation, this is that." Not only was Pentecost a fulfillment of this provision, but we may have similar experiences if we will pay the price. In the power of his Spirit both age and youth may share deeper things of God—age recounting its blessings, and youth responding to the upward call of a heaven-given vision. These revelations of God's grace and power, Joel says, are available not only to the master, but to the servants also. Employer and employee, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, may together partake of the divine gifts. The promise of spiritual endowment is to all who need deliverance—deliverance from sin, deliverance from the attacks of the Evil One, deliverance from the perplexities and anxieties of the passing days. The word "whosoever" brings hope to every despairing sinner, and courage and strength to every weary saint.

● We thank thee, Father, for the visions of victory, for the sense of thy presence, and for the wisdom and power of the Spirit granted us for the performance of every task in thy name.

TUESDAY, APRIL 1

Christ's Promise to His Church—Acts 1:1-12

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

M.—Paul's Defense. Acts 22:1-21.
T.—Paul Before Felix. Acts 24:1-27.
W.—Paul Before Agrippa. Acts 26:1-18.
T.—Agrippa's Verdict. Acts 26:19-32.
F.—Paul in Rome. Acts 28:16-30.
S.—Beginning of Wisdom. Prov. 1:1-10.

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 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 Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

Jesus told his disciples that he would not leave them alone. They had an unfinished task—to make him known unto the ends of the earth. Note the words in this

Scripture, "All that Jesus began, both to do and teach." Christ promised to be with his disciples all the way, and just before his ascension he told them that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit was come upon them. On that day when Jesus left them to go back to his Father, the disciples, like many of us, were inclined to ask questions about matters which should not concern them. Jesus said: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Parents do not always reveal all of their purposes and plans to their children. But Christ did tell his disciples the principal concern of their lives—to be his witnesses unto all nations. Premier Petain said that France failed because the people thought more about enjoyment than about sacrifice. Some day Christ will return. What account shall we give of our stewardship—selfish indulgence and enjoyment, or loyalty and sacrifice?

● Lead us, Lord, to do thy will, and give us strength day by day for the unfinished task committed to us, that we may be faithful stewards.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

The Office of the Spirit—John 16:7-15

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

In performing the unfinished task committed to us, the Holy Spirit, who is as much of a Person as Christ is, is our helper. One of the most impressive paintings in the Corcoran Art Gallery is the picture of an old fisherman and his little granddaughter sitting side by side in a rowboat. Her little hands are on the heavy oar, and by her hands are the big strong hands of the grandfather. The title of the picture is "A Helping Hand." We can do nothing of ourselves, but we can do all things through him who strengtheneth us. Jesus told these faithful men who were with him that he had many other things to tell them, but—"ye cannot bear them now." He told them that when the Spirit of Truth was come, he would guide them into all truth: for the revelation of God was written as men were moved by the Holy Spirit. We may not be able now to hear everything that Jesus would speak to our hearts, but if we are responsive to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we shall have revealed to us more and more of his will. The Holy Spirit, Jesus tells us, will convict us of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; will be a helper; will reveal the Truth to us; will declare things to come; and will glorify Jesus.

● Holy Spirit, be our helper this day, and reveal unto us the truth of Christ. Open thou our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of the Word of God and be quick to do thy bidding.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3

Gifts of the Spirit—1 Corinthians 12:1-11

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit us.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

In making Jesus Christ Lord of our lives we are to remember that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." In the home, in the school, in business, we are not all given the same work to do. We may all have a common purpose, but each has his own part in reaching the ends sought. There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. Paul uses the illustration of a body, with each member of the body having its own function. One member cannot do the work of another. Each child of God has some gift divinely bestowed. The poor widow could not preach by word of mouth, but she could set an example in living that would be told around the world. God bestows on some the gift of teaching, on others the gift of singing, on others the gift of prophecy, on others the gift of healing, and on still others the gift of comforting and encouraging.

In Margaret Ogilvy, her son, J. M. Barrie, tells the story of his mother's soft face, who, because she had passed through chastening sorrow herself, could comfort others. "That is how she got her soft face and her pathetic ways and her large charity, and why other mothers ran to her when they had lost a child."

● Help us, dear Lord, to find the practical work thou hast for us, and to do that work to thy glory.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4

Spiritual Refreshing—Isaiah 44:1-8

1 Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:

2 Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

4 And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

5 One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.

6 Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

Throughout the Bible God is saying over and over, "Fear not, neither be afraid." One of the most beautiful pictures of our God is in Isaiah 40:11. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Again in Isaiah 41:10 are

these words: "Fear thou not; 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." The apostle Paul in the dark places was cheered by the words of the Lord, "Fear not." In the last book of the Bible, the Living Christ said to the aged apostle, John: "Fear not; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." His grace is sufficient for every need. We cannot find abiding confidence and unceasing all-sufficiency anywhere else in the universe. He not only protects, but he refreshes and reinforces all who trust in him. Jesus said to the woman at the well: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." He is the Water of Life. Almost the last words in the Revelation are these: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

● In every condition and circumstance of life we turn to thee, our Father, believing that thou wilt supply grace for every need.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

The Spirit of Truth—John 15:26-27

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

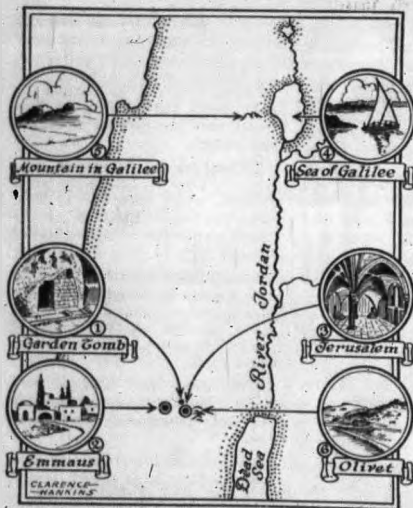
21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is



GEOGRAPHY OF THE RISEN CHRIST

written in their law. They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

It is given to the children of God not only to believe, but to suffer. The true disciple follows in the steps of Jesus in shadows as well as in sunshine. We may not be called on to face death because of our faith, but many a Christian in this day, in a hostile environment, must endure ridicule and hardships innumerable, and must show by his behavior the reality of the faith which he professes. Earle H. Ballou says that the word "crisis" in Chinese is made up of two characters, the first being "danger," and the second, "opportunity." Hence, a "crisis" is a "dangerous opportunity." We are not left alone in these trials, but the Spirit of God reinforces us. When we testify, he adds his testimony to ours. Jesus is saying also, in this Scripture passage, that his words and his works lead men to hate him. Critics of missionary endeavor say that we ought to let the heathen alone and leave them content with their own religion. Were that true, God might have left us alone in our sins and not revealed to us, through his Son, our deepest needs. Jesus not only makes men conscious of sin, but he

provides a remedy for sin. He is our best friend, and those who hate him, hate him without cause. We who have been with him are to bear witness of him that others, too, may follow him and rejoice in his companionship.

● Give us grace and strength and courage, dear Lord, that we may endure, in the Spirit of Christ, every criticism of our faith, and that we may be true witnesses for our Saviour.

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

Strength in the Lord—Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle 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.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

THE FIELD AND THE SOWER

MAY JUSTUS

The Lord came unto my heart as unto a field unplowed,
The Lord came unto my heart one day, the year was spring.
His feet in a furrow walked, before him the grasses bowed,
And over him flew the birds with sounds of rejoicing.

The bramble bush in the path entangled the Lord's ploughshare,
The thorn and the thistle vied in piercing the good Lord's hands.
And every winding root sent up a protesting prayer,
The Lord God smiled as he worked as a worker who understands.

A cry went over the field: "Lord, how can we bear the woe?"
A wall arose from the ground: "Lord, how can we bear the pain?"
The Lord God's only reply—the seeds he began to sow,
And everywhere it went, the beautiful golden grain.

The Lord God came unto my heart as unto a field unplowed,
The Lord God came unto my heart one day and the year was spring.
I have heard of a Harvester who is coming by this way,
A sound goes over the field—a sound of rejoicing.

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Recently a group of Indians put on a play in a young people's program in which young Christians were represented as keeping step with their leader. Then the devil was represented as coming on the scene and speaking words to the leader which caused those young Christians to waver and to break step. The greatest battles are not fought with material airplanes, and warships, and big guns, but are fought against the spiritual hosts of wickedness by the saints of God. We have been provided with defensive and offensive weapons which will enable us to win victories. We should make use of the whole armor of God: truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and prayer. Being thus equipped, we can say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

● Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see not only the forces that are against us, but the forces that are for us, that in thy name we may win victories for thy glory.

LESSON FOR APRIL 13, 1941

Christ Shows Himself Alive

Luke 24:12-17, 25-33

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Wednesday and Friday

GOLDEN TEXT: I . . . was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Revelation 1:18.

MONDAY, APRIL 7

The Empty Tomb—Matthew 28:1-8

1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Skeptics who reject the scriptural account of the supernatural rolling away of the stone and of the resurrection of Christ, have never been able to offer any consistent or convincing explanation of the empty tomb. There is no better attested fact in history than the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The enemies of Christ and the friends of Christ alike were surprised when they saw the empty tomb, but there were too many witnesses of that empty tomb for the fact to be denied. All alike were awed by the empty tomb, the undisturbed grave clothes, and the words of the young man who said, "He is not here: for he is risen." One day an Oriental scholar said to a Christian missionary, "Your religion has no tomb as have other religions. We know where Mohammed and Confucius and Buddha are buried, but what about Jesus?" The missionary replied, "That is the glory of the Christian religion. We need no tomb, for Jesus is risen; he is living."

● We thank thee, our Father, for the empty tomb and for the assurance in our own experience that Jesus is not only risen, but that he has daily fellowship with those who follow him.

TUESDAY, APRIL 8

Peter Comes to the Tomb—Luke 24:8-12

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

In spite of the incredulity of the eleven when the women brought the news of the empty tomb, Peter was not convinced that their words were idle talk, but he arose and went to see for himself. He had passed through so many experiences and had suffered so deeply following his denial of Jesus, that he was bewildered. After he had seen the empty tomb and undisturbed grave clothes, he went to his

home wondering. He could not understand, but in his perplexity he kept his heart and mind open. This is the spirit of any sincere seeker after the truth. Men who avow that they will not accept what they cannot understand are inconsistent. Such an attitude would be a denial of their own personalities which they cannot understand, and a confession that their minds are closed to the truth. When Moses saw the burning bush which was not consumed, he wondered and worshiped. We are told twice that Jesus appeared to Peter; once by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:5 and the other by Luke in Luke 24:34. No details are given of this sacred experience, but as Peter departed to his home, "wondering . . . at that which was come to pass," Jesus probably met him on the way, an experience no sacred that the records do not disclose what was said. "How mighty is the testimony of the Resurrection!" Lord Lyttleton and Gilbert West entered into solemn compact to prove that the Resurrection had not taken place and that Saul of Tarsus had not been converted. At the end of the year each had a surprise for the other, for each had been convinced and each had trusted Christ. General Lew Wallace tells of the years of preparation for writing *Ben Hur* with the purpose of disproving the facts of Christ and of the gospel. So convinced was he that he surrendered to Christ and joyfully told his wife of his conversion. There are more proofs and better proofs, and there are more witnesses and better witnesses, and there is more testimony and better testimony that Jesus rose from the dead than can be found to prove that George Washington ever died. That soul must deliberately and wickedly shut his eyes against the light who rejects the risen Son of God." (W. W. HAMILTON, *A Bible Revival*.)

● We cannot always understand the mysteries of thy grace, but we

believe, our Lord, and follow on where thou dost lead.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

On the Way to Emmaus—Luke 24:13-17

13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

The world had tumbled down about the men who had known Jesus and had followed him hoping "that it was he who should redeem Israel" (ASV). It looked as if everything were lost. These two, one of them Cleopas, were walking along together talking about the things that had happened. During his earthly ministry Jesus had sent the disciples out, two by two, to carry the good tidings. Here are two in sorrowful companionship, recounting the tragedy of the week. We need fellowship in sorrow as in joy, and in the performance of some worthy task. We do not always recognize Jesus when he comes to be with us. He may come in adversity, in suffering, or in some prosperous circumstance. Too often our eyes are closed, and we are not aware of his presence. It may be that Jesus is in the home, pleading with us through some discipline or sorrow to let him fill our hearts and lives.

● Lord, forgive us because we did not recognize thy Presence. Open our eyes, that whatever the circumstances of life, whatever the conditions that beset us in the home, we may behold thee. Let our eyes be open that we may behold, our ears be open that we may hear, and our hearts be open that we may feel thy Presence.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10

The Sadness of Cleopas—Luke 24:18-24

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

Everybody in Jerusalem, Cleopas said, was talking about what had happened to Jesus, the Nazarene. They poured out their hearts and disappointments to the Unknown Companion who had joined them. They had learned from the women, from the angels, and from Peter and John the story of the empty tomb, but they were still sad because they had not seen Jesus. They were slow to believe the things which had been told them and the possibility of his resurrection. The prophets had foretold the death and resurrection of Christ, and Jesus himself had told his disciples that he was to die and would be raised again, but they were slow of heart and they lacked understanding. Does Jesus find occasion to rebuke us today who profess his name and claim to be his disciples, but when we face difficulties and discouragements are disposed to give up in despair?

Are you weary, are you heart-hearted? Tell it to Jesus, tell it to Jesus.

● Increase our faith, Lord, that what thou hast spoken not only through the law and the prophets, but what thou hast told us in thine own ministry on earth and in heaven, may give to our hearts the assurance that thou wilt do that that thou hast promised to do.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

From Gloom to Joy—Luke 24:25-31

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

Joseph Fort Newton, in his sermon, "The Presence," said that if the Bible were about to be destroyed and he could save only one

flying leaf, that leaf would be the story of the walk to Emmaus. "The words thrill me, a radiant personality touches me. Ages of doubt and cruelty may lie between, but the light shines and there are footsteps by my side." When Bishop Thoburn was returning from India, years ago, a man said to him, "I have been told that you are a missionary of the Christian religion. Don't you know that Jesus Christ is dead, and that he was buried more than eighteen centuries ago?" The good bishop answered, "My friend, you are mistaken. He is living, for I have talked with him this morning in my room." The experience of those two disciples has been the experience of multitudes of believers through the ages. In our home we may have the sense of his Presence. We know that he is living, not only from what the Bible tells us, but from what our own hearts have felt. We belong to the great company of those whose eyes at first were holden so that they could not recognize Christ; but when our eyes were opened, we saw that it was he.

● Lord, we thank thee for the sense of the Presence of the Living Christ whose grace is sufficient for every need.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

Victory over the Grave—1 Corinthians 15:50-58

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

The departure of a believer is a coronation experience. The New Testament does not call such an experience death, but a sleep. We all shall not sleep, but when Jesus comes again, we shall all be changed. We shall realize fully, then, the significance of the scriptural teaching that death is swallowed up in victory. Christ assures every believer that he is victor over death; in the resurrection of which Christ is the first fruits, we shall come forth with bodies incorruptible, immortal, heavenly. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and we shall ever be with the Lord. With the assurance of such a victory, let us go on with confidence so that we may say with the apostle, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." The last words of Dwight L. Moody were: "If this is death, there is no valley. This is glorious. I have been within the gates, and I saw the children! Earth is receding; Heaven is approaching! God is calling me!"

● Take from our hearts all fear of death as thou dost give us the assurance of thy Presence with us in life and in death, and of the victory through the resurrection which thou dost vouchsafe to everyone who believes.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13

Delivered from Death—Psalm 118

Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.

2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee;

3 But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I

not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

5 The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

As we turn back to the Old Testament, we find, again and again, the assurance that the man who takes refuge in the Lord should have no fear concerning life beyond the grave. Job himself asked a question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" and answered that question with an unshaken faith, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him: For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Likewise, the psalmist, here and elsewhere, sets at rest any doubts that God will take care of his people in life, in death, and in the land beyond. The early Christians were victorious because the heart of their message was the risen, reigning Christ, and they believed that they, too, would share the resurrection experiences of their Lord.

When with the ransomed in glory His face I at last shall see, 'Twill be my joy thro' the ages To sing of His love for me."

● We cannot see all the days before us, our Lord, but we follow in the knowledge that thou wilt lead us in thy power and take us unto thyself in the heavenly home which thou art preparing for us.

Using Witnessing Power

Act 3:1-4: 6:9-20

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31.

MONDAY, APRIL 14

Power to Witness—Act 4:1-12

5 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

The priests, the elders, the scribes, and their associates sought to suppress the testimony concerning the resurrection of Jesus, but they could not explain the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. The works of God, whether in the healing of the sick or in the transformation of character, are unanswerable. "Since they saw the man standing with them, who had been healed, they had nothing to answer" (Montgomery). The religious leaders of Jerusalem were disturbed more by the acts of the apostles than by their arguments, although they could not

refute their testimony. A son testified the other day that he was led to trust Christ, not so much by the message of the preacher, as by the life of his mother. There was something about that life which he could not explain apart from her faith. The religious leaders in Jerusalem knew that there was some power unknown to them which enabled these men to cure the cripple. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, gave the credit to God, not to man. He exalted the name of Jesus Christ, for that name not only enabled the cripple to stand before them strong and well, but that name is the only name under heaven whereby men must be saved. Mohammed cannot save, Confucius cannot save, Buddha cannot save, good works cannot save, ordinances cannot save; only Jesus Christ can save.

● We thank thee, our Father, for the transforming power of Jesus Christ. Help us so to live this day that men may see our good works and glorify thee.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

Power to Be Bold—Act 4:13-23

13 ¶ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Use of the Tongue. Prov. 12:13-20.
T.—The Rich and the Poor. Prov. 22:1-16.
W.—Avoid the Wine Cup. Prov. 23:29-35.
Th.—The Worthy Woman. Prov. 31:20-30.
F.—All Things Are Vanity. Eccl. 1:2-11.
S.—Vanity of Possessions. Eccl. 5:1-11.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem: and we cannot deny it.

17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Peter and John were neither ashamed nor afraid. Efforts to silence them by threats only emboldened them to bear testimony to the name of Jesus. "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John, was commanded by his enemies to revile Christ, he replied: "Four score and six years have I served Him, and He hath done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" The Holy Spirit gives to men and women, whose lives are in accord with their profession, holy boldness to witness for God. Missionaries when threatened with death have been faithful to their Lord, through the centuries martyrs have sealed their testimony with their blood. Despite "trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment," they were unflinching in their devotion. When James Hannington, on his road to Uganda, Africa, faced the soldiers of M'wanga, the arch persecutor of Christians, he said, just before he

was killed: "Tell your king that I am dying for the people of Uganda, and that I have bought the road to Uganda with my life."

● Give us courage today to say and do those things that will exalt the name of our Saviour.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

Boldness by Faith—Daniel 3:13-18

13 ¶ Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

15 Now if ye be ready, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psallery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

This is one of the stories of which the world never grows weary of hearing. Here is pictured the conflict between the God of Daniel and the god of the heathen king. It was also a test of the faith and courage of men who worshiped and served God. They believed that their God would be able to deliver them, but the real test of their faith comes in their declaration: "But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Even if God should seem for a moment to fail us, we will do right anyway. If some sorrow, some affliction, some

adverse circumstance, has come into our lives, we will not let that condition or circumstance of life shake our faith in God. Jesus was the supreme example when, on the cross, after He had cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he said, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." "Into thy hands" is the decision which every child of God should make in every hour of trial. Just when I need Him, Jesus is near. Just when I falter, just when I fear: Ready to help me, ready to cheer, Just when I need Him most.

● So strengthen our faith, sustain us by thy grace, that we may let the world know that thou and thou alone art God.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Not Ashamed of the Power—Romans 1:7-18

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

We have many things to encourage us in our Christian lives: the faith and fidelity of our fellow believers, the assurance of God's power available to all who believe, the revelation of God's righteousness, the realization of our obligation to the whole world. We may grow much by studying Paul's prayer life, and by examining the sources of his strength. He was strengthened and sustained primarily by the grace of God, but he was also helped immeasurably by the prayers and the faith and the deeds of others; others in turn were encouraged by Paul's life and labors. So we, too, by kind faith and virtuous deed are to lift up the hands that hang down, and make straight paths for our feet, that others as well as we may be helped thereby to walk in the Way. We have the gospel which has proven its value to the whole world; a gospel which saves Jew and Gentile; a gospel which is the saving power of God unto everyone who believes. Whatever the race, the color, the condition in life, God has entrusted to us that gospel and we have a debt to others which can only be discharged by preaching and living that gospel.

● We thank thee, our Father, that thou hast not only saved us by the gospel of Christ, but that thou dost sustain and lead us. We accept the stewardship of that gospel, that we may make Christ known, both to our neighbors and to the lost, in the uttermost parts of the earth,

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

The Blessing of Trial—James 1:12-18

12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

No man is free from temptation. Even Jesus himself was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin. God does not tempt men, but he provides with every temptation a way of escape, and that way is through Christ. Every child of God may avail himself of that deliverance from evil and our daily prayer should be: "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." Temptations come before us in a thousand forms, the temptation to follow the crowd, to do evil, to compromise, to get evil gain, to selfish indulgence. But God has made available to us heavenly resources. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation" and trial. One of the disastrous results of yielding to temptation is that we blame God or blame others even as Adam blamed both God and Eve. Dr. A. T. Robertson says "The pitfalls are many in modern life, in the country, in the village, and in the city . . . but the point made by James is that the one who yields does so because of the sin in one's own heart." Dr. Robertson quotes a woman who writes out of a sordid life: "No matter how much humiliation a girl has to endure, it is better to endure it than to get into this life." God has not left us alone. "Every good and every perfect gift is from above." In the power and wisdom of God we are to make the right use of those gifts.

● As we go out daily into the highways of the world, so lead us and direct our steps that we may not yield to the temptations of life and be defeated by the trials which would beat us down.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

The Reward of Faithfulness—
Revelation 7:13-17

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Once in a while God lifts the curtain and gives us a glimpse of the glorious rewards for those who endure. In the preceding chapter John writes: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" All about us are men and women who are crying out, "How long, O Lord, how long?" Here in the Scriptures we have just read is the promise of ultimate victory. There will be a multitude in that day who have come out of the great tribulation, a multitude who will enter into the eternal habitation in which there will be no more hunger, no more suffering, no more death. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," and the Lamb shall be our shepherd.

● We thank thee, our Father, for the assurance that when we have passed through the temptations and trials and tribulations of this earthly experience, we shall enter

into the glorious inheritance provided for those who love thee and are kept by thy power.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20

The Triumph of Faith—Romans 10:8-11

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

The word of faith which we preach must be in our hearts. Out of the heart are the issues of life. The heart must be cleansed by the blood of Jesus before his Spirit can dwell therein. No one can see God unless he has passed through that regenerating experience. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." But it is not enough for us to have God in the heart; we must confess him known to others. We must confess him with the mouth. We have a faith conditioned here on belief and confession. The light within will shine out. The glory of saving faith cannot be hidden. The man who believes is not ashamed, and this promise and this provision is for all who believe wherever they may dwell. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," and it is our business to tell all men what God has done for us. We confess Jesus Christ not only as Saviour, but as Lord.

● We are not ashamed, our Father, of thee and of what thou hast done for us. Strengthen our faith and increase our courage so that we may always rejoice to confess the living faith in our hearts.

The Better Home

LESSON FOR APRIL 27, 1941

The Early Church Meeting Human Needs

Acts 4:32-35; 8:1-7

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Acts 4:32.

MONDAY, APRIL 21

The Jerusalem Brotherhood—
Acts 4:32-35

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Paul says in his letter to the Romans that the Scriptures are written for our instruction. We may learn from the Jerusalem church what we should do as a brotherhood in the Lord. The early believers were united in heart and soul and in the administration of their possessions. They had learned from Christ that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of his possessions. They had learned, too, that ownership is vested not in us, but in God, the giver of every good and perfect gift. They had learned that they were stewards; and it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful. Because they were of one heart and soul, and because they were united in fellowship and in service; because they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the message of the Lord with boldness; there was a response to their witness, "and great grace was upon them all." As there was need in their community, they were selling their houses and lands and were bringing the price of the things and laying it at the apostles' feet. They did not sell everything at once, but they sold houses and lands as there was need and the distribution was

not made by themselves, but by the apostles. This would correspond to the bringing of our offerings to the church where there is need. There are several points of difference between the use of property by this early church and communism. It was Christian; individual ownership or stewardship of property was recognized; the distribution was made for and by the church and not by the state; it was free of intolerance; it was voluntary, not compulsory; it was only for a temporary emergency. "It was a community of regenerated souls living together in a spiritual mastery of spiritual goods, seeking divine ownership of all things, administering their stewardship for the common good under a common control" (Dawson).

● Teach us, O Lord, that the property which thou hast committed to us is to be used in accordance with thy will to meet human needs and to send thy gospel to the ends of the earth.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

Organized Service—Acts 8:1-7

1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS
For Individual Devotions

M.—Vanity of Labor. Eccl. 2:18-20.
T.—Vanity of Times and Seasons. Eccl. 3:1-16.
W.—Vanity of Riches. Eccl. 5:1-15.
Th.—Vanity of Avarice. Eccl. 5:18 to 6:9.
Fr.—What Is the Chief Good? Eccl. 7:1-16.
S.—Uncertainties of Life. Eccl. 9:10-18.

should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God increased: and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Into the early church which was made up of imperfect people like churches of the present day, there were projected minor disagreements and discords. Among the multitude of disciples in Jerusalem, representing various lands, the widows of Grecian Jews complained that they were being neglected in this daily distribution. At certain feasts, following the customs of the years, multitudes were present from north, east, south, and west. The needs of the believers were supplied by the church and not by the state. The twelve apostles, believing that they should not dissipate their energy in details of administration, asked the church to select seven men "of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (ASV) who might look after the tables. The apostles needed to "continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word." These men were selected by the church and not appointed by the apostles. It was a congregational form of church government. Organization is not the principal thing in a church, but

It is necessary. When Christ fed the five thousand, Luke tells us that Jesus asked the disciples to have the multitude to "sit down by companies." He taught us to distribute responsibility and organize for efficient service. Christianity is to serve as well as worship, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are to follow in the steps of him who went about doing good.

● Teach us, O Lord, that as redeemed men and women, we are not only to love thee with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength, but that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

Mutual Helpfulness—Romans 12:1-8

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus;

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

The Scriptures teach us to be mutually helpful. "One another" is found frequently in the Bible. We are to pray for one another; show tender affection to one another; prove one another; edify one another; be of the same mind toward one another; administer care for one another; forbear one another;

be kind to one another; comfort one another; use hospitality one to another; have fellowship one with another. In the parable of the good Samaritan, in the story of the judgment in Matthew 25, and in his own personal ministry, Christ taught us to minister unto the suffering. Our home life and our church life will be strengthened when, in faith and practice, we bear the infirmities of the weak and do not seek primarily to please ourselves.

● Teach us, our Father, to follow the example of Christ who pleased not himself, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto others.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Forbearance and Helpfulness—Galatians 6:1-10

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Isn't the apostle saying here that if a man be overtaken by any trespass, we are not to criticize or condemn, but we are to restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness? Only those who are spiritually qualified are masters of the art of restoration. We should cultivate this art,

for we know not when we ourselves may be tempted and may be overtaken. A covetous man, whose life is inconsistent with his profession, should not be selected to restore a young Christian. Someone who is spiritual, someone whose daily life is a testimony to Christ, can most effectively render that delicate service. In this passage we read two sentences which seem to be contradictory. "Bear ye one another's burdens. . . . For every man shall bear his own burden," but these are two different words in the original. One is a burden of community interest and the other is an individual burden.

● Give unto us grace and wisdom, Lord, to seek out those who are in need of an encouraging word and a neighborly deed, and minister unto that one in the name of Jesus.

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

A Cheerful Service—1 Corinthians 13:1-4

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

In the preceding chapter Paul has commended the saints of Macedonia for the grace of giving. Out of their deep poverty, beyond their power, they had given more than Paul had hoped; and, instead of the preacher entreating them, they had entreated him to receive their gifts. The secret of their giving is found in the statement, "First they gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." This Scripture verse cites the power of a worthy example. "Your zeal hath provoked very many." Many others in the matter of giving are following our example, and scriptural giving on our part will lead others to give likewise. By the way of a reminder, Paul exhorts his brethren in Corinth to measure up to his expectations and to reach the goal in liberality which they had already set before them. This giving, however, should not be primarily because of what others have done, or because we are asked to give; but we should give bountifully so that we may reap bountifully, and give cheerfully that the grace of God may abound toward us. God loves a cheerful giver, not one who gives because he is being watched, or because he is being compelled to give. We should give for love's sake, because God loved us so much that he gave his best for us.

● Open our hearts, Lord, that as thou hast given thine only Son to us, so we may be constrained, for love's sake, to give thee the first place in our affections and to bring to thee love's richest gifts.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26

The Divine Helper—Isaiah 41:1-10

8 But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

9 Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

10 Fear thou not, 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.

11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

13 For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

15 Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

16 Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

God will not only protect those whom he has chosen to do his will and so fortify them that they shall have no occasion to fear or be dismayed, but he will strengthen and reinforce them that no evil can withstand them. Always God is saying to us as we undertake to do his will, "Fear not; I will help thee." This gives us encouragement however difficult the circumstances. We find in the preceding verses a picture of co-operation on the part of earthly artisans. How much more should we who are in the Lord's business co-operate with one another, encourage one another, because we have the sense of divine co-operation and encouragement! Whether we are missionaries in our own neighborhoods, or go to the ends of the earth, we are conscious of the presence and power of the divine helper, and find increasing joy in the fellowship of others and in co-operative service in our Father's business.

● Whatever the trials and tempests of life, we are confident, Lord, that when we are on missions for thee and are doing thy will, thou wilt be with us all the way.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

Growth Through Generosity—Psalm 113

1 Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

5 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor: his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

The man who is generous, who renders cheerful service in Christ's name, who seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, shall grow in grace, shall abound in mercy, shall prosper in material things: not that these things constitute his motive for serving—for that would be unworthy service—but because of the promise of God to those who keep his commandments and cheerfully do his will. God has promised to open the windows and pour out overflowing blessings to his people who honor him and who bring into the Lord's storehouse their tithes and offerings. The man who puts God first in his life and home is not over-anxious concerning tomorrow, for his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. Two great Christian laymen testified recently that the turning point in their business and in their spiritual experiences came when they made God their partners and gave him the supreme place in their plans and purposes. One of these men, Mr. LeTourneau, said that when hard times came he resolved to pay his missionary pledge first. When he placed God at the top of the list, God blessed him.

● Whatever the circumstances that beset us we desire, our Heavenly Father, to seek first thy kingdom and thy righteousness, and to enthroned thee in our hearts.

The Church Enlarging Its Fellowship

Acts 8:1-4, 14:17, 23

Printed and explained in Daily Reading for Monday

GOLDEN TEXT: Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Acts 8:4

MONDAY, APRIL 28

The Church Enlarging its Fellowship—
Acts 8:1-4

1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

Christ commissioned his disciples to begin in Jerusalem, but they were to extend their missionary labors beyond Jerusalem throughout Judea and Samaria, unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Did not God permit persecution against the church to scatter believers abroad in accord with the geography of the commission? Back in Deuteronomy is a picture of the eagle who breaks up the nest to compel the little eagles to try their wings, although the mother eagle is underneath to sustain them in their trials. A new day came to Christians in Mexico when the native churches were compelled to depend on themselves and on their own leadership. In China, with the migration of millions to the back

side of China enforced by the invasion of hostile armies, a multitude of believers carried the gospel message with them to other multitudes who had never heard the name of Jesus. Throughout Christian history, persecution has frequently had the effect of enlarging the fellowship of believers. "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word." Persecution in Jerusalem brought joy in Samaria.

● We thank thee, our Father, for the worldwide vision and task which thou hast given us, and know that whatever difficulties encompass us, we may enter the open door which thou hast set before us.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Philip and the Ethiopian—Acts 8:26-40

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

- M.—Value of Wisdom. Eccl. 10:8-20.
T.—Value of Charity. Eccl. 11.
W.—Value of Religion. Eccl. 12.
Th.—Vision and Call. Isa. 6.
F.—Cleansing from Sin Promised. Isa. 1:1-30.
S.—The Sinful Nation. Isa. 2:1-8; 3:10-26.

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Aco: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

One of the most interesting pictures in New Testament times is the picture of the Ethiopian official returning from Jerusalem to his home. Philip had been hidden by the Lord to leave his ministry to the multitudes in Samaria to go down the desert highway southwest from Jerusalem. He might have wondered why God was taking him away from the crowds to the

desert. God took Moses from Egypt to the deserts of Sinai to prepare him for a bigger work. God sent Saul of Tarsus into the deserts of Arabia to prepare him for a mission to the Gentiles. God sent Philip from the many villages of Samaria to one man driving down the highway towards Africa. Some-

body in Jerusalem had put into the hands of the Ethiopian a copy of the prophecy of Isaiah, and when Philip asked him, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" he replied, "How can I except some man should guide me?" There is the teacher, and there is the student desiring to know the truth. Beginning with that Scripture passage, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, Philip preached unto him Jesus. We may find Jesus throughout the Old Testament. Philip won the Ethiopian official and baptized him when he had believed on Jesus Christ, and that Ethiopian official influenced his country for God. We may get discouraged sometimes because we have only one or two, or only a few, in our class, but God may use that one or two of those few to make him known to the ends of the earth. We are told that only one boy was converted in a meeting years ago in North Carolina, but that boy was A. T. Robertson, who became in his day the greatest scholar in New Testament Greek.

● Strengthen our faith, O Lord, as we try to be faithful in the little things which thou hast committed to us, for thou hast taught us that the little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

Foreigners Converted—Isaiah 18:18-25

18 ¶ In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction.

19 In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.

20 And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them

a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

21 And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.

22 And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

23 ¶ In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:

25 Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

One may be surprised to learn that in the land of Egypt were people "speaking the language of Canaan and loyal to the Lord of hosts" (Moffatt), but the gospel can find a lodging in the hearts of people in any nation. Somebody had been doing missionary work. Some of the Baptist churches in Italy had their beginnings with Italian Baptists who had been won to Christ in an Italian mission in Galveston and had returned to their homeland to be witnesses for Christ. When the Baptist World Alliance met in Philadelphia in 1911 we were told of men in Southeastern Europe who had gotten hold of a New Testament and had begun to read it. They put an advertisement in the papers in Sofia, asking if anyone in the wide world believed in the baptism of believers and the preaching of the gospel by believers, to come to their help and baptize them upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Yes, the gospel of Jesus Christ is still the power of God in every nation where men hear about God and believe.

● We thank thee, Lord, that where-ever men call upon thee with contrite, trustful hearts, thou wilt hear and answer them.

THURSDAY, MAY 1

Gentiles Become Fellow Citizens—
Ephesians 2:11-22

11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands:

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace:

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Back through the years a wall had stood between the Jews and Gentiles. The Jew believed that a Gentile could come to God only by becoming a Jewish proselyte. Paul tells us in Ephesians and Colossians that the mystery which for ages had been hid in God was revealed to the apostles and prophets by the Spirit; namely, that "the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

(Eph. 2:14). Christ broke down the middle wall which had separated the Jew from the Gentile and through him, men of every nation, Arie, and tongue may have access in one Spirit unto the Father. Christ died as much for the man in Africa as for the man in America; and all believers, wherever they dwell, are fellow citizens with the saints and with the household of God. Christ's gospel breaks down the middle wall of partition between rich and poor, between employer and employee, between educated and uneducated. In his church we may all have fellowship in his service. One of the clear teachings of the New Testament is that all believers, whatever their rank or standing in the world, have a right to equal privileges in the church.

● We thank thee, our Father, that the way has been opened for all who believe to come to thy throne of grace, else we might never have been saved.

FRIDAY, MAY 2

Jonah's Widened Horizon—
Jonah 3:1-4

- 1 And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying,
- 2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.
- 3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.
- 4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

The book of Jonah is one of the greatest world missionary tracts ever written. Jonah did not believe in carrying to alien nations the tidings of Israel's God, and when God told him to preach unto the city which had invaded his own land, he went in the other direction and tried to run away from God, as many men and women are trying to do these days. But he could not escape God; and when he had been disciplined by the Lord, and had been bidden the second time to go unto Nineveh and preach the preaching which God had bidden him, he obeyed. Jonah

was disobedient, but God gave him a second chance to do his will. After Moses in his impetuosity had smitten a man in Egypt and had fled, God gave him another opportunity. After Simon Peter had denied his Lord, Christ sent him a special invitation to meet him in Galilee and the cowardly apostle became a brave witness for Christ. "The hope of the world," said Dr. J. W. Storer, "is this: that God loves the souls of men whom men with souls love not. Whether it be in a Nineveh or a Jerusalem, his voice is tenderly saying, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.'"

● Forgive us, Lord, that we have been slow of faith and negligent in obeying thy command to preach the gospel to every creature.

SATURDAY, MAY 3

Nineveh's Prompt Repentance—
Jonah 3:5-10

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

9 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

After the preaching of judgment and repentance, there followed one of the greatest meetings in all history. In which multitudes believed on God, including the king, who exhorted them to repent and

turn from their evil ways. God has given us in America the opportunity to carry his message to a weary, warring world. When God's call comes to us as individuals for any service in his name, let us arise and go where he bids us go. In Nineveh, in Ephesus, and in other cities of the ancient and modern world, when the gospel was preached with the power of the Holy Spirit, men and women cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" We wonder if the experiences in Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah were not similar to the cries of conscience-stricken sinners when Jonathan Edwards preached on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." We are told that God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them. The change was not with God, but with the sinners of Nineveh. When men repent of their sins, forsake their evil ways, and return to God, God always welcomes them and saves them by his grace. He is not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

● "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

SUNDAY, MAY 4

Gentiles Follow the Gleam—Jonah 3:10-14

1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of

Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaloth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

9 Surely the Isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their

silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

The only light for a world in the darkness of sin and superstition, and enmity is Jesus Christ who is the Light of the World. Even as we write these words, "a black cloud shrouds the nations, yet the Eternal shines out upon you, his splendour on you gleams" (Isa. 60:2, Moffatt). The only light which can come to troubled and tempted hearts is Jesus.

LESSON FOR MAY 11, 1941

The Responsibility of the Home Regarding Beverage Alcohol

Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Jeremiah 25:5-10

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6.

MONDAY, MAY 5

Parental Responsibility—
Deuteronomy 6:4-8

4 Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord:

5 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

This Scripture lesson touches the heart of true home life. The daily

papers, the magazines, the radio, the movies, the automobile, the strenuous business and social engagements, all demand so much of our time that we neglect the most important asset, the teaching of the Word of God in our home and the meditations on these teachings in our hearts. America's greatest need is more homes which give the Word of God the central place in their daily schedules. A study of the lives of one hundred twenty-seven foreign missionaries revealed the interesting fact that one hundred twenty-one had come from homes which had the family altar where the Word of God was read

Something happens when the light shines into the hearts of men. Then they see and are radiant. Their hearts are enriched and they bring their wealth unto God. When the light shines in, we give the best to God. We read further along in this chapter, and see that it is not for a brief period, as is the sun or the moon, but is an Everlasting Light and the days of their mourning shall be ended.

● We thank thee, our Father, that thou didst send thy Light into the world, the Light which shineth in the Darkness.

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

- M.—The Song of the Vineyard. Isa. 5: 1-12.
T.—Immanuel Will Come. Isa. 9:1-7.
W.—Return of the Remnant. Isa. 10: 20-27.
Th.—Messiah's Reign. Isa. 11:1-9.
F.—Psalm of Thanksgiving. Isa. 12:1-4.
S.—Jehovah's Triumph. Isa. 25:1-8; 26: 1-7.

● We thank thee, O Lord, for the memories of the homes which thou didst give us and for the simple faith of those who built those homes.

TUESDAY, MAY 8

A Temperate Family—Jeremiah 35:1-11

1 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

2 Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

3 Then I look Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites;

4 And I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door:

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever:

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents: that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers.

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

9 Nor, to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

Here is a picture of a home which was brought up to fear God. The

children did not yield to temptation, did not drink wine even in the name of religion, because their father had taught them to drink no wine and they had loved him and respected his admonitions. They were simple, humble people, contented to live in tents and to walk in the way of their father. David Livingstone said of his father, "He deserves my lasting gratitude for presenting me from infancy with the continuously pious example. . . .

By his winning ways he made the heartstrings of his children twine around him." Frances Willard's father was a total abstainer and his membership certificate in a temperance society was hung on the dining room wall where the children could see it every day.

● We thank thee, O God, for thy sustaining and strengthening presence amid all the trials and temptations of life.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

Rewards and Penalties—

Jeremiah 35:12-18

12 ¶ Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying,

13 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the Lord.

14 The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me.

15 I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

16 Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father,

which he commanded them, and this people hath not hearkened unto me:

17 Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

18 ¶ And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

God used the example of the Rechabites as an illustration of a lesson which he wished to teach the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem concerning their disobedience. He said in effect, "These sons obeyed their father's command, but ye have not obeyed me." He promised a reward to the Rechabites to pass judgment on the men of Judah because they disobeyed God. God is a loving Heavenly Father to those who have been saved by his grace; but he is also a Holy God who disciplines his children, even as wise and loving and just parents discipline their disobedient children. Not all suffering comes because of disobedience. One day when the disciples asked, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Jesus taught, too, in John 15 that fruit-bearing branches are cleaned and pruned that they may bear more fruit. The writer to the Hebrews asked, "What son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" Some suffering, some losses, some judgments, come because of our disobedience, because of our wayward lives, because we have forsaken God and have gone after other gods. Let us search our own lives and our home to make sure that we are obedient to the will of God, and that we are doing those things, and

only those things, that please him. The apostle John has this word for us, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

● Search us, O Lord, and know our hearts; try us and know our thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in us; and lead us in the way everlasting.

THURSDAY, MAY 8

The Nazirite—Numbers 6:1-4

1 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazirite, to separate themselves unto the Lord:

3 He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.

4 All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk.

5 All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.

6 All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall come at no dead body.

7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the consecration of his God is upon his head.

8 All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord.

In his prayer recorded in John 17 Jesus said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." The primary meaning of sanctification is separation, consecration.

Back in the old days of the nation of Israel, men and women similarly set themselves apart to the performance of a holy mission. They made a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, "to separate themselves unto the Lord." Whatever the measure or type of self-denial in the life of a Christian, everyone of us should so identify ourselves with Christ's cause and so relate ourselves to his high and holy ideals that the world may be able to distinguish us from unbelievers. We may not be required to follow the letter of the Mosaic Law in this separation, this consecration, but everyone of us should, in spirit and in life, come out from among the ungodly and so live that men may see our good works and glorify our Father. A well-known newspaper columnist said not long ago that one day as he was walking along the street his thoughts were evil, but when one of God's great ministers passed him he was rebuked in heart for entertaining any such thoughts; the very presence of a man who had separated himself from worldly things to magnify Christ was a blessing to this man of the world.

● We thank thee, Lord, for our loved ones whom thou hast given us and for our dear friends. Help us, for their sakes, to separate ourselves from the world in our ideals and in our living.

FRIDAY, MAY 9

Being a Good Example—

1 Corinthians 8:4-13

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this

hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

The solution to many perplexing questions is found in these Scripture verses. Paul is saying that meat offered to idols may be neither better nor worse than any other meat and that the eating of such meat is not a sin, unless in so doing we offend the consciences of people and thereby become a stumbling block to them. There are many things which are wrong in themselves. The drinking of alcoholic liquors, regardless of its influence on others, is physically and morally hurtful to the person who drinks. Likewise, gambling is sinful and degrading; so with immoral living. Evil deeds carry within themselves their penalties. Some Christians think that they can play cards, not for gain, and thereby do no wrong. But the ordinary pack of playing cards is a chief tool for gambling the world around; and such implements of gambling in the home or elsewhere may not only offend the consciences of the weak and be a stumbling block to them, but it may be the first step in teaching them to gamble. A child may become a gambler because he learned the first lesson in the home. A good surgeon always cleanses his hands before he attempts any operation. We must have clean hands and pure hearts if we would help others spiritually.

● Lord, direct our home life and our social relationships that we may never be stumbling blocks to our associates.

SATURDAY, MAY 10

Warning Against Wrong Influence—
Habakkuk 2:15-20

15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that pullest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

16 Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory.

17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts—which made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

18 What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.

20 But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.

Habakkuk, who was perplexed by the invasion of a foreign foe, by injustice and lawlessness and violence within his land, and by the destruction wrought by devastating drought, could not understand God's apparent indifference. But the Lord gave unto the prophet in the high fortress the justification for this discipline of a nation which, as pointed out in this chapter, was guilty of idolatry, intemperance, immorality, injustice, covetousness, and iniquity. Particularly in this passage which we have just read, God pointed out the curse of intemperance and of idolatry. The people who name the name of the Lord should never promote or defend any policy which contributes to drunkenness and which turns the people away from

the living God. Moreover, we should have so much regard and respect for our influence that we will be slow to do anything, possibly harmless in itself, which would cause our brother to stumble. We are to follow the example of Paul who said more than once that if eating meat made his brother offend, he would eat no meat forevermore, that he cause not his brother to stumble. "A great pastor, who declined the offer of tickets to the opera, was asked the reason for so doing by his aggrieved friend. He reminded her of the care exercised by the surgeons and their assistants in their work with the human body. He called attention to the sterilization of instruments, of clothing, of thread and needles, and of the precaution taken in every way known to medical science. Why? Because they are dealing with life, and they are unwilling to take any possible risks. The minister said: 'I, too, am dealing with life, spiritual life, eternal life, and I am under even greater obligation to see that I take no risk which may cause my work and life and influence to be a menace.' Parents and pastors and teachers and friends, who conform to this world, are not taking the precautions ordered by the Great Physician, and need not be surprised if spiritual disease and death come to those whom they ought to help" (W. W. HAMILTON, *A Bible Revival*).

● Help us, O God, to set our affections on things above and so to live that men seeing our good works, may glorify thee.

SUNDAY, MAY 11

Teaching Children Obedience to God—
Psalm 78:1-7

1 Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in

Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children;

7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

One of the most interesting stories in the Old Testament is found back in the book of Joshua. When the tribes west of the Jordan River heard that the two and one-half tribes east had built an altar, they prepared to war against their brethren east of the river and destroy the altar which seemed to them to be an evidence of rebellion against God. The two and one-half tribes explained that they had built that altar not for burnt offerings, or for meat offerings, or for sacrifice, but to remind their children of God and to prepare against the time to come when "your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel?" The same concern for the religious training of the children is found in our Scripture passage for this day. "Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children." Many of us owe our Christian faith and our ideals to our fathers who taught us. Let us be as true to our own children, "that they might set their hope in God." Dr. H. C. Mabie, one of the greatest missionary statesmen in the ranks of American Baptists, told the story of his first missionary impression. When he was a little child he attended a missionary meeting with his mother. "When the contribution plate came to my mother, I saw her slip a ring off her finger and lay it on the plate, and then I observed that she wiped some hot tears from her eyes. Then I knew that some great thing was going on or my mother would not do that. . . . It is doubtless out of such a childish experience that there arose in my heart such an ideal concerning Christian missions."

● For the sake of those whom thou hast given us in the home circle, we dedicate ourselves, O God, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

LESSON FOR MAY 12, 1941

Broadening Christian Horizons: Saul's Conversion

Acts 9:1-18

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Acts 26:19.

MONDAY, MAY 12

Saul the Persecutor—Acts 9:1-8

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him in to Damascus.

In writing to his young friend, Timothy, Paul said of himself, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, to a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." Paul's own experience is assurance that the worst sinner in our own community may be saved

by the grace of God. According to Paul's testimony, he delivered into prisons both men and women and consented to the death of the saints. As he went on his way to Damascus to arrest others of the Way, whether men or women, he met the Living Christ face to face. He could no longer doubt the reality and power of Jesus Christ. When Nathanael asked Philip, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip answered, "Come and see." We would not debate with anyone who doubts the person and deity of Christ. We would only ask that he be honest and sincere enough to put Christ to the test—"Come and see." Not all men have the same experiences as Saul of Tarsus, but all men may know that Christ is Saviour and Lord. Years ago we met a man who for many years had been a professed atheist, lecturing on infidelity in nearly every state in the Union; but one night when, in his perplexities, he cried in all sincerity unto God, "O God, if there be a God, show thyself unto me." God heard that cry and saved the sinner who sincerely sought the Way.

● Amidst the world turmoil, we thank thee, our Father, that our faith rests in One whom we met face to face, the Living Christ.

TUESDAY, MAY 13

Saul's Conversion—Acts 9:8-18

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS
For Individual Devotions

M.—Woe unto Ephraim. Isa. 28:1-12.
T.—Trust Jehovah, not Egypt. Isa. 31.
W.—Assyria's Army Slain. Isa. 37:14-20, 34-38.
T.—Hezekiah's Recovery. Isa. 38:1-15.
F.—Jehovah Comforts. Isa. 40:1-11.
S.—Jehovah's Servant. Isa. 42:1-12.

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem.

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

When Saul of Tarsus met Jesus, he asked two questions, "Who art thou, Lord?" and "What wilt thou have me to do?" From that hour until he reached the end of his earthly journey, he sought to follow wherever Jesus Christ, his Saviour and Lord, led him. Jesus himself might have told Saul of Tarsus directly what he should do, but he chose one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, to instruct Saul what he should do. Ananias revealed to him that God had appointed him "that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth" (22:14). The next step was to be baptized as a symbol of his spiritual experience. According to the divine plan as revealed in the Acts, saved people should follow Christ in baptism. God uses us as his witnesses to lead

men and women to believe on him, and to instruct them in what they should do as followers of Christ. Henceforth, the man who had been zealous for God according to the law of his fathers was to be zealous for Jesus Christ. He knew whom he had believed and was persuaded that he was able to keep that which he had committed unto him. For him to live was Christ. One of our greatest Jewish evangelists tells how a Christian friend led him into the light when he was seeking the Way. Hyman Appel-man, a young Jewish lawyer from Chicago, was passing through Kansas City on a vacation trip to the West. He met a reporter on a Kansas City daily and their conversation led to an argument about the New Testament. The newspaperman suggested to the Jewish lawyer that he had better learn more about the New Testament before discussing it further. The young attorney bought a copy of the New Testament and read the Gospel of John. Going on to Denver he met a pastor in that city who led him to Christ.

● Help us to live, dear Lord, that when sinners are seeking the Light, thou canst use us to direct them to thee.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

Paul's Testimony—Acts 22:1-13

1 Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)

3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the father, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwell there,

13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

Paul's experience is given three times in the book of Acts, once by Luke in his account of Paul's conversion, and by Paul at Jerusalem and Caesarea in chapters 22 and 26 of Acts. He probably told his experience wherever he went. He was a Jew who had received his religious instruction at the feet of Gamaliel and was zealous for God. Paul himself wrote: "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." Saul of Tarsus with all of his academic and religious training was not ready to be a witness until he had met Jesus, had surrendered to do his will, had been instructed by a good man who was acquainted with the saving grace of God. In many mission

fields young converts are required to pass through a period of instruction before they are received into the fellowship of the church.

● Lord, lead us in the study of thy Word and into an acquaintance with thy work that we may instruct others who would come into the knowledge of the truth.

THURSDAY, MAY 15

Giving Up All for Christ—

Philippians 3:1-14

1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I

may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

No man of his day had a better family background than Saul of Tarsus. He was a religious leader beyond his equals. He was one of the best educated men of his generation. He had wide influence among his friends. He was blameless so far as the law was concerned; but with all of those achievements, he was the chief of sinners and only the grace of God could save him. When Christ came into his life, he realized that those things which were gain to him personally were loss for Christ. God could and would use a man who was personally equipped, who was willing to be transformed by divine grace, and who would transfer the center of his life from himself to Christ. His supreme desire was that he might know Christ, that he might know the power of his resurrection, and the chastening fellowship of suffering. Henceforth, he set his face forward to the goal of the upward calling.

● We are not worthy to be good soldiers of thine, our Lord, until thou hast redeemed us from the power of darkness and hast disciplined us in service and suffering.

FRIDAY, MAY 16

Saved Through Grace—Galatians 1:11-17

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it;

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Throughout his ministry, Paul sought to make clear the truth, that he was what he was by the grace of God, not by his personal attainments. "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The grace of God saved him; God by his grace called him. God's grace was sufficient for him. In every time of trial, he possessed gifts according to the grace that was given him. He preached that men were saved by grace and not by works. Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. As sin reigned unto death, so grace reigned unto eternal life. Paul also taught that God had bestowed his grace upon us that we might be the better equipped to serve him. We are to abound in the grace of giving not only money, but life. The supreme example set before us as expressed in the words: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." God has saved each one of us for a good purpose: what is that purpose in my life? "God called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me."

● Lord, reveal unto us thy purpose for our lives and use us to fulfill that purpose.

SATURDAY, MAY 17

Appointed to Service—1 Timothy 1:12-17

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry:

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul marvels that although he had been the chief of sinners, a blasphemer, a persecutor, an enemy of believers, God conferred his grace upon him. Christ Jesus, his Lord, counted him faithful and appointed him to his service. He had committed all to Christ, and Christ had committed to him his truth—"the glorious gospel of the blessed God." Paul knew how to become all things to all men, if by all means he might win some. He had a stewardship entrusted to him, and he was faithful to that stewardship. Christ died for us; and we who live ought no longer to live unto ourselves, but unto him who for our sakes died and rose again. He saved us to serve, not to sit and wait in idle contemplation. Christ himself did not pray that we might be taken out of the world, but that we should be kept from the evil one and be his witnesses. In the midst of a vile environment in the slums of a Japanese city, Kagawa bore testimony to God's saving grace and thus was the means of transforming the lives of many who touched his life.

● God give us strength and grace to overcome every adversary of the soul and magnify thee in our lives.

SUNDAY, MAY 18

The Riches of Grace—Ephesians 2:1-10

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that

now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of

his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The believer has true riches which endure forever. With Paul, count your blessings as enumerated in this passage of Scripture: redemption from sin, eternal life, a member of God's family, fellowship

with God in heavenly places, the riches of God's grace, God's kindness, and the workmanship of God. Men who have houses and lands and earthly goods can carry none of them to the home eternal except as they lay up treasures in heaven by investments in the name of Jesus and for his sake. We have treasures untold made available to us by our Father's grace. Our gratitude to him for his goodness prompts us to live for his glory, to do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. We are saved not by good works, but for good works.

● Make us content, dear Lord, to glorify thee on earth and to serve those who are in need.

we will come nearer finding the will of God as we pray: that we are to do his will when it is unmissably revealed, even if it conflicts with our plans and prejudices, and we are to make Christ known to all people, whatever their race or color or nationality.

● Teach me, Lord, to love all for whom thou hast died and to whom thou hast bidden me carry the message of thy saving grace.

TUESDAY, MAY 20

The Gospel for All Men—Acts 11:11-18

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me.

12 And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

God uses human instrumentalities in winning the unsaved and training the saved. When Cornelius sought to know more about God: an angel from heaven might have carried the divine message to him directly, but God's plan is to use sinners saved by grace to tell other sinners how to be saved. God prepared Simon Peter to take the message to a Gentile, and he prepared

the heart of the Gentile to receive the message. This was one of the greatest days in the history of Christianity. Cornelius was a devout man and one that feared God with all his house, who gave alms and prayed. But he was not saved, for Peter told the Jerusalem church that his commission was to tell Cornelius "words whereby thou and thy house shall be saved." All in the household of Cornelius who heard the word, believed, and were saved, and the Holy Spirit fell on them. Next came water baptism, not before salvation, but after salvation. An interesting sidelight on Peter's experience in visiting a Gentile was his precaution in taking six brethren with him as witnesses; else the Jerusalem church which was not yet convinced that devout Jews could afford to have fellowship with Gentiles might have disciplined the apostle Peter. But in the view of the overwhelming manifestation of the power of God, confirmed by the brethren who accompanied Peter, they could only hold their peace and glorify God. The church in Tennessee of which Daniel Buckner, the father of R. C. Buckner and H. F. Buckner, was a member, withdrew fellowship from him because of his missionary activities. The church in Indiana of which Isaac McCoy was the first pastor was excluded from the association to which it belonged on the ground that it was a missionary church. So God has actually allowed the Gentiles "to repent and live" (Moffatt).

● We marvel daily, our Father, at thy grace which saved us and keeps us and uses us.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

The Glorious Prophecy—Isaiah 61:1-9

1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptance year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them

beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

4 ¶ And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God; ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 ¶ For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

8 For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery by burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.

Why is the Spirit of the Lord given to believers? Not that they may boast that they have unusual power, but that they may glorify God and serve their fellow men; to preach the gospel to the poor; to bind up the broken hearts; to proclaim liberty to the captives; to proclaim both God's favor and God's vengeance; to comfort all that mourn. The Holy Spirit was given us not primarily for our own personal advantage, but to empower us to minister unto others. Jesus himself, at Nazareth, quoted part of this Scripture and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Let us not forget the holy, helpful purpose for which the Holy Spirit was given us. "All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." Throughout Isaiah is a revelation of God's purpose to make himself known among the nations. "Look unto me, and

LESSON FOR MAY 25, 1941

Broadening Christian Horizons: Peter's Vision

Acts 11:5-18

Printed and included in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. Acts 10:34.

MONDAY, MAY 19

Peter's Vision—Acts 11:5-18

5 I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven.

We may consider with profit the steps in the development of Peter

as a Christian: his introduction to Jesus by his brother; his confession of Christ as the Son of the Living God; his lesson in renunciation of self; his denial of Jesus; his fellowship with the risen Christ; his boldness in witnessing for Christ in Jerusalem; and his suffering for the sake of Jesus Christ. He had gone a long way since he first met Jesus in Galilee, but he still needed to grow in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour. He had received the commission of Christ, but he was not yet a world missionary, even after his glorious experience as a preacher on the day of

Pentecost. God had to show him by a vision, by a vivid object lesson, that the gospel was for the Gentile as well as the Jew. While praying on the flat housetop of his friend, Simon the tanner, waiting for the simple meal to be prepared, he fell into a trance and saw a vision. Peter saw a sheet let down filled with four-footed beasts and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. Those four-footed beasts, doubtless, included swine, and when Peter the Jew was bidden to slay and eat, he said, "Not so, Lord." Many of us when God has bidden us do something which did not appeal to us have answered, "Not so, Lord." God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach Jonah, by his actions, said, "Not so, Lord." He may have bidden some of us to preach or to go as a foreign missionary or to serve in some humble place at home, and we answered, "Not so, Lord." We should learn like Peter that what God has cleansed, that is not to be called common. We can glorify God in the mental task as well as in the larger one. These verses teach that

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

M.—Jehovah Our Saviour. Isa. 43:1-13.
T.—Jehovah Forgives Sins. Isa. 44:21-28.
W.—Salvation for All. Isa. 45:1-13.
Th.—The Servant Suffers Shame. Isa. 53.
F.—Mercy for All. Isa. 55.
S.—The Glory of Zion. Isa. 60:1-3; 61:1-3.

The Better Home

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be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." "Thou shalt avenge to set the claims of Jacob up again, and restore Israel's survivors; I now appoint you to bring light to the nations, that my salvation may reach the world's end" (Isa. 49.6, Moffatt).

● Give us understanding hearts, our Father, that we may make use of the spiritual resources which thou hast committed to us.

THURSDAY, MAY 22

No Respector of Persons—Romans 2:1-11

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whoesoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life;

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

In the first chapter of Romans Paul points out the sins of the Gentiles; then in the second chapter

he turns to the Jews and declares that they, too, are guilty and that God is no respecter of persons. God will render to every man according to his works, whether he be Jew or Gentile, whether he be American or African. There are two Scripture verses bearing on this truth: one declaring judgment, the other declaring redemption. "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

God divides men not on the grounds of their race, or color, or financial status, or degree of guilt, but on the ground of whether or not they have been justified by faith apart from the works of the law; his promise is to all men, "whoso believeth." Some time ago we heard an unsaved person say, "But God cannot mean me for I am too great a sinner," but hope came to that same sinner when we pointed out the promise, "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Dr. W. W. Hamilton tells of a mother who was insulted because someone asked prayer for her son, and she walked out of the meeting, saying, "I want you to understand that my boy is no common sinner." A few years later, after a crime in that community, the bloodhounds followed the trail to that home and to the bed of the boy who was "no common sinner."

● God help us to realize that sin has poisoned every life, and that only the blood of Jesus can cleanse from sin.

FRIDAY, MAY 23

Spreading the Gospel—1 Thessalonians 1

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and

peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

This message reveals a high degree of faith and love and hope. The saints of Thessalonica became an example to believers in adjoining provinces. Everywhere their faith was an inspiration to believers, and a convincing testimony to unbelievers. A native woman in Nigeria who had opposed the missionaries was won to Christ by the behavior of a missionary mother who lost her little baby. Where can we find as clear and concise a description of the triumphs of grace in mission lands as in these words: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." We are not only to wait for a Son from heaven, but while waiting we are to worship and witness, and work.

● We give thanks to thee, God our Father, for the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ which have sounded out the Word of the Lord in every place.

SATURDAY, MAY 24

Salvation for All—Romans 10:11-13

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on 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?

15 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!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

There are four questions in the heart of this Scripture passage:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?

How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?

How shall they hear without a preacher?

How shall they preach, except they be sent?

The fourth question knocks at the door of everyone of us. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent." Somebody asked if the heathen are saved without the gospel. The answer is found here. We ourselves cannot know the larger joys of salvation if we do not send the gospel message to all nations. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Jacob Chamberlain, a pioneer missionary to India, told about going into a hostile village. As he drew near, the people prepared to stone him. He said, "Wait until I tell you a story," and then he told the old, old story of Christ on the cross dying for all men; when he had finished the story they had dropped the stone, and they said, "Tell us more." The gospel of Christ makes its appeal to all men everywhere when preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

● With our lives and the material means thou hast entrusted to us, our Lord, we shall endeavor to answer the question, "How shall they preach except they be sent?"

SUNDAY, MAY 25

The Universal Kingdom—Psalm 72:12-19

12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.

16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains: the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

18 Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

The kingdom of God was the theme of Jesus. "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." A number of his parables were illustrations of the kingdom growth and consummation. This kingdom is not a temporal, visible kingdom, which can be overthrown by men. It cometh not with observation. All believers are members of the kingdom of God. Christ as King has dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Jesus our Saviour and Lord is concerned with all human needs; so ought we as subjects of his kingdom minister unto the needy. In this psalm is a picture of deliverance by the King of kings. In the description of the judgment in Matthew 25 Jesus taught his disciples that they were to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, minister unto the sick, visit those in prison. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Through Isaiah, God said that the fast which pleased him was "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" Our first mission is to bear testimony to Christ as our Saviour, to win souls, to evangelize; but we are to do more in his name. We are not only to preach and teach, but we are to heal and minister unto the needy. Christ told us not only to love the Lord our God with all the heart, mind, soul, and might, but to love our neighbors as ourselves. Our profession of religion is more convincing when we minister unto others in the name of Jesus, and in the power of his Spirit.

● Take our lives, our Father, and through them minister unto the sick and suffering and sorrowing.

Broadening Christian Horizons: The Antioch Movement

Act 11:18-30

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16.

MONDAY, MAY 26

The Gospel in Antioch—Act 11:18-28

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

Elsewhere those who were scattered abroad were "preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only," but the distinctive feature of the ministry to Antioch was "that they spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus." The Christian horizon was ever widening. When Barnabas came to Antioch from Jerusalem and saw

the manifestation of the grace of God, he went to Tarsus, hunted up Paul, and brought him to Antioch. They not only preached, but taught. "The strong hand of the Lord was with them" (Moffatt). Why were the disciples called Christians first in Antioch? We suggest at least two reasons: First, the missionary message had an opportunity in Antioch such as it did not have in Jerusalem. The gospel which was meant for all men had right of way in Antioch. Again, the word "called" was the word used by the Greeks referring to a man's business. Today we say a man is "called" a banker because that is his business; or is "called" a teacher, or a farmer, or a mechanic, according to his business. The disciples in Antioch, carrying out the program of Christ of evangelism, missions, Christian education, and benevolence, not only to the Jews, but to all others, were called Christians because that was their business. They were Christians. Dr. Hamilton tells the story of a mother, a member of the church, who realized that her life in her home was not what it should be. "The next morning things changed in her home. She was up when husband and children had their breakfast, was dressed as if for company, and saw to it that things were not warmed over and burnt and poorly served. Father, older son, and daughter wondered

what had happened, but asked no questions, went to work and to school wondering what had taken place. When the younger boy came down, had such a good breakfast, and mother kissed him good-by and told him how she loved him and hoped he would have a good day, he could not keep quiet, and said: 'Mother, what is the matter? Are you going to die?' A good old-time revival would indeed make some wonderful changes in our homes."

● Help us to be real Christians, Lord, both in the home and in our social and business relationships.

TUESDAY, MAY 27

A Missionary Tour—Act 11:27-30

27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwell in Judaea:

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

The church at Antioch was not only evangelistic and missionary, but it was concerned about the welfare, spiritual and physical, of their brethren elsewhere. When word came of the famine in Judaea, the church at Antioch determined to send relief unto them. Note that the disciples "every man according to his ability" had a share in this blessed ministry. This is the scriptural plan of giving. A

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

M.—Call and Vision, Jer. 1:4-19.
T.—Reckoning Judah, Jer. 2:1-13.
W.—Ivory Entreated to Return, Jer. 3:1-18.
T.—Captivity Foretold, Jer. 5:1-3, 14-19.
F.—False Worship, Jer. 7:1-11.
S.—No Peace, Jer. 8:11-22.

poor man cannot give as much money in amount as a rich man, but if he gives according to his ability, God honors his gift. The poor widow whom Jesus commended was able to give only two mites, but she gave more than all others because she gave all that she had, while others gave out of their abundance. Every member of a church is under obligation to give "according to his ability," just as every member of the church must believe for himself, and be baptized for himself. Parents should encourage their children who are members of the church to give something and should make provision for each one to give "according to his ability." The gift to which Paul refers in his second letter to the church at Corinth in the eighth and ninth chapters is for a similar purpose: to help the famine-stricken brethren in Judaea. He commended the benevolences of the church in Macedonia whose "deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Churches which are poor, as well as believers which are poor, in money, should be given the opportunity to share with their brethren elsewhere in a co-operative mission to the needy. If we give according to our ability, God will bless our gifts and will make all grace abound unto us.

● Give us a vision, our Father, of what thou hast given us and lead us to lay on the altar ourselves and all that we possess.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

A Missionary Tour—Matthew 10:1-5:11

1 And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

Here again is the teaching of Jesus concerning his kingdom and the ministry of his disciples. First, their mission was to the house of Israel, but Christ clearly told his disciples before he went back to the Father that they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Paul went out as a world missionary, but he preached first to the Jews, and when they refused him, to the Gentiles. Christ teaches also in this Scripture passage that the men who preach are worthy of their hire and are not to exhaust their time and energy in providing material support. Paul also taught clearly this same truth: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? . . . Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." The only time, as we recall, when Paul apologized to a church was to the church at Corinth, when he asked them to forgive him for not being a burden to that church: "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong." Pastor and missionary should be provided a support by the churches so that they may give themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word. It is ordained of God that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

● We thank thee, Lord, that thou hast called and commissioned preachers of thy Word. Teach us our duty—not only to pray for them, but share with them our material goods.

THURSDAY, MAY 29

Persecution Overruled—Philippians 1:12-17

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things

which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

Dr. A. T. Robertson said that in this experience of Paul in Roman imprisonment, the gospel was kicked upstairs, for imprisonment gave him the opportunity to reach the whole praetorian guard and to others in places of responsibility. His behavior in his bonds encouraged and emboldened others to speak the Word of God without fear. In suffering and in persecution the religion of Jesus Christ is tested, and unbelievers are convinced of the reality of the gospel under such circumstances, as they could not be convinced by those who live in ease. The one factor, more than anything else, that broke the force of the Boxer Rebellion in China more than forty years ago, was the behavior of missionaries and native Christians in persecution and martyrdom. Recently we heard of an ungody father who was won to Christ by the behavior of his believing daughter in the face of ridicule and suffering.

● Give us courage and grace, Lord, to testify of thee in every condition and circumstance of life.

FRIDAY, MAY 30

God, the Source of Power—
1 Corinthians 1:21-5

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Recently the editor of a daily paper expressed the opinion in an hour of world crises that God was on the side of the strongest battalions. He represents a large company whose faith is in the power and wisdom of men. Paul spoke for the great company of believers whose faith was in the power of God. Early one morning when the Syrian army was surrounding the city of Dathan in Israel, the servant of Elisha, beholding a host of horses and chariots, said to his master, "Alas, my Master, how shall we do?" The prophet Elisha answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." The Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. God is on the side of the battalions of faith rather than on the side of the battalions of force. His calendar is not the same as the calendar of men, but in the end righteousness will always triumph. In his letter to the Philippians Paul expressed a truth similar to the sentiment of the Scripture story we are studying today when he said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." All things are possible to him that believeth, and the resources of heaven are placed at the disposal of men and women whose faith stands in the power of God. Neither Moses in the Old Testament nor Paul in the New Testament were eloquent in speech, but they were giants in spiritual power and wisdom. Read again what happened to the battalions of Pharaoh's army when they tried to follow the children of Israel through the Red Sea. Read again what happened when Roman soldiers stood guard at the tomb of the crucified Christ. The strength of a church is not determined by the efficiency of its organization, nor by the nature of its organization, nor by a strong membership. Its strength rests in believers who

have faith in God and who are fully surrendered to do the will of God. A saint of God, a shut-in because of affliction, can so move God by intercessory prayer that a mighty battalion of force will fall back, defeated, because of God's power. When Mr. Moody began his ministry in England he was ridiculed by many of the leaders, especially in the great universities, but under his preaching multitudes were won to Christ, among them such mighty leaders as Sir Wilfred Grenfell, Henry Drummond, the Studds brothers. Later it was learned that one woman who was an invalid had prayed without ceasing that God might lead Moody to England and open the hearts of the people unto his preaching. Temporary defeats may come to the child of God, but ultimate victory belongs to those whose faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

● Through all the strife and storms of the world our hope is in thee, O God.

SATURDAY, MAY 31

A Growing Church—Ephesians 4:11-16

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

A normal Christian is a growing Christian. Like a normal child grows physically and mentally. The scriptural ideal for every believer is a full-grown man in spiritual status. Paul had to deal with grown men and women in the churches who were still children in the faith. The writer to the Hebrews referred to those who were still babes in Christ, inexperienced in righteousness. Let us examine our own hearts and see whether we be children or full-grown men and women in the kingdom of God. Are we easily provoked? Are we selfish? Are we jealous of others? Do we seek the highest seats? Are we impatient? If so, are we not still children? In a New Testament church Paul says each member has his own work, just as each member of a human body has its own function. Some are fitted for one task, others for other tasks, but each one should have his own work "unto the building up of the body of Christ" (ASV). We are to grow both in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we are to grow from childhood to manhood, we must continually learn. In Paul's first letter to young Timothy, are the significant words that God would have all men be saved "and to come to the knowledge of the truth." We send our children to school because we want them to know something. God wants his children to know something, to know his Word, to know his will, to know his will, that they may intelligently and effectively do his will. Spirituality and intelligence should go hand in hand. The biography of Dr. J. D. Sandefer has just come to our desk. Read what the great-hearted president of Harding-Simmons said on this point: "There is no education in the last analysis worth while that does not put regeneration of the student personality above any and every course taught in the institution."

● Lord, keep thy hand on us and lead us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY, JUNE 1

A Song of Thanksgiving—Psalm 122

1 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:

4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.

5 For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

9 Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.

On another occasion, when the psalmist was puzzled by the seeming inequalities of life, the pros-

perity of the wicked, and the suffering of the righteous, he wrote: "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." We find the answers to many of life's problems when we go to church. We should be glad when the hour comes to go to the house of God, not only to hear the preacher of righteousness, but, in company with fellow believers, to worship God. We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, that we may give thanks in the name of the Lord and pray for the peace of Zion. We are to go to the house of God not only for our sake, but "for my brethren and companions' sake." Someone very near to us may be kept out of the kingdom of God by the example which we set in staying away from church when circumstances make it

possible for us to go. Over in Ezekiel 11:16, God promised to be a little sanctuary to those who were kept away from the Temple by circumstances beyond their control. Years ago, Phillips Brooks of Boston preached a great sermon on "Little Sanctuaries," based on the teaching that God will provide a little sanctuary for everyone of his children who are providentially kept away from the house of God, yet seek his face. But when we can go, we should turn our feet joyfully to the house of God. Spiritual prosperity, if not material prosperity, is assured those who love God and worship him in his holy place. For our own sake, for many brethren and companions' sake, and for the sake of the house of God, we will seek thy face.

● We thank thee, Father, that all who worship thee in spirit and in truth can find thee and have blessed fellowship with thee.

LESSON FOR JUNE 8, 1941

Beginning of World Missions

Acts 12:25 to 13:12

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Wednesday and Thursday

GOLDEN TEXT: And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15.

MONDAY, JUNE 2

Christ's Commission—Matthew 28:18-20

16 "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Dr. S. D. Gordon has an imaginary story of the return of Jesus to heaven. He was telling Gabriel

about his ministry on earth, about the cross, and the tomb, and the resurrection. He told Gabriel about his plans for his work to be carried on. Gabriel, so Dr. Gordon imagines, asked Jesus, "Suppose those men fall you?" Jesus replied, "But I am counting on them." We hear much and think much about man's faith in God, but did not God show his faith in man when Jesus committed to a little group of eleven men the commission to make him known unto the ends of the earth?

John tells us that Jesus said to his disciples who, after his resurrection, were gathered behind closed doors, "As my Father sent me, even so send I you." Mark gives us the words of Jesus spoken at meat when he said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Matthew tells us about the meeting in Galilee which Jesus had appointed before his death. Jesus told them first that all authority had been given unto him in heaven and on earth. Our missionary task and hope rest on that assurance. We hear people asking these days, "Isn't the world going to pieces?" No, we can say with Paul in his letter to the Colossians, "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (ASV). Occasionally the question arises concerning authority in religion. The Roman Catholic locates authority in the church; but in this commission we find that authority is

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

M.—The Girdle and Bottle. Jer. 13:1-14.
T.—Potter and Clay. Jer. 18:1-12.
W.—The Broken Bottle. Jer. 19.
Th.—Jeremiah in Stocks. Jer. 20:1-19.
F.—Prophecy to Zedekiah. Jer. 21:3-14.
S.—Good and Bad Figs. Jer. 24.

vested in Jesus Christ, and the revelation of that authority is given us in the Holy Scriptures. Whatsoever he says, we are to do. Our lives are to be governed, not by what friends or loved ones may say, but by the will and word of God. In carrying out the commission of Christ, we are not only to make disciples of all nations, but we are to baptize them and teach them. Have we learned yet the sure meaning of that command, "Make disciples"? Would Jesus have put baptism into the heart of the commission. If for believers it had been an inconsequential matter? Is our work done when we make disciples and baptize?

● Thou hast saved us; we have followed thee in baptism; thou hast kept us and taught us. Send us wheresoever thou wouldst have us to go.

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

The Field is the World—Acts 1:8

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 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 Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Where are we to preach and baptize and teach? Our field is the world. God so loved the world, not just one country. Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all the nations, not a few favored people. According to Mark, Jesus commanded his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Luke tells us that Jesus commanded that repentance and remission of sins should be preached unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. And here in the first chapter of the Acts of the apostles—the Acts of the Holy Spirit—Jesus named the field for missionary activities, Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and the uttermost

part of the earth. John Wesley had the true conception of the missionary task when he said, "My parish is the world." Don't forget that the gospel was first proclaimed to people who lived on the other side of the world from the land where we live. If somebody had not been a world missionary, the people in America might never have heard of Jesus Christ. If we cannot go ourselves, we can help to send others.

● With open hearts we wait before thee, Lord; make clear to us thy will concerning our lives; give us grace and courage to do thy will.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

A Missionary Church—Acts 13:15 to 13:19

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Can you picture the scene in Antioch? Can you imagine the emotions of that early church, when almost in the beginning of their labors in that great cosmopolitan city, the Holy Spirit said to them, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them"? We wonder if there were not some members of the Antioch church who asked, "Isn't there enough missionary work in Antioch to do without sending out our best preachers as foreign missionaries?" There was plenty of work to do in Antioch, multitudes in Jerusalem were not saved, but their responsibility was to witness

for Jesus unto the ends of the earth. The Antioch church, because it was missionary in its mind and motive, grew rapidly and was for a long time, the missionary center of the early centuries. Churches grow and prosper so long as they are loyal to the commission committed to them by Christ. More than a century ago Baptists in the South divided into two companies, one missionary and the other anti-missionary. The anti-missionary body is but little stronger in numbers now than it was then, while the missionary forces have multiplied over one hundredfold.

● When thou dost call for our best, Lord, bring our wills in accord with thy will that thy name may be known to the ends of the earth.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

The Mission to Cyprus—Acts 13:4-13

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews and they had also John to their minister.

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a

darkness, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

13 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

The Holy Spirit is our world missionary leader. The Holy Spirit calls men and women as missionaries, the Holy Spirit leads, the Holy Spirit empowers. These early missionaries were led first to the island of Cyprus, the old home of Barnabas. Here, as elsewhere, they proclaimed the Word of God, first in the synagogues of the Jews. But wherever they went, their ministry ultimately was to the Gentiles also. One of the first converts in western Cyprus was a Roman officer who sought to know more about God. Here, as always, and everywhere, these missionaries encountered difficulties. They were resisted by an enemy of righteousness. The power of God manifested through Paul blinded the sorcerer. The Roman officer was so impressed that he believed, for he saw that the works of God harmonized with the teachings of the Lord. Paul was never thwarted by difficulties. While at Ephesus, he wrote to the church at Corinth, "I will tarry at Ephesus . . . for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." Those very adversaries, those very difficulties, constituted God's call and challenge to the missionary to stay there. Adoniram Judson labored in Burma seven years—through sorrow, hunger, privations—before he baptized his first convert; but when he was asked during that time, "What are the prospects?" he replied, "The prospects are as bright as the promises of God." The history of world missions is the story of the conquest of faith in the face of difficulties. These difficulties may be in our own home, not in China or Africa, but the same faith that triumphs in distant lands will ultimately triumph in our own community or in our own family circle.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

The young man, Isaiah, saw the Lord in the year that the king died. There are men and women all about us who never see God until some circumstance of life brings bereavement to them. The young man Isaiah learned the answer to three questions. "What sort of God have I? What sort of man am I? What sort of work can I do?" The God whom he saw was

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

A Prophet's Commission—Isaiah 6:1-4

1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings: with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.



a holy God. No other religion offers a God who is holy and loving. For the first time the young man Isaiah saw his own sins, his own imperfections. People who claim to be holy and sinless in this life have never stood in the blazing light of God's holiness, else they would have confessed as did Isaiah, "Woe is me! for . . . I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." He saw first his own sins before he saw his neighbors' sins. "It's not my neighbor, O Lord, but it's me, standing in the need of prayer." After the young man had seen the holy and loving and omnipotent God, after he had seen his own sins and unrighteous condition, and had seen his unwholesome environment, he was ready for the cleansing which could come only from God. Then, and not until then, was he ready to answer the call of God. He faced the question asked by multitudes of young people, "What shall I do with my life?" When God asked, "Who will go for us?" the young man, cleansed by divine power, answered readily and heartily, "Here am I, Lord; send me." When some time ago a missionary lost his life in one of the most difficult mission fields in the world and the call was taken to the colleges of that denomination, "Who will take this young man's place?" more than a score of young men answered, "Here am I; send me." That call is not always necessarily for foreign missionary work. God did not call Isaiah to a distant land; he did not take him away from his city of Jerusalem; but for half of a century he was the mighty preacher of righteousness who stood between Jerusalem and destruction.

● When thou dost call us, may we answer, dear Lord, "Here am I; send me."

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

Spreading the Gospel—Romans 15:15-21

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God.

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles,

ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed.

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation.

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

We are saved by the grace of God; what are we going to do with the personality thus redeemed by the grace of God? Paul suggests an answer in these words, "Because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God." God has saved us for a purpose and that purpose is well expressed by Paul in another letter, "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. . . . Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Paul was always careful not to glory in his personal background or efficiency, but to glory in the God who bought him. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." "I will not dare," he says in this reference, "to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me" (ASV). One of the things in which Paul gloried which were wrought by Christ was the response and

obedience of the Gentiles, the people who were not Jews. They were his joy and his crown. They were partakers with him of grace. Another interesting fact about Paul's ministry is his desire, his determination to preach the gospel where Christ was not already named. Isn't this one of the compelling reasons for preaching the gospel where the name of Christ has not been heard? In the city where these words are being written everyone is in reach of the gospel, yet in one of the largest cities in America we heard a pastor say that they had found a boy within two blocks of his church who had never heard of Jesus. But there are other cities and country places around the world where multitudes have never heard the name of Jesus. Should we not give the gospel to them that they may know the tidings of him for everyone?

● Give us strength and grace, Holy Father, to live not for ourselves, but for him who died for us and rose again.

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

The Lord's Promise—Leviticus 42:8-10

8 I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

9 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

10 I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

11 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

12 Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the tales, and the inhabitants thereof.

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. Matthew 28:19-20.

Luke tells us that when John the Baptist, in prison, was in the shadows, he sent two of his disciples to the Lord, asking him, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Jesus did not send a letter to John with arguments concerning his messiahship, but in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight." Then he sent his answer to John, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached." The most convincing evidence of a Christian's faith is what it will do. Christ's answer to John was a fulfilment of this promise made through Isaiah. Every true witness of Christ, every missionary through the ages has been strengthened by this promise: "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." God included in his promise the ministry to those in need. Jesus himself went about not only teaching and preaching, but healing, and in the parable of the good Samaritan he taught that a real neighbor will minister to those who suffer in body. We have learned something else, too, about God: There is no other Name to share his glory. We hear sometimes a suggestion that Christianity in heathen lands ought to share with the heathen religious ministry to the people of those lands. Here is God's answer to that suggestion: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. . . . Only in the Lord . . . is righteousness and strength" (ASV). "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth."

● In the home, in the business and social life, use our lives, Holy Father, to convince our associates of the reality of the Christian profession.

Progress in World Missions

Lesson for June 18, 1941

Acts 13:44-52; Galatians 3:26-29

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Tuesday and Wednesday

GOLDEN TEXT: For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26.

MONDAY, JUNE 9

Preaching in the Jews—Acts 13:26-33

26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

30 But God raised him from the dead:

31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers.

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Here we learn something concerning Paul's message and method in preaching to the Jews. There is enough gospel in the Old Testament to save every Jew in the world if he will believe. Christ is revealed in every book of the Old Testament. Compare Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" with Galatians

3:6-8: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Paul showed from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah, that he was the fulfilment of prophecy, and those who dwelled in Jerusalem and their rulers, in the trial and crucifixion of Jesus fulfilled all things that were written of him.

● We thank thee, Holy Father, that through all generations thou hast revealed the Messiah, the Suffering Saviour, so that men might hear and believe.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

Preaching to the Gentiles—Acts 13:44-52

44 ¶ And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that

thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

In this same chapter we have Paul's message first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. In speaking to the Gentiles, he quoted again from the Old Testament, "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." The response of the Gentiles was favorable. The Jews were filled with jealousy and contradicted all things which were spoken by Paul, but the Gentiles were glad and glorified the word of God. In the eleventh chapter of his letter to the Romans Paul gives a clear understanding of the place which Jews and Gentiles have in the purpose of God. There is a hardening in the hearts of Israel "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," but Israel shall be saved. Gentiles and Jews alike can be saved only by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Jew and Gentile meet in Christ. Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see." Abraham believed in the Messiah to come and was saved, as were all other believers before God was made manifest in

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS For Individual Devotions

M.—The Yoke. Jer. 27:1-11.
T.—Advised to Be Content. Jer. 29:1-14.
W.—The New Covenant. Jer. 31:27-34.
Th.—Covenant with David. Jer. 33:14-22.
F.—Roll Burned and Rewritten. Jer. 36:1-32.
S.—Jeremiah in Prison. Jer. 37:11-21.

In the flesh. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, but all believers who are Christ's are children of Abraham, and heirs according to promise.

● We thank thee, Lord, for the demonstration of thy power among the Jews as well as among the Gentiles.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

Justified by Our Faith—Galatians 3:23-25

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

We are saved by the grace of God, and by grace we mean the unmerited favor which God bestows on us. Law had its place in bringing us to Christ. Paul refers to the tutor or pedagogue who, back in the old days, led the children to the teacher, but when the teacher was come, the child was no longer under the direction of the pedagogue. The law could not save, but it led to Christ who could save. The law was the looking glass which revealed to sinners their need of a Saviour, but could not remove the blemish. The moral law is a guide to us for our conduct, but the moral law cannot save. We become sons of God, not by good works, not by culture, not by church membership, but by the grace of God through

faith in Christ Jesus. Baptism, instituted by Christ himself, does not save, but it is a symbol of the saving grace of God, a memorial of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and in baptism we put on the uniform of Christian service. The uniform does not make a soldier, but it advertises to the world the fact that the man who wears the uniform is enlisted in his country's service. Under the old covenant, says Dr. Carroll, a Jew only belonging to the nation by fleshly descent was in the covenant. In the new covenant there is no distinction of nationality. Under the old covenant Abraham's slaves were circumcised because they belonged to him. Under the new covenant, earthly relations do not count. The individual alone counts. The child of a preacher must himself repent and believe and must be baptized for himself. Under the new covenant there is no distinction between male and female, between bond and free. "We are not children of God by generation; we are children of God by regeneration."

● We thank thee, our Father, that the way has been opened for all believers to come to thee, whatever their rank or relationship in this life.

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

Justified by God's Grace—Romans 3:21-30

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference;

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

We are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1). We are justified by grace (Rom. 3:24). We are justified by blood (Rom. 5:9). The law leads men to God, but the law does not save. If we would stand before God justified—not guilty of sin—we must have his righteousness, not our self-righteousness. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul expressed this truth, "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith," and this righteousness may be ours through repentance and faith. By justification Paul means the standing that a man has before God, by which he is declared "not guilty," not because of his own merits, but because Jesus Christ took his sins and died in his stead. The sinner who stands before God, justified through the blood of Christ, has had all of his sins, past, present, and future, laid on Christ. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all . . . he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." We cannot realize fully the riches of the grace of God which has made this provision for us. In this experience God not only declares a sinner "not guilty" because Christ has taken his place under the law and died in his stead, but God in his grace and infinite mercy has given the sinner new affections, new attitudes, new motives, a new relationship as a child of God.

● We marvel, our Heavenly Father, at the transforming power of thy grace in making new creatures out of sinners against thee, and we thank thee for thine infinite love.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13

Strengthening the Believers—Acts 14:21-23

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again

to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch.

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

24 And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

On his first missionary journey Paul evangelized, declaring God's gracious provision for remission of sins, not only for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. But when he retraced his journey after he had been stoned and left for dead at Lystra, he and his companions did more. They confirmed the souls of the disciples, exhorted them to continue in the faith that prepared them for many tribulations, helped them to select elders in every church, prayed with fasting, committed them to the Lord. When an evangelistic campaign in a church closes, the work is only begun. The new converts must be taught, must be trained, must be strengthened in the faith, must be encouraged. The church has a great responsibility to every young convert especially. For their own sake and for the sake of the church they should be given nourishing spiritual food. They must know the joys of Christian fellowship. They must be reinforced by the sympathetic counsel and co-operation of mature Christian men and women. When Paul and Barnabas returned to the missionary church at Antioch, which had sent them out, they were able to report, not only that God had opened a door of faith unto the

Gentiles, but that they had been taught the way of the Lord. No wonder that as they passed on their way to Jerusalem, preparing for the conversion of the Gentiles, "they caused great joy unto all the brethren."

● We have heard thy call unto each one of us, Lord, to know the truth that we may be made free. Guide us by thy Spirit as we seek to know all truth that we may the better serve thee.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

God's Delays—Isaiah 12:1-5

1 And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou hast comforted me.

2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

5 Sing unto the Lord: for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.

6 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

In these verses we are told three things that God has done for us: God is my salvation; God is my strength; God is my song. When God saves by his grace through faith in the blood of Christ, he gives strength so that the believer can say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The seeking sinner who expresses a fear that he cannot "hold out," fails to take account of the strength which God will give him. The sinner who is saved and kept by the power of God has a new song in his heart. There is no joy comparable to the joy of salvation and soul-winning. Moreover, three statements are made that the believer would do for God: I will trust; I will give thanks; I will tell others—"declare his doings among the people." The Lord hath done excellent things. Let this be known in all the earth.

● Amid all the distractions which beset us, we cast our care upon thee, our God, that thy peace which passeth all understanding may guard our hearts and our thoughts in Christ Jesus.

SUNDAY, JUNE 15

A New Earth—Revelation 21:1-8

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and he will wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Whatever and wherever the new earth and new heaven shall be, we know that the home which Jesus is preparing for us will be infinitely more glorious than our present habitation. As we grow older in this world, the telephone call after midnight, the telegraph messenger, the blanched face and deep emotions of a friend, the beckoning hand of the physician awaken our fears. But in the eternal home where a new heaven and a new earth meet there will be no more sad tidings, no more pain, no more death, no more tears, no more separations, no more sin. These experiences of the past will be forgotten. Our new home will be glorious, most of all, because God himself will be with us. No longer shall we be baffled by life's mysteries. No longer shall we be asking questions about things which we cannot understand. Our Father God will make all things new, and perfect, and beautiful.

● We thank thee, Father, for the home which Jesus is preparing for all who love thee.

First Jerusalem Conference on World Missions

Act 15:1-21

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. Acts 15:11.

MONDAY, JUNE 18

The Council at Jerusalem—Acts 15:1-11

1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

6 ¶ And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck

of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

In churches constituted of Jewish believers it was difficult, especially in the Jerusalem church, to take off the old grave clothes of Judaism. They were slow to see that God saved by his grace and not by any ordinances or ceremonies. Many of them still believed that circumcision was essential for salvation, even as certain groups today teach that baptism is essential for salvation. They were bound hand and foot by legalism—by Jewish traditions. We have in many churches men and women who are strict adherents of the law, but they have missed the spirit of true worship and fellowship. Saul of Tarsus, according to his own testimony, was blameless as touching the righteousness found in the law, but Saul, before his conversion, was a stranger to the deeper things of God, to the regenerating grace of God. Before he met Jesus, he was constrained by the law; after he met Jesus, he was constrained by love. The religionists of Jesus' day accused Jesus of sacrilege and of blasphemy because he did not conform in his thinking and living to their legalistic patterns. They would crucify a man for violating the traditions of the fathers, but they would not turn their hand to help

the sick and suffering. Through the old-time prophets, Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, and Micah, God condemned the ancestors of the Jewish legalists for offering their sacrifices while their hands were dripping with blood. Through the centuries has come his call: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" A living faith and loving service go together.

● Lead us, Lord, to worship thee in spirit and in truth, and to tell others of thy redemptive grace.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17

The Decision of the Council—

Acts 15:12-21

12 ¶ Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 ¶ And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up;

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

When questions arose at Jerusalem and in other communities influenced by Judaism concerning law and salvation, when faraway Antioch was disturbed by the Jewish teaching that circumcision was essential to salvation, the church at Antioch asked Paul and Barnabas and certain others to go to Jerusalem and settle that controversy. No individual lives to himself and no church lives to itself. Whatever affects the welfare of one church affects other churches. The church at Antioch chose the wise course. In the discussion at Jerusalem they talked through the questions involved and reached an agreement, an agreement influenced by the Holy Spirit. In this, the first Christian council, Peter, Barnabas, Paul, and James, and others expressed their opinions. Peter spoke out of his experience, especially with Cornelius and his household. He expressed the conviction that the Holy Spirit had made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, and they both alike should be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus. Then Barnabas and Paul, speaking out of their experiences in Gentile provinces, expressed a similar judgment. James, the pastor of the Jerusalem church, joined with those faithful missionaries in the opinion that the Gentiles who turned to God should not be troubled with the question which had been raised of ceremonial salvation. This is one of the most significant decisions ever made in the history of Christianity. It went to the heart of the vital question of salvation and should have put an end for all time to the contention that men are saved by works, by ceremonies, or by ordinances, rather than by the grace of God. In the very next missionary journey when the Philippiian jailer asked the preachers, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The message sent out to the churches from the Jerusalem council made clear the scriptural teaching that Christian behavior should accompany salvation. Ethics and religion should be inseparable. High ideals and clean living and good works go hand-in-hand with the Christian profession.

● We thank thee, Lord, for thy churches and for the privilege of co-operating in the proclamation of the good news of salvation by grace.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

The Decrees of the Council—

Acts 15:22-29

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner: The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

The vote of the Jerusalem conference was unanimous, although the radical Judaizers probably did not vote. James was a practical

pastor and did not stop with the vote. The Lord's people must do more than pass resolutions. The next step was to get word to all the churches concerning the decisions in the conflict between spiritual religion and ceremonial religion. "And they wrote." They disclaimed the conduct of the Judaizers in Antioch and Jerusalem whose lives were not worthy to be compared with men like Barnabas and Saul, who had hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They recommended to the churches, by the messengers who were commissioned to carry the decision of the Jerusalem conference, to abstain from idolatry, from immorality, and from murder. Churches, wherever constituted, should live up to the moral code. Everybody ought to do right. Certainly the Lord's redeemed should abstain from all evil. The ideal before us is that of holiness. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

● "Take my will, and make it Thine."

THURSDAY, JUNE 19

Righteousness by Faith—Galatians 3:11-21

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ,

even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

It was difficult in Paul's day, even as it is in this age, for unregenerated people to grasp the truth that they must be saved by the grace of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and not by good works. Good works is the result of salvation and not the cause of salvation. The righteousness which is acceptable before God is the righteousness which Christ gave us when he exchanged places with us and was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." In the contention at Antioch when some of the members of the Jerusalem church who still insisted that circumcision had something to do with salvation, Paul rebuked the apostle Peter for his behavior, and throughout his letter to the Galatians, he made clear the truth that man is not justified by works, but by the grace of Christ Jesus, even we who believe in Christ Jesus. But the Christian experience goes still further. Not only do we stand justified before God, by faith in Christ, but we have been crucified with Christ and the life which we now live is Christ living in us—Christ who loved us and gave himself for us.

● We hear thee say, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and

follow me." Lord, we bear that cross with thee, for thou livest in us and makest possible service in thy name.

FRIDAY, JUNE 20

Freedom from Bondage—Galatians 3:1-4

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Lightfoot, in his great exposition of Paul's letter to the Galatians, says, "Having escaped from the slavery of heathenism they would fall bow to the slavery of Judaism." In this Scripture passage which we have just read, Paul contrasts law and grace. He is saying, in effect, "If you want to base justification on law, you will have to put it on the plane of debt and leave grace out." If we try to discharge our obligation to God as we would other debts, we have a hopeless task, for nobody can pay the debt which he owes to God. The expression, "Ye have fallen from grace," means that people who base salvation on works rather than on grace have discarded grace as a system, not as an experience. The words "are fallen away," mean literally, "are banished"—you have shut grace out of your lives. Then Paul points out the advantage of a spiritual religion over a ceremonial religion, of grace over law. Faith whereby we avail ourselves of the grace of God is more than acceptance of a doctrine. It is a spiritual experience that works. As Paul puts it: "Faith which worketh by love."

● So constrain us by thy love that faith operating in our lives may exalt thee and point our brother men to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

Freedom in Christ—Romans 8:1-16

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

In his foreword to *Facing Life and Getting the Best of It*, the author, Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney, said that the last time he was in London he came upon the saying of a famous English psychologist: "After years of experience in dealing with the ills and troubles and sins and passions of men and women, he goes on record as saying: 'There is no victory in life, save through religion.'" John in his first epistle said: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." In the eighth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans which begins with "no condemnation," and ends with "no separation," Paul tells us that Christ has made us free from the law of sin and of death. Christ does something for men and women enslaved by sin and fear which no one else in the universe can do. He not only emancipates from the

bondage of sin, but he fills the heart with joy and with the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Christ has put the believer where the forces of hell cannot destroy him. He does what the law cannot do, what government cannot do, what society cannot do. We were dead in trespasses and in sin, "but God... hath quickened us together with Christ." The words, "but God" point the way to deliverance. Having been freed from the law of sin and of death, we are still subject to the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. We are no longer under the sentence of death, but we are bondslaves of Jesus Christ. His will is our law. "For me to live is Christ."

● Have Thine own way, Lord!

Have Thine own way!
Hold o'er my being
Absolute sway!
Fill with Thy Spirit
/ Till all shall see
Christ only, always,
Living in me.

SUNDAY, JUNE 22

Complete in Christ—Colossians 3:8-17

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge

after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Having been raised together with Christ in this new life, we are to set our mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. A new life demands that we put away evil things, that we put off the old man with his doings, and put on the

new man in whom Christ is all and in all. We are to put on a heart that is compassionate and forbearing and forgiving. Love and peace are to rule the new life. The word of Christ is to be our daily counsel and comfort. Spiritual songs, not jazz music, are to fill our hearts as we teach and admonish one another and with thanksgiving make our requests known unto God. Every room in the life is to be dedicated to the Lord Jesus. In the life of Charles Studd, the story is told of his experience with F. B. Meyer, who was then a young preacher. He found Meyer one day reading the Bible and asked him what he was doing. The young preacher said he was trying to find the will of God for his life. Studd asked Meyer if he had turned over to Christ every key in his life. He thought a moment and said, "Yes, every key but one." He said to Meyer, "Before you can be blest in your ministry, you must surrender every key to Jesus Christ." After several days' struggle, Meyer surrendered that key with all others to his Lord, and he sought thereafter, whatever he did in word or in deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. The world was made richer by the life of the man who had given to Christ the control of every part of his life.

● So control our desires, the meditations of our heart, Holy Father, that thy peace may rule in our hearts.

LESSON FOR JUNE 23, 1941

Lessons from the Early Church

1 Corinthians 3:1-15

Printed and explained in Daily Readings for Monday and Tuesday

GOLDEN TEXT: For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11.

BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

- M.—Christ's Second Coming. 1 Thess. 5:1-11.
- T.—Christ's Second Coming. 2 Thess. 2:1-12.
- W.—Disorderly Brethren. 2 Thess. 3:6-13.
- T.—Defending His Apostleship. Gal. 1:11-24.
- F.—Endorsed in Jerusalem. Gal. 2:1-10.
- S.—Faith, not the Law, Saves. Gal. 3:1-14.

MONDAY, JUNE 23

The Gospel of Glory—

1 Corinthians 3:1-11

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for

whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one, and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Like many churches in our own day, the fellowship of the church of Corinth was marred by jealousy and strife. F. W. Robertson calls attention to three elements in the membership of that church—Greek, Jew, Roman. One asked for a purely intellectual religion, another for signs, a third for equal position in a democracy. The church was divided on the question of preachers. Some were for Apollos, the young man; others for Paul, the older man; some for Cephas; others, renouncing human leadership, were for Christ, they said. Paul reminded them that while each minister had his part in the building of a church, their dependence must be on God who, alone, gives the increase. Churches and individuals should look well to their foundations, laid not by men, but by Jesus Christ. Every man's spiritual experience must be based on Christ and not on man. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is, therefore, no place for jealousy and strife with any individual or church which has Christ as its foundation; and not any man or group of men. To quote Robertson: "To see the part played by each individual in God's world, which he alone can play, to do our own share in the acting, and to feel that each is an integral, essential portion of the whole, not interfering with the rest, that is the only emancipation from partisanship."

● Help us to see, our Heavenly Father, that the work is thine, not ours, and that we are fellow workers with thee.

TUESDAY, JUNE 24

The Gospel of Liberty—
1 Corinthians 2:12-18

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble:

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

God has laid the foundation, but he expects us to build on that foundation, and that building will be tested by the Master Builder. It will be tested by fire. It may be that someone reading these words is now passing through the fire—the fire of affliction, the fire of temptation, the fire of persecution, or the fire of adversity. Remember the words of the apostle Peter: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." We desire to present to God at the end of the day, not only the foundation which he laid for us, but a structure built to his glory. Here is a test of our God-given liberty. Each one of us is free to do as he pleases so long as he pleases to do the will of God and to fulfil the divine purpose. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day. The foundation is sure to stand the test. No man can

take that from us, but what about the building, which we are constructing by our own will and words and work? What sort of temple are we building for the Holy Spirit? We have only one brief life in which to build on the foundation which is provided in Christ. Will the structure which we erect stand in the judgment, or will we be saved yet as by fire?

● We pray that, daily, thou wilt direct us in what we think and say and do, so that we may be conformed to our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we may glorify thee, our Father, by our lives.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

The Gospel for the Gentiles—Acts 18:44

34 ¶ Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached:

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name

whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

When William Carey, the pioneer in modern missions, proposed as a subject for discussion by a group of ministers "Whether the command given to the Apostles, to teach all nations, was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent," he was rebuked for such a suggestion, for they said that when God pleased to convert the heathen, he would do it without consulting Carey or anyone else. In our own day we have met people who said that they did not believe in foreign missions. There is plenty of work to do at home; let the heathen alone. That was the attitude of many men in apostolic days, especially among Jewish believers. Peter himself had to be converted by a vision before he would go as a missionary to a Gentile home. He learned in that experience that God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation people may find God. Peter learned, as we must learn, that through the name of Jesus Christ, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. There is no salvation in any other way. The gospel which saves in America, saves in Asia and Africa. We are under inescapable obligation to carry to all men that message of redemption from sin. God has chosen us as ambassadors for Christ, and by us is beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God.

● "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory."

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

Christanity's Message—Acts 13:32-38

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he

said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Paul is saying here that God kept his promise in raising Jesus from the dead. God always keeps his promise. God is not slack concerning his promises, although one day may be with the Lord as a thousand years. The writer to the Hebrews says that because it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge have a strong consolation, an unshaken hope, an anchor which enters within the veil and holds fast. In the good news which Paul carried to Antioch in Pisidia on his first missionary tour was not only the assurance that Jesus was risen from the dead, but that he would never return to death. Therefore, the believer risen with Christ would never go back to the old estate of death. The good news carried also the promise of forgiveness from sins, and of justification in the sight of God. The good news which we are commissioned to carry to every creature in the world is the message of the crucified and risen Saviour, who bore our sins on the cross and opened for us a living way to God. The only conditions prescribed are repentance and faith. All who believe are justified before God. With confidence we can take that message to every man, woman, and child in the world. Missionaries have not found a tribe where there was not sooner or later a response to this message.

● Lord, there are so many who have never heard the good news. Forgive us that we have been so slow to obey thy commission. Take us and use our lives, our talents, our money for making Christ known to all men.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27

The Growth of the Kingdom—
Matthew 13:31-35

31 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 ¶ Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

In all of his teachings Jesus used parables, or illustrations. Someone has defined a parable as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." Jesus used illustrations with which the people were familiar. The identification of the mustard seed which, obviously, was not quite the same as the mustard plants with which we are familiar, does not affect the lesson. Out of a tiny seed as small as a speck grew a tree. Here we have a "great result from a small beginning." The teaching of Jesus on this spiritual process reminds us of the statement in Zechariah: "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Nobody thought that from a little group of obscure men in Jerusalem would come a vital spiritual influence which would affect the whole world. Men "shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." Read again the experiences of Carey in India, of Morrison in China, of Judson in Burma, of Paton in the New Hebrides. These men all toiled for

years without visible results, but God gave a rich harvest. One of the most thrilling stories in modern missions is that of the Lone Star mission in the Telugu field in Southeast India, where American Baptists labored for years without results. Two or three times in their conventions they considered very seriously the abandonment of that mission, but they were persuaded to continue it a little longer. Then the Spirit of God gave the harvest, and in one day 3,222 converts were baptized. This kingdom shall spread over the earth until "he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." This growth of the kingdom will be through spiritual processes and not through alliances with earthly kingdoms.

● We worship thee, Almighty God, as Ruler of heaven and earth, for we know that thou must reign until men of every nation and tribe and tongue shall confess thee as Lord of all.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

The Council of the Church—Acts 15:1-4

1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

The young missionary church at Antioch had gone beyond the mother church at Jerusalem. Because it was largely a Gentile church and was more cosmopolitan in its outlook, it was free from the social, racial, and religious prejudice of the Jerusalem church. Paul and Barnabas and other chosen men were sent to Jerusalem with an escort, and as they passed through the intervening provinces they told the good news of the conversion of the Gentiles. The brethren who heard them along the way were happy. This is a part of the service rendered by missionary publications in telling the Lord's people about the triumphs of the gospel in other lands. Such tidings always bring joy to the hearts of men and women who love God and desire to do his will. The men representing the Antioch church were courteously received by the Jerusalem church. Note that these were specific organizations—local, visible churches. In the Jerusalem conference the brethren faced the whole question of spiritual religion versus ceremonial religion, and the verdict was given "with one accord" for spiritual religion.

● We pray that thy Spirit may likewise lead all of our churches to settle vital questions in accordance with thy will.

SUNDAY, JUNE 29

Increasing Joy—Isaiah 51:7

1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her veriation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his

shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

After giving a catalog of dark sins in the first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul said: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Will such a blessed condition endure forever? Human governments rise and fall; what about the kingdom which promises and provides such deliverance from bondage, darkness, and oppression? "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Let us hasten to carry to the nations the message of such a glorious kingdom. One of the South's fairest daughters was leaving for West Africa as a missionary under appointment of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Someone reminded her of the perils of climate and disease in the tropics. She replied, "Yes, I have thought of all that, but I would rather go, doing the will of God, if I lived only thirty days after reaching Africa, than to remain here, disobedient to God's call, and live many years."

● We thank thee, Lord of hosts and Saviour of our souls, that some day thou shalt overcome the world, and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that thou art Jesus Christ, the Lord, to the glory of our Father in heaven.

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