

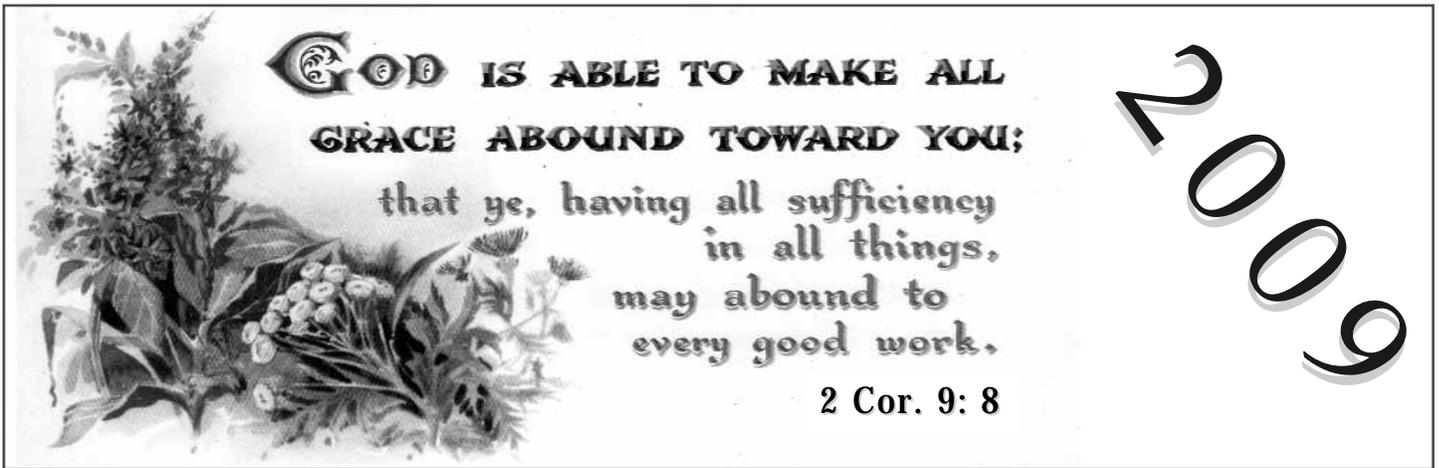
The
PRESENT TRUTH
and
Herald of Christ's Epiphany

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"The Lamb opened the seventh seal." "Ye have approached Mount Zion, and the City of the Living God, The Heavenly Jerusalem ... See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh ... saying ... 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven' ... Wherefore, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." "Christ being come an High Priest ... by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle ... obtained eternal deliverance." —Rev. 8: 1; Heb. 12: 22, 25, 26, 28; 9: 11, 12.



The central thought in our text is that of *liberality*—(1) God's *liberality*, toward us, and (2) our *liberality*, toward Him, particularly as it manifests itself in serving His Truth, His cause and others whom He desires us to serve.

Liberality may be defined as generosity in our desire to see others prosper from gifts that we have provided of our means, talents, time, attention, *etc.*, on them,

especially on the needy. It is one of the secondary graces. Secondary graces do not have affection organs, which, by exercising themselves directly, express such graces; rather, they are produced by the higher primary graces (faith, hope, self-control, patience, piety, brotherly kindness and charity) laying hold on the lower affection organs and suppressing their efforts to control. When the lower affection organ of *acquisitiveness*, the love for gaining and retaining (which produces the lower primary grace of *providence*), is allowed to control, it makes one *covetous, avaricious* and *miserly*; but when the higher primary graces lay hold on *acquisitiveness*, and suppress its efforts to control, the result is the exercise of the secondary grace of liberality.

The deeper fullness of meaning in our motto text becomes clearer as we examine the context. In 2 Cor. chapters 8 and 9 the Apostle treats at considerable length the subject of liberality; particularly Christian giving to needy fellow-Christians. As indicated in the A.R.V., his presentation may be separated into four parts: (1) Chap. 8: 1-15, which introduces the subject of the offering that he was seeking on behalf of the needy saints in Jerusalem; (2) Chap. 8: 16-24, which commends to the Corinthian brethren the three brothers who were to precede him to Corinth and prepare the offering beforehand; (3) Chap. 9: 1-5, which compliments the Corinthian brethren on their previously-manifested desire to make an offering (which Paul had used as an encouragement to others elsewhere to cause them to do likewise), and appeals to them through the motives of proper imitation, and possible shame coming to them, as incentives to cause them to do what they had determined that they would do in the matter; (4) Chap. 9: 6-15, which urges liberality, and enlarges on the blessed fruits it yields. Evidently at the time of the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15) the Apostles had urgently requested the brethren to remember the



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Free from all sects, parties, organizations, and creeds of men, but bound to God as it understands His Word, this magazine stands for —

- The defense of the Parousia Truth, given by the Lord through "that Servant," as basic for all further development of the Truth;
- The defense of the arrangements, charter and will given by the Lord through "that Servant," as binding on controlling corporations and associations among Truth people; and for
- The exposition and defense of the unfolding Epiphany-Basileia Truth, as meat in due season for the Lord's people, as He is pleased to provide it.

THE LIBERALITY OF THE MACEDONIANS

poor (Gal. 2: 10). St. Paul was attempting to fulfill this request, and therefore considered the matter of seeking an offering for the brethren in Jerusalem as being very important. These brethren were mostly from the poorer classes and were in dire need. The turbulent state of the times was about twelve years before the destruction of Jerusalem and this unrest had driven many people from the surrounding country into Jerusalem for greater security. Many were thrown upon the charity of their fellows to the general impoverishment of all. Christians were unpopular, hence could expect little or no outside aid from worldly people. They could expect to receive aid only from their Christian brethren in other places, such as Corinth, who were in much better earthly circumstances. The Apostle realized that, in addition to supplying the physical needs of the brethren in Jerusalem, the offering he was seeking would be a testimony to the saints in Judea of the love of the Gentile brethren in Christ (comp. 1 John 3: 16-18).

Christian giving, particularly the giving of money, for the interests of the Lord's cause, His Truth and His people, is usually considered a delicate topic to discuss in the ecclesia. We may be glad that under Divine inspiration the Apostle Paul devoted two whole chapters, 2 Cor. 8 and 9, to this subject; for he gives us a very helpful example as to how it may well be handled. Note carefully the variety of insights in which he presents the matter—all of them *ideal*. "Money," as such, has no character, so he never mentions it. In 2 Cor. 8 and 9, in harmony with the meanings of the Greek words, he calls the requested "collection for the saints" (1 Cor. 16: 1) a grace (*charis*), a service (*diakonia*), a partnership or participation (*koinonia*) in service, a generosity (*hadrotes*), a blessing (*eulogia*), a manifestation of love. He transfigures and lifts into a spiritual atmosphere a subject on which even Christians are apt to be materialistic. We need not be hypocritical when we speak among the Lord's people about Christian giving, including the giving of money. Both the giving and the business of the ecclesia should be transacted as Christian affairs, and not as secular affairs.

After assuring the Corinthian brethren of his love for them and his confidence in them (2 Cor. 7), the Apostle comes directly to the subject of the desired offering. In Chap. 8: 1-15 he introduces it with his usual eloquence, inviting the brethren to look at the matter through three models: (1) the example of the Macedonian brethren; (2) the example of Jesus; (3) the requirements by which God determines the liberality which is acceptable to Him.

The donation for the needy brethren at Jerusalem, given through the liberality of the Macedonian churches, the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, is described as "that gift for God which has been given by the congregations [ecclesiae] of Macedonia" (v. 1—Diaglott). This gift was given while they were "in a great trial of affliction," in which "the abundance of their joy, even in their deep poverty, overflowed in the riches of their liberality" (v. 2), for, as the Apostle testifies, "According to their ability, and even beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints; and not as we had hoped [in view of their poverty], but they first gave themselves to the Lord; and then to us by the will of God. [They had already devoted their human all to the Lord and they accordingly now put themselves first and foremost at His service in this matter], and [then, secondarily] to us [they put themselves also at the service of the Apostle, as the Lord's administrator], through the will of God." The manifested self-devotion and self-sacrifice of the Macedonian brethren encouraged St. Paul to take steps to draw the Corinthian brethren also into the same strong current of charity, and to prevent them from being outstripped by other churches. Accordingly (v. 6), he desired that Titus, who, under his direction, had probably laid the plan of this contribution (1 Cor. 16: 1-5) when he had previously been at Corinth, should now complete this good work in the brethren there and developed further in them this grace of liberality also. They abounded in everything (1 Cor. 1: 5), even financially (2 Cor. 8: 14), and now the Apostle urges that Christians as distinguished as they were in every respect—in faith, utterance (*logos*: word, doctrine), knowledge, diligence, and their (*agape*) love for him—should see to it that they abound in this grace of liberality also, being as eminent for their spirit of loving self-sacrifice for their needy brethren as they were for their *faith, doctrine, knowledge, diligence*, and their *love for Him* (v. 7). By way of contrast, a character that is undesirable is here suggested: that of one who abounds in spiritual interest, who is fervent in prayer, able to speak in the church meetings and to answer questions, active in service and affectionate, but who is unable to part with temporal good things he possesses, such as money, on behalf of the Lord, the Truth and the brethren.

JESUS' EXAMPLE

In his general introduction of the subject of the offering, the Apostle next cites also the example of the Lord (2 Cor. 8: 8). "I do not speak this by commandment," he explains, "but through the earnestness of others, I am testing also the reality of your love." In other words, he tells them that if they truly love the brethren, they will not begrudge helping them in their distress, but will show their love by their liberality, as the Macedonian brethren had done. However, he indicates that the Macedonian brethren are, of course, no law for them; and, though he has urged their example, he really did not need to do so, because there is a much greater example he can give. He refers to this in the succeeding verses:

"For you know the favor of our Lord Jesus, that [the following is the way that loving favor expressed itself], being rich {as God's only begotten Son (vs. 9—Diaglott), in the possession of the highest of all angelic natures), yet on your account he [that rich One, as the Logos] was made poor [in *nature*, by divesting Himself and becoming human; in *possessions*, having nowhere to lay His head; in *office*, by becoming a sin-offering and, in human eyes, by being a lay preacher; in *associates*, by having those of non-report who followed Him, and in *honor*, by being despised and rejected of men and accused as an alleged blasphemer, rejected, and, finally, crucified as an outlaw and rebel against human government], so that, by His poverty [by which He became our ransom], you [who were poor, needy, the condemned sinners of Adam's race] might be enriched [by regaining your forfeited inheritance through Adam, by faith justification, offering it in sacrifice, thereby receiving installation as new creatures, running for the prize of the Divine nature, by receiving of the Holy Spirit, and by having the prospect of sharing His Kingdom glory]" (Phil. 2: 5-13; Eph. 1: 7-18; 2: 7). What better example could the Apostle have cited to encourage the grace of giving among the Corinthians and all the rest of God's people since then, than that of the One who had made that great sacrifice on behalf of the Church and the world, the One who Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20: 35)?

RULES GOVERNING LIBERALITY

The Apostle makes the practical application for the benefit of the Corinthian brethren, and gives the rules by which God determines the liberality which is acceptable to Him. He does not command, but gives his judgment or advice: "This," he says, "is profitable for you, who, previously began not only to do, but also to

be desiring to do, a year ago" (v. 10). But the undertaking of "a year ago" was never completed. A good work which has been started with interest and spontaneity enough, but which has begun to drag, and is in danger of coming to naught, is very demoralizing. It enfeebles the conscience, develops irresolution and incapacity, and stands perpetually in the way of accomplishing other things. It is Divine wisdom, which says "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might" (Eccles. 9: 10). Procrastination is an enemy of achievement.

Therefore, in contrast to the length of time expressed "a year ago," during which performance had lagged behind their will to do, the Apostle urged that "now," *at the present time*, they "complete the doing of it, that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be the performance, according to ability. For if readiness of mind be present, one is acceptable according to that he may have, and not according to what he has not. Not, however, that to others may be relief, and to you distress, but an equality; at this time [instead of as it was a year ago] let your abundance be [a supply] for their deficiency, so that also their abundance may be for your deficiency, so that there may be an equality, even as it has been written (Ex. 16: 18), 'He who gathered much had nothing over; and he who gathered little had no lack'" (vs. 11-15).

It will be noted that the Apostle here gives four rules by which God determines the liberality that is pleasing to Him: (a) There must be a *readiness of desire, will*—a willing mind; "whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the LORD" (Ex. 25: 2; 35: 5). What we give willingly as a donation to the Lord is not tribute paid to a tyrant, not a tax, but the outworking of disinterested love, and the response of gratitude to our great Benefactor; otherwise He does not wish it. "The gift without the giver is bare." (b) To will is not sufficient; there must also be *performance*—without procrastination and unto a completion. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2: 14-26). (c) The Apostle specifies not only readiness to will and readiness to perform unto a completion, but also that it be "*according to ability*." One must be just before he is generous. If he donates to the Lord's cause, be it ever so generously, and neglects to provide properly for his own, "he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5: 8). If he gives in violation of the requirements of justice toward those dependent upon him or toward others, if he offers in disobedience or contrary to the Golden Rule, his offering is not acceptable to God (1 Sam. 15: 22; Matt. 7: 12; Hosea 6: 6). (d) *Brotherhood must be mutual, not one-sided*; and in the interchange of

sacrificial service equality will result. The law of reciprocity governs our giving. St. Paul appeals on the principle of equality and gives the supply of the manna as an illustration. One may minister in a temporal way and receive in return a temporal or a spiritual blessing, either at the time or later. "There is one who scatters, and yet increases more; and there is one that withholds more than is right, but it tends to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich; and he who waters will also be watered himself" (Prov. 11: 24, 25).

There was evidently an unpleasant side to this transaction. In the last four chapters of this epistle (2 Cor. 10-13) St. Paul strongly refutes the criticisms made by certain Judaists and a minority in the Corinthian ecclesia who were more or less influenced by them. Some had gone so far that he urges them all to examine themselves if they be in the faith (13: 5). Apparently some had accused him of having a personal interest in the offering, of putting his own hand into the bag and of seeking personal gain, and it became necessary for him to defend himself against their evil surmising and false accusations (2 Cor. 11: 7-9; 12: 13-18). In view of this adverse element he had been very careful not to be "burdensome," despite the fact that they "abounded"; rather while in their midst he had worked at tent making and had labored with his own hands (Acts 18: 1-3, 11; 1 Cor. 4: 12 NIV), and even though "the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel," nevertheless he did not use this power, but made the gospel of Christ without charge (1 Cor. 9: 6-19). He really had given no occasion for any to think that he was making "gain" of them.

ASSISTANCE FROM TITUS

We will now examine 2 Cor. 8: 16-24. Knowing of these adverse conditions on the part of a minority in the Corinthian church, God through St. Paul wisely provided for Titus, who had already won their affections and who was very willing and zealous on their behalf, and for two other brothers of good repute, to handle the matter of the offering and to encourage them in their proper liberality. One of these two brothers was well known, for his praise in the gospel was throughout all the churches (v. 18), and not only so, but also he had been voted (*chosen, approved*, by a show of the hands: from Greek *cheir*, the *hand*, and *teino*, to *extend*, or *stretch out*—(*Parousia Vol. 6, pp 276*) by the congregations to accompany the Apostle with this gift, which Paul was to dispense for the glory of the Lord (v. 19). The other brother also had proven himself diligent in the Lord's service (v. 22). The Apostle was carefully "avoiding this,

that no one should blame" him "in this abundance" which he had charge of dispensing, for he took thought for things honorable (comp. 1 Cor. 16: 3, 4), "not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (vs. 20, 21). What wisdom the Lord gave to St. Paul! Note how highly the Apostle commends Titus, and what an appreciation of Christian character manifests when he describes the other two brothers, the ones voted on and approved as messengers representing the contributing churches, as reflections of the splendor of Christ! To common eyes they might be commonplace men, but not to him. He encouraged the Corinthian brethren that by showing before these honored messengers the proof of their love, and of his boasting on their behalf, they would be showing it up front before the churches.

PAUL URGES WORKS— PROFESSIONS NOT ENOUGH

The Apostle then explains (2 Cor. 9: 1-5) the occasion of this boasting on their behalf. He compliments them by stating that it was really not necessary for him to enlarge on the subject of the offering, since he had already said enough on this matter (v. 1) and he knew the readiness of their mind, seeing that they had already firmly purposed to contribute to the support of the needy and suffering saints in Jerusalem. Thus instead of urging the offering upon them as a duty, he tells them that he had been holding up their readiness to donate as an example to the Macedonians, stating that Achaia, of which district Corinth was the capital, was prepared a whole year ago; and he encourages the Corinthians with the statement that their zeal had stirred up very many in Macedonia (v. 2). The Apostle tactfully used each group to encourage, by their example, the other and to stir them up in proper emulation. He now explains that he is sending the three brothers ahead, on their behalf, in case, if any of the Macedonians would accompany him when he comes to Corinth himself, they would find matters not so flourishing as he had led them to believe—this would put him to shame, to say nothing of them (vs. 3, 4). He thought it wise to have these brethren precede his coming and to first make ready the Corinthians previously announced gift, that it might be ready as a blessing, prompted by free will and liberality, and not as an extortion, or as a matter of avarice, in which one gives reluctantly, keeping as much as he can (v. 5).

"GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER"

In 2 Cor. 9: 6-15 the Apostle resumes his direct and urgent tone. While he had said that it was not necessary

for him to write further on the matter of the offering, seeing that they had willingness and readiness of mind, nevertheless he concludes by urging liberality and emphasizing the blessed fruits it yields: “But this I say, He who sows sparingly, will also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully, will reap also bountifully; even as each one purposes in his heart [so let him give], not from grief [grudgingly, reluctantly, grieved over parting with the contribution], or from necessity [the Jews had in the temple *two chests* for alms: the one for giving what was *necessary*, what the law required, the other for *free-will offerings*; to escape condemnation, some would grudgingly give what *necessity* required; others would give *cheerfully*, for the love of God, and through pity for those in need]; for God loves a cheerful [Greek, *hilaros*; ‘hilarious,’ rejoice willingly] giver [about those who give grudgingly or of necessity, nothing is said—the benefits of giving are lost to them; but of the cheerful giver much is said—*God loves them*]” (2 Cor. 9: 6, 7). Material gifts, such as money, are nothing in the sight of God unless given in the proper spirit. He takes no account of the gift without the giver; He looks upon the heart. God loves the happy, joyful, willing giver, who gives, not because of desiring to match or outdo someone else, or because of being shamed into it, but because his heart is filled with love and devotion to Him and joy in doing His will and in blessing others, be the gift large or small. The true givers may therefore be of good cheer, for God *loves* them.

OUR 2009 MOTTO TEXT

This brings us to 2 Cor. 9: 8, “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.” What a wonderful source of assurance is found in the words, “*God is able!*” This and similar expressions are found in many places in the Scriptures; (Dan. 3: 17; Luke 3: 8; Rom. 11: 23; 14: 4; 2 Tim. 1: 12). The Greek word translated “grace” here is *charis*, which is defined also as *graciousness, favor, a generous gift, a charitable act, or liberality*. This same word is used also in 2 Cor. 8: 1, 6, 7, 19; 9: 14, 15. The Greek word translated “abound” twice in this verse is *perisseuo*, which means “*to exceed a fixed number or measure,*” “*to be over and above,*” “*to super abound, be in excess.*”

God, who has the unlimited resources of the universes at His command, and who has omnipotent power, is indeed able through His liberality to make every favor to abound, to be in excess, to be more than enough toward us. The implication is that He will thereby give us so much that we will always have “all sufficiency in all

things,” we will always be “enriched in everything for all liberality.” This would include always having more than merely sufficiency, always being enriched in heart and prospering in the graces of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22, 23; 2 Pet. 1: 5-11) and in the knowledge of His Word; it would include always having that “all sufficiency” in temporal things, such as food, raiment, shelter, money, *etc.*, *that He sees to be best for our highest welfare*. He will not always give His people in this Age an abundance of temporal good things; He allows many to be poor in this world’s goods, though they be rich in faith (James 2: 5); He allowed even St. Paul at times to be in need of temporal things (1 Cor. 4: 11; 2 Cor. 11: 27; Phil. 4: 12).

God gives us the “all sufficiency” *for a purpose*; He does not desire us selfishly to hoard for ourselves or our families the spiritual and temporal good things He has bestowed upon us. He, having abounded toward us, desires us to do the same toward others. He gives us abundance in order that we “*may abound to every good work.*” This would mean the bestowing of our spiritual and temporal good things upon others.

SOWING LIBERALLY— REAPING LIBERALLY

The Apostle reverts to the illustration of the sower 2 Cor. 9: 9, 10 and quotes from Psa. 112: 9. He who is righteous sows much out of his spiritual and temporal good things: not *at home* merely, nor merely among his *acquaintances*, but *abroad*, among others, both in his own and even in other countries; he dispersed, scattered, spread his bounties, even among *strangers*, whether of his own or of another nation. As he had opportunity, he did good to all men, *especially to those who were of the household of faith* (Gal. 6: 10). His righteousness endures; he shows his faith by his works. The Apostle continues, “He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food [comp. Isa. 55: 10], will supply [God, who desires His consecrated children to exercise liberality, first provides them with *the means* thereto], and will multiply your sowing, and will increase the products of your righteousness [comp. Hosea 10: 12], you being enriched in everything for liberality, which produces through us thanksgiving to God” (2 Cor. 9: 10, 11).

In closing, the Apostle encourages the Corinthian brethren by showing them especially three blessings that will result from their liberality:

(a) It will yield a rich harvest of thanksgiving to God. Their loving service to their needy brethren in Jerusalem will not only supply their material needs, but the recipients and others will see the hand of God

in this relief, and it will evoke many thanksgivings to God (v. 12). True thankfulness to the Heavenly Father is an atmosphere in which all graces flourish, and those whose gifts of love bear fruit in this grateful spirit are benefactors to an extent which no money can estimate. We may bring glory to God, for wherever genuine love is, He must be, first and last.

(b) And, looking forward, the Apostle sees in his mind's eye the brethren in Jerusalem "glorifying God on account of the proof of this ministration in your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ, and the liberality of the contribution for them and for all" (v. 13). They would be won to recognize more unreservedly the Christian standing of the Gentile brethren. Once they may have had their doubts about the Corinthians and other pagans who were said to have received the Gospel, but after receiving this offering there will be no doubt in their minds—such a manifestation of brotherly love must be from God through Jesus Christ. The language of love is intelligible everywhere; and then they will praise God that the Corinthian brethren have obediently confessed the Gospel and demonstrated a fellowship with them and with all the brethren (1 Pet. 1: 22; 1 John 3: 14; 16-18).

(c) Finally, among the fruits of kindness is to be reckoned the direct response of brotherly love, expressed especially in prayer on behalf of those from whom the blessings have been received, whether they be material or spiritual. If you bring blessings to others of the Lord's people, even though they may not know you personally, they will pray God to bless you in return, "ardently loving you on account of the surpassing and transcending grace of God bestowed upon you" (v. 14). Indeed, liberality is one of the graces of the Spirit much to be desired and carefully and diligently to be cultivated, and it is much appreciated in us by our Heavenly Father, the Giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1: 17).

GOD'S UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

In conclusion the Apostle bursts out into a great climax with a characteristic doxology (v. 15): "Thanks to God for his inexpressible [unspeakable] free gift!"—the gift of redemption in and through His only begotten Son (John 3: 16), the great, original, unspeakable, indescribable, vast, stupendous, immeasurable, inexhaustible and unsearchable (Eph. 3: 8; 1 Pet. 1: 10-12) gift of God's infinite love, in which everything else is included (1 Cor. 8: 9; Rom. 8: 32), and especially all such manifestations of brotherly love as have just been considered. If we have received from God "his unspeakable gift," what great thing is it if we give a few

perishing gifts for His sake? We do well daily to ask ourselves the question, "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?" He has done so much for us! May His great infinite liberality be more and more an incentive to us to develop this same beautiful grace of His Holy Spirit in our own characters! Our 2009 motto text should be of great assistance.

What a privilege and what gratitude and joy are ours that we are accepted by God and invited and enabled to give our little human all to Him and to lay it down in His blessed service! "He really needs none of our efforts, none of our money [or time, talents]; but since it will be to our advantage, and assist in our development, He permits His work to be in such a condition as will have need of all the efforts of those who are truly His, and of all the means that they will be prompted to use in their efforts to glorify Him" (P. 6, p. 346). "God loves a cheerful giver." To be appreciated by Him, the gift must be an outworking of disinterested love, or else a thank-offering, prompted by a realization of our debt of everlasting gratitude to Him from whom all our blessings come. And to such, the Apostle assures us, "God is able to make all grace abound." Whoever cheerfully gives anything in God's service—time, talent, strength, money or influence—will find himself proportionately abounding in the different graces; for such are in the right attitude of heart to grow in grace.

From Prov. 3: 9, 10 we learn that if we honor God with our substance our figurative barns shall be filled with plenty and our figurative presses shall burst out with new wine; that is, by God's favor we will abound in the deeper and simpler things of the Truth and its Spirit; for "The secret of the LORD is with them that reverence him; and he will show them his covenant" (Psa. 25: 14). As God abounds toward us, let us abound in His service with joy, doing with our might what our hands find to do, each serving according to his opportunity and "the ability which God gives" (1 Pet. 4: 11). And let us remember the words of our Master (Matt. 10: 8), "Freely you have received, freely give."

As a supplementary article, we suggest, "Lending to the Lord," R2211.

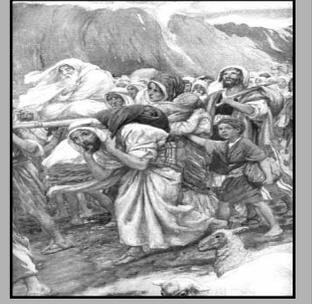
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HYMNS FOR 2009

As a companion hymn to our text we suggest "More Likeness to Thee," Hymns of Dawn, number 198. Use this hymn on the first of each month as the day's hymn; all other days, please use the second hymn listed with the day's Manna.



CROSSING THE RED SEA



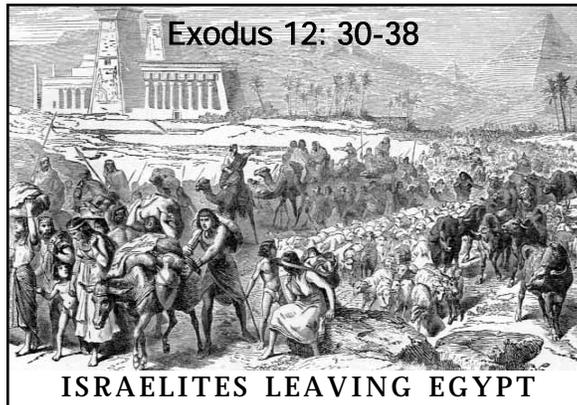
Exodus 14: 13-27

SKEPTICS have railed greatly against the truthfulness of the Bible record of Israel's deliverance—crossing the Red Sea. They object that so rapid an exodus of two million people, with their flocks and herds, would be impossible; they object, secondly, to the testimony that God miraculously delivered them by making a path for them through the sea. As to the first objection, we can readily see that if the Egyptians had been opposed to their leaving the difficulties would have been much greater. We are to remember, on the contrary, that after suffering the chastisement of the ten plagues they were willing and anxious for their departure; Pharaoh himself sending a message to Moses, even in the night in which the first-born were slain, saying, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go serve the LORD, as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also." We are to remember that the Israelites were, in a measure organized; their tribal and family relationships having been maintained. The narrative shows that they went forth in military order—either five abreast or in five companies (Ex. 13: 18, margin).

Evidently all were under the command of the heads of the tribes, the elders of the people. Several days elapsed before their journey brought them to the Red Sea. The great wall of Egypt, called Shur (somewhat similar to the great wall of China), is supposed to have hindered their making a more direct route. Besides, this wall was in the midst of a sandy desert, where there would be no sustenance, either for them or for their cattle, while the route taken passing through the borders of Egypt to the head of the Red Sea, was evidently the most favorable one as respects pasturage. Various comparatively shallow places in the Red Sea, near its head, are suggested as possible ones by which the crossing may have been effected, and the description

given would indicate that the passage was made on such a sandbar, which perhaps ordinarily would have from five to twelve feet of water upon it according to the condition of the tides. The presumption is that the strong east wind spoken of, operating with the tides, laid bare this sandbar, and thus gave the Israelites a passage.

But while Pharaoh, under the sting of the last plague, was anxious for the departure of the Hebrews, nevertheless, as his grief abated and he considered the loss his empire was sustaining in the departure of two million subjects, intelligent and ingenious and docile, and when he considered further that they were not a proven fighting force, and impeded in traveling by their flocks and herds, he evidently felt that he had been too generous in permitting them to go. He concluded that in the few days'



march they had already experienced something of the difficulties and trials of the journey, and that by this time they were not only discouraged, but hemmed in by the northern tongue of the Red Sea, and the Egyptian wall, while on either side were mountains. He concluded that they could be easily retaken, and would feel that they had had enough of their outing and perhaps would return to their labor more docile than ever. Consequently the Egyptian troops were started in pursuit. When the Israelites, who had for years learned to dread their Egyptian masters, heard of the Egyptian army in pursuit, cried unto Moses despairingly and Moses, in turn, cried to the Lord on behalf of the people. The Lord's response to Moses' prayer is a striking one from which the Lord's people may also take a lesson. It was: "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward" (Ex. 14: 15). There is a time to *pray* and also a time to *act*, and thus to co-operate with God, who is answering our prayers. When the Lord's time for answering our prayers has come, and we know it, it is for us to manifest our faith in Him by going forward. Too many of the Lord's people, after hearing the Lord's

message, instead of going forward in obedience are disposed to tarry and pray to the Lord that He give them some special message not common to others. Such, through weakness of faith, are in danger of losing their standing. Without faith it is impossible to please God; and obedience is merely a demonstration of faith.

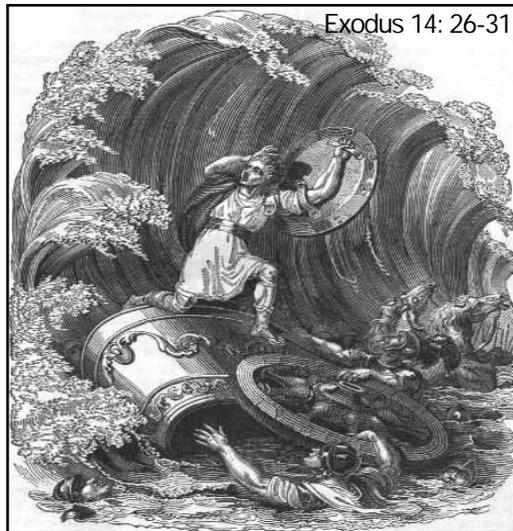
Apparently the Israelites got a glimpse of the Egyptians in the distance before sundown. This is implied in Moses' statement: "The Egyptians whom you have seen this day you shall see again no more forever." The account declares that the pillar of cloud and fire, by which the Israelites were miraculously led, removed to their rearward, so as to be between them and the Egyptians—a pillar of cloud and darkness to the latter, and a pillar of fire or light to the former. Apparently there was a great storm that night, the east wind blowing furiously; outside narratives, such as that of Josephus, declaring that it rained, thundered with lightning. But whether this was merely upon the Egyptians, from the pillar of cloud, or whether it was also upon the Israelites, would be merely conjecture.

What we do know is that during that night the windstorm blew across that upper neck of the Red Sea in such a manner as to leave the sandbar bare for a considerable breadth, so as to permit the rapid passage of so large a body of people. The Israelites knew, through Moses and their elders, what miracle had been performed and hastened to escape from their pursuers. The Egyptians probably were totally unaware of the miracle, and perhaps unaware that they were crossing the ordinary bed of the sea, and

and therefore, without trepidation, hastened onward in pursuit, impeded, however, by various accidents to their chariots, which sank into the comparatively soft sand of the sea bottom. They, no doubt, concluded that where the Israelites had gone they could go. Nevertheless, as they crossed they became so discouraged with the opposition, of what they probably at first considered accidents, but afterward recognized as Divine providences on Israel's behalf that they resolved on a return—to give up the pursuit, saying that the God of the Hebrews fought for them. By this time it was nearly daybreak, and Israel having crossed over, Moses stretched forth his rod over the sea, and winds and tide, being controllable, the waters returned on the Egyptians, and they were drowned. It is said that

immense storms, somewhat analogous to this one, frequently occur in this vicinity, and that Napoleon and a troop of soldiers were very nearly overtaken at about the same place that Pharaoh's chariots were lost, by a sudden onset of storm and rising of the tides. A critical writer suggests that Pharaoh's charioteers were probably intent upon heading off the Israelites, and thus turning them backward, and that the sea waters were a wall on either hand, in the sense of being a flank protection, hindering the troops from getting ahead of the Israelites, turning their flank. He says: "The wall would not, by any oriental, be supposed to be an actual wall rising up beside them, any more than the wooden walls of Great Britain are board fences about the island; or the hedge about the law, which the rabbis built by their precepts, was a growth of vegetation."

There are numerous lessons connected with this narrative, profitable for all of God's people. As already suggested, the experience of the Israelites and the Egyptians at this time represented the experience of the world in the close of this Gospel Age, and in the dawn of



the new dispensation—the period of deliverance of God's people, too, from bondage to sin and death, which will be accomplished at the dawn of the Millennial Age. We may reasonably understand that the last or tenth plague upon Egypt symbolizes the bitter experience of the world connected with the death of the antitypical first-born of antitypical Egypt at the close of the present Age, and that these experiences will be favorable to the Lord's people, and unfavorable to others, down to a certain point where the contest will

be abandoned, and those in authority in the world will agree to the full liberty of all who love righteousness and who desire to walk in the Lord's way. Satan and his fallen angels will concede for a time, the demands of the weak and the helpless, and subsequently in the Little Season, repent, and attempt their recapture under the slavery of selfishness, and so through a Red Sea of trouble the Lord will then administer a final chastisement upon all those who oppose His deliverance of the poor and the needy, and they that have no helper, and who cry for righteousness, and follow the leadings of His representative, Messiah. Surely, when the new dispensation has been opened up, and the silver trumpets of the Jubilee shall have sounded release (Lev. 25: 9-13), and restitution shall have been wrought throughout all the world, there will be great

rejoicing among all who love righteousness, and, in the language of Ex. 15: 1, 21, they may say, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously." Already the Christian can, *by faith*, rejoice and realize his release from sin and death.

Another thought we may draw from this narrative is the unlimited power of God, who has promised us that if we are His, and will follow the leadings of our Master, the antitype of Moses, all things shall work together for good to us. We are to learn that nothing is too wonderful for our God to accomplish, and in proportion as faith increases, our joys will increase, and

we will have the full assurance of faith; the full assurance of victory, for this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. We are to learn that while the wicked may triumph for a time the Lord is against them. He is on the side of the poor and oppressed, who are seeking to know His will and to do it, and though He bear long with them, as represented in the parable, yet, finally He will avenge them of their Adversary. Their enemies shall then become the enemies of the Lord, and the enemies of the Lord shall bite the dust—be destroyed (Luke 18: 7; Mic. 7: 17), as a just recompense of reward. * * *

2007 ANNUAL REPORT FROM BRITAIN

Dear Brother Herzig: Greetings in the name of Jesus!

The year of 2007 has gone by all too quickly. From a religious viewpoint in Britain, it is becoming more and more evident that we are living in a post-Christian era. Muslim and atheistic, as well as influential sodomite groups, continue to seek the total abolition of Christmas and Easter as religious festivals. Programmes on television are beginning to discuss the possibility of Islam replacing Christianity as a state religion. Moreover, materialism continues to leach away at what little Christian faith there is still left. State schools have for some thirty years been teaching a curriculum of "World Religions," in which all the six major indigenous faiths in Britain are treated as equals. Needless to say, the Bible is all but ignored. Hence most people up to the age of forty are now Biblically illiterate and extremely susceptible to the influence of the occult and alien religions. What little protection they had has now been removed. This is the main reason that we are in a post-Christian era in Britain.

Another major impact on the lives of the public here has been the continuing change of our weather. Although evolutionary scientists speculate that all this change is coming about as a result of human activity, such "scientific" atheists cannot recognise the hand of God in this matter. Pastor Russell predicted this situation about a century ago in the Photo-Drama of Creation (p.105; p. 91, 1914 edition).

He states: "Gradually the glaciers in the form of icebergs are running out and dissolving in the more Equatorial waters." Earlier, he said that the climate of Alaska and the Arctic zone is being affected "remarkably".

These scientists, with their much-vaunted "worldly wisdom", take no account of the world-wide Flood of Noah's day. They fail abysmally to see the hand of God in the environmental history. The ice-caps bear eloquent testimony to the existence of a canopy of ice and water which once surrounded the earth. Its collapse in Noah's day at the Poles caused a world-wide flood of catastrophic proportions. Atheistic scientists, "blinkerred" by false theory, cannot 'see' what is before their eyes!

It is hoped to focus public attention on the Canopy Theory in 2008 by a series of "public witness" meetings dealing with climate change and Bible prophecy. The fact that Pastor Russell was the prophet of climate change may help to increase the reading of his works. Additionally, it is hoped to circulate widely the new booklet about the "J.W.'s" with possible newspaper advertisements. Also, it is hoped to circulate to the brethren the new modern style tracts during 2008. There is a mood of optimism borne of joy among the brethren, that the Lord has guided His people through a "vale of tears" in 2007. And having come through; we will enthusiastically do the work of witnessing to the world.

Another very disturbing feature at this time is the loss of confidence in British banks. It has been *150 years* since scared investors have had to queue outside a British bank, yet this has happened; showing the very shaky foundations of the British banking system. People have been sinking further and further into debt and have been encouraged to take out mortgages and loans that have clearly been beyond their means to repay, by insidious and irresponsible advertising in the media. The

highly respected and sober Confederation of British Industries predicts that economic growth will fall in 2008 in Britain along with other indices which are even more pessimistic. The housing market which has been the bastion of the “feel good factor” and the artificial prosperity of recent years is close to a catastrophic drop; leading to the forced repossession of thousands of homes. Another alarming factor is the increasing and serious balance of trade deficiency. Britain is buying far more than it is selling; this is always a harbinger of a deep recession. The outlook is very bleak for Britain.

Public law and order is also turning into a more pressing issue in British Society. It is becoming increasingly evident that the police are unable to deal with the escalating number of murders in the major cities. Beleaguered politicians grasp gratefully at diminished statistics which seem to point out a decrease in minor crime. However, in actuality this is even more alarming, since people are no longer reporting these crimes to the police because they have lost confidence in their ability to solve minor crime due to its abundance! It may well be that this is the real reason why the British Government is withdrawing its army from Iraq so that it may be available to quell violent disturbances in British streets fomented by the increasingly powerful Muslim and Anarchist groups that may plan such riots. The strength of the British Army is being weakened by the moral decline among its ranks; last year it lost the equivalent of nearly a battalion (about 800 troops) due to drug taking; if this continues the British government will be unable to honour its commitment to continue its fight in Afghanistan, and will be having to face another humiliating retreat as in Iraq.

The British monarchy continues to remain under a cloud of suspicion. This “cloud” was caused by the sudden death of the Princess of Wales. Many in the media continue to believe that her death was the result of a conspiracy in “high places”. Whatever the truth of this matter may be, one thing is certain; that the moral legacy and example left by the Princess of Wales has done a great deal to destroy Christian values in this country. The manner of her death in a car crash along with her latest paramour has left a great many unanswered questions; that in turn has led to a marked decline in the popularity of the Monarchy. A similar “cloud” hangs over the House of Lords, which is also becoming increasingly distrusted by the public. In recent years the original hereditary peers have been replaced largely by wealthy and influential plebeians, although a remnant of the original aristocrats remain. A new method of political

appointment has already become corrupt in what is known as the “cash for honours” scandal: in spite of a police enquiry no one has been taken to court, much to the public’s disgust!

The Catholic Church continues its slow decline into oblivion. The priests no longer have the prestige and power once enjoyed; even in deeply Catholic counties. In the main it has been the fierce glare of publicity, concerning vile priestly practices which are causing this downturn of popularity. The Protestant Churches continue to turn a blind eye to the Bible’s teaching on the subordinate role of women in the Church. Priestesses abound in the Church of England, even Bible believing and evangelical groups are now appointing female “elders”! Apparently the ‘moral’ revolution (actually immoral) of the sixties has more sway in their minds than the Bible! A perceptive Professor of Biblical Interpretation, James D. Smart, in 1970 authored a study called: ‘*The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church*’ in which he laments, “My finding is that the Bible is in a very bad way in the Church.” Later he states that there had been, “a steady decline in the education of the Bible in the church, and a mounting ignorance of the contents of the Bible among members of the church.”

He continues; “It is a puzzling phenomenon. I am convinced that it constitutes the crisis *beneath all other crises* that endangers the church’s future.” Also he opines; “that there has been a *blindness* which scholar, preacher, teacher, and layman, *all alike* have shared...” (italics mine). It has been nearly half a century since this “higher critic” wrote his book, and we have in that time witnessed the rise of sodomite clerics into positions of power and the ordaining of women ministers in the Church of England. This in turn has meant that the churches are close to schism with a further weakening of their already diminished power and authority over the people. Consequently the Bible’s teaching is being rebelled against or ignored on a massive scale. For example, before the sixties it was unheard for a woman to enter a church congregation without a head covering; now the complete reverse is true. A further phenomenon is adding to the woes of Christendom; the rise of militant atheism. While atheists have always existed in small numbers, it is becoming clear that a mass movement is beginning to develop that is actively promoting this philosophy of fools. Its leader, Prof. Dawkins, is receiving much favourable publicity in the media.

At our General Convention last August we were blessed with the visit of our dear Bro. Don and Sr.

Patricia Lewis. The Lord truly blessed this occasion and a godly, wholesome spirit prevailed.

Some have queried the fact that Brother Ralph Herzig had not spent many years in the Bible House before being appointed. However, the Lord can train a brother, both inside or outside the Bible House! Indeed the Lord has been training a capable brother for the last sixty years or so to be a leader of the Lord's Epiphany enlightened people *for this time*. He has been trained generally outside the Bible House, because he will need a wider range of experience than might have been available there. Brother Herzig has filled his office now for over four years and there has been every indication that he has the Lord's approval.

Some postulate that the Lord's Epiphany enlightened people have no longer a need of a leader and claim that the only leader needed is Jesus Christ. This claim has been set forth throughout the Christian Era; so why did the Lord raise up a Wycliffe, a Luther, a Wesley or a Pastor Russell, if all that was needed throughout the Gospel Age was the invisible leadership of Jesus Christ? Providentially, the Lord is wiser and more observant than the opposers who promote this idea! The Lord will not leave His Epiphany enlightened

people without a leader, for He is a God of order, not of anarchistic confusion! On the other hand, Satan would dearly like to obliterate the Movement that the last member of the Little Flock established. Satan can no longer directly attack Brother Johnson, who is now glorified, but he will do anything he can to destroy the Movement he founded! Satan has a special hatred of the Epiphany Messenger; first he faithfully taught and led the "little flock" Truth Movement and continued the publication of the writings of "that servant."

To the disbelieving brethren, the wise words of our Lord to those who opposed Him are especially appropriate; "I told you and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of me." (John 10: 25).

Dear brother, the vast majority of the dear British brethren wish you well and are doing all they can to forward the Truth message in this country.

God bless and keep you from the fiery darts of the Adversary,

Bro. R. D. Doidge

Pilgrim and British Representative

BRAZIL

2007 Annual Report

Dear Bro. Herzig,

Greetings in the precious Name of Jesus!

The Movement of the L.H.M.M. in Brazil had its beginning with the coming of some brethren from Poland in the years of 1927, 28 and 29. They knew God's word and the Epiphany Truth in Poland. Through these brethren, two classes in different cities and later another class in a distant area were established. The brethren today, are decendants of those pioneers, also from some German families who arrived in this country.

Through the years, later generations spoke less of the language of their fathers and learned the Portuguese language. This presented a problem as we had minimal books and literature in Portuguese.

A young brother, after examining the points of view of some of the Bible Student groups, found, according to his own words, that the teachings of the L.H.M.M. are the most coherent with the Bible, logic and facts. The enthusiasm was contagious. He has

helped us in translations and the graphic aspects of our literature. Certainly, our God, Jehovah, allowed the coming of this brother to assist in the quality of literature produced.

Thank you for arranging for the brethren from Poland to come and serve at our convention. They demonstrated much faith, knowledge and much enthusiasm. The Polish brethren have continued to assist us, so that we now have an Internet site. Certainly, this website will allow the knowledge and message of God's Plan to go forward throughout Brazil and in all Portuguese-speaking countries. The message of God's Plan and the future Kingdom will be within reach of many people that up to now, did not have this opportunity.

Our hope and the possibilities of a more promising future is based in the support and stimulus that we have had from the Bible House, in the person of the Executive Trustee and Pastor, emphasizing the Movement's invigoration in Brazil is for one and all. This allows the feeling that development is possible and will become real, depending on our determination in carrying the Truth to as many as possible.

What a true God is Jehovah, and His Son, Jesus Christ, that allow for the members of His people, in Brazil, to remain united, increased in faith, and

influenced to develop others in the knowledge of His Salvation and wonderful Plan for the future blessings for all humanity in His Kingdom.

With Christian love,
Your brother in the Master's service
Bro. Mario Woitowicz
Auxiliary Pilgrim and
Temporary Brazilian Representative

INDIA

2007 Annual Report

Dear Bro. Herzig:

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord!

We are grateful to God and His beloved Son for the protection and grace that has been with us throughout the year and look forward for the same as we take strides into the future. We also thank you and the Bible House for being good in supporting the Gospel message through the agency of the L.H.M.M. in India and especially for the supply of books and magazines sent to us periodically, which has been a source of help in our spiritual walk of life as we sojourn in this world.

When India was under the British Empire and Bro. Japamany was the Representative in India, we had the liberty to preach and publish Christian books. Now the country is in turmoil. We have little freedom so far as

religion is concerned, especially Christianity. We are not to sell our publications. They are permitted to enter the country without paying any customs duty mainly because they are branded as "for ministerial purposes." This acceptance comes in a limited sense. Under such circumstances, we are not recognized by the government to have a bookstore. Under present day circumstances, we do not recommend the L.H.M.M. to have a bookstore, mainly because the L.H.M.M. is not a registered body.

Having national conventions is a problem. Our country is not like the Western countries. In India, each state has its own language as well as culture. In addition to the financial strains we have political disturbances and communal riots cropping up all of a sudden at various places. Though India is a secular country, we Christians are a minority and the L.H.M.M. is like a drop in the bucket. Though English is a link language, those who assemble at the time of Conventions deliver the message in their own language for which one has to seek interpreters. Hence, I have advised our brethren to conduct local conventions in a small way, this way the expenses may be brought down; similarly, the other problems will disappear.

As in years past, the brethren in India continue to serve in the Lord's vineyard, seeking to spread the good news of the Gospel. On behalf of all the brethren in India and myself, we send our Christian love and greetings to you and the Bible House family.

Your brother in the Lord's service,

S. L. Lambert

Pilgrim and India's Representative

2007 Jamaica

Annual Report

Dear Bro. Herzig: Greetings with much love.

Thanks be to our God who has kept us alive and in His service for another year.

Many were the trials but the Lord delivered us out of them all and compensated us with many blessings. The 2007 year's motto Text, "*Consider Him that endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart*"—"They that wait upon the Lord shall...not faint" proved to be very helpful in my experiences as that is exactly what I have been doing.

The year was started by our annual "Thanksgiving" service at the Barton's Ecclesia. Since the 31st of December fell on a Sunday, we all worshiped there together. There was a lot of hymn

singing in the evening and the service of thanks was called to order at about 10:00 p.m. It included one hour praise singing, two discourses on praise and a prayer and praise service in which all the brethren were privileged to take part. There were 40 in attendance including many visitors. It was brought to a close at 12: 45 p.m., January 1.

In March we had a blessed Memorial Celebration. The meeting was attended by 21 brethren. It is reported that 13 more partook of the Lord's Memorial in different locations.

Our convention in April was a very blessed occasion; it was four wonderful days of blessings and spiritual fellowship. We were very happy to have Bro. Daniel

and Sr. Sue Herzig here for the convention. We were just as one family and it was as if we had known each other for a long time. I wish to state to you my thankfulness to you for making this wonderful arrangement for us; also for your prayers, which helped to make the convention the success it was.

The Photo Drama Study Guide was introduced to the brethren; they all seemed to appreciate it very much. I will order more for our stock.

We had our one day convention at the Barton's Ecclesia on the 5th of August, 2007. The theme was—"Behold The Lamb of God." It was a nice day of rich spiritual blessings. The Spirit and presence of the Lord could be felt Matt 18: 20. There were 29 brethren in attendance.

In August, we experienced the most violent hurricane we have ever seen. We were without light and

telephone and water was in short supply. The utility systems were down. Several hundreds of people lost their homes and had to use public shelters. Thank God, we survived without any injury and a roof was still over our heads. The two meeting halls are still standing with only minor damage.

On October 28, 2007 we celebrated our two Pastors' memorials at the Kingston Ecclesia. There were 18 in attendance; all testified of blessings received from their ministry.

Thank you for the new leaflets. I love the way you have modified them, the "*Jehovah's Witness Teachings Examined*," is very helpful. I have learned a lot from it.

We are thankful to God for your labor of love.

Yours in the Master's service,

Calvin Hall, Pilgrim
Jamaican Representative

NIGERIA

2007 Annual Report

Dear Bro. Herzig,

Your frank and honest expression of concern for and keen interest in the revival, sustenance and growth of the Harvest Truth in Nigeria comes to me as a harbinger of hope that the Truth in Nigeria will not only survive but may additionally outlive the present generation of brethren.

Many of the brethren are still holding tenaciously to the Truth in spite of the increasing economic hardship incidental to the manifestation and affect of the general great Time of Trouble.

I give Jehovah God special thanks for the wisdom given to you with regards to the appointment of an Auxiliary Pilgrim and a Temporary Representative for Nigeria. This development did bring a great joy to the Nigerian brethren who have been worried, in the past twenty one years, of remaining as sheep without a shepherd. By the Lord's assisting grace, I and my dear wife, Sr. Sarah Ebong, have been praying before the arrival of the letter that Jehovah should give us a leader and that the Executive Trustee would be guided by Jehovah's wisdom whenever he would be appointing a leader for the Nigerian brethren.

As you have deemed it fit to appoint me for this humble position, I will continue to pray for more of the graces of the spirit to enable me to serve the Lord,

the Truth and the brethren till the end of my pilgrim journey. I thank you for the wonderful advice you gave me when you asked that I should pray for Jehovah God's direction concerning the offer. As regards the appointment, who am I to refuse what Jehovah has placed in my care, since I have consecrated my all to His service.

Since my appointment, several trips have been made to different states where meetings with the elders took place. At those meetings, a series of reports affecting the Parousia and Epiphany Truth in the state and the general difficulties the brethren are facing was given to me. We are striving to enlist the prominent brothers of each state to assess the classes and give me a feedback on how much will be needed to provide what is needed to supply the spiritual well being of the brethren.

Our National Convention was held in Lagos, September 28-30. The theme of the convention was "Discerning the Signs of the Times." Each officiating brother served us efficiently while dispensing the Truth contained in the convention theme to all present. The last day of the convention witnessed a lot of excitement as people converged at the opening of the convention by visitors from the Present Truth Church and other individuals who were very attentive to the symposium

and discourse, singing joyfully together with us the various hymns. We had the chairman's closing remarks, vote of thanks, love feast, and the benediction as we closed finally at about 4:45 p.m. with many blessings showered on every participant. There were a total of 359 brethren in attendance at the convention. The convention was attended by brethren from the states of Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Delta, and Ibadan Oyo.

Bro. A. T. Akpan, the convention Chairman, and the entire congregation took a vote to send our warm, loving and sincere Christian greetings to you and all the

dear brethren the world over, thanking you especially for appointing a Temporary National Representative and Auxiliary Pilgrim in Nigeria this year.

May Jehovah God continue to bless, strengthen and keep you and make you a success in His service in Jesus dear Name.

Yours in His service,

Willie S. Ebong

Auxiliary Pilgrim—Temporary Nigerian
Representative

BIBLE STANDARD MINISTRIES — L. H. M.M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bro. Herzig,

Sending you and all there much love in the Lord. I very much sympathize with you in your trials. Our trials in this evil day, surely puts the finishing touches on our characters. We all feel it. The Present Truth and Bible Standard are exceptionally good. Where would we be without a guiding light? I pray for you daily as does our class of five.

Please give my (our) love to all your helpers.

God bless us all!

Christian love and prayers,
J. H., Cambridge Springs, PA

Dear Bro. Herzig, Warmest Christian Greetings!

I just wanted to take a minute of your time to let you know how very much I appreciate your service to the Lord, the Lord's work and the Lord's people. These are trialsome times, but I do believe that you are fulfilling the duties and responsibilities assigned to you by the Lord; and for that I am so thankful.

The Bible Standards and Present Truths are a blessing to me and to others, as testified to at our weekly testimony meetings. So many, so often, say how much they appreciate the encouragement they receive from these.

I was privileged to be a part of the Muskegon convention, although there were some difficulties, I believe the Lord preserved the integrity of the convention and over-ruled any major problems. Praise God! I most appreciated the deeper Epiphany talks that were given. I really enjoy the "meatier" Truths, as they force me to study more and to "prove all things" for myself.

I have recently been blessed by listening to some of the tapes from earlier conventions (early 70's). That was the approximate time that I started attending conventions and it was the Epiphany message especially, that got me "hooked" on my studies because it was all so new and all so interesting. I must admit that, at first, my studies were geared more towards trying to disprove the Truth, but it soon became evident that that was not going to happen. Again, praise God!

As an Epiphany student, I appreciate hearing and studying the Epiphany Truths. May God grant you the continued strength and wisdom to keep that wonderful message pure. That is my constant prayer for you, dear Brother.

God bless and keep you. Christian love,
K. L., Whitehall, MI

Dear Bro. Herzig and Bible House Friends!

May your holidays be blessed and healthy ones.

Our class has voted 100% to welcome all speakers you are able to provide for us. It is our desire to let you set the dates for them because our times are flexible to arrange anytime. If this is not suitable, please let us know. We look forward to the service. We appreciate all the work you and the co-laborers are doing and your zeal means so much to us.

May God continue to guide you. The Present Truth and Bible Standard are wonderful spiritual food.

Christian love to each one,
The Reidsville, NC Ecclesia

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2009 LHMM CONVENTIONS

United States:

March: Details to follow

New England, May 15, 16, 17

Athens/Nelsonville, Ohio, July 17, 18, 19

September: Details to follow

France: All conventions in Barlin

Spring: April 11, 12, 13;

Summer: July 31, August 1, 2;

Fall: October 31, November 1

Germany:

Wandlitz, October 3, 4, 5

Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad:

(Check Jan/Feb 2009 Bible Standard for dates)

Lithuania:

Kowno, June 20, 21, 22

Nigeria:

National Convention, Akwa Ibom State, November 28-30

Poland:

Kolobrzeg, April 11, 12, 13; Poznan, May 1, 2, 3;

Bydgoszcz, July 11, 12, 13; Leszno, July 14, 15, 16;

Gliwic, July 17, 18, 19; Susiec, July 21, 22, 23;

Krakow, August 21, 22, 23

Ukraine:

Orlowka, June 26, 27, 28; Lwow, August 14, 15, 16

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Hyde, August 7, 8, 9;

Sheffield/Barlborough, October 24 and 25

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MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2009

Wednesday, April 8, after 6:00 p.m.

The Memorial date this year comes on April 8 after 6:00 p.m. The newing of the moon nearest the vernal equinox, at Jerusalem, occurs at 6:28 p.m. March 26. Accordingly, Nisan 1 begins at 6:00 p.m. March 26 and Nisan 14 begins at 6:00 p.m. thirteen days later, or at 6:00 p.m. on April 8. May the Lord bless His consecrated people as we properly prepare ourselves to commemorate Him and His great sacrifice for us (1 Cor. 5: 7, 8)!

IN REMEMBRANCE

Bro. Fiedosei Daranutsa, died July, 30, 2008, at the age of 79. He was born in Moldova, came to the U.S. in 2001 and resided in Spokane, Washington. He was a member of the Seattle, Washington class. Bro. Daranutsa is survived by his wife, five daughters and their husbands, two sons and their wives and many grandchildren. Bro. Walter Markiewicz officiated at the funeral service and the graveside service was conducted by Bro. Walter Onyszko.

Bro. Monday O. Okoro, Abia State, Nigeria, died at the age of 64, April 24, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Madam Blessing Onwagba Okoro, their children, grandchildren and brothers. His last service to his class was the subject of "Israel's Return." He was meek, gentle and a peacemaker. Bro. Okoro's family and local class will miss him and his dedication to God and our Lord Jesus. Thanks be to Jehovah, for we sleep but not forever. For weeping may endure for a night — Joy cometh in the morning.

CORRECTION FOR AUTUMN 2008 PRESENT TRUTH

On page 42, "In Memoriam" article, column 2, line 12 please insert the following: Achievements and attainments of this forty-eighth star member and seventh Principal Man of the Laodicean stage of the Church (Micah 5: 5).

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