

DAILY READINGS FROM THE WORD

Reg Lang



Booklet 1 January to March

Foreword

These “Daily Readings” have a simple plan of a quotation from scripture and a meditation from the author inspired by the spiritual writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Contained in Swedenborg’s extensive writings are detailed accounts of unusual experiences by which he was shown the inner meaning of the scriptures (*The Word*). His works document the wisdom and power of applying the scriptures to ourselves, which can lead us to a heavenly life of joy and happiness as intended by the Lord God. Swedenborg states that the Lord Himself guided him on his journeys exploring the spiritual world. Proof of the power of the wisdom in Swedenborg’s works is the amazing influence they had on significant people and movements in history.

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Jan 1 Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

You too, in the beginning, are created heaven and earth: a little spiritual universe. Heaven within and earth without: just as Jesus says in the New Testament 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you'.

God creating is the first teaching of the Bible: and the first picture we should have of Him: without Him we can do nothing. Try not to think of time when you think of the beginning: so far as you are concerned it is all NOW. By the beginning is meant the first thing in your creation from which all else follows. First God and Heaven, then earth. You are being created NOW.

Jan 2

Creation

***Now the earth was formless and empty,
darkness was over the surface of the deep***

Genesis 1:2

In our early days we don't think much about heaven. Our earth life seems nearer to us and much more attractive: in consequence it is out of harmony with heaven. It is spiritually uncultivated, and so is said to be 'formless and empty'. At first our minds are shallow, and their depths are covered with the darkness that arises from ignorance. Soon we must begin to look within or upward to God our Maker, or our heaven will be disjoined from our earth life, and we shall become unhappy indeed.

Jan 3

Creation

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Genesis 1:2

Water in the Bible is a picture of truth. What water is to natural life, truth is to spiritual life. In each case it cleanses and refreshes.

Think of the waters as the appearance of all the little knowledge of truth that fills your mind. Of themselves they are dead, but when the Spirit of God hovers over them they awaken and come alive. As they do so you are thrilled with a new delight, and begin to prepare for a new state of spiritual growth or development. These enlivening truths relieve the darkness that covered your mind, and some intelligence begins to remove ignorance.

Jan 4

Light

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness.

Genesis 1:3,4

This is the first kind of light: your mind is now beginning to see and to understand. It is good, because you can now distinguish, if only in a general way, between right and wrong. God has separated the light from the darkness. Now you can begin to look within, or up, to the light: and down to darkness. Even at this early stage, the choice is before you: there is no compulsion: you can look to the light or to the darkness.

Jan 5 Light

God called the light “day”, and the darkness he called “night”. And there was evening, and there was morning — the first day.

Genesis 1:5

Whatever knowledge of truth is from God, is called Day. There is no night where God is. Whatever is from self, and its own apparent intelligence, is Darkness, and in the Bible is called Night.

When this basic distinction is appreciated and acknowledged, you are at the close of the first stage of your creation into spiritual maturity – the image and likeness of God. The evening and the morning are the first step or day. Thus the wonderful story of God’s Word begins to unfold in your life. The Word is the book of life.

Jan 6 Light

God made two great lights — the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.

Genesis 1:16

What the two great lights – the sun and moon – are to natural life, the two great lights – love and truth – are to spiritual life.

The greater light, the sun of heaven, or the Lord's love, rules in our spiritually happy times and the lesser light, the Lord's truth rules in times of spiritual temptations and trial.

Just as the light of the moon is reflected from the Sun, and is of itself cold, so truth is reflected from love, and apart from love lacks warmth. In the sun of heaven, love and truth are united but in faith only reflected.

Jan 7

Light

There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

Matthew 17:2

Even as the sunshine gives us beautiful summer days, so does the warm sunshine of the Lord's love give us summer in our hearts.

We can as it were make our own happy summer by turning to Jesus. Cloudy skies often arise from our self-seeking, but as we try to keep the first commandments of love to the Lord and the neighbour, the clouds open up and His face shines upon us again.

You like your house to be in a sunny position: why not build the house of your mind in the sunshine of Divine love?

Jan 8

Light

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

Though you may not have the means to follow the sun and so avoid the cold dark days of winter, you can follow the spiritual sun. You can leave the cold winter weather of self seeking: the hard, icy conditions of pride, greed and unbelief. Without money and without price you can follow the spiritual sun and delight your soul with goodness. Try it just a little way and you will be convinced. Follow Jesus and He will fill your own little world with light. Cold and darkness will be scattered, and you will be frost bound no longer.

Jan 9

Light

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

John 3:19

Have you noticed how eagerly evil seeks darkness? How it seems to hide or cover up what it does? Sometimes by a lie or pretence, or some other secret hiding place. Like evil beasts it seeks the darkness for its activities. The great destroyer of evil is light. Even daylight robberies are planned in dens of darkness.

Yet how futile it all is! No man can hide himself away from God. The deepest, darkest cavern cannot conceal Him. Read Psalm 139: 'If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.' The love of evil is the love of darkness. Evil and darkness come from hell.

Jan 10 The Garden

Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

Genesis 2:8

As you grow into spiritual maturity, things of the mind take on a more lively interest. The truth is that God is preparing a garden for you, east in your souls, and He is causing you to dress it and keep it. East is where the sun rises; meaning spiritually, where the Lord rises among your good affections and knowledge of Him.

If you like, your mind can now become as Eden, a garden of the Lord. Your affections can be fragrant with His love, in correspondence with the sweetest blooms of an earthly garden: and your thoughts alive from the living truth.

Jan 11 The Garden

The Lord will surely comfort Zion ... and will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the Lord.

Isaiah 51:3

This is spoken of those who follow after righteousness. These are Zion, who is to be comforted and to be filled with joy and gladness. For seeking God's righteousness changes everything. If you are seeking righteousness, your mind will soon cultivate knowledge of truth; and good affections will arise where your heart was before like a desert. This wonderful change will come from the Lord, whose comfort is joined together with right thinking and loving.

So plant the seeds of the Lord's Word in your mind and your wilderness and desert will become like Eden, the garden of the Lord.

Jan 12 The Garden

The Lord will guide you always;...You will be like a well watered garden.

Isaiah 58:11

Try to believe in the Divine Providence. To do so will give you happiness. The Lord loves you, and will guide you continually if you will look to Him. Looking to Him means listening to His voice and loving His commandments. He will guide you then, all the way and bring you safely through all your difficulties.

Your mind will become like a watered garden, full of colour and rich with fruit. It will be a mind where the Lord can walk and communicate with you.

Jan 13 Serpents

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

Genesis 3:1

Unexpectedly, with subtle craftiness, the serpent stole into Eden long ago. In the Bible the serpent represents evil of every kind, but particularly sensual evil. In you, it is that which would turn you from God to your own desires and your own judgment of good and evil. This principle, like the serpent, is subtle, and moves quietly among your lowest appetites waiting its opportunity to deceive. It wants everything to serve its own gratification. It lives on the dust.

The Lord stands at the door knocking. If you listen to His voice, you will have strength to overcome the serpent.

Jan 14 Serpents

Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Genesis 3:13

For what you do, you are responsible! In your choice you have the freedom of maturity. This woman listened to the serpent, and freely chose to do its bidding. When the inevitable trouble followed, she blamed the serpent. But even in this she was actually blaming herself, for the serpent represented her sensual nature. When we once yield to our lower nature it casts us out of Eden, and it is quite a long way back. But we can return, for Jesus comes to seek and to save the lost.

Jan 15 Serpents

The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the Lord.

Isaiah 65:25

This is such a happy picture. The holy mountain of the Lord is the country of his holy love. The serpent, representing our sensual nature is still part of us, and can even have a good implication when it is properly subservient to our spiritual maturity.

Dust, the nourishment of mere appetite, it still its meat but in its proper place it does not hurt nor destroy. The spiritual principle should always control the natural.

Jan 16 The Tree

And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 2:16,17

Why is the fruit of this one tree forbidden? Simply because it is so deadly. By feeding upon it is meant that we make our own standards of good and evil: and our own standards arise from the love of self. If you follow your selfhood instead of God, you will spiritually die. God is the Maker of heaven and earth and all the laws of life: without Him you can do nothing.

Jan 17 The Tree

To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Revelation 2:7

To eat from the tree of life is to feed on the Lord's goodness and truth. In another place (chp 22) we read that this tree yielded her fruit every month: that is, for every succeeding state of faith. Its leaves also are for the healing of the nations: they are the truths of good through which it breathes. This wonderful tree is in the midst of the garden, the paradise of God. If you overcome putting self first, by loving God first, then you will eat of this tree of life.

Jan 18 The Tree

“But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

Jeremiah 17:7,8

To be blessed is to be happy: and the greatest happiness comes to those who trust in the Lord. They are compared in the Bible to trees planted by waters that in consequence flourish: and the leaves are always green.

To trust in the Lord is to trust all the way: not just for those few steps you can see, but for all the subsequent steps as well. Thus we become trees of the Lord.

Jan 19 The Ark

For forty days the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth.

Genesis 7:17

Floods in the Bible stand for something more than just floods of water: spiritually they represent a flood of false ideas and temptations. Just as they affect multitudes of people, so they happen to individuals.

The ark represents the Lord, or the Lord's provision that you may be saved. It is that little good, hidden deep in the heart, prepared by the Divine Providence, perhaps from the earliest days: something good and innocent that flooding temptation cannot drown: something the floods will bear above the earth. It is your most precious gift from God.

Jan 20 The Ark

But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.

Exodus 2:3

The child in the ark is Moses. Moses represents the law of the Lord. Pharaoh was afraid of the children of Israel and arranged that all baby boys should be drowned. But the Divine Providence over ruled evil and provided a means of escape for Moses, who later led Israel out of bondage.

The ark is a picture of something good provided by love. If you have a little love for the Lord's teaching, it will lift you above the evil river: and eventually lead you to heaven.

Jan 21 The Ark

Place the cover on top of the ark and put in the ark the Testimony, which I will give you.

Exodus 25:21

This ark containing the commandments was the most holy thing in the tabernacle of the Children of Israel. It was covered by the mercy seat, and above, with wings outspread, were two cherubim.

In an individual sense you are a church or tabernacle in particular. Inwardly in the tabernacle of your soul is the secret place where God communes with you. Here is the ark, or knowledge of heavenly things, where God and His commandments are sacred. As we follow the ark we go forward on our journey to the Promised Land.

Jan 22

Stones

They said ... let's make bricks ... They used brick instead of stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

Genesis 11:3, 4

These people substituted brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar; hoping to build themselves a way up to heaven, and make themselves a name. Their purpose and practice were bad and they soon came to confusion.

You and I make the same mistake when we imagine we can climb up to heaven by our own intelligence. We substitute brick for stone, when we make artificial truth; and bitumen for mortar, when we bind our bricks with self indulgence.

Jan 23 Stones

Haven't you read this scripture: "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes'?"

Mark 12:10,11

It is obvious that stones in the Bible represent truth or truths – sometimes the opposite. But those who do not love the Lord reject His truth.

Would you like to build the house of your soul on a secure foundation, so that it can withstand all the storms and adversities of life? You can do so! But you must build on His truths and make Him the head of the corner.

Jan 24 Stones

The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone.

Revelation 21:19

This picture of the holy city is entrancing; jasper walls, golden streets, gates of pearl, and foundations of precious stones. And within, in the midst, the tree of life.

It is a picture of the Lord's church, not in any narrow or sectarian sense, but of His universal church in heaven and earth. It is founded on all manner of precious stones – all the precious truths of His Word. All who love the Lord and keep His commandments may enter in – even you and I. The gates are never closed.

Jan 25 Journeys

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

Genesis 12:1

What the Lord says to Abram. He says to us all. It is a call to the good within us, to journey away from the country of self love, to the country of the Lord.

Our kindred represent our merely worldly associates, and our father's house the old Adam of self love. The land He will show us in Canaan, which signifies Heaven and our life there. We do not know the way and we cannot see the place, but His providence will direct us safely to it.

Jan 26

Journeys

As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them;

Luke 24:15

Two friends of Jesus were on a little journey to Emmaus. While they walked along, talking, a stranger joined them. "What are you talking of? Why are you sad?" the stranger asked. They told him of Jesus who had been crucified and who they now heard was alive again.

It is good, as you journey on the road, to meditate and to talk together of Jesus. His providence will cover you as you walk along; and though you don't know He may join you.

Jan 27 Journeys

“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

Luke 15:13

This poor boy took his journey away from home, to the far country of self gratification; and in consequence he was soon lost. This involved another journey, for when he came to himself he saw he must return home. The journey home was harder, for it meant repentance and humiliation. But it also meant his Father's love, and his Father's home; and no more bitterness and hunger.

Jan 28 Bread

Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat.

Exodus 16:4 & 15

The people journeying through the wilderness were hungry, and God sent them bread from heaven. When they found it on the ground, and gathered it morning by morning they did not know what it was.

It is really a picture of ourselves on our journey from this world to heaven. God sends us bread, not only for our bodies but also for our souls. He sends just enough each morning for our need. It is bread! We do not understand it, but it happens just the same.

Jan 29 Bread

I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life.

John 6:47,48

How very important it is to believe in the one we love. And it is of the very greatest importance to believe in God, whom the first commandment bids us love with all our heart. Indeed, to believe lovingly in the Lord is to have everlasting life. But to have life of any kind we must have food. The body cannot live without it, neither can the soul. Jesus tells us this, for when He speaks of everlasting life. He says, "I am that bread of life." To feed on this bread is to believe in Him and love Him.

Jan 30 Bread

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna.

Revelation 2:17

It is easier to listen to the sounds of this world than to the voice of the Lord in His Word. But it is important that we make an effort to hear the Lord's voice, because then we can open the door, and He will come in and eat with us. To this end we must overcome the predominant voice of the world. As we do so we shall be blessed with hidden manna: eating with Jesus we shall feed on His love, and be nourished secretly in our souls.

Jan 31 Clouds

By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way

Exodus 13:21

The story of the children of Israel journeying through the wilderness is full of interest and significance. On our way from the bondage of self love of God and our neighbour, we are eternally led by the Lord's love. But we do not easily see that it is love leading us. The love is hidden in the commandments and laws of the journey, and is often obscure; and so we are led by a pillar of cloud. Like the Israelites we often fret, but the Divine Providence understands and brings us safely home.

Feb 1

Clouds

Praise the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendour and majesty and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.

Psalm 104:1,3

The Lord riding in clouds!

At first this may seem strange. Yet almost all of our experience confirms this idea. Do you remember your early school days? How obscure arithmetic and spelling were! Every new truth you had to learn came in a cloud. It is just the same with Bible truth. It all has to be learned. Even to those advanced in religious life many Bible passages are dark, and many seem as contradictions. Actually they are full of love and light. The truths of the Word are the clouds of heaven – the chariot of God.

Feb 2

Clouds

“At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

Matthew. 24:30

Often when we suffer trials and temptations we come into great distress. Then life seems dark and impossible, but the Lord mercifully shortens those days for us, by turning our thoughts to Him. We begin to read His Word, and to seek Him there; things that before seemed dark and cold light up. Here and there the Son of man comes in power and great glory – comes to you and me – in truths, or clouds of His Word.

Feb 3 River Jordan

See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you.

Joshua 3:11

Roughly, the River Jordan divided the wilderness from the Promised Land. It was the last obstacle to the children of Israel on their journey from Egypt to Canaan.

When we follow the Lord's commandments, represented by the Ark of the Covenant, we eventually cross Jordan into the Holy Land. Jordan represents the Lord's Word; the dividing line between heaven and earth. Its natural sense introduces us to the spiritual within, where the Lord dwells. Thus the commandments lead us to eternal love.

Feb 4 River Jordan

So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

2 Kings 5:14

This story of Naaman and the little captive maid, with the visit of Elisha, stirs the imagination. Here is disease, pride, a long journey and a picture of healing and humility.

Naaman may represent you; Elisha the prophet represents the Lord: leprosy corresponds to profanation. You go to the Lord to be healed and you are told to wash seven times in Jordan. When you do so, you are clean, for the waters of Jordan represent the cleansing truths of the Lord's Word.

Feb 5 River Jordan

People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptised by him in the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:5, 6

If you are interested in vigorous religion, go into the wilderness of Judea and listen to John Baptist. He is young and austere, clothed in camel's hair and eating insects, locusts and wild honey. His message is direct and quite unflattering. He is, indeed, a voice crying in the wilderness, calling to repentance.

John is introducing and preparing the way for Jesus, just as the literal story of the Bible does. He baptizes in the waters of Jordan, because they, like the truths of the Word, give entrance to heaven and the Lord Himself.

Feb 6

Wilderness

***See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up;
do you not perceive it? I am making a way in
the desert and streams in the wasteland.***

Isaiah 43:19

A way in the wilderness gives access, and rivers allow gardens to replace the desert. Together, they make a great and notable change.

There comes a time for many of us when we begin to realize that our minds are not unlike a wilderness, and that our hearts are desert like. What can we do about it? Well, the Lord has said, “I am the way”. If we follow Him, He will make a way through: and where our hearts are parched, rivers of truth will turn them into gardens of the Lord.

Feb 7

Commandments

If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Isaiah 48:18

Many people do not like the commandments: others try to by pass them. Yet Jesus said that those who loved Him were those that kept His commandments. We must recognize that all the regulations of the Lord are given out of love, and for the sake of love. When we follow, they guide our feet into the way of peace. Jesus said, he who breaks the least of them would be called the least in heaven.

The Commandments lead us beside the still waters; the deep, quiet truths of the Word, flowing in to peace.

Feb 8

Rivers

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Revelation 22:1

You have seen the river flowing under the bridge in the town. You have perhaps, walked along its banks. Have you seen the other river, pure and clear as crystal? It flows from the throne of God; its waters are the waters of life. It is the river of holy truth, alive from the love of God. You can see it in the Bible, flowing down from the heaven to earth. It is composed of all the truths or teachings of the Lord. You walk along its banks when you read the Word.

Feb 9 Choosing

“choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Joshua 24:15

To be able to choose! This is something we value. Yet, when we think of it, we see it makes us responsible: and it is easy to make a mistake.

Joshua knew that he could not force the Israelites to follow this or that course. They, like us, had to choose to follow their own way, or the Lord's. But having made their choice, they alone were responsible. Nevertheless, Joshua gave them inspiration and an example. “As for me and my house,” he said, “we will serve the Lord.”

Feb 10 Choosing

“but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Luke 10:42

This is another quite different picture of choosing. It is not so much one of choosing a way to take, but rather of choosing what to do when Jesus is a guest in the house.

From an individual point of view the house may be you: you as to your mind. Then it would be you who invited Jesus in. Martha may represent your thoughts busily active, thinking of ways to serve. But Mary would represent your love so warmed and happy by the presence of Jesus that it could choose nothing else than to sit and listen to Him.

Feb 11 Choosing

***Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!
For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of
decision.***

Joel 3:14

Decision, or deciding, is choosing. There are always multitudes of people faced with the need of decision. The valley is a picture of the cleft between two opposing positions: it is here that men become conscious of the necessity of choosing: and of their freedom of choice.

In your life the multitudes are your thronging thoughts and feelings. The valley of decision is the free place between right and wrong, where your choice must be made. The Lord is always near in the freedom of your mind. Call upon Him, while He is near.

Feb 12 Rain

Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.

Deuteronomy 32:2

Just as the rain refreshes and blesses the earth, so the teachings of the Lord drop their loving blessings on His children. And His sayings distil their tenderness on all who receive them. The small rain, suited to the young or tender seedling, pictures the gentle blessings of loving kindness that fall about us in the early days of Christian experience. Showers on the grass, causing it to be green and fresh, are like the Lord's blessings enlivening our simple earliest knowledge of Him.

Feb 13 Rain

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty

Isaiah 55:10, 11

Here the Lord likens the falling of rain to the words of His mouth. As rain waters the earth and causes growth, so His words or teaching prosper His purpose. Those who receive His blessings will go out with joy and be led forth in peace. Where the Lord's Word is received it always bears fruit: it does not return empty.

Feb 14 Rain

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

Matthew 7:25

This is said of wise folk, who hear and do the Lord's sayings; who Jesus ways build on a rock.

Rain, in a good sense, signifies blessings of truth and good from the Lord's love. But in an opposite sense, it represents floods of false and evil affections, from the love of self and the world. But when we build on the rock of the Lord's teaching we are able to withstand all the attacks of our fallen nature.

Feb 15 Commandments

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.

Psalms 119:97,98

The Commandments and our enemies!

The commandments are God's regulations for a wise and happy life. They are the road to the life that is lived in heaven. In mostly they are the love that is God.

The enemies that are ever with us are the feelings and thoughts that are concerned only with the love we have for ourselves. These are real enemies, ever trying to pull us away from the Lord and heaven. All our unhappiness is caused by them.

Feb 16 Commandments

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: `Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’

Mark 12:29,30

All the teachings and commands of the Lord are summed up in this first and great commandment. To apply it to life is to be conjoined to the Lord. It is to live as He teaches.

It simply means that we are to be devoted to His will, with all the strength of our love and understanding. Then, also, we will really love our neighbour.

Feb 17 Commandments

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

John 13:34,35

This is the rule Jesus gives us by which men shall know us to be His disciples. It is the rule of Divine Love. But most of us find it very exacting. What happy people we would be, if we lived as the Lord teaches!

To love others as Jesus loves us is to love them outside of self interest. It is to love them regardless of the love for us. It is to love their welfare and seek their good.

Feb 18 Oil

“Command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light so that the lamps may be kept burning.

Exodus 27:20

Olive oil has an important place in the Bible story. It was used by the people for heating and lighting and for healing. But its great importance in the Lord's Word is the spiritual significance; every use olive oil supplied naturally has its spiritual correspondence. In general, olive oil is a picture of love. Love warms your hearts and the light arising from love lights the rooms of your mind. Love heals and soothes spiritual ailments. Love causes the lamp of life to burn always.

Feb 19 Oil

You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

Psalms 45:7

The Lord makes His sun of love to shine on the evil equally with the good: but evil does not receive it as good does. Reception makes all the difference. The love of righteousness opens all the doors of the heart and understanding: when these are opened gladness enters deeply. To be anointed with the oil of gladness is to be blessed with the delight of love. Above our fellows, here means, as the text implies, above what would be possible if we did not love righteousness.

Feb 20 Oil

Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps.

Matthew 25:2,3,4

The wise and the foolish! It is a picture of ourselves. We all have lamps, but some of us do not provide oil. Lamps signify the truths that form our faith. But, like lamps without oil, so is faith without love. We cannot be saved by faith alone. As lamps need oil, so faith needs love. Love burns warmly and gives a light to our path. Love in our faith numbers us with the wise.

Feb 21 Lamps

The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli..... The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was..... the Lord called Samuel.

1 Samuel 3:1,3,4

The child Samuel: the light from the lamp: the sacred ark containing the commandments; and in the night the unseen voice calling, "Samuel, Samuel".

Samuel may be a picture of you trying to serve the Lord. The lamp alight in the temple represents the Lord's love – warm and bright. The unseen voice is that of the Lord in His Word calling you. Can you respond, Speak Lord, for your servant hears?

Feb 22 Lamps

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Psalms 119:105

There are many kinds of lamps, lanterns and lights, from the powerful lamp of the lighthouse to the little night light. Almost always they give cheer and comfort.

But how is the Lord's Word a lamp?? It is a lamp because it is filled with the oil of love. It is a light, because from God's love comes all the light of life.

Your feet are the part of the body that is most continuously in contact with the earth: they represent your natural life. The light of the Lord's Word falls on your daily life and shows you how to tread.

Feb 23 Lamps

You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.

Psalm 18:28

We all need light. In the winter how often we look forward to the summer, when it is light from early morning till bedtime.

We all need spiritual light too. Without it, our minds become progressively darker and the gladness of life dies away.

Just as when the earth turns nearer to the sun, summer with its warmth and light comes again; so when we turn to the Lord, His love fill our minds with light.

He lights our candle and enlightens our darkness. In the light He gives, we can enter into all the delight of spiritual summer.

Feb 24 Chastening

O Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me!

Psalm 3:1

Sometimes it seems that everything goes wrong. Trouble increases and more difficulties rise up against us. In periods like this we may come into states approaching despair. We do not know at the time that great good may come to us by way of these afflictions. You see, they turn our thoughts to the Lord and away from ourselves. They chasten and humble us and direct us to a happier way of life. Usually in troubled times we blame others and circumstances; but we have to learn that more often than not, troubles arise from pride, self confidence and self love: these are our enemies.

Feb 25 Chastening

Away from me, all you who do evil, for the Lord has heard my weeping. The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer.

Psalm 6:8, 9

Go away! Go away! How often have we spoken like this of selfish thoughts? Selfish thoughts are evil. When we indulge them our happiness departs and we are soon in danger of destruction.

Frequently it is not easy to send them away: then is the time to seek help from the Lord; to cry out to Him in our need. He will hear the voice of our distress and our prayers for aid; then we will be able successfully to tell evil thoughts to go away.

Feb 26 Chastening

He is the God who avenges me, who subdues nations under me who saves me from my enemies. You exalted me above my foes; from violent men you rescued me.

Psalms 18:47,48

Think of the people to be subdued under you as the crowds of false ideas that would like to take control; and of the enemies as the evil and selfish indulgences that could destroy your soul. And acknowledge that evil of every kind should always be below your feet. Then you will understand what is meant by God's subduing the people under you and delivering you from your enemies; and that He lifts you up above these things.

Feb 27 Wheat and Tares

Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.

Matthew 13:30

In this passage it is possible to see our lives as a mirror. When we look carefully into ourselves we can see many false things together with good ones.

Sometimes we may wonder whether the weeds will ever be overcome; but the Lord says, "Let both grow together until the harvest"; it is part of his merciful providence.

At last when our characters are judged the angels will gather together all that is false and destroy it, but all our wheat will be saved.

Feb 28 Enemies

a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.

Matthew 10:36

The Lord teaches us to honour father and mother and to love others as ourselves. At first then it seems strange that He should tell us that our enemies are in our own household.

But in Bible language, your household means yours! Your very own, for even if you live in a cave, you still have a household. Your house is your mind.

The family of your mind is composed of all your nearest and dearest desires and all your teeming thoughts. Among these are many that are selfish and false; these are your true enemies; your dangerous enemies!

Feb 29 The Slimy Pit

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.

Psalm 40:2

A slimy pit signifies self esteem, which sinks down into hell. Mud and mire signifies the desires of selfishness which adhere to us with sickening tenacity.

Our feet correspond to our natural life which is in almost constant contact with worldly things. As we humbly approach the Lord our natural life is raised, lifted out of the pit of devastation, till our activities on the natural plane are made secure on the rock of the Lord's commandments. Hence our stance is established and we shall reach heaven at the end of the road.

Mar 1 The Lord

In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame.Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go; give the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

Psalms 71:1,3

The Lord's rock of refuge is His love. He tells us in John 15: "If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love," Not only is the rock of refuge His love, but it is also founded on His wisdom, the rock of eternal truth. These, His love and truth together, provide a fortress and you will never be put to shame.

Mar 2 The Lord

Praise be to the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me.

Psalm 144:1, 2

When we once really know that of our selves we can do nothing, we begin to find wisdom. Then we accept the teaching of the Lord and draw all our strength from Him. We tackle the enemies arising from self love with new purpose and vigour and much more successfully. The Lord's eternal truth becomes a stronghold of defence shielding us from the enemy on every side.

Mar 3 The Lord

The Lord is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 27:1

The Lord's light shines out from infinite love. When we accept this light we do not walk in darkness, but in everlasting life. This true salvation, from all the horrors of self love, pride and destroying appetites, is the Lord alone. In following Him we have nothing to fear. We may be frail but He is strong: underneath us are the everlasting arms; and the hands that built heaven and earth can hold us securely in every trial. He is our strength every moment. Of whom can we be afraid?

Mar 4 The Lord

***The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures; he
leads me beside quiet waters***

Psalm 23:1,2

The twenty third Psalm is known and loved all over the Christian world. To be able to say in one's own heart, "The Lord is my shepherd", is to experience one of the greatest blessings. It is our acknowledgement of Divine Providence, leading, sheltering, and feeding all along the way to our Father's home. There is nothing we can want above this: there are green pastures to rest in and loving wise provision for every need, every step of the way. The green pastures are the refreshing restful teachings of the Lord's Word; to rest in these is indeed to be restored in heart and soul.

Mar 5 The Shepherd

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

Isaiah 40:11

How beautiful this is! The Lord, the Shepherd; His flock, those who follow Him: fed daily by His hands. More closely and interiorly the flock is the group of good affections and thoughts in your mind: those that follow the Shepherd's voice. And the lambs are the little innocent treasures, perhaps stored up from long ago: these the Good Shepherd carries very tenderly with wonderful care. And your heart that is holding new seedlings of love for Jesus is led very gently with infinite patience.

Mar 6 The Shepherd

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me

John 10:14

What we love we call good. The Lord is the Good Shepherd because He is love; because He loves us, and His sheep love Him.

Love knows and understands more wisely than anything else. The Good Shepherd knows His sheep. He knows you, not superficially but absolutely and thoroughly: just how far you can be led today, and just when you must rest on the way. It is because of His love and knowledge that He is able to lead you so perfectly. As you accept and follow Him and His leading, you too come to know Him and in His leading find increasing delight.

Mar 7

Providence

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23:6

This is a picture of providence, and of its gentle leading. Because we are able to look back and see something of the wonder of its leading, it is said to follow us. For though we cannot see anything of providence even a little way ahead, the days that are past reveal its goodness and mercy. We learn to listen for the Shepherd's voice: we know that if we follow it will lead us home and that we will dwell there for ever.

Love hides tomorrow's difficulties; and Love following gives us assurance day by day.

Mar 8

Walking with the Lord

And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

This passage might be used as an illustration of how to keep the first two great commandments; of love to the Lord and love to the neighbour.

The man who does love justly, loves mercy, and walks humbly with the Lord, loves the Lord with his heart and mind. He also loves his neighbour as himself. Justice, mercy and humility are the true signs – the actual signs - of Christian life. They are the three qualities the Lord requires of you and of me. Justice is good, mercy is gentle, and humility is wise.

Mar 9

The Lord

Heth You are my portion, O Lord; I have promised to obey your words. The earth is filled with your love, O Lord; teach me your decrees.

Psalm 119:57,64

If you keep the Lord's words you will be numbered among the happy. You will experience love in your heaven within, and also in your earth life without. Your daily activities so concerned with the things of the world and often of the earth, will nevertheless be full of the Lord's love. Love will soften every hardship and ease all your problems. It will enable you to forgive injuries, bear sorrows and to love your fellow men. So make the Lord your portion.

Mar 10 Praise

Shout with joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious!

Psalm 66:1,2

The natural land has its own way of making a joyful noise to its Maker. Mountains and hills: rivers and streams: flowers and fruit: flight and songs of birds: sunrise and sunset: blue skies and stars: all proclaim His glory.

How does the land of your life make its joyful noise? By keeping the Lord's teachings: for then all your activities shout His praises. The duties of your calling, your energy and interest in public service, your patient kindness and understanding, all praise His name. And men seeing your good works glorify with you, your Father in heaven.

Mar 11 Praise

***Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.***

Psalms 150:6

This is the mountain top of the Psalms: the very last verse, the crown of praise! Here all the wonder and beauty of the Book of Psalms is summed up in praise. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Spiritually understood, “breath” is the spirit of the Lord’s teachings – the truth breathed upon mankind from His love. And we read, “Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, “Receive you the Holy Spirit”. All who receive this blessing have “breath”: and all who receive it praise the Lord. Everything in your life that breathes from Him, praises the Lord.

Mar 12 Praise

saying: “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”

Revelation 7:12

“Amen” signifies confirmation. It is almost like saying, “Yes, yes!” And here, although it seems as though the angels, or perhaps ourselves, are giving praise and glory to the Lord, it is only an appearance: we have nothing to give. We appear to ourselves to give when we receive; for in receiving we acknowledge before Him that all is His. All the praises of glory and wisdom, all the thanks and honour and power and strength are His for ever and ever. Amen!

Mar 13 He Teaches

Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."

Isaiah 2:3

The mountain of the Lord represents His supreme love. To know about it we must go up to it. When we do, He teaches us how to live in His ways: just as He taught the Beatitudes and the Way to heaven to the disciples on the mountain. In those days it is said the people were astonished at His doctrine. You and I will be astonished, too, if in love we listen to His teaching; and then we will know exactly how to walk in His paths.

Mar 14 Jesus Comes

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given

Isaiah 9:6

These words came to the world a long, long time ago, but were not fulfilled until hundreds of years later. Yet to those people of old, and to ourselves, the message comes in the present tense. Unto us, you and me, a Child is born. Spiritual life begins inside us.

Jesus comes today, to give us a new beginning in a new birth, without which we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. If you have knowledge of Jesus, and it is precious to you, though it be only from the innocence of your earliest memory, you will find His presence there – come to save you.

Mar 15 His Name

***and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful***

Isaiah 9:6

At first, although the Lord is with us we do not submit to His rule: so these words are the future tense. The government will be on His shoulder: but when? Today perhaps or tomorrow! Actually, immediately we keep His Government laws. Until then we are rebels.

But when we accept His sovereignty everything changes. We may not as yet understand much more about Him, but in our new found delight we say what we do know; we call His name Wonderful! It is the most thoroughly descriptive name our awakening experience can express.

Mar 16 His Name

And he will be called Wonderful, Counsellor

Isaiah 9:6

When we yield the government of our lives to the Lord, He becomes our Counsellor. We find Him so Wonderful that we listen delightedly to His advice – His counsel. We now understand what the word means, when it says, His second name will be called Counsellor.

As we listen to His teaching we are filled more and more with wonder: His counsel is so beautiful and attractive: it is all about loving our Maker, and loving one another, and looking for the kingdom in heaven. All summed up in a new commandment: “Little childrenlove one another as I have loved you.”

Mar 17 His Name

And he will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

After accepting the Lord as our Counsellor miracles begin to happen. Our blind eyes are opened; we begin to see the Lord is the Light of the world. We find the disease of selfishness is being healed: we find new delight in loving our neighbour. The turbulent restlessness of self seeking goes, and we say as the disciples did “what matter of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him”. Now we call His name Mighty God, and this leads us further into love, till we realise the Child is born to us, is our Everlasting Father. To know this, is to come into peace – to the Prince of Peace.

Mar 18 Providence

O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

Psalm 139:1,2

This Psalm is full of marvellous pictures of the Lord. It tells us clearly that He knows all about us. Perhaps most of the people we know like to feel their affairs are secret to themselves. And for this there seems to be some reason. Nothing at all however, can be hidden from the Lord. If you try to hide something from Him you will quickly know in your heart that you cannot.

The Lord searches us through and through, knows all our movements and all our thoughts however far from Him they may be. His providence covers everything: either we follow Him or He follows us.

Mar 19 Providence

Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in — behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

Psalm 139:4,5

These words tell us the truth, yet we are rarely aware that the Lord knows us so well. We soon would be though, if we learned to reflect on them. Every word in our tongue is known. The Lord is behind us and before us. We can even become conscious of His hand being laid upon us. The hand representing His power and might, which so often lifts us up out of the horrible pit, and from the miry clay of self satisfaction. We cannot fully understand this wonderful presence and knowledge of the Lord. But it can be a part of our experience.

Mar 20 Providence

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

Psalm 139:8

You see there is no getting away from God. Man cannot successfully run away from God, or from himself. The convict in prison may have just missed the death penalty, but he still has to live with himself. And where he himself is, God confronts him: whether it is in heaven or down in hell. To make one's bed in hell is to lie down in a confirmed state of self love and self indulgence. To love God first is to be in heaven: to love self first is to be in hell.

Mar 21 Providence

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Psalm 139:14

Your body is wonderfully made! It surpasses the perfection and precision of any machine. But you, who live in the body, are still more fearfully and wonderfully made.

Day by day, from the cradle to the grave God is making you; so marvellously that your mind can be in the spiritual world and, through your body, in the natural world as well. His providence provides for every moment, that you may be made, through the stages of regeneration, an angel of heaven.

Mar 22 Providence

your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Psalm 139:16

The Lord's eyes signify His wisdom which sees all things. Our body at first is imperfect, without form and empty. But all our parts are there in their beginnings, and in a marvellous continuance of sequences they are woven together. Fashioned into form by the hands of god, though, so far as the world could see, there was nothing. By precept upon precept, line upon line; here a little and there a little you are shaped into angelhood.

Mar 23 Walls

and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

Exodus 14:22

The Israelites journeying to Canaan picture ourselves on our way to heaven. At the outset they had to go through the sea, which represents the flood of false things that beset us; when we determine to free ourselves from bondage of self, and to begin a new life.

It is often frightening! But if we implore the Lord He will lead us safely through. He will clear a way through this evil flood, pushing it back to right and left, so that the false things themselves become walls delineating the boundary of our evils and falses with heaven in the middle where the Lord dwells in us.

Mar 24 Walls

No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.

Isaiah 60:18

Your land is your character. The more you keep the commandments of love to the Lord and the neighbour, the freer from violence your character becomes. The borders of your character are the teachings of the Lord that surround your activities and secure them against evil that wastes and destroys. Your walls are Salvation, that is, they are the truth, or truths, of the Lord's Word, within which you are quite secure and safe from the evils of self love.

Mar 25 Walls

The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

Revelation 21:18

These words are telling us of the Holy City: here in particular about the wall, which was built of jasper. The Holy City pictures heaven, or more particularly the Lord's true universal church. The walls are its boundaries.

As the church has its vision and life from the Lord's Word, the walls are the Word in its natural of literal story; within which the Lord and all the wisdom of heaven dwells. On this, the outer side of the walls is the natural world, on the other, or inner side is the Holy City and all it represents. Jasper stones signify precious truth.

Mar 26 Gates

He (Jacob) was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”

Genesis 28:17

Jacob was on a journey. At sunset he lay down to rest, and dreaming saw a ladder that reached up to heaven, and on which angels were ascending and descending. The Lord stood above and spoke to him. It was all strange and frightening. “This,” he said, “is the gate of heaven.”

You too, are journeying – perhaps to heaven: if so, many memories of the Lord’s Word will form a ladder reaching up to God. By it, your thoughts will ascend with the angels. To become aware of this is to experience holy fear: and like Jacob, you will say, this is none other but the gate of heaven.

Mar 27 Gates

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts..... Write them on the door-frames of your houses and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:6,9

The words spoken of are the first great commandment: The Lord is one, and is to be loved with all the heart and soul and might. Of such importance were these words that he people were told to write them on the posts of their houses, and on their gates.

Spiritually understood, one's house signifies one's own character. The gates represent the things believed, that gives entrance to heart and mind. If the commandment of love to the Lord is written on your gates, you are happy indeed.

Mar 28 Gates

The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

Revelation 21:21

The figure twelve represents something full and complete: thus the city had twelve foundations. Gates represent knowledge of the Lord that introduce, and pearls signify their precious qualities. The street inside was pure gold, showing us that the ways of the city are the ways of golden love.

Your knowledge from the Word of Jesus is your twelve precious gates of pearl. Each picture of Him that you treasure is a precious pearl. These are your own particular gates to the Holy City.

Mar 29 Paths

You will make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalm 16:11

Paths! So many of them, running in many different directions, and to a thousand destinations. But the Scripture here is talking of the path of life; and the path of life is the path of love. It leads to heaven and the Lord.

In the Bible, paths usually stand for truth, and truth leads to love; and love is life. The Lord shows us this path, and by following it we come into His presence where joy is full; and there from His love, there are pleasures for evermore.

Mar 30 Paths

This is what the Lord says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.

Jeremiah 6:16

Paths are often very interesting. Perhaps you remember some of the favourite paths of childhood: through a cornfield, over cliffs by the sea, or may be, along the banks of a stream.

Perhaps you remember too, some of the old paths of Bible stories, paths you travelled over in childhood. The path by the still waters of the twenty third psalm. The path through the cornfields with Jesus and His disciples and many others. These are good ways to walk in; all leading to rest for your soul.

Mar 3:1 Paths

“A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

Luke 3:4

This was the voice of John the Baptist in the wilderness. It was clear and unmistakeable, telling the people to prepare a way for the Lord.

Perhaps, sometimes, you hear a voice in the wilderness of your life calling you to prepare a way for the Lord; to make straight paths for Him. You can prepare by seeking the truth, for it is truth that makes straight paths. Truth in thought and in activity. Truth is found in the teaching of the Lord: It makes straight paths when we live as it directs.

DAILY READINGS FROM THE WORD

Reg Lang



Booklet 2 April to June

Apr 1

Cities

***Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding
no way to a city where they could settle.***

Psalm 107:4

A wilderness is a wild, uncultivated stretch of country. In the Bible it is often a picture of that part of one's mind where there is no spiritual cultivation. No growth of happy affections for goodness and truth, because no knowledge of the Lord. In such a state we feel lonely in our heart and wander in a solitary way without delight and hope.

We need a city to dwell in: a spiritual city where good affections and lively knowledge of the Lord are busy with the affairs of the Kingdom of Heaven. We need to receive the Holy City as it comes down out of heaven to earth.

Apr 2

Cities

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

Matthew 5:14

In natural life all light and warmth comes from the sun. In spiritual life all light and warmth is from the Lord's wisdom and love, the sun of our souls. When we receive the Lord's wisdom and love it lights up and warms the world of our natural life as well. Then our mind becomes like a city of light set on a hill of love: it just cannot be hidden. It is like a city, because it is crowded with a multitude of active affections and thoughts, engaged in the government of daily life. Spiritually, its laws and by laws are from the commandments of the Lord.

Apr 3

Cities

I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Revelation 21:2

The Holy City is a picture of the Lord's church: the next verse calls it a tabernacle. Not a tabernacle of bricks and mortar but of teachings of truth that lead to loving God and one another. It is prepared as a bride, because the Lord is the Bridegroom of His church. The Holy City comes down from heaven for it is of heaven not of the earth. It will come down into your life if you will open the door of love and receive it into your heart and mind.

Apr 4 Temple

***One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all
the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of
the LORD and to seek him in his temple.***

Psalms 27:4

Desires arise from what we love. If you love the Lord you will want to dwell in His house to behold His beauty: you will desire to inquire of His will, in His temple.

If on the other hand, your first love is for yourself, your desires will be very different, they will then concern your own indulgences and interests.

The temple of the Lord represents heaven, the church, and the Word. For in these the Lord dwells.

Apr 5 Temple

Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days"

John 2:18,19

The Jews wanted a sign, and Jesus gave them one; but in strange words. They did not understand them. "Destroy this temple," He said, "and in three days I will raise it up." Then the Jews said, the temple took forty six years to build! But in the following verse we read, that Jesus was speaking of the temple of His body. His body represented Divine truth as Jesus said, "I am the truth". Divine truth is the temple of Divine love. The Jews destroyed this temple but in three days Jesus raised it again.

Apr 6

Tabernacle (Tent)

“I long to dwell in your tent forever and take refuge in the shelter of your wings. ”

Psalm 61:4

Would you like to dwell in the tabernacle for ever? It does not mean living in a tent or ecclesiastical building: these are only earthly receptacles, convenient for the meeting of the Lord with His people. Jesus Himself is the true tabernacle, and He tells us how to dwell in Him. “If you keep my commandments,” He says, “you shall dwell in my love.”

To live in His love forever, is to live in heaven in supreme happiness. To trust in the shelter of His wings is to enjoy all the provision of His covering providence.

Apr 7 |ncense

“Aaron must burn fragrant incense on the altar every morning when he tends the lamps.”

Exodus 30:7

The sweet perfume diffused by burning incense, represents the fragrance of one's affections when they arise from a heart burning with love: love for the Lord. Everything has its own emanation or atmosphere. Though our natural eyes may not be able to see it, we can often feel it very keenly: it may even help us to choose our company.

If in worship our hearts are not burning with love for the Lord, the fragrant incense is missing. The Lord, and our guardian angels will in consequence seem distant from us.

Apr 8

|ncense

he was chosen by lot (Zacharias), according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

Luke 1:9

The priest's lot, was to burn incense when he went into the temple, because burning incense represented prayers and worship. Incense gives its perfume when it is burned, likewise our worship is fragrant when it burns, that is, when it is alight with love. Worship without love is lacking in spirit: it is cold and merely formal. When our hearts are alive with love the angels are near us, as indeed, one appeared to Zacharias.

Apr 9

|ncense

The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand.

Revelation 8:4

Spiritually, the smoke of the incense pictures the devotions of those who worship the Lord. Their prayers ascending to God out of the angel's hand, is a picture of the angels who have charge over us; who are ever ready to communicate between us and heaven.

This vision reminds us too, of the angels Jacob saw ascending the ladder, step by step, to God Who stood at the top. When your heart burns with love it produces spiritual perfume, which in the Bible is likened to the smoke of incense.

Apr 10 Rain

Listen, O heavens, and I will speak; hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.

Deuteronomy 32:1,2

In the Bible water corresponds to truth, and rain corresponds to truth falling from the spiritual skies of the Lord's Word. When rain falls on the earth it comes together and forms pools of water: and when truth falls in our minds it forms pools of truth, which we call teaching or doctrine. Thus the words of the Lord, and His doctrine, are said to drop as the rain.

Apr 11 Rain

The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.

Deuteronomy 28:12

All blessings come from the Lord, none from ourselves. He opens to us His good treasure, and out of heaven falls the rain. In the world it is natural rain, but into the land of our minds it is spiritual rain, which is truth. The truth of His love. It comes in the changing seasons of experience to enliven all our activities by cleansing and refreshing. His doctrine falls from heaven as rain, and it always comes to bless the work of our hands.

Apr 12 Rain

I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Matthew 5:44,45

As the Lord makes His sun shine on all, evil and good alike, so does the sun of His love shine on all without distinction. And just as the rain falls on all, so does His truth, without any difference between the just and the unjust. The Giver never changes, neither do the gifts. All the variations of difference arise from the form of the receiver. Learn to receive the rain of truth so that it may guide your steps into the ways of peace; it will bring you inestimable blessings.

Apr 13 Wells

Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

Genesis 21:19

Ishmael was about to die of thirst. It is a picture of our understanding languishing for truth. God opening Hagar's eyes, represents the light that comes from our longing for knowledge. When we thirst and long for truth, God shows it to us. The well of water represents God's truth in His Word.

Filling a bottle is like taking enough for our immediate need. Giving it to the boy to drink signifies satisfying our innocent affection, with the refreshing truth of the Lord's teaching. God will open your eyes if you ask Him.

Apr 14 Wells

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

Isaiah 12:3

Joy means delight: water corresponds to truth: Wells signify depths of truth: and salvation is security from evil and its consequences.

To draw water out of the wells of salvation is to draw truth out of the Lord's Word. Every little passage of the Word is a well of truth much deeper than appears from the surface. And every little drop of truth, when applied to life, saves. But the wells are deep, and only joy can draw it out. Joy comes from love; so love the Bible and its teachings, and you will soon be drawing water out of the wells of salvation.

Apr 15 Wells

“but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

John4:14

When the Lord gives us the water, or truth of His Word, it forms wells in our memories; and springs up from these wells into the love of everlasting life. The more we love the truth, the more we are able to receive from the Lord: thus our wells become deeper and spring up with increasing delight. Whosoever drinks of the water Jesus gives can never thirst. No one suffers thirst in everlasting life.

Apr 16 Springs

For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills;

Deuteronomy 8:7

It is indeed a good land, but the Lord can only bring us into it as we follow Him. It is a picture of the heaven state, both as to place, when we leave the natural world, and to perception in the mind as we journey on. It is constantly refreshed by streams of truth running through our daily activities. And springs of truth arise from the valleys and hills of our alternating states of love for the Lord.

Apr 17 Springs

For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 7:17

The Lord Jesus Christ, The Lamb, is right in the midst of the throne in heaven. It is He Who feeds the people of His flock and He Who leads them to the lovely springs of living waters – the sparkling crystal truths of His love. And to crown all our happiness. He wipes away all our tears. This is what it is like to be in heaven, where all is lovely and beautiful, and where the Lamb is ever in the midst. If we wish we can begin to be in heaven even now.

Apr 18

Stones

Joshua set up the twelve stones that had been in the middle of the Jordan at the spot where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood. And they are there to this day.

Joshua 4:9

Joshua represents the law of the Lord combating evil and leading to good. The number twelve represents all, or what is full and complete just as the twelve disciples figuratively represent all who follow the Lord. Stones correspond to truth of faith. The twelve tribes set their twelve stones in Jordan, as a memory of where the commandments of God, in the ark of the covenant, held back the waters for them to cross.

Apr 19 Bones

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

Psalm 51:8,9

Bones form the framework of the body: without them we could not stand. They correspond to basic truth which forms a foundation about which life can be built. When we become conscious of sin against the Lord it is as though His presence breaks our bones, or shows them to be not true but false supports.

But when we repent and receive His mercy, this is corrected, and we begin to build again on a foundation of truth. Then we have joy and gladness: our foundations are restored, and our bones rejoice.

Apr 20 Bones

This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.

Ezekiel 37:5

This is from the vision of the valley of dry bones. Spiritually it is a picture of a valley of depression: of people who have little knowledge of the Lord. Bones, representing foundation faith or truth, are dry and uninteresting. They are scattered and unconnected without the sinews and flesh of love. But God says He will cause breath to come that they may live. And they receive breath and live, an exceeding army. When the Lord breathes upon us, we too receive new life. Our bones of faith come together and love is breathed into them and we live.

Apr 21 Being

My whole being will exclaim, "Who is like you, O LORD? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them."

Psalms 35:10

It means that every little truth that forms the framework of your faith will acknowledge the Lord as Saviour. The poor, who are delivered, are the few humble qualities that seek good: that often withdraw into the inner chambers of the heart for fear of the worldly life without. These qualities are called "the poor" because they are in constant need of the Lord. They know they have no strength of their own in which they can trust.

Apr 22 Angels

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

Psalm 34:7,8

Few people seem able to believe that angels are with them. Yet, it is so! No doubt the kind of life that some of us live repels angels. But they are round about those who fear the Lord: to fear is not to be frightened of Him, but to have deep respect for what He says. It is fear doing anything that would displease Him. In such case the angel of the Lord is camping near at hand to deliver us. I think some times we can be almost conscious of the angel's presence.

Apr 23 Angels

and the enemy who sows them (the weeds) is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

Matthew 13:39

The devil, representing hell, interferes with us all along the way. He spoils our gardens by multitudes of pests, and he spoils the garden of our minds by injecting spiritual pests in the form of false ideas and evil suggestions – the weeds of the parable. But some day there will be a harvest; a harvest of all that is good and true, that we have managed to cultivate from the Lord's good seed. This harvest will be gathered in by the angels, for they are the Lord's reapers. The weeds will then be taken from us and burned.

Apr 24 Angels

I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

Revelation 22:8,9

Men are sometimes prone to worship mistakenly. We must try to remember that God alone is Maker and the Giver of life. All good in angels and men is from God only: we may acknowledge good in others, and then glorify our Father in heaven from Whom it comes.

Angels are our fellow servants; they are of us, as the text says.

Apr 25 Enemies

Many are those who are my vigorous enemies; those who hate me without reason are numerous.

Psalm 38:19

The Bible is the Book of the soul. It is the Word of God, full of spirit and life. Its history and geography are the servants of the life within. Bible “enemies” are representations of spiritual enemies. That is why war against them so often carries a ruthless picture of destruction. The love of self is our greatest enemy, and it is the parent of all our destroying indulgences. Like pests on a fruit tree they multiply continuously. Except the Lord is at hand to save us we would have no escape.

Apr 26 Enemies

Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD, and abhor those who rise up against you? I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.

Psalm 139:21,22

Hate is a hard word, and an unhappy one. But here it stands for utter adversity to all those feelings that are against the Lord: and of all the thoughts that rise up against Him. Perfect hatred is full and complete rejection of evil and false notions. It is an acknowledgement that they are of, and from Hell, and that they oppose all that is good and wise. To abhor is to feel sorrow that evil should come between us and the Lord.

Apr 27 Goliath

A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall.

1 Samuel 17:4

The Philistines represent false principles. Their champion is swollen with pride from his imagination of his own importance. Goliath of Gath is a picture to us all of what stupid, selfish pride can do.

Although it is actually of no importance, it seems to itself to be bigger and stronger than all others. Yet one little stone from the stream, representing one little truth from the Lord's Word, can bring it all to the ground. But Goliath, like self love, is very sure and very boastful.

Apr 28 The Law

And you shall write very clearly all the words of this law on these stones you have set up.”

Deuteronomy 27:8

These were the unhewn stones, used for the building of the altar to the Lord. They represent truth from the Word unaltered by man. It is through this truth that pure worship is performed. Moses having to write on these stones the words of the law, represents God impressing upon His people the utter necessity of His commandments: and they had to be written very plainly, that they might easily be seen and so carried out in the ordinary activities of life. The law of the Lord is perfect and when applied to life converts the soul.

Apr 29 The Law

If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; The law of his God is in his heart; his feet do not slip.

Psalm 37:23,31

God is our Maker and His laws are for our good. When we respect them our steps are made firm by Him and all is delightful.

To have God's law in our hearts is to love it. And when we love it, all our ways are directed by its regulations. Then none of our steps slip: our ways are securely guided by unchanging and eternal order. Day by day we step on, into the ways of peace.

Apr 30 The Law

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.

Matthew 5:17

Often we read in the Old Testament, that this or that was done to fulfill the Scriptures. In every part the Scriptures display and teach the laws of creation and life. They cannot be destroyed; they are the foundations on which the whole of life is founded.

When we neglect these Divine laws our only hope is Jesus; He comes to us to restore order into our lives, not by destroying the law, but by enabling us to fulfill its requirements. Thus we come again into harmony with heaven and into the ways of peace.

May 1 Beauty

***One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the
days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the
Lord and to seek him in his temple.***

Psalm 27:4

Just one thing to desire of the Lord and one thing to seek: to dwell in His house and to behold His beauty in all the changing states of life. What a vision of delight! The security of His house and the beauty of His love and wisdom. We think of the Lord in many different ways: but do we think of His beauty? Do You? All beauty is from good and the Lord is Goodness itself.

May 2 Beauty

***May your deeds be shown to your servants,
your splendour to their children. may the
favour of the Lord our God rest upon us;
establish the work of our hands for us—yes,
establish the work of our hands.***

Psalm 90:16,17

The Lord's great work is to save us from ourselves. As we follow Him, He leads us in the paths of righteousness, away from the destroying sins of self indulgence. When we come to see His goodness following us and the wonder of His work in guiding, we gladly acknowledge His glory. All the delight that comes into our changing life we see to come from Him. It is all His beauty falling upon us; and to taste it, is to long for more.

May 3 Beauty

Awake, awake, O Zion, clothe yourself with strength. Put on your garments of splendour, O Jerusalem, the holy city.

Isaiah 52:1

Jerusalem, the holy city, is a picture of the Lord's church; both in general and in particular. You may be a holy city yourself. You are, in so far as you acknowledge the Lord and live from him. To awake is to be aware of the presence of the Lord. Your strength is the love He gives you. Your beautiful garments are His teachings, for they clothe your soul just as worldly garments clothe your body. If you are wise, you will put on these beautiful, warm and comforting garments.

May 4

Garments

He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent.

Psalm 104:2

The Lord is life and life is the light of men. The Lord is clothed with light, it is His garment. It is the Divine truth, pictured in the Bible as clothing as white as light. It is white because it is innocent; and it is as the light, because where there is truth there is no darkness,. The heavens are stretched out like a curtain for they are within the veil of truth.

May 5

Garments

As you receive truth from the Lord, you too in a finite way are clothed with garments of light. I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Isaiah 61:10

The garments of salvation! What are they? In this world's life clothes are for the body, but in spiritual life garments clothe the soul. Spiritual garments are composed of the teachings of the Lord that clothe, or surround our love for Him.

It is the truth of these teachings that saves us from the devastating evils of self love. To be clothed in these garments is something to rejoice and be joyful about. They are indeed the garments of salvation and God's gift to those who love Him.

May 6

Garments

While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

Luke 24:4

Two men from heaven, for they were angels. In shining garments; for folk in heaven are clothed in garments that are gleaming with light, from love in their hearts. These two angels were ministering in the sepulchre of Jesus. Sometimes we wonder about heaven and those who are there: are they anything like us? What kind of clothes do they wear? The disciples saw these angels as men and they saw their shining garments and heard them talking. They were real!

May 7

Fire

Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

1 Kings 18:38

Elijah built the altar, than had water poured on the burnt offering and wood, till it overflowed and filled the surrounding trench. Then calling on the Lord, fire came down and burned the sacrifice and wood, the stones and dust and water in the trench.

It pictures the fire of God's love falling into all worship that is offered in humility to Him. This love enters into everything, from greatest to least and so effects the water (truth) that love and truth become closely conjoined: till we cannot tell one from the other.

May 8

Fire

He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

Daniel 2:25

In the Bible, fire corresponds to love: sometimes representing love in an evil sense, sometimes in a good sense.

Nebuchadnezzar full of fury with Shadrach, Mechach and Abed-nego, cast them into a fiery furnace. Then sat down to watch the flames destroy them. You see, the fire here represented evil love and it could not hurt men who trusted God. When you feel the burning of evil love about you, look to the Lord: He will send His angels to save you.

May 9

Fire

John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Luke 3:16

We are introduced into the life of religion through the story of the Bible. Afterwards a great experience awaits us. It is the coming of Jesus to baptise us with the Holy Spirit and the fire of His divine love. The Holy Spirit is the divine truth inside the letter of the Word. Fire is the goodness of His mighty love that is the very life of the Word.

May 10 Foundation

***When the foundations are being destroyed,
what can the righteous do?"***

Psalm 11:3

Once, I built a wall five feet high and fifteen inches wide, all of stones. I was quite proud of it and so was the family. A few weeks later we had a period of heavy rain and my grand wall fell down. It was very sad: but a splendid lesson, for I had forgotten the foundation. Without foundation what can the righteous do? Floods of adversity come and we tumble. But truly wonderful foundation and stones are available: they are the teachings of the Lord. Especially the two great commandments of love to God and love to the neighbour. Nothing can destroy these.

May 11 Foundations

In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Psalm 102:25

Remember, God created the heavens first and then the earth. The foundations of the earth are people in whom heaven rests. Jesus tells us to seek heaven first. If you seek heaven, by giving it first place in your life, your outer life representing the earth will be its foundation. Below your life are the outer and lowest truths of all, forming the boundaries of creation. Heaven is the Lord's throne, the earth is His footstool. The better the foundations your earth life provides the more of heaven you will receive.

May 12 Foundation

“The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Revelation 21:14

The holy city, representing the Lord's church, comes down from the heaven and enters into us as we receive it. The wall of the city represents the teachings of the Word. These surround the spirit and life within. Walls have foundations and these of the holy city are the eternal truths of the Lord's love. They are said to have in them the names of the twelve apostles, because the number twelve represent what is complete and the apostles stand for all who follow Jesus. The Lamb is the Lord.

May 13 Songs

He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.

Psalm 40:3

Gladness in the heart tends to cause singing. You of course have noticed this in your own experience. This passage is a picture of one who has been lifted up by the Lord, out of a horrible pit and from miry clay.

The pit and mire represent the degradation and tenacity of the evils of self love. To be lifted up and saved from them is indeed to find a new gladness and a new song of praise to the Lord. When others see this, they are filled with wonder and themselves begin to trust the Lord.

May 14 Songs

our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?

Psalm 137:3,4

These poor people were prisoners in Babylon! They are a picture of ourselves; when the sins of self will have captivated and wasted our strength. Once we were happy, but now have come into the far country of want and desolation. Songs and mirth have departed! We want to be happy but how can we sing the Lord's song in this strange land? The songs of Zion are for those who are happy in the Lord.

May 15 Noise and Singing

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

Psalms 100:1,2

How many of us who cannot sing, rejoice in making a joyful noise? When the heart is full of gladness, something must happen.

We serve the Lord with gladness, when we find delight in living from His teachings and commandments. It is this kind of noise, for in it all the affections of the heart sing in the presence of the Lord. You see, He is present where He is loved and where He is loved, His commandments are kept.

May 16 Fear

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

Psalm 111:1,2

Fear! A word used in a variety of ways and with many meanings. We may fear consequences arising from something we have done; the wild nature of a storm or an impending operation; or the approach of a distinguished person.

On the other hand we may be filled with holy fear lest we offend the Lord or stray from His leading. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, because it implies deep respect for His commandments which when followed, brings us into a wise and happy life. But at last perfect love casts out all fear.

May 17 Fear

Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honoured his name.

Malachi 3:16

This is the fear of deep respect: of reverent humility. Those who experience it delight to talk together of the Lord. As the Lord, from His infinite wisdom, knows the least thoughts of our heart, He is said to have hearkened to our words.

The book of remembrance is a picture of our interior memory, in which everything we have done and experienced is recorded: it is our book of life. This book is written before the Lord, for He sees and knows all things.

May 18 Fear

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

Do you sometimes feel lonely and dismayed, or frail and helpless? Well, cheer up! The Lord is with you! In your weakness He will be your strength. Though you cannot face life's problems alone, with His help you can. Learn to walk with Him and you will come to feel His strong hand holding yours; and leading you into the paths of righteousness. Fear not, be strong and of good courage.

May 19 Courage

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

Deuteronomy 31:6

We too, like the children of Israel are journeying to the Promised Land. Like them, we often find the going difficult and sometimes quite frightening. We easily forget that although we may be "grown up" we are still children and need our Father's strength and care.

But we can be strong and of a good courage, if we remember that the Lord our God goes with us. His good love holds us in His care and His wonderful unchanging truth protects us continuously.

May 20 Psalm 27:14

Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

Psalm 27:14

To wait on the Lord is patiently to trust Him. To be of good courage is to walk fearlessly with Him. To be strengthened in heart is to feel His loving care. These are the things that make all the difference. They are qualities that can be yours too, for God's gifts are for us all. But even God does not give us things when we refuse to receive them. His part is to give, ours is to receive. In order to receive, we must seek His face and listen to His word and thus wait patiently for Him.

May 21 Gentleness

your right hand sustains me; you stoop down to make me great.

Psalm 18:35

The Lord's right hand is a picture of His loving truth. It ever holds us up. It is greater than all our difficulties and equal to all our needs. And His gentleness makes us great, because it is good. And how very wonderful it is to be able to receive this goodness from Him. As we learn of Him, He gives us rest, for He has told us. He is meek and lowly in heart. And in meekness, is kindness and gentleness – true qualities of true greatness. Truly the Lord's yoke is easy and His burden is light.

May 22 Talking

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:6,7

The words spoken of are the commandments of the Lord. They are to be in our hearts that is to be loved. They are to be taught diligently to our children. And we are to talk of them when sitting in the house.

Spiritually understood, one's house is one's mind; and one's children are all the little thoughts and affections that fill the mind. Talking of them is thinking, meditating and reflecting about the Lord's commandments.

May 23 Talking

My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you— I, whom you have redeemed. My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long

Psalm 71:23,24

When our worship of the Lord is humble and sincere we are filled with rejoicing. In such a state we love to talk of the Lord; and talking is often very useful and very instructive. Without it and the communion it gives us with one another, we would suffer severe loss. To talk of the Lord with our friends can be delightful indeed. But we can only talk of His righteousness “all the day long” while we are in a state of love to Him.

May 24 Talking

I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me

John 14:30

Jesus had talked to the disciples and the people continually; in their synagogues and homes and by the wayside. But now He says, "I will not talk much with you." Why not? It is because of the coming of evil. Jesus and evil have nothing in common. In so far as the devil is first with us, Jesus cannot talk much with us. Even though He did, we would not listen.

May 25 Sin

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

Psalm 51:2,3

Unless we washed, we would soon become unclean and unhealthy. But we sometimes fail to realise that just as the body needs washing, so does the spirit that lives in the body, and if not washed, it too becomes unclean and quite unhealthy. In this passage from the Word we acknowledge our faults and pray to the Lord to wash us clean. Then His truth, which is spiritual water, becomes active in our minds, cleanses us from sin and produces a healthy spirit.

May 26 Sin

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a physician, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Luke 5:31,32

Here is cheering news for you and me! Jesus came as a physician to call sinners to repentance. He can heal spiritual sickness! Repentance is the prescription, but while we imagine we are righteous we don't appreciate the medicine: thus the saying of Jesus, I came not to call the righteous. Repentance means seeing sins to be against God and in this acknowledgment turning from them and abhorring them. Repentance is the Physician's medicine and it saves us from destroying sickness and disease.

May 27 Trouble

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”

Psalm 46:1

To love God is to be conjoined to Him. The more closely we are conjoined, the happier we become. And in this happiness we find a secure and wonderful refuge: no evil can hurt us here. God is also our strength when we love Him: and He has all power in heaven and in earth: He is stronger than all the spiritual enemies that beset us. He can defend us fully in any circumstances. And He is indeed a very present help in trouble.

Tell Him your trouble; lay it all out before Him in detail: then you will know from experience that He is in truth your refuge and your strength.

May 28 Trouble

“The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the Lord: “O Lord, save me!”

Psalm 116:3,4

Many of us forget the Lord. Then, when troubles come and we are worried and distressed, we remember Him again: this is one of the blessing of adversity. The sorrows of death arise from self love which always kills happiness. The pains of hell are the miseries of retribution, for all sins hit back: there are no exceptions! The result is trouble and sorrow. But trouble and sorrow brought the prodigal to himself and turned him home again. They can lead us also to remember the Lord.

May 29 Washing

“I wash my hands in innocence, and go about your altar, O Lord,”

Psalm 26:6

Our hands do most of our work, they represent our daily activities. To wash them is to cleanse our ways and to do so in innocence is to wash them in the Lord's teachings which are truth. In so far as we live from self we are guilty, but in so far as we act from the Lord we are innocent. To compass the altar of the Lord is to draw near to Him. It is to ascend into the hill of the Lord, which those do, who have clean hands and a pure heart.

May 30 Washing

“wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong”

Isaiah 1:16

When you wash your hands, say to yourself, “I must wash my spiritual hands as well.” Then you will begin to see why: and to understand what spiritual washing means. For this you will need Bible water which is God’s truth. This will wash you and make you really clean. It will remove evil from your doings through your desisting from them: and in looking on you, the Lord will see before His eyes, someone who loves Him. While washing, reflect on the evils you are imploring Him to remove and soon they will cease to afflict you.

May 31 Washing

And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Revelation 7:14

Tribulation is a part of the cost of regeneration. At the time it seems a heavy cost, but when it is all behind us we forget the trial: how can we do otherwise? We are home and all is lovely.

We know what white robes mean, for the Bible tells us; the fine white linen is the righteous acts of the saints. We make our robes white by making our actions clean: by washing them in the blood of the Lamb – in the Lord’s divine truth.

Jun 1

Bed

The bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around you.

Isaiah 28:20

A strange passage, how can it be of use to us? Well, the bed is a picture of the teaching of the Lord that forms our faith. As we rest the body in bed so we rest the soul in our faith. If our faith is too short to stretch in, it is short of love: love expands and lengthens our bed of faith.

The covering pictures the truth, or truths of our doctrine, with which we wrap ourselves up. If these are cold for the want of love, they will be too narrow to cover us.

Jun 2

Bed

But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

John 5: 11

Most of us spend a third of our life in bed. Think of it! One year out of every three you have probably spent in bed. The sick man at Bethesda had been in bed much longer. It was time to get up and make some effort. But his bed, representing Faith, needed Jesus. No one else could help him. "Rise," said Jesus, "take up they bed and walk." He did! It is a lesson to us all.

Directly we take up our Faith, because the Lord tells us to, we are healed and carry our bed, which means we live our Faith and walk into Life itself – for we are now living with Jesus, our God.

Jun 3 Prayer

***But I call to God, and the LORD saves me.
Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress,
and he hears my voice.***

Psalms 55:16,17

Is this you speaking? Are you calling upon God? If so He will save you; but from what? There is one thing to be saved from: sin and its destroying tentacles. To call on God is to look towards Him: away from self.

Evening, when the sun goes down, is a picture of our spiritual state when love seems to be departing. Morning represents a new beginning with love rising again and noon the fullness of love. To pray and cry aloud is to long ardently for the Lord.

Jun 4 Prayer

“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

Matthew 21:22

Have you tried praying like this? If so perhaps you would have been disappointed. Yet Many have found these words of Jesus wonderfully true. The word “believe” is the word that makes the difference. It is the affirmative attitude that brings the object of desire near to us. When we pray to the Lord we must believe in Him, which means, love and trust Him. Then we shall only ask for those things that are in harmony with His will and He will certainly give them to us. Even to the removal of mountains of selfishness..

Jun 5

Seeking

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Matthew 6:33

Most of us are life long seekers. Perhaps the big difference between folk arises from what they see. Jesus tells us to seek the His Kingdom and He puts it first. That is, first in importance. But He does not tell us where to seek it, not exactly anyhow. Where do we seek for it? We can seek knowledge of it in His Word. We can make it the first thing to seek in one another, in our homes and always in our work and social life. God hides His Kingdom within us and tells us to look for it. It is a most important task.

Jun 6

Seeking

My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek.

Psalm 27:8

When our hearts desire to do as the Lord says, we are on our way to heaven. Jesus tells us that if we seek we shall find. To seek His face is to seek life itself. It is to seek the sun of love. The face of the Lord is the face of Divine love and wisdom.

It is said we become like what we seek. The miser seeks money and becomes a picture of cold cringing avarice. He who always seeks the face of the Lord, at last becomes an image and likeness of His Maker.

Jun 7

Idleness

‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’

Matthew 20:6

Idleness is the devil’s pillow. In its bed is disease and death. We are born to be useful and in service to one another to find happiness and delight. Nothing in the order of God’s creation is idle. All things from least to greatest serve the common good.

It is the same in the body, if the blood ceased to flow the body would die. Each organ and each part must be active in service to all other parts. Health will not tolerate idleness. As with the body so with the soul: every part must perform a use to the whole. We, and all within us, must work in the Lord’s vineyard.

Jun 8

Space

‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’

Luke 14:22

Space is strange!

There was a man who wanted to die before heaven was full, while there was space or room for him in heaven. He did not know that to live in heaven is to live in love – God’s love. “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,” said Jesus. To remain in His love is to live in heaven.

There is so much spiritual space in God’s love that there is always room. It is infinite! All who wisely love His commands, however different they maybe, will find a home there.

Jun 9

Slavery

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

Exodus 20:2

In this verse Egypt stands for our natural life and its delight in science and knowledge. And the house of slavery represents our captivity. How easily we become absorbed in natural things, giving to them our health and best of our days.

But the position should be reversed. Spiritual life should control natural life, for the end of all our endeavour must be the Kingdom of God. How can we shake ourselves from the dust and be free? Only by remembering the Lord our God. He alone can break our chains and lead us home.

Jun 10 Commandments

“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God,”

Exodus 20:7

To think of God and to speak of Him without any respect is to misuse His name. And especially is it so when we use His name without serious purpose and become profaners.

To misuse God's name cuts us off from Him and the wonderful things He teaches. In this we cannot be guiltless, for it is an active attitude of the 'self' that we love and follow; the 'self' that is profane and becomes increasingly miserable. This commandment is for our good if we follow its lead we shall avoid much sorrow.

Jun 11

Commandments

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”

Exodus 20:8

We call the Sabbath, Sunday, the day of rest. Many of us love it very much, because it has meant and does mean such a lot to us. But many in these days know it only as a holiday.

The commandments tell us to remember to keep it holy. In the ordinary sense it means that six days are for work and our own concerns and the seventh for the Lord and His church. In a deeper sense the Sabbath represents the rest and peace the Lord brings us into through the struggles of regeneration. Thus it is a picture of heaven and the Lord's love for us and is indeed holy.

Jun 12 Commandments

“Honour your father and your mother,”

Exodus 20:12

In the natural sense this commandment tells us to honour our earthly parents. This most of us do in any case, though often from reasons of relationship alone.

Spiritually, father stands for the Lord, and mother for the church. The Lord and the church are our spiritual parents. All our life is from the Lord and the church in its true state, nourishes and cares for us as a mother. These are the father and mother we are spiritually commanded to honour. To keep this commandment, means that we enter into continuing love for the Lord and His church, ever becoming more closely joined.

Jun 13 Commandments

“You shall not murder.”

Exodus 20:13

This command in its ordinary sense is clear to all. We know that it is wrong to murder. But of course, there is always a deeper meaning, for the Bible is dealing with spiritual matters.

We are not to murder, nor try to murder our neighbour's love for the Lord; nor his affection for others; nor his good name and reputation. We are not to destroy anything that is good and true. Nor are we to murder by bringing into disrepute the services and teachings of the church of the Lord; nor His Word, either in the Old or New Testaments. Anything held to be holy by others is to be respected.

Jun 14 Commandments

“You shall not commit adultery.”

Exodus 20:14

How much happier our country would be if this law were observed. Where it is neglected degrading conditions and misery abound, and countless children become homeless.

But this commandment also carries a deeper meaning, for within it is spiritual and refers to the spirit of mankind. To commit adultery on the spiritual plane is to embrace adulterous feelings and thoughts. It is to attempt to mix evil with good, and false reasoning with the truths of the Lord. When this is done the soul sickens and falls into decay. To try to break the Lord's commandments is to commit adultery, for they are good, and to pervert them with evil is bad.

Jun 15 Commandments

“You shall not steal.”

Exodus 20:15

There are those who steal with deliberate purpose. They are universally despised and they are a public menace. There are others who would not dream of snatching a handbag and yet they will pilfer where they see plenty. And again there are those who would not steal money and yet will gladly steal their employer's time and take wages for work not done. Sin is strangely subtle. But every self imposed restraint is good.

Then there is spiritual stealing. Taking credit for good that comes only from the Lord. Stealing our neighbour's good name, and taking our knowledge from the Bible solely for our own ends and reputation.

Jun 16 Commandments

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.”

Exodus 20:16

How easy it sometimes is to disregard this commandment. And what a lot of sadness arises from our carelessness. False testimony! What a nasty thing it is! It may be only a gesture of just a passive attitude. Then again it may be a positive statement quite unjustified by the actual position. Indeed, it is any act or word that gives a false picture of someone's character. It is against our neighbour and so against God. Spiritually, it is denial of God's love and God's wisdom, either by thought, or word, or attitude.

Jun 17 Commandments

“You shall not covet ... anything that belongs to your neighbour.”

Exodus 20:17

To covet is to eagerly want what is another's for oneself. If we did not love ourselves we would never covet another's goods. It is evidence of selfishness and of discontent. It is to put self first.

A deeper spiritual meaning is that we must not covet the self loving way of life. We must not want to move away from the Lord's ways, to lust after the things His commandments forbid. Neither should we covet the good and happiness of our neighbour for ourselves. Our neighbour's good in every respect is to be respected even as our own.

Jun 18

Commandments

God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds.

Genesis 1:25

Animals, cattle and creeping things have a spiritual significance as well as a natural place on the earth. In the Bible where spiritual values are of first importance they correspond to your affections.

The earth where the animals live represents your external life. It is crowded with affections of every kind. Some of them noble, some inferior, and others that as it were, creep about among your lowest appetites. When you read of these things in the Word, try to see their place in the cosmos that is you.

Jun 19 Horses

“A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. ”

Psalm 33:17

In general, in a natural way, a horse signifies intelligence. Spiritually, the horse in the Bible signifies one's affection for knowledge or understanding. Sometimes a good affection is represented, at other times a merely selfish one.

When the picture is one of trust in one's self derived intelligence, then one's horse is a vain thing for deliverance. Although we may be very self confident in our own understanding of a matter our strength is vain – it cannot save us. The eyes of the LORD are on those who fear Him (verse 18)

Jun 20 Horses

“I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.”

Revelation 6:2

A white horse signifies the understanding of Bible truth, for white signifies truth and a horse intelligence. The bow signifies the teaching of truth and a crown the sovereignty of love. And going forth conquering, and to conquer, represents the supremacy of love through the truth of the Word.

All this and much more, John saw when his spirit eyes were opened. You may not see as John did, nevertheless you will come to see wonderful things if you read your Bible in the presence of the Lord.

Jun 21 The Donkey

Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.

Numbers22:21

Balaam is a picture of those, who with their lips, acknowledge the Lord, yet in heart are far from Him. They are never ready to compromise with the enemy of the church. To rise up in the morning represents the beginning of a new state. To saddle his donkey, signifies to reason with himself in preparation for his journey with the princes of Moab. The princes are the enemy's messengers. The donkey represents natural reasoning which carries man's lower desires. Like the donkey, natural reasoning can be slow and stubborn.

Jun 22 The Donkey

Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, “Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion see, your king is coming seated on a donkey’s colt.”

John 12:14,15

Jesus riding on a donkey is expressive of regal authority, for in olden times it was often the custom of kings. But in the Bible words carry fuller, deeper meanings. The donkey represents man’s lower intelligence or natural reasoning. For as the donkey carries the body, so natural reason carries one’s mind.

The king coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt, represents the Lord’s triumph in bringing all things of His natural humanity under the submissive control of His divine love.

Jun 23 Sheep

‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’

Luke 15:6

Sheep are among the gentle animals. In the Bible they usually represent those who are in that which is good. In this parable the man who found his sheep, represents the Lord. The sheep might be you or me. Or it might be something good you or I had lost. The Lord is the Good Shepherd Who gives His life - Himself - continuously for good and to seek and save it when it goes astray. The Lord is happy when a lost sheep is found and calls all who love Him together to rejoice with Him.

Jun 24 Birds

Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

Matthew 8:20

Foxes represent the kind of prudence that hides in the ground of self love. The birds of the air represent out thoughts that flit about in every direction. These have their nests or dwellings in our affections. But often there is no place where the Lord can find cover, or a resting place in our minds. The Son of Man, the Lord, is represented by His Word, in which He is revealed to us as Man. Spiritually understood birds are thoughts of all kinds.

Jun 25 Doves

I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest"

Psalm 55:6

Doves are delightful! They do not destroy other birds nor their nests. They are birds of peace. In the Word they correspond to what is good, and to truth. As their wings lift them up towards the sky, so does the truth of what is good lift us up towards the skies of heaven.

To long for wings like a dove is to earnestly desire the truths of peace and goodness. To fly away, is to be able to lift ourselves above the clamour of selfish life, and so to find rest.

Jun 26 Owl and Sparrow

“I am like a desert owl, like an owl among the ruins. I lie awake; I have become like a sparrow alone on a roof.”

Psalm 102:6,7

The owl is a bird of the night. It lives chiefly on the life of other creatures. It is not lovable, nor gentle in its habits. When you read in the Bible about the owl, think of thoughts that are false and destructive, and of the desert part of your heart from which they arise.

The sparrow is a small common bird. A picture of our more ordinary thoughts; sometimes merely natural, sometimes spiritual. A sparrow alone on the roof is like a lonely thought, a spiritual one, for it is on the top of your house – the house of your mind.

Jun 27 Scorpions

“Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.”

Deuteronomy 8:11,15

This is a serious warning! We forget many things, but we should never forget the Lord. He alone leads us safely through the wilderness and its terrors.

The venomous snakes and the scorpions are the evil destroying thoughts and feelings that creep cunningly about in our lower nature. False and evil persuasions often cause stupor to our minds just as the vile sting of a scorpion does to the body. The wilderness pictures our uncultivated mind, lacking in truth and in good.

Jun 28 Moses

“Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face”

Deuteronomy 34:10

Moses was a great prophet. He was also a great leader; and his life was unusual both for its variety of experience and for the fact that he came to stand in a peculiarly close relationship to the Lord. We may recall that he was at first unwilling to accept the heavy responsibility which the lord desired him to accept. We remember that Moses said in Exodus 4:10 “O Lord, I have never been eloquent, ... I am slow of speech and tongue.”

That is often our reaction when the Lord calls us to perform a task which imposes a special responsibility upon us. We make excuses. Yet we have the Lord's reply. “Who gave man his mouth?” So it was that Moses trusted the Lord and carried out his tasks. The Lord upheld him so that even Pharoah stood in awe of this dread servant of the Lord. So may it be with us, if we trust the Lord to uphold us when we serve Him. For

His strength is more than enough for us, as it was for Moses.

Jun 29 Elijah

“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.”

Malachi 4:5

Elijah was another great prophet of the Lord. His story in the Word is of outstanding interest. He is a splendid representative of the Lord, particularly of the Lord's Word.

It is the Lord's Word in its plain literal record that thus comes to prepare the way for Jesus. It comes to tell us of Him and to introduce Him to us. It calls us to repentance of life, that we may receive Him. When we do, He stands before us in His Divine Human in every page of His opened Word: in lovely but terrible majesty.

Jun 30 John Baptizing

“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”

Matthew 3:11

Our first baptism is by truth that leads to good, represented here by the waters of Jordan. John the Baptist represents the Word in its literal story and the Jordan represents its truth, through which we must pass to enter the Promised Land. But Jesus coming after is mightier. He comes to baptize us with the Holy Spirit and fire. It is baptism from within working outwards. The spirit is divine truth, and fire divine love. First we must be reformed, then regenerated.

*DAILY
READINGS
FROM
THE WORD*

Reg Lang



Booklet 3 July to September

Jul 1

Jesus Tempted

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

Matthew 4:1

In this account of Jesus, we have a picture of what happens to us when we receive His spirit and love. Temptation does not come from the good spirit of God, but it does come as a result of receiving it. Directly we receive it there is conflict! The conscious presence of the Lord's good in our hearts immediately reveals the evils of our self love. It is this sense that the spirit leads us into the wilderness, and while the two opposing positions are present there is bound to be temptation.

Jul 2

Jesus Tempted

After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Matthew 4:2,3

Forty in the Word, signifies temptation. Day and night represent its alternations. The children of Israel were forty years in the wilderness suffering intermittent temptations.

The tempter represents the hell of self love, seeking to cast God out of our lives. Hunger may be natural, but it may also be deeply spiritual when we suffer its afflictions. Self says, turn the stones of the wilderness into bread. These stones represent worldly deceits, but they can never satisfy us.

Jul 3

Jesus and Temptation

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

Matthew 4:4

Your body lives on food, the bread of this world. And you, who live in the body, need food too, but not of this world. You need spiritual food, for you are a spirit. You need this world's bread for your body, but you, the soul, need every word of the Lord, if you would live a healthy spiritual life in your body, and later in heaven. Jesus told the temple this. Jesus is the Bread of Life. His words are spirit and life. Natural bread should not be used alone but together with spiritual bread.

Jul 4

Jesus and Temptation

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Matthew 4:5,6

The tempter is now called 'the devil'. The temptation is deeper. The pinnacle of the temple represents pride of intelligence. This is what the devil inspires, and when he tells us to throw ourselves down and let the angels care for us, it means that our selfish love prompts us not to bother about practice, but to content ourselves by an empty profession of faith.

Jul 5

Jesus and Temptation

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Matthew 4:8,9

The exceeding high mountain is a picture of that which fills our heart. Before we are regenerated, it is the love of self. From the love we have of ourselves we see all the things of the world below us and want them. But when just a little truth from the Lord is present we know we must not fall down before these things, but lift them up and use them for Him.

Jul 6

Jesus and Temptation

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.' Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Matthew 4:10,11

This is a splendid example for us. Temptation comes and we just turn to the Lord's Word. We find we must worship God and Him only. We tell Satan this and send him away and he goes! Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He comes into your life to save you. He does it by loving you and winning your love for Him. Remember this and tell the tempter you worship the Lord only, and he will leave you. Try it and you will know from experience.

Jul 7 Repentance

***From that time on Jesus began to preach,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”***

Matthew 4:17

Repent! This is recorded as the first work in the preaching of Jesus. But immediately the reason is given. And what a momentous reason it is. Nothing less than that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. At the door of your house, your mind, ready to enter and make your day. To give you divine teaching and divine love. To replace all that is drab, with vision and delight. Repentance means earnestly turning from self to the Lord. As we do this we open the door and heaven enters.

Jul 8

Jesus

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Matthew 4:23

Galilee is distant from Jerusalem. It represents our natural life which is distant from our spiritual life. After preaching repentance, Jesus goes about in every part of our own Galilee, to teach us and preach the good news of heaven. Where He finds sickness and disease among our ideas, our thoughts and affections, He restores and heals. All that He did long ago, in Canaan, He does even now in us, in your life and mine.

Jul 9

Jesus

Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them

Matthew 5:1,2

Think of the multitudes as your ideas. Crowds and crowds of them, some concerned with your thinking and some with your feelings. Jesus sees and knows all about them.

Now think of the mountain, for just as mountains are the big things of natural life, so are the things you love most, the big things of your spirit life. These form your heart, and this is where Jesus sits to teach you His love. The disciples, who come to Him there, are thoughts of yours that have answered His call and become disciples.

Jul 10 Poor in Spirit

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 5:3

This is the first blessing Jesus teaches on the mountain. It is also first in importance, the beginning of all the blessings.

To be poor, is to be in need. To be poor in spirit is to be in spiritual need. Need of any kind disposes us to accept help. The man who is proud and rich in himself feels no need. He has not ability to receive the kingdom of heaven. He is full up with himself.

The poor in spirit are humble and know that of themselves they are empty of any good or any worth. Their need it like an open door and heaven enters in.

Jul 11

Mourners

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

Mathew 5:4

We mourn when we lose someone or something we love. There is a feeling of pain and emptiness within us and we are softened by the affection. This is so whether we mourn naturally or spiritually.

When our hearts are softened, we are ready and able to receive comfort. This is especially the case when the reason of our mourning is spiritual. We seem to have lost the love we had for the Lord. We have lost happiness.

We are in a strange land where we cannot sing the Lord's song. Realising this we mourn and are sad. Thus the door is opened. The Lord enters and we are comforted.

Jul 12 The Meek

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”

Matthew 5:5

The Lord is creator: the earth is His. We, as His children, inherit the earth with all its wonder and loveliness. But to be properly His children we must be meek, that is, happily submissive to His will. There is a great difference between real inheritance and mere so-called ownership by title deed.

Spiritually understood, the earth represents our outer life in which we live our Christian life. To be meek, is to be willing to learn of Jesus, Who is meek and lowly in heart: then we inherit our earth instead of if inheriting us. This is very different from claiming our rights and entitlements.

Jul 13 Hunger

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. “

Matthew 5:6

We are happy indeed when we suffer hunger and thirst for righteousness. For the need leads us to the supply. The food for the spiritually hungry is Jesus. The Bread of Life: and the drink of those who are spiritually thirsty is Jesus too, for He says, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." The supply is unlimited and requires neither money nor price. But our capacity to receive is always related to our need. Thus we are happy and filled according to our hunger and thirst. It is through our hunger and thirst that the Lord leads us into the paths of righteousness.

Jul 14 Mercy

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”

Matthew 5:7

Mercy! What hope and comfort it has brought to men and women. One of the loveliest qualities we can obtain. Mercy comes from goodwill, hunting for good, never for evil. It is always seeking ways to temper pain and ease sorrow, to seek and to save the lost.

Mercy is one of the lovely qualities of the Lord's love. They are blessed who have it, and all can have it for the supply is abundant. The only limiting factor is the capacity to receive. Jesus tells us, Mercy obtains mercy: it crosses our threshold as we try to apply its qualities to others.

Jul 15 Pure in Heart

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

Matthew 5:8

The pure in heart! These are they who ascend into the hill of the Lord. Good health requires a pure physical heart: and of course good spiritual health depends on a pure spiritual heart: a heart of pure love for God and the neighbour. This is the only kind of heart that opens our eyes to see God. And to see God is to be blessed in His hill of love. It is to see heaven and the beautiful qualities of God's love and wisdom. It is not just scholarship that opens the eyes, it is a pure heart.

Jul 16 Peacemakers

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9

Peacemakers! The children of God, people often very different from mere pacifists. Busy men and women, making peace, with the sincere qualities of sincere love, patience and understanding. Seeking in all circumstances to bring good into life, by true thinking and usefulness.

Though we may not be able to do much in the world about us, we can be peacemakers in the little world of our own lives. We can compel ourselves to love God first and our neighbour as ourselves: in doing so we shall be actual makers of peace. And peacemakers, remember, are the children of God. Are you a peacemaker?

Jul 17 Persecution

“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 5:10

Righteousness is doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. But directly we begin to exercise these qualities, the love we have for ourselves, and for worldly pleasures, molests us; and very soon we are persecuted for righteousness sake. If we persist along the path of justice, mercy and humility, we shall suffer the tribulations of persecution, but we shall find the kingdom of heaven. Do you suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness? If you do, Jesus says, you are happy, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to you.

Jul 18 Your Light

“let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

What a blessing a light can be! But Jesus is speaking about your light. What is your light? It is the light that comes from what you love. You are a disciple of Jesus, so you love Him, and your light is from Him. It is this light you must shine, so that others can see the good it reveals: then they, like you will glorify your Father in heaven.

An evil person shines their light on themselves: a good person shines their light from their Father in heaven on to their neighbour.

Jul 19 Yes, yes

Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Matthew 5:37

It is written: the people were astonished at the doctrine of Jesus. To many people this part of His doctrine is astonishing; for there are many occasions when a simple positive yes, or no cannot be given: or so it seems.

Yet as we progress in our spiritual life we come much nearer to this position. We begin to know in our hearts that the answer must be Yes or No, as the case may be. We also begin to know that whatever is more, does indeed arise from evil – the evil of our own desirings. Think it over.

Jul 20

Enemies

But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you

Matthew 5:44

Enemies are those who are against us. We are not told to agree with them, but we are told to love them. Even if our enemies curse, hate and persecute us, we are still to love, bless and pray for them. It is the teaching of Jesus, the doctrine of heaven. If you lived like this, you would be as happy as the angels. You would be one of the children of your Father who is in heaven. Nothing would disturb your inner peace.

Jul 21

Sincerity

“Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 6:1

Sincerity in religious life is of first importance. Our Father in heaven sees the heart. Others may see our acts of service or righteousness, but we are not to do them for this reason. The reward of our Father is His acceptance of our love. It is also His truly wonderful love for us. When our righteousness is pretence, or only for the world to see, our Father’s blessing is lost. We are to take heed about this; it is important!

Jul 22 Prayer

“when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Matthew 6:6

This is the Lord's teaching about prayer. The room, or inner chamber, represents the interior of the mind. And shutting the door, means closing out all distracting thoughts from the world. In this secret place we meet and talk with our Father. Here He will see us, and reward us openly. When prayer begins from and ends in the outer life, it ceases there. When it begins from the inner chamber it spreads abroad, then the reward or love of our Father is open to all.

Jul 23 Your Father

“your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

Matthew 6:8

At first this seems strange. If our Father knows our need, why ask? But when we think it over we see how good it is. How different it would be if He did not know! The truth is, our Father knows everything. Perhaps this is why He tells us we are not heard for much speaking.

To know when we pray that our Father understands our need is a great help. He is all powerful and eager to aid us, and only needs us to let Him in so that He can enclose us in His loving care. Then He sups with us, and communion is complete.

Jul 24 About Prayer

“This, then, is how you should pray:”

Matthew 6:9

We all need to pray. But prayer is sometimes very difficult. It is easy to pray from a book: and it may sometimes be easy to say a lot of things to God. It is less easy to kneel down and talk to God as our Father intelligently. To feel His presence, and to know that He is listening. But it can be done by following the Lord's teaching. He does not tell us to pray after this manner. The manner is brief, the words are simple, and the meaning is clear. And the prayer covers all our need.

Jul 25 Our Father

“Our Father in heaven,”

Matthew 6:9

This is the beginning of the great prayer. We are talking to our Father. Not my Father in an isolated sense, but our Father. The Father of us all, of every colour and every creed. We cannot begin this prayer selfishly: but only by taking with us all our brothers and sisters. As we do so we begin to feel round about us the Everlasting Arms.

Then immediately our thoughts are lifted to heaven, where He dwells. Perhaps for a moment we question, where is heaven? He tells us! The kingdom of heaven is within you. So we pray, closing our eyes to outside things and looking within, to the secret place of the Most High.

Jul 26 Your Name

“hallowed be your name,”

Matthew 6:9

As we approach our Father in heaven we begin to feel His presence. Then we recognise a holy sphere and pray, “hallowed be your name”. Perhaps for a moment we wonder, what is our Father’s name? He has very many different names in the Bible. But one name stands out from all the others. It is the name the Bible says He shall be known by: You shall call Him Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. Jesus the first and the last. The loveliest name human lips can frame. The name of our Father in His Divine-Human form: hallowed by all His children.

Jul 27 Thy Kingdom

“your kingdom come,”

Matthew 6:10

No kingdom can stand on anything less than compliance with its laws. Neither can the kingdom of heaven. To pray for it to come, is to pray for the sovereignty of our Father's teachings among men. These teachings are summed up in the two great commandments of love: love to our Father, and love to our neighbour. Where these are respected the Lord's kingdom comes. Where they are actually applied to life, His kingdom is established.

It would be well sometimes to look in the mirror when you pray this prayer, for the person you see there, is the only one you can compel to receive the Lord's kingdom.

Jul 28 Thy Will

“your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Matthew 6:10

The Lord's will is the will of divine love. It is the will to give His children joy and peace. To save all who are lost and broken: and to prepare homes for them in heaven. There is nothing we can pray for better than this. It is central in the prayer our Father has given us.

We are told to pray, that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. In heaven His will is supreme; when it is also supreme here, earth will be closely united with heaven: disease and sickness will vanish, and people will be happy.

Jul 29 Daily Bread

“Give us today our daily bread.”

Matthew 6:11

Our daily bread! Without it, and what it represents, we cannot live. To maintain health, the body must be regularly fed. But while we pray for this food, let us remember that we also need food for our religious life. The spirit needs regular feeding even as the body does. It must be well fed, and in good health, to press forward in the life of regeneration.

This bread of our Father is telling us to pray for, is food for our souls. It is Jesus: for He says, “I am the Bread of Life.” We need Him each day. How else can we love Him and our neighbour? He is our staff of life.

Jul 30 Debts

“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

Matthew 6:12

To forgive, is to forget or remit. Here we ask our Father to forgive us, but only as we in turn forgive one another. But what are debts? Something we owe. What do we owe our Father? We owe Him the love of heart, soul, mind and strength, as His first commandment teaches.

In so far as this love is lacking we are in debt. And we owe love to our neighbour, equal to the love we have for ourselves: where this is wanting, we are in debt to one another. As we forgive our neighbour's debt, we can ask our Father to forgive our debts.

Jul 31 Temptation

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

Matthew 6:13

We do not like temptation, neither do we want to be in bondage to evil. So we pray as the Lord teaches. Yet, although the Lord does not lead us into temptation, He allows us to suffer its torments. It is the only way to freedom from the bondage of selfish desires. But if we pray to our Father for deliverance, He will save us from being overcome. He will give us fortitude, patience and endurance: and at last evil will be cast out and we will be free. This new freedom will be like complete delivery from a horrible disease.

Aug 1 Treasures

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.”

Matthew 6:19

Treasures are things you love. The earth represents your outer life. Moth and rust represent evil things and false things respectively; things that corrupt and spoil. Thieves are evil desires that break into your treasures and rob you of their delight. In this way treasures laid on the earth soon lose all their appeal. You may accumulate them, bother about them and find a place to store them, but in the end they cannot give you any happiness. They are of the earth, earthy, and soon return to dust.

Aug 2 T treasures

“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Matthew 6:20,21

Many people seem to live to collect things. All sorts of things: antiques, stamps and art works. But all for this world alone.

Jesus tells us to collect things too; He calls them treasures. Treasures that can never be corrupted, never be stolen. Treasures we can lay up in heaven and take with us when we leave this world. They are the treasures of love and kindness, and knowledge of the Lord; sweet and happy memories, unforgettable experiences.

Aug 3 Clothes

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.”

Matthew 6:28,29

Clothes are important. But spiritual clothes are of greater importance. The lilies of the field, so sweetly beautiful are a picture of innocence. As we consider their growth we recognise their correspondence. They grow so patiently and quietly, and are quite innocent of their loveliness.

They do not toil to spin their clothes. Their quality is the gift of divine Love. Even wisdom in all its glory is not arrayed like innocence. Innocence is celestial.

Aug 4 Seeking

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Matthew 6:33

It is one thing to be first in time, and another to be first in importance. The kingdom of God is of first importance. It should be the first purpose in all that we do. We should seek it in all our propositions and activities; for it is the kingdom of divine Wisdom and divine Love. When we give it first place and make it our end in life, then all the other things we need fall into place and are added unto us. Anything less than the Lord's Kingdom in the first place is of inferior value, and a continuing loss to us.

Aug 5

Judging

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Matthew 7:1,2

How easy it is to judge! But how difficult to judge wisely and kindly. And as we judge others we set up a standard that in turn judges us.

Judgement as to whether an act or quality is good or bad, is often necessary. But judgement of a person, or a person's motive, is forbidden. Among God's children, it is strictly avoided. Our Father alone can truly judge, for He sees the hearts of men and knows all their intentions. His judgement too is filled with loving kindness and tender mercies.

Aug 6

Asking

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Matthew 7:7

Life largely consists from early childhood of these three things. We seem to be always asking questions: and seeking for this and that; and all our learning is a kind of knocking. We know that unless we ask, and make an effort, we shall be left behind in all our undertakings.

But do we realise that these things are even more important in spiritual life? Jesus will give us the Bread of Life, if we ask Him. If we seek we shall find Him, and if we knock at the door of His Word He will open it up to us.

Aug 7

Conduct

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 7:12

How direct and clear the Lord's teaching is. What could be better than this? Simply treat others as you would like them to treat you. It is the conduct of heaven brought to the earth. It is the law and the prophets because it is the truth, leading to the goodness of life.

Within your soul where heaven is, you know it is true and good. You know that if you let this teaching down into your earth life, and make it your law of neighbourly love, then you will be living as the angels do.

Aug 8 The Gate

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.”

Matthew 7:13

In general before each of us there are two gates. This is where our freedom lies. We can choose this or that without any outside compulsion. One is narrow and difficult, but it leads to life. The other is called wide because it admits no restraints: it leads to a broad way where many enter, and journey together to destruction.

Which is your choice? Tell yourself the answer! Truth is the strait or narrow gate; false desires the wide one.

Aug 9

Fruits

“Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”

Matthew 7:20

This is true everywhere, but here Jesus is talking of men. Men are not known by their affectation, but by the way they live. Their daily activities are their fruits. But not only do we know others by their fruits; we can also know ourselves by the same test. We can even look in the mirror, and see something of our fruits in the face that looks back at us. For the face is an index to the man behind it.

Our actions are fruits, so are our habits. We can, from time to time, examine these, and so know the quality of the life we live from the fruits we yield.

Aug 10 Lord, Lord!

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 7:21

Heaven is the home of those who truly love the Lord. It is not gained by favour, or by crying, Lord, Lord! To live there one must be happy to do the will of the Father in heaven: and to serve and love others, at least equally as oneself. Heaven is not composed of people who have managed to gain admittance; but of men and women who love to live as the Lord teaches. Of people to whom the joy of life is to serve others.

Aug 11 A Wise Man

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

Matthew 7:24

If you hear and do as Jesus says, He will liken you to a wise man. A wise man who built his house on a rock. The sayings of Jesus are the Wisdom of divine Love.

The house built on a rock represents the character established on the foundations of eternal truth – the Wisdom of God. Our first concern should be to listen to the Lord; and our next to put what we hear into practice. Then even you and I will be likened to a wise man.

Aug 12 Floods

“The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

Matthew 7:25

Rain corresponds to God’s truth falling as a blessing from heaven. But in an opposite sense. In this teaching it represents an outpouring of false ideas.

These gathering together, form floods of evil. The wind beating them against the house is the spirit of evil, trying to wreck man’s mind. But the rock of truth on which the house of the mind is built cannot be overthrown. Build on the sayings of Jesus and your house will be invincible.

Aug 13 Doctrine

“When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching,”

Matthew 7:28

The doctrine of Jesus and the astonishment of the people. The sayings of Jesus contain the teaching of Jesus, here spoken of as His ‘teaching’. This teaching came to the people with new authority. It was clearly defined and very direct. The people had heard nothing like it before; it simply astonished them.

It would astonish the world today if folk would listen to it and follow its directions. It would astonish you if you took it to heart: when lived it changes men and women. It is the code that distinguished Christians by revealing the difference between religion and religiosity.

Aug 14 Jesus

“When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him.”

Matthew 8:1

Comparatively few people ascend high into the mountains. Those who do know their majesty and loveliness. Spiritual mountains are lovelier still: they are elevations of love beyond the worldly level. Only a few of our thoughts are able to ascend to these altitudes. These thoughts of ours that do, are the Lord's disciples in our minds. Through these the Lord teaches us how to live the life that leads to heaven.

When Jesus comes down in His teaching to meet us and be with us in the ordinary things of life, then multitudes of our feelings and thoughts follow Him.

Aug 15 Evening

“When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.”

Matthew 8:16

This makes such happy reading. Demons cast out and all sick healed. What an evening to remember. But it has a direct message for you and me as well.

The evening represents a declining state of spiritual experience. The demons are evil passions that enter into us and the sick represent the evil consequences. Jesus casting out demons with His word reveals the wonderful power of His teaching; which when applied to life remove our evil passions. And when these are removed our spiritual sickness is healed.

Aug 16 Follow Me

“Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Matthew 8:21,22

How strange this sounds. Think of the ‘disciple’ as one who follows the Lord; or as a principle in your life that does so. Then think of the father, not as a person but as the old Adam within, the parent not of our new birth but of all our selfish nature. This dies when we follow Jesus and we need not linger over our loss. Jesus says, Let the dead bury their dead. By the dead is represented self love, the father of all our troubles. Self love is a dead thing and always buries itself.

Aug 17 The Ship

“Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.”

Matthew 8:23

Can you see the ship with Jesus and the disciples, sailing on the Sea of Galilee? Can you see it again as the little ship of your faith? Your faith, into which Jesus has entered to journey with you from the world to heaven. Long ago we used to sing:

*“We are out on the ocean sailing
To a land beyond the tide.”*

This is just what all the disciples of Jesus are doing. And remember, that you as an individual, have disciples of Jesus in your own mind. All the feelings and thoughts that look to Him are your own disciples that follow Him.

Aug 18 The Storm

“Without warning, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.”

Matthew 8:24

The sea has so many moods! Sometimes calm and delightful, at others wild and stormy: and between these extremes a wide range of varying conditions, with flowing currents and tides.

It is a picture of our natural life, through which we must pass to gain a home in heaven. Sometimes our natural life is very disturbed, and even stormy. Waves of difficulties and troubles hit our little ship of faith and almost cover us with despair. We forget Jesus. He seems to be asleep and to have no share in our troubles.

Aug 19 Save Us

The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”

Matthew 8:25

We going to drown! It is a cry of despair. It is a picture of experience we all suffer at one time or another. We can hardly pass through the struggle of regeneration without doing so. Our self-will must be softened.

But blessed are the uses of adversity: they drive us to Jesus. We go to Him and awake Him. Actually this is an appearance. The Lord neither slumbers or sleeps in His care of us: it is we who were asleep. But the storm of trouble brings us to our senses. In our desperate need we cry out, “Save us, we’re going to drown!”

Aug 20 A Great Calm

He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

Matthew 8:26

A great calm! What a welcome and wonderful experience after the storm.

But the question: Why are you so afraid? Perhaps just that – our little faith! But quickly our faith grows bigger, for Jesus arises within us and rebukes the winds and sea of our troubled state. Our little ship of faith regains an even keel. There is a great calm, and with the calm comes a foretaste of the peace that Jesus gives, that passes all understanding.

Aug 21 They Were Amazed

The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

Matthew 8:27

No wonder the men were amazed! Just a few words from Jesus and the storm gives place to a great calm.

So it is with our storm tossed lives. Faith in Jesus makes all the difference. We are amazed again and again at the way He looks after us. We cannot understand His providence: it is infinite. What manner of man is this? He is God, revealed in His divine humanity, having power over all the winds and seas of adversity that afflict us. He is Jesus, the first and the last.

Aug 22 Burdened

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Matthew 11:28

Are you troubled with the toil of Life? If you will respond to this appeal you will have rest.

But how can you come to Jesus? Well, it is as real a journey as any other. You cannot leave one position for a new one without covering the intervening distance.

What is the distance from you to Jesus? It is not physical: it cannot be measured by kilometres. It is surely a distance of desire. If you desire only your own way, then you are far from Him. But if you love Him, then you are coming to Him, and He will give you rest.

Aug 23 Learn of Me

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:29

This means replacing the yoke of self desire, with the yoke of the Lord's will. But to do this we must know what the Lord's will is: so Jesus says, learn from me.

As we do learn, we come to know His will is love. His wonderful love for us, and the love He wants us to give Him and our neighbour. This love is gentle and humble, full of charity and service to others: free from aggression and self importance. In it, is innocence and rest for the soul.

Aug 24 My Yoke

“For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:30

Love makes all things easy. It can ease burdens and reduce strain and soothe sorrows. The Lord's yoke is easy just because it is love. It is this yoke of love that Jesus asks us to take upon ourselves, that we might have rest. And His burden is the teaching, or truth, of His Word. It is light, because its heart is love and loving kindness: and because His truth makes us free and shows us how to walk in a plain path. And because, without any effort or toil of our own it defends us securely from evil and its horrors.

Aug 25 Like Sheep

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.”

Matthew 10:16

Like sheep in the midst of wolves! Sheep represent something good, and wolves something evil and rapacious. In this world they seem to be mixed together, but actually the sheep are as Jesus says, in the midst. And they are to be wise like serpents yet harmless as doves. Serpents represent sensual principles which are subtle and doves good and holy principles quite free from harm. As this applies to the world at large, so it applies to the little world of your own life. The sheep must be in the midst, prudent as serpents but harmless as doves.

Aug 26 Standing Firm

“All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”

Matthew 10:22

Standing firm is a great quality. One of the greatest. The end is a completion of a task: the cause of all the effort. But what are we to be saved from? Not from God for He is love, and love harms no one. Not from anyone or anything outside of us: these can only hurt the body which will die in any case. The only thing that can make hell for us is the love of self, instead of the love of God. It can lead us into horrible states of misery and unhappiness.

To stand firm to the end, is to endure the temptations and the trials of the journey from the love of self to the love of God.

Aug 27 Body and Soul

“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell”

Matthew 10:28

Your soul is you! Your body is your covering in this natural world. You will live always, but your natural body, after having served its worldly purpose will die. As the body is temporary we need not worry too much about it.

But the soul is different: it cannot be killed. But it can miss its way. It can be degraded and lose its happiness; and so drawn by sin against God down into hell. We should certainly fear every desire and every thought that is against God. These can cast us into hell.

Aug 28 Hairs

“And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

Matthew 10:30

It seems incredible! Millions of people and the hairs of the head of relatively little importance. But actually this is just the point of the saying. The Divine Providence has regard to the least and most ordinary of circumstances.

Out of all the millions of men and women, Providence knows you. Knows your sorrows and your joys, your most insignificant feelings and thoughts. All are numbered, all accounted for, in every step of your way. You cannot understand it can you? But it makes no difference, it is God's teaching and it is true. You are finite: Your Lord is infinite.

Aug 29 Sword

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”

Matthew 10:34

Peace and the sword are two opposites. Yet how often it is said one prepares the way for the other.

But what is spoken of here is spiritual peace and a spiritual sword. Spiritual peace cannot be on the earth till the sword of the Lord's truth has prepared the way; till His truth has removed the falsities of self domination and driven away peace destroying pursuits. How can peace dwell with feverish passions and self importance? Truth must first provide a vessel in which peace can dwell.

Aug 30 Enemies

“a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.”

Matthew 10:36

At first reading this seems wrong. The commandments tell us to honour our parents and to love one another; how then are we to find our enemies in our own house? Well, spiritually understood, enemies are not people, but desires and thoughts. And our household does not refer to a merely natural dwelling, but to one’s own mind.

Your mind is your household, containing many affections or desires, and a multitude of thoughts. Among these desires and thoughts are some that are opposed to God and His love and truth; these are the enemies of your very own household. They are relentless and cruel, and friends of hell.

Aug 31 His Cross

“anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.”

Matthew 10:38

To be worthy is to be worthwhile. Spiritually, we take our cross, by loving the Lord's Divine Truth, which denies us the love of self first. It is this surrender of self will and all the merely worldly pleasures that arise from it, that make our cross. When we take it up and follow the Lord, we become more closely conjoined to Him. And it is hard at first, but it leads to worthwhile life and the greatest possible happiness.

Sep 1 Corn

“At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them.”

Matthew 12:1

It is a beautiful picture of the Sabbath day. Jesus and the disciples amid the grain. Perhaps it recalls memories for you when in days past you, like the disciples, have walked a long a path through the grain.

The Sabbath represents a state of peace, and the grain the food the Lord gives us in His Word. The disciples are those who love the lord; and their hunger signifies their need of Him. Plucking and eating the heads of grain is what we do when we feed on the Word of life.

Sep 2 The Hand

Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other.

Matthew 12:13

But for a little stretching we would miss many good things. How often we stretch out till we can just grasp what we want. We do it physically and mentally. And always it is desire that makes us bother to stretch.

It is much the same in our spiritual life, but if desire fails we cannot stretch. Then through lack of use our hand withers. But if in response to Jesus, we stretch out to Him, our hand is restored. We again have power to stretch and reach, because we desire to obey the Lord.

Sep 3 He Spoke and Saw

“Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see.”

Matthew 12:22

Think of it! One possessed with a devil, and blind and dumb. Supposing it was you! How wonderful it would be to meet Jesus and be healed.

When our personal control is in the grip of hell we are possessed. And when we are blind spiritually our understanding cannot see or reason: then we are also spiritually dumb for we cannot speak the Lord's truth. Jesus can heal us because He can drive the devil out, and when the devil goes Jesus enters. Then we can talk and see.

Sep 4 Whoever has

“Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.”

Matthew 13:12

This seems hard. Yet it is a lesson that life teaches us. Give a piece of land a bushel of seed, and the harvest will be an abundance more. Acquire a knowledge of letters and you will soon be able to read the wisdom of the ages. With labour and diligence everything you have increases. So does knowledge and love of the Lord, until your cup runs over.

Be lazy; plant no seed, and soon your little land loses what it had and becomes wilderness. Refuse to learn and your mind becomes empty. Repel the Lord's love and your happiness will be taken away.

Sep 5 Merchant

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.”

Matthew 13:45

A merchant! What a variety of merchants there are. Coal merchants, timber merchants and many others. But how nice to be a pearl merchant.

The kingdom of heaven is like a pearl merchant. Always interested in goodly pearls, and seeking for them with continuous delight. The good pearls are the experiences of the Lord's love, and the delightful knowledges of His wisdom. These form the universal commerce of heaven.

If you like you can be a pearl merchant, and deal in the precious pearls of the Lord's Word. Then one day you may find the pearl of great price.

Sep 6 Pearls

“When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”

Matthew 13:46

This is the peak of discovery and the merchant's greatest triumph.

The pearl of great price is the knowledge and acknowledgment of Jesus. In heaven, He is first and last, the Lamb in the midst of the throne. To find Him is the greatest task in life. But we cannot take Him home as ours without paying the purchase price. What is it? No figure is stated, none can be. The price is heavy, very heavy; nevertheless it is within the reach of rich and poor alike. It is nothing less than all we have. Complete exchange of me for Him.

Sep 7 The Net

“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.”

Matthew 13:47

Have you ever thought of this in relation to yourself? It affects others, but in particular it is about you. Heaven casts a net into the sea of your own little life. It does so to catch all that it can for your eternal home. It gathers of every kind: good affection and mean ones, true thoughts and false thoughts. All mixed up together in a field of corn, all must be harvested together, that the good may be saved.

Sep 8

Full Nets

“When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away.”

Matthew 13:48

Just as fishermen draw their nets in and sort out their catch, so the heaven within us draws in its nets. Draws them in for the same reason, to secure and save all the good and true fish it can. For there are spiritual fish: they are the affections and thoughts that live in the waters of our earth life. Some are of value to heaven and the home that is being prepared for us there. But the bad or useless ones are cast away.

Sep 9 End of the World

“This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 13:49,50

Again, think of this in relation to yourself. When your natural, world-life ends your heaven will take over. As wicked passions and thoughts would spoil it, they must be eliminated. This is a task for the angels who are God’s messengers. They live in truth and are able to make proper discrimination. Every good or just affection is saved, also every true thought. These are the treasures you have laid up for heaven. Every wicked thing is cast out and burned.

Sep 10 Compassion

“When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.”

Matthew 14:14

A large crowd! How often we read that Jesus had compassion. It is the feeling of divine love for the broken and sick. Inside the borders of your life there are large crowds: not of peoples, but of the milling feelings and thoughts that people represent. Jesus sees them all as He comes forth in His love for you. He sees how sad and sick many of your desires and ideas are, and He enters into you to heal them. Every least thing of your mind is watched over.

Sep 11

A Remote Place

As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."

Matthew 14:15

Just as evening signifies the decline of a day, so does it signify the decline of a spiritual state. After sunset, night soon follows and spiritually we find we are in a remote place. It is then that our disciples, or thoughts that follow Jesus, go to Him and complain. For the crowd of things there are in our natural life are tired and hungry and we ask Jesus to send them away. We want them to satisfy their hunger in their villages: that is, in the outside things to which they are accustomed.

Sep 12 Five Loaves

Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.

Matthew 14:16,17

They do not need to go away! You give them something to eat, says Jesus. But there are crowds of people and they have only five loaves of bread and two fish. There are crowds of things in your mind, all of them hungry and many tired. But they have followed Jesus and He does not want them to return to their ordinary natural pursuits without food.

The five loaves represent the little affections for the Lord remaining to them as night begins to fall: and the two fish represent their little faith.

Sep 13 He Blessed

And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.

Matthew 14:19

Jesus took the very little love and faith they had for Him. Then looking to heaven, He blessed and broke it into many parts. Thus a little good in the hands of Jesus becomes an abundance, for it is as a vessel which He fills to overflowing with His love. This divine food is passed to the thousands of things that compose our ordinary outer life by means of the disciples. The disciples are our spiritual principles that follow Jesus: they are the medium between our internal and external life.

Sep 14 They All Ate

They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Matthew 14:20,21

It is wonderful! All the things that compose our life are now filled. No part is unsatisfied. Give Jesus a little love and He will give you an abundance, even to preparing a table before you in the wilderness. The twelve baskets full of fragments, after all had eaten, represent the fullness of the knowledge of God's goodness and truth, resulting from our feeding on the bread He gives us.

Sep 15 Whoever

“Then Jesus said to his disciples ... whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.”

Matthew 15:24,25

Man's life, spoken of here, refers to his natural life in the world, and to the life he has in his body. To make this an end, and to live for it, is to put self first. They who do this lose it, for its end is deadly both as to body and soul. But those who deny self, and follow Jesus, find true life and live forever. They lose the life of worldly gratification, but in doing so they find true life, that is filled more and more with eternal delight.

Sep 16 Transfigured

“There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.”

Matthew 17:2

To the disciples Jesus seemed different. But actually He was not changed. But Peter, James and John were seeing Jesus with their spirit-eyes, opened especially for the purpose. His face shining as the sun represents the glory of His divine love, and His clothes being as white as the light represents the truth of His love. Jesus is indeed the Sun of heaven.

Sep 17 Jesus Only

“When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.”

Matthew 17:8

No wonder! They had just seen Jesus in the glory of His Divine Humanity. After this, when they lift up their eyes they will see Jesus only: Jesus the First and the Last. Jesus, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He alone will be their vision, their Father and Saviour.

When once a man has seen Jesus everything is changes. The eyes of his understanding are filled with the vision: relatively speaking he sees no other but Him. He must look down into the things of the world, but when the eyes of his spirit are lifted up, it will be the face of Jesus, the Sun of Heaven, he will behold.

Sep 18 Faith

He replied, "... I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Matthew 17:20

Faith! What is it? Faith is the eye of love. It is given to those who acknowledge the Lord, learn of Him from the Word, and live according to His teaching. This faith secures the presence of the Lord, and saves us from ourselves. Even when it is only in its beginning, and small as a grain of mustard seed, it enables us to remove mountains of selfishness. Indeed, such faith, because it gives us God's presence, makes nothing impossible unto us.

Sep 19 Greatest?

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Matthew 18:1

The question is astonishing. The answer Jesus gave them, must have seemed even more astonishing. Among the children of the Lord greatness stands for love. Not for eminence as mankind understands it. Not for power and might and distinction. Jesus told us to learn of Him because He was meek and lowly in heart. In heaven he is greatest who loves greatly – who can love others more than himself, and wants to be servant of all.

People in heaven don't' think about being great or of importance. All there are brothers and sisters, children of the Heavenly Father.

Sep 20 A Child

“He called a little child and had him stand among them.”

Matthew 18:2

A little child represents a little innocence. This is what Jesus calls unto Him. Innocence is the beginning of good spiritual life. To be innocent is to be free from self-will: it is to acknowledge the Lord as Father, and to love to do His will.

In the depths of your mind you will find if you seek, the little child of long ago. And there in the memories of your infancy you will recall states of innocence: they are still there in the midst of your life. It is through these precious remains that the Lord will save you from yourself.

Sep 21 Converted

And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3

This is the teaching of Jesus about being converted. We are to turn and become as little children. If we do not, we will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.

In the Word little children represent innocence. To be converted and become like them, means that we must cease to be led by ourselves. Our activities must be innocent of self; otherwise we cannot enter the Lord's kingdom where He alone is Lord. Thus we daily pray, "Thy will be done."

Sep 22 Humble Himself

“Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.”

Matthew 18:4,5

To humble ourselves as a little child is to love the Lord as our Father. This is innocence. It is the greatest quality in heaven.

To receive one such little child, is to receive the Lord Himself: for where innocence is, the Lord is in the centre. Thus we read, The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters. The Lamb represents divine innocence.

Sep 23 Two or Three

“For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

Matthew 18:20

Reflect on the things you love and are interested in: food, pleasures, hobbies. Relations and friends. Indulgences and entertainments. It would take you a long time to write them all down. Then there are all the different things you think about.

You are full of multitudes of feelings and thoughts. Now, how many of these are friendly to Jesus? If there are only two or three, He is there in the midst. If you try to love Him and the neighbour, He is certainly present and will gradually bring all the things of your life into harmony and correspondence.

Sep 24 Rich Men

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 19:23

A rich man! What does it mean?

There are rich men who are humble, kindly and generous: and there are poor men who are arrogant, rough and mean. In fact neither poverty nor riches make a man's character.

In Bible language a rich man represents one who is self satisfied, proud and full of self importance. It is hard indeed for such a man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Before he can do so he must be converted and become as a little child.

Sep 25 To Be Great

“whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave”

Matthew 20:26,27

To be great is to love. To be chief among men, it to serve. These qualities of love and service are the overriding principles of true Christian life. Where these principles are acknowledged, and lived, people are happy and there is prosperity and contentment.

Insofar as you love God you want to serve Him, and just so far as you love your neighbour, you try to give him useful service.

Those who love the Lord are great, and those who serve the neighbour are of chief importance.

Sep 26 The Other Side

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."

Mark 4:35

We often have to pass over to the other side. From one set of circumstances to another: for as we say, there are two sides to every question.

Spiritually it is the same. One side of our life is lived in outside natural things. The other side is lived among internal or spiritual things. Between the two positions there is a continual passing over, for the internal must bring the external part into harmony with itself. To this end there is interplay between the spiritual and natural positions.

When Jesus passes over with us, all it well.

Sep 27 A Storm

“A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.”

Mark 4:37

A furious squall of wind! It represents the contrary weather we sometimes encounter on the sea of life; particularly when we pass over from an inner state to the things of bodily life.

The waves represent the mounting frustrations that arise from false ideas of life, and merely worldly concerns. And by their filling the ship, pictures our faith being almost swamped by them. Most of us experience storms of trouble like this, when we try to pass over to our outer life, the things we learn of the Lord.

Sep 28 Asleep

***Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion.
The disciples woke him and said to him,
“Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”***

Mark 4:38

Think of the ship as your faith, in, and by which you pass through life. Jesus is always with you inwardly in your faith; occasionally you are conscious of His presence, but often you are not. In this case the disciples had forgotten He was with them, and this is represented by His being asleep.

But when the storm breaks, their memory is aroused, and they cry out to Him for help. It was they who had forgotten Jesus, but now in fear they ask, “don’t you care if we drown?”

Sep 29 Peace

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

Mark 4:39

It happened long ago, but what matters so much is, that spiritually it happens now in our experiences: yours and mine.

By "He got up" is represented His presence in your mind in response to your cry for help. His words rebuking the wind, and telling the waves to be still, represent His ascendancy over your calamity. The wind ceasing, pictures the spirit of evil being driven back, and the great calm represents the peace Jesus gives to those who trust Him.

Sep 30 So Afraid

He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

Mark 4:40

Why so afraid? It seems to be part of our heritage to be often afraid. So many things distress and upset us. How much happier we would be if all our fear could be taken away.

As our religious or spiritual life matures we do come into quieter experiences, and at last all our fearfulness will be left behind. It is a matter of faith. But true faith in Jesus can only grow as our love for Him grows. This is one reason why the first commandment is so important – you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

DAILY READINGS FROM THE WORD

Reg Lang



Booklet 4 October to December

Oct 1

Wind and Waves

They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Mark 4:41

Even the wind and the waves obey him! This is surely almighty power: the disciples tremble in its presence. Yet all must obey the God of heaven and earth, or fall into destruction.

Here, the wind and waves represent the turbulent troubles and cares of worldly life. But when we allow the Lord to rule in our hearts and minds, all things of our lower life are brought into order. As we begin to realize His presence and power we are filled with wonder. What manner of man is this? It is God, in divine humanity.

Oct 2

Gerasenes

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes.

Mark 5:1

The other side of the lake! The side bordering on the wilderness, opposite to the promised land.

Can you see this geography is your own person? The promised land is the heaven within. The other side, is your lower worldly life represented by the country of the Gerasenes.

Jesus and the disciples crossing over, is a picture of how Jesus comes with your affections for Him, from your inner mind, down into the common activities of your outer life. And this crossing over is in order that the things of your merely natural life may be brought into order and correspondence with spiritual principles.

Oct 3

An Unclean Spirit

“When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him.”

Mark 5:2

A man out of the tombs! It is a strange picture. Think of it in relation to yourself. Directly Jesus steps out of your ship of faith, into your worldly and bodily appetites, there is a crisis. There must be, for two opposites are meeting.

The tombs represent dead things such as merely bodily pleasures. The spirit that dwells in them is unclean for it is entirely self centred. It is difficult to appreciate the horrible nature of the uncleanness of self love. But a little thought will show us how dead and tomb like it is.

Oct 4

The Tombs

“This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him.”

Mark 5:3,4

A grim picture and a sad one. A home among the tombs: chains and an ungovernable spirit.

Yet it may be a picture of ourselves, of you and me. Spiritually to dwell among tombs, is to live in the midst of evil indulgences – dying and dead things.

Not being able to be bound, not even with chains, represents the overpowering nature of the lusts of bodily life. They cannot be tamed by any man. But we need not despair, for Jesus has come and He knows how to save the lost.

Oct 5 Night and Day

“Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.”

Mark 5:5

A picture of horror and misery!

Night and day, represents a state of alternating evil. In the mountains means in the heights of self love. The tombs signify dead delights. Crying, pictures misery, and cutting himself with stones, represents the hurt inflicted by false ideas and pursuits.

This is a picture of deep distress, and a warning to us all. We must remember that though it may apply to only a small part of our bodily life – it is a deadly part. In the pleasures of self love and self indulgence there is nothing but death.

Oct 6

Jesus

He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won’t torture me!”

Mark 5:7

From states of evil depravity we see Jesus afar off, and urgently want to come to Him. But the evil within us is far removed from the Lord. It cannot have anything to do with Jesus; but He who came to save the lost has much to do with us.

But the love the Lord brings is so different from our self seeking love, that at first it tortures us.

Oct 7

Legion

For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!" Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many."

Mark 5:8,9

Come out! This command of Jesus is to the unclean spirit, not to the man. For when evil goes out of us, good can enter. First we must cease to do evil, then learn to do well. First repent, then heaven can enter. The name of the unclean spirit is Legion, because to every bad thing there are many others attached. Some are evident, others unseen but in unbroken sequence, like the links of a chain they are together from Hell. All evil is from hell: all good is from heaven.

Oct 8

The Pigs

The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them."

Mark 5:12

This seems so strange. Why should the devils want to go into the pigs?

All through life, like seeks like. Evil can only tolerate the company of evil. Similarly, good qualities can only dwell in the company of those who love and seek them.

By the pigs are represented unclean passions: these are the things devils seek. When we suffer the Lord to cast our lusts out, their devils go down into hell. And they go at their own request. Before the prodigal came to himself, he fed pigs, but afterwards he left them and returned to His father's home.

Oct 9

They Were Drowned

“He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.”

Mark 5:13

Jesus forces no man. We are free to follow Him or ourselves. When the unclean spirits left the man, the Lord gave them leave to do as they wished; which was that they might enter the pigs. The herd running violently down a steep place, represents the devil's eagerness for the company of hell, here represented by the lake. By being drowned is signified the suffocating nature of evil passions.

Oct 10 They Went to See

“Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.”

Mark 5:14

They that fed the pigs ran off. They had no pigs to tend, they were all drowned in the lake.

We are feeders of pigs when we indulge our lusts, but when these leave us, so do the thoughts that cared for them. To tell it in the town and in the country is to let it be known in every part of our mind. The people coming out to see what had happened represents every lower thought we possess being made aware of the wonderful thing that had happened.

Oct 11 Restored

“When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.”

Mark 5:15

What a change! It is a picture of what can be done for a man who comes to Jesus. Not raving and cutting himself with stones now. But quietly sitting down, clothed and in his right mind.

When the devils go we rest in Jesus, represented by sitting. Then we are dressed with habits and manners representing His teaching. Not maddened any more by fevers of self love but in our right mind. It is a condition of rest after toil and peace after storm.

Oct 12 A Certain Women

“And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse.”

Mark 5:25,25

It is about you. The woman represents your love of life, which is wasting away entirely. It is a spiritual disease. The physicians of the world only cause further suffering for they represent worldly indulgences: indulgences which, the world says make life worth living, yet of themselves are deathlike.

To spend all that one has on these worldly pleasures is to give them one's love and all one's thought: the result is a wasting disease.

Oct 13 Touch

When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."

Mark 5:27,28

Again, it is spiritually about you. Hearing of Jesus you want to come to Him. You know your life is wasting away: that you no longer find any satisfaction or delight in the way you live. To touch His clothes is to make contact with Him. His clothes represent His truth or teachings for these are the covering of His love. His truth, as He tells us, makes us free; free of disease and misery. Thus we become whole and happy again.

Oct 14 The Suffering

“Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering”

Mark 5:29

What a change! You humbly sought Jesus through the crowd of all the things that filled your mind. You touched His clothes, that is, you contacted His wonderful truth, and drew it into your sick soul. Straight away you knew a great change had happened, life was worth living: it was no longer running away into a diseased melancholy. You felt new health in your body: the earthly receptacle of your soul was healed of the suffering of indulgence and loss.

Oct 15 Fell Down

“Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.”

Mark 5:33

The woman, as we have said, represents our love of life. By fearing and trembling is understood holy fear and deep wonder at the marvellous change that has arisen. Before touching Jesus life was sad and miserable, now love and delight are alive again.

Falling down before Jesus signifies real repentance and humility. Telling Him all the truth pictures our readiness to open our hearts to Him. More really it represents our recognition that He knows all about us and is acquainted with all our ways.

Oct 16 Peace

He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Mark 5:34

It is a tender message, full of comfort. When our love is no longer wasted on self indulgence, but humbly seeks the Lord, we become His children: His sons and daughters. The faith that makes us whole is our belief that He can heal and that causes us to make an effort to contact Him.

It is not what is called “faith alone” that heals, but faith which makes an active approach to touch Jesus. To be whole, is to be free from self love – the one suffering that wastes our lives.

Oct 17 Devils

“And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;”

Mark 16:17

Signs of belief! But not signs that we are to look for in others, so much as signs in ourselves. The scriptures are for all, but the Lord is talking to you.

If your belief in Him is real, you will be casting out of yourself. First cast out the log from your own eye, as Jesus teaches. The devils are the desires of selfish gain and selfish pleasures, and their self seeking acquaintances.

To speak with new tongues is the next sign. Not new languages, but new intelligence, new love and kindness, the teaching of Jesus.

Oct 18

Snakes

“they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all;”

Mark 16:18

Snakes! Why should one who believes in Jesus pick them up? It is because serpents spiritually represent the things of the senses. The senses particularly of natural life that are cunning and deceiving. When we believe in Jesus we lift our natural life and all its senses on to a higher plane.

Drinking deadly things means hearing and perhaps imbibing false ideas and teachings. To some extent we all do, or have done this. But again, belief in Jesus removes the harm, for His truth becomes our standard and frees us from harm.

Oct 19 The Sick

“they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

Mark 16:18

How very wonderful to be able to do this. Would you like to have such ability? If you can believe in the risen Jesus you can do it. Indeed it is one of the signs of your belief.

There is just one person in this world whom you can recover from this kind of sickness. It is yourself! In the Name of Jesus, and from your belief in Him, you can lay your hands on the spiritual sickness of your affections and thoughts till they recover. Till instead of loving yourself first, you love Jesus first, and think of His kingdom in all your propositions.

To lay on your hands represents applying your strength from the Lord.

Oct 20 Martha

“As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.”

Luke 10:38

It is the beginning of a much loved story. But try to think of it as relating to yourself. Jesus enters into a little part of your faith, represented by the village. You appreciate His presence, and welcome Him into your house, which spiritually is your mind. Martha, being a woman, represents your feeling or affection for Jesus. But it is a mental affection, rather than an affection of the heart. In tomorrow's reading you will see the difference in the representation of Martha and her sister.

Oct 21 Mary

“She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said.”

Luke 10:39

Martha had a sister called Mary. Martha represents your mental affection for Jesus as previously stated. But together with the affection of your mind is a sister affection represented by Mary. Now Mary is an affection of the heart, represented by her sitting at the feet of Jesus: also by her listening to His Word which reveals a state of humility which is always present when we truly love the Lord.

To sit at the feet of Jesus is to subject ourselves to His providence in all things of our life.

Oct 22 Serve Alone

“But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

Luke 10:40

Martha is quite distracted! She, you will remember, signifies the part of our mind that does the thinking. Its part is to serve the loving side of life by planning and providing. Sometimes it forgets it is the servant of love, and then it complains. Must I serve alone, it asks? It is an appearance that the thinking comes first and does all the work. Actually, thinking is only the executive of loving. When love for Jesus fails, thinking of His ceases.

Oct 23 Troubled

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Mark 10:41,42

The mind often becomes troubled and perplexed. It has much to do and many problems to handle. It can only be at rest when it acts from love for the Lord. The one needful thing, the good part for a quiet mind, is beautifully represented by Mary. As soon as we give our love to the Lord and listen to His Word, our Martha part, representing our mental affection, is quietened and we become happy.

Oct 24 Begging

“As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.”

Luke 18:35-37

Jericho is at the foot of the hills where the road goes up to Jerusalem. Jericho represents knowledge of the Lord through which we pass to the spiritual Jerusalem, the Holy City, representing the church and heaven.

Like the blind man we sit by the wayside begging till Jesus comes, or until we realize His presence. Then if we are poor in spirit we beg Him to help us.

Oct 25 He Cried

He called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him.

Luke 18:38,40

It is the cry of desperate need. The prayer of a blind beggar. If you are able to say, "It represents me", you are blessed indeed. The Lord can help the broken and poor in spirit. For this poor man, the kingdom of heaven is at hand!

By, "Jesus stopped" is signified the Lord's presence; by asking for the beggar to be brought to Jesus, is signified, the inducement of all the man's thoughts to help him.

The man has cried vehemently for mercy, and mercy is now about to enter into his very being.

Oct 26 My Sight

Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" "Lord, I want to see," he replied.

Luke 18:40,41

What a question! And what an opportunity for the blind man. When he came near, represents our spiritual approach to the Lord. As we draw near we realize how urgent Jesus is to help us. And we answer His wonderful question directly, "Lord, I want to see you."

The physical blindness of the beggar corresponds, of course, to our spiritual blindness. Somehow, we have found it difficult to believe: the eyes of our understanding have been closed, but now, by the wayside, it this great opportunity.

Oct 27 Saved!

Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

Luke 18:42,43

Receive your sight! How wonderful it must have been for the beggar. It can be even more wonderful for you. For the beggar in the story it was physical sight; for you it can be spiritual sight. The day your eyes are opened to see Jesus will be one of the greatest of your life. If you cry out to Jesus as this man of Jericho did, trusting Him for deliverance, your faith in Jesus will open your eyes. Always afterwards you will follow Him.

Oct 28 Light

The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

John 1:9

It refers to Jesus, the Light of life. Without light we could not see anything in the world about us. Similarly, without spiritual light the eyes of the mind cannot see anything in the spiritual sphere.

Jesus is the light; from Him comes all the light of our understandings. The more we love Him, the more light we have, for all light arises from love. Even in the natural world, the more we love it the more beauty we see. Jesus has told us that they who follow Him will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

Oct 29 The World

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

John 1:10

It is speaking of Jesus: Immanuel, God with us. Present with us in the world He made, but unrecognised and unknown. Similarly, He is in the world of your life today. In the busy world of your mind, with its teeming feelings and thinkings. The little world of your own, made especially for you: where the sun of love rises and sets, and where the winds of your spirit blow.

But although He is present in your world, do you know Him? He is present to bring you love and understanding: to heal your sickness and disease: to save you from yourself.

Oct 30 Born Again

You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

John 3:7

The truth is that the will of man is so depraved by the love of itself, that without a new beginning, we could have no hope of reaching heaven.

Our first birth is of the earth, and for first purposes. Our new birth must be of the spirit, and for spiritual purposes. To this end our mind must be lit by the lamp of truth, which truth comes to us as we read the Lord's Word.

By this means the holy seed is sown in our heart, and from this holy spiritual seed new life begins. Thus by the mysterious, secret workings of providence we are born again.

Oct 31 The Wind

“The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

John 3:8

The wind blows! It is often tiresome, but it is a great cleanser. It represents the spirit of truth. It blows through our minds without asking, and we don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It may visit us as a gentle breeze or a whirling storm. It stirs up our understanding and often cleanses our thinking. Our new birth comes too, like the spirit of truth. We don't know how, or anything of its beginning, any more than we do of the first days of our natural birth.

Nov 1

Drink

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

John 4:7

Jesus asks for a drink! But the woman questions His request. He is a Jew, she is a Samaritan.

A woman of Samaria represents a desire of the mind. Coming to draw water represents seeking truth. Jesus asking her for a drink represents the Lord's need of our mind's affection.

Samaria represents the affection of truth and Jerusalem the affection of good. Jesus asking for a drink of the Samaritan woman, really signifies His desire that the affection of truth be conjoined with affection of good. Truth without love is not really alive.

Nov 2 Living Water

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

John 4:10

The gift of God! It is the gift of living water. Living water is God's truth arising from His love. When we drink truth alone we thirst again, but when truth is infilled with love it really does quench our thirst. To ask Jesus for this living water is very different from drawing water ourselves out of the wells of the earth. So ask Jesus for it, He says, "If any man thirsts, let him come to me and drink."

Nov 3

Get Up

Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk."

John 5:8

The man is sick, but Jesus tells him to get up and walk! It concerned this man of Jerusalem, but it also concerns you. The man was impotent, and represents all who are spiritually sick. The bed on which he lay corresponds to doctrine, or shall we say, one's faith. When we are physically sick we lie down on a natural bed, but when spiritually sick we rest in our faith of spiritual bed.

But we must not rest too long; we cannot live by faith alone. To take up our bed and walk at the command of Jesus, it is to live the life of faith. When we do this our health is restored.

Nov 4

Bread

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”

John 6:35

Jesus is the bread of life. Notice the word, life. This is not referring to the body which of itself is dead. It is to do with the life within, which animates the body by infilling the spirit, the real man in the body.

Just as the body feeds on natural bread, so the spirit feeds on spiritual bread, which is the love that is Jesus. And to believe in Him, is never to thirst, for He is the truth. To come to Jesus is to love Him. To believe on Him is to keep His sayings.

Nov 5 Eternal Life

“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:54

To eat the flesh of Jesus is to feed on the goodness of His love. We can do this by learning to love both what He loves and what He teaches. To drink the blood of Jesus is to absorb His truth, which is revealed in His Word; and then to regulate our thinking and activities by its requirements.

If we do this our spiritual life will be warmed by His love, and lighted by His truth. This will introduce us to eternal life, and at the end of our trials we shall be raised up to Him.

Nov 6

Spirit and Life

“Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”

John 6:63

The flesh apart from the spirit is dead. It is the spirit of life from the Lord that quickens, and enables us to live. It is very similar with the Lord's Word, it is the spirit within that gives life.

The words the Lord speaks are spirit and are life, because the spirit represents His divine truth, and the life represents His divine love. And His truth and love are everywhere present in the Word. The words without spirit are dead.

Nov 7 Truly

“I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”

John 8:51

The Lord's sayings! To keep them is to live for ever! Truly, means absolute certainty. To keep the Lord's word signifies honour and respect in the mind, and compliance to its standards in the activities of life.

His word is essential truth, and it is infilled with divine love: to keep it is to live from Him. And to live from Him is to be conjoined with Him, and this in turn is eternal life. Life which never sees death. The earthly body must die, but the soul inhabiting it will live for ever. Nothing conjoined with the Lord can die.

Nov 8 The Gate

“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.”

John 10:9

The gate! The entrance to eternal life and all happiness. The gate represents the way and the truth, that introduce us to our Father’s love, and so our Father Himself.

To enter life through this gate is to be saved from the miseries of self-seeking; and from the worldly pleasures that successively die. To go in and out of this gate, is to find pasture for our souls; the food and delight of love and wisdom, forever.

‘Any man’ means, of course, all of us – you and me!

Nov 9

My Sheep

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”

John 10:27,28

The Lord's sheep represent His people, those who hear His voice and follow Him. The Lord knows them individually, and all their weaknesses and frailties and their peculiar need every moment.

He knows you!

His sheep follow Him, that is, they hear His voice in His Word, and live by His sayings. And He gives them eternal life. If you follow Him He will give you eternal life. He will prepare a home for you in heaven, where to grow old is to grow young. Your cup will run over and you will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Nov 10 Believe

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;"

John 11:25

He who believes! What a wonderful thing believing is. If we believe in self as of first importance, self destroys us. If on the other hand, we believe in Jesus, He gives us life that can never die.

Even though one dies as to worldly life, if he believes in Jesus, he is raised up and lives. Belief does this, because it attaches us to what we believe. And to be attached to Jesus is to be conjoined with the resurrection and the life. All things are possible to him that believes.

Nov 11 The Fragrance of Perfume

“Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.”

John 12:3

It is a picture of loving kindness; and what it can do for one’s house, which signifies both natural and rational minds.

The perfume, very costly, represents love. The feet of Jesus represent His love for us, in human form. The house, as said, signifies the mind – yours or mine. When we welcome Jesus into the house of the mind and begin to love His least teachings, then our least thoughts are applied to His needs. Our love thus expanded on Him, receives His love, and the house of our mind is filled with its fragrance.

Nov 12 New Command

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

John 13:34,35

A new command, but it comprises all the others. It is so simple, yet so profound. Just that we love one another as Jesus loves us. And He loves us always, and in all circumstances; especially seeking us when we are broken and lost.

Even when He rebukes and chastens us it is that we may be brought from misery into happiness. Receiving such wonderful love ourselves, we are to pass it on to others. It is the one sign that we really are disciples of Jesus.

Nov 13 The Father

Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John 14:9

A long time! Have you known the name of Jesus a long time? Perhaps from early childhood in your old home? Many of us have. He has been with you always, even from the very beginning. For without Him you can do nothing.

If at times you have loved Him only a little, you have seen Him in your mind. He is your heavenly Father come to find and save you. If you try to find Him and love Him you will see He is your Father.

Nov 14 If!

“If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.”

John 15:10

If! Always there are conditions. It is a mistake to think we can have the costly blessings of spiritual life unconditionally, we cannot!

We can live in the Lord’s love if we keep His commands. And what a wonderful home to live in; a home where all is love, always. Where we can find every comfort and divine understanding in all circumstances.

And the commands themselves express love in practice. Love for the Lord, the God of love, and love for one another. What kind of living could be happier?

Nov 15 Friends

“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. ”

John 15:13,14

Laying down life! What does it mean? It means exactly what it says, but it says more than is often appreciated. It may mean sometimes laying down bodily life for another. But it always means laying down the life of self, and self-seeking, for the life of service to others.

And we become friends of Jesus, when we lay down our will for His will. When from our hearts we pray – “Your will be done.” There is no greater love than this. But it makes us friends of Jesus.

Nov 16 The Title

“Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

John 19:19

The title! Only twice is Jesus given the title of King of the Jews. Once at the time of His birth and again at the time of His death.

The name Jesus represents Divine love, and by King is represented truth of Divine wisdom.

This inscription over the cross in relation to ourselves represents His love ruling in our hearts and deeds and His truth ruling in our understandings and then in our words. The cross represents the denial or sacrifice of the self in us.

Nov 17 The Garden

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. ... they laid Jesus there.

John 19:41

“At the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden.’ From the place of the skull, the emblem of death, where the cross was set up, to the garden, the bright emblem of life, where the tomb was hewn, was but a step. In the garden, near to the cross, there was a new tomb – how significant. The tomb represents resurrection.”

William Bruce

It was new, where no man had laid, representing the great truth that the Lord was the first in whom humanity was made new.

Nov 18 Angels

“Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.”

John 20:11,12

The angels were the first to tell Mary, and through Mary the church, that the Lord had risen.

In relation to us the angels represent God’s messages of truth enlightening our minds. Mary represents the church and, in particular, the church in us. Mary stooping down and weeping, signifies deep sorrow that we have seemingly lost the Lord, while we feel such a need for His love.

Nov 19 Mary

Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20:16,18

When Jesus speaks to us by name, as He did to Mary, it shows how well He knows us. Spiritually one's name is a picture of one's quality. Jesus knows one's quality absolutely, every feeling and every thought. Mary turning and saying, Master, represents the church within us recognising Him as our teacher. And her coming and telling the disciples she has seen the Lord represents our acknowledgement that this Master or teacher is our Lord and Saviour in human form.

Nov 20 Peace

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

John 20:19

"In the evening there will be light." The Light itself stood in their midst. It is the evening of the first day of the week. The beginning of a new experience, for Jesus is risen. The doors being shut represents being closed against all disturbances of the mind. It is then that Jesus enters into our midst, and we see Him with our mind's eye. Thus the Prince of peace passes to us, joining all our love for Him with our thinking, taking away all discord.

Nov 21 The Right Side

Jesus said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

John 21:6

The right side of the boat! Your boat is your doctrine or your faith. The right side is the good side, and the left side is the truth side. The net represents your affections which do all the fishing. But it is necessary to fish from the good, or love side of your faith. Then like the disciples of long ago you will find your net full to overflowing. Truth keeps your faith on its course, but love lifts the harvest.

Nov 22 Feed My Sheep

The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.

John 21:17

Three times Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him. Peter represents truth, the rock on which the Lord builds His church.

In you too, the Lord builds His church on the rock of His truth. It is important that you love His truth. You do, if you love Him. The question: “do you love me?” concerns you. If your answer is “you know that I love you” then Jesus says, “feed my sheep”. His sheep are all good thoughts that follow Him.

Nov 23 Wretched

“You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.”

Revelation 3:17

Sometimes we think we are rich, and have need of nothing. As yet we do not see that worldly riches fall away, and that spiritual riches endure. We are wretched when we have no spiritual living place; and miserable when we have no truth, and poor indeed when we are without good from the Lord. And we are blind and naked, when we cannot see truth, nor clothe ourselves with its teaching.

Nov 24 Chastening

“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. ”

Revelation 3:19

When we are troubled and tempted by falsity, it seems that the Lord is rebuking us. And when indulgence in selfish desires results in pain and misery we feel it is the chastening of the Lord. Actually it results from our own folly, for directly we allow ourselves to be led by Him, we come into happy states.

It is because the Lord loves us that He allows the rebuking and chastening, for these may lead us to repentance: and repentance opens the door to heaven, and all happiness. To be zealous, is to be serious and urgent in our efforts to turn from the self to the Lord.

Nov 25 The Door

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”

Revelation 3:20

The Bible is like a door. A very wonderful door, opening outwards into the natural world and inwards into the spiritual world. It is here that the Lord stands urgent to be received. To hear His voice is to hear Him speaking to us in His Word; and we open the door to Him, when we do as He teaches. Then He comes not only to us, but into us, by entering into our affections and into our thinking. Then we eat together, He with us and we with Him.

Nov 26 Many Angels

“Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.”

Revelation 5:11

It is a picture of the people of the heavens. Round about the throne represents their humiliation and adoration of the Lord, who is the centre of all their doings and delights. Their number pictures the whole multitude of angels, and represents no so much numbers as we count people, but the infinite range of the qualities of love and wisdom from which the Lord is praised. You may be numbered even now with these happy people.

Nov 27 Glory

saying: “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”

Revelation 7:12

Amen signifies Divine Truth, and confirmation from it. Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks signify the Divine Spiritual attributes of the Lord. But honour and power and strength, signify the highest qualities of all, that are called Celestial. By, be to our God for ever and ever, signifies that these attributes of the Lord are eternal, and to all eternity.

Amen, signifies again Divine Truth, and its confirmation by all who love the Lord and live in His ways.

Nov 28 White Robes

“These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Revelation 7:14

Great tribulation is part of the cost of our regeneration. It results from the evils of self love and false thinking, fighting against us as we try to love the Lord and our neighbour.

We wash our robes and make them white, as we apply the teaching of the Lord’s Word to our daily activities. White robes signify principles made pure by truth. And to wash them in the Lord’s blood, represents cleansing them in the Divine Truth of the Lord’s Divine Love.

Nov 29 The Lamb

“Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 7:16,17

Being in the presence of God, we never hunger or thirst, for He feeds us with the bread and water of His love and wisdom. We are no longer troubled by evil desires or false persuasions. The Lord alone, represented by the Lamb, cares for all our needs, and is ever in the midst. By wiping tears from our eyes, signifies the end of all trials and temptations.

Nov 30 First and Last

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Revelation 22:13

The Lord is all in all. Wonderful, and the Prince of Peace. He is Jesus the first and the last. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is Immanuel, God with us. He is the Lamb in the midst of the throne. To hear Him speaking to us is to hear our Father's voice. To love Him is to love all others. To live for Him is to live in eternal happiness. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Dec 1 A Child

***“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.”***

Isaiah 9:6

This was written long before Jesus came, even hundreds of years. And yet, it is in the present tense. You see, it refers to us all: to the people of long ago, and to you and me today. Jesus was born into the world; and is born into the world of our minds, just as the prophecy says. He came to seek and save the lost, and He comes to your own personal world, and mine, for the same reason. He is the truth given to us from Heaven, to take over the government of our minds.

Dec 2 Jesus

“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem.”

Matthew 2:1

Bethlehem of Judaea. In relation to yourself, Bethlehem of Judaea represents the church, or your religious life. It is that part of you, where you love to do what you see is right. This is where Jesus is born, eventually to enter into the whole world of your daily life. In the days of Herod the King, represents states of selfish control.

Wise men signify good thoughts. Coming from the east, means from the Lord. Thus the Lord provides, and leads us to Himself.

Dec 3 Where?

and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

Matthew2:2

Where is He? They that seek, find!

Jesus being spoken of as the King of the Jews, represents His government of Divine Truth. Seeing His star in the east, represents for us, seeing His truth shining from His love.

Coming to worship Him represents our acknowledgment of Him as our Lord, and our desire to come to Him. But at first, though we have seen the light, we are not sure of the way to find Him. So we continue to seek and enquire.

Dec 4 Herod

“When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.”

Matthew 2:3

Herod was troubled! In such circumstances he always is. He represents evil government, both in the world about us, and in the little world of our own souls. Self love does not want to be ruled by love for God, or by love for the neighbour. When it is conscious of wise men, or of God's truths within us, disturbing his kingship he is troubled. And all Jerusalem, here representing our false religious life, is troubled as well.

We can accept Herod and his rule, or we can seek God and His government. The choice is ours.

Dec 5 What Time?

“Then Herod called the wise men secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.”

Matthew 2:7

Herod does his enquiring privately. Like selfish love he is cunning. We are in the same position when we seek the truth for our own ends, that it may serve self. He enquires diligently; it is important to Herod that this new king be discovered and overcome. What time did the star appear? Or spiritually understood, in what state of life were we, to see this truth of Jesus?

Just as there are wise men in the world, so there are wise thoughts in our hearts. We do well to be guided by them.

Dec 6 The Star

“After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.”

Matthew 2:9

The wise men now leave the king. In the world of our minds we leave King Herod when we turn away from our selfish reasoning. And when we depart, then the star appears again. We could not see it while in the presence of Herod.

By the star going before us is represented our following the truth revealed to us from heaven. This truth stands over the place where Jesus is in our minds just, as long ago, it did at Bethlehem in the world outside of us.

Dec 7 Great Joy

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.”

Matthew 2:10

Overjoyed! This picture of the wise men rejoicing has had a distinctive place in the Christmas story, down through the ages.

And how true it is in our spiritual experience. Herod the king, and all he represents, blinds our eyes to the star. While we are with him we lose its light, and its guiding: but when we leave our self seeking we find it again. Then we are happy, and our rejoicing can hardly be over-expressed. The star of truth guides us to Jesus, Who is Himself the Bright and Morning Star of all our hope and peace.

Dec 8 In the House

“On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him.”

Matthew 2:11

The wise men came to the house. The house represents, spiritually, your mind. When wise thoughts enter fully into you, then you clearly see Jesus. Mary represents the church or, shall we say, the faith of your religious principles. When you see Jesus like this you love Him. To fall down and worship Him, is a picture of humility in His presence. True worship is always from a humble heart.

To open the door of the house of the mind to wise thoughts from Jesus is to find delight of life.

Dec 9 Gifts

“Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.”

Matthew 2:11

Treasures! All our treasures are of the heart. The things we love most are treasured most. The wise men opening their treasures represent you opening your heart before Jesus, that is, if you are numbered with the wise. The three gifts from your treasures are the most costly of all. There is nothing you can give of more value than these. The first is Gold representing your love. The second is Frankincense, representing your thinking of Him, or your faith. And the third, Myrrh, represents your love for the Lord together with your faith in active obedience to His will.

Dec 10 Another Way

“And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another way.”

Matthew 2:12

The warning! When once we have seen Jesus and given Him our love, we must not return to Herod: remember! Herod is evil and represents the love of self. We must now return to our own country; our own kind of life; another way. We found Jesus by the guiding star of truth; it led us from Jerusalem to His birth place. Having opened our hearts to Him we return not by truth, but by the way of love. from this day forward, Jesus is the Sun of our souls.

Dec 11 To Egypt

“So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt,”

Matthew 2:14

On our first finding Jesus, and offering Him our love, we are filled with jubilation. But soon afterwards we often come into difficulties. Our spiritual state seems to be darkened, which is represented by the child being taken by night.

We all have to take our love for Jesus down into Egypt – that is down into the natural things of daily life. In this kind of life things are so busy, that we seem to forget Him. But while with us still, He is, as it were, hidden and safe from the destroying nature of self-love – the Herod of our souls.

Dec 12 Jesus

“But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus’.”

Luke 1:30,31

This of course is true history, and full of wonder. But in relation to ourselves it represents the coming of Jesus to us. We find favour with God when we receive the faith of Jesus into our lives. The angel represents a message from heaven telling us of this. To bring forth a son pictures the birth of the Lord's truth into our minds. Jesus is the truth. His name is Jesus, because He comes to save us from self-love and its degrading consequences.

Dec 13 Rejoicing

And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, “

Luke 1:46,47

Mary represents the church. The church rejoices when Jesus comes.

In relation to ourselves, Mary represents the love in our hearts that is ready to receive Jesus. His approach causes great delight, and our minds rejoice. We glorify the Lord when we fix our thoughts on Him, and see Him as the first and the last in all our concerns. We know that His coming will save us from the destroying love of ourselves. And we rejoice in God our Saviour.

Dec 14 Register

“In those days Caesar Augus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register.”

Luke 2:1,3

All went to be registered. We all register and pay taxes in one way or another. Everything we do has its own cost. There is no escape.

In those days, represents our spiritual state just before the coming of Jesus. Then, the world demands our duty of registering and taxpaying. Soon now, things will be changed. The world will still require its due, but a higher authority will seek our registration in the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. A new King is approaching.

Dec 15 From Galilee

“So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.”

Luke 2:4,5

From Galilee to Judaea. In the circumstances it must have been a trying journey.

Spiritually speaking, we take this journey when we move our thoughts and affections from the things of the world to those of heaven. Our hearts then, are full of desire for Jesus. We long for His coming. At first we proceed from a feeling of duty, but soon duty is forgotten, for Jesus comes, and all now is love.

Mary represents the love in our minds that receives Jesus.

Dec 16 No Room

“and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Luke 2:7

The loveliest story in all history. In relation to ourselves it pictures the beginning of our new birth.

The cloths represent the innocence which is wrapped about the Jesus principle in our hearts. And the manger where the babe is laid, is a picture of our poor understanding which is the feeding place of the love that comes to save us.

There being no room at the inn, represents our merely natural life that has no accommodation for the Lord.

Dec 17 Shepherds

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.”

Luke 2:8

Nearby! The shepherds and their flock. That part of your mind into which Jesus comes, is the same place where shepherds and sheep were. It is the inner country of your soul that receives Jesus. The shepherds are your thoughts that care for your little flock of good affections that need Jesus.

Night represents selfishness and ignorance: but through this state of spiritual night, your shepherds watch over your sheep. Just as all this happened long ago, so it happens again in the fields of your mind.

Dec 18 Glory of the Lord

“An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.”

Luke 2:9

Long ago the angel of the Lord came to the shepherds at Bethlehem. Today, in much the same manner the angel comes to you and me: but spiritually in our minds, not naturally and outside us. The angel represents truth from the Lord bringing us the news of His approach. The glory of the Lord round about them pictures the wonder of His illuminating love that fills our minds. And, by being deeply terrified, is represented holy fear as we become conscious of the Lord's presence.

Dec 19 Good News

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."

Luke 2:10

Good news of great joy! This is the message of Christmas. The news came to the shepherds through the angel. Spiritually they come to you through the message of truth from the Lord. Truth that lights the mind and which once accepted takes away all fear. Spiritually, this truth of His coming is for you, and all people.

The tidings are good, because they are the tidings of love, the love of our universal Father Who comes among us in human form to save us.

Dec 20 A Saviour

“Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:11

Today! A day about two thousand years ago. But a day of wonder, representing an eternal day. The day or state of life into which the Saviour, the truth of Divine love, is born. The city of David is spiritually the place in your mind where the Lord's truth receives His love. It is thus that Jesus comes to you, into conditions that are able to accept Him. He cannot come unless you accept Him. There may be very little truth in your mind, but if there is enough to make a manger, He will come.

Dec 21 The Sign

“This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Luke 2:12

The sign the angel gave the shepherd was threefold, and simple for them to understand. A babe, cloths and a manger.

The same sign is given to us today. Only it is to be found in our minds. Bethlehem is the spiritual principle within us. The babe is the beginning of the new love for Jesus, born in our hearts. The cloths are the innocent and lovely things from our childhood and memory that are wrapped about and around our knowledge of Jesus. And the manger is the place where He is fed: it is our understanding.

Dec 22 Glory to God

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests."

Luke 2:13,14

When Jesus came to our sad world, there was rejoicing among the angels. And the shepherds were partakers of it.

It is even so with us. The knowledge that Jesus has found entrance to our hearts rejoices the angels. A multitude of happy feelings spring up to say their Glory, Glory. From this joy within there comes a great peace, and we feel good will to all around us. All our feelings and thoughts cry out. Glory to God in the highest.

Dec 23 To Bethlehem

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

Luke 2:15

The shepherds had seen the angels, and heard their gladness: they could never forget that experience. So with us, when once we have been conscious of the angels' presence, everything afterwards is different.

Our quest in future must be Bethlehem, to learn more of what is happening in the spiritual place of the life within us. A new thing has happened, which the Lord is telling us, Jesus has come.

Dec 24 With Haste

“So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.”

Luke 2:16

The shepherds were intensely interested in what the angel had told them. This caused them to hurry to Bethlehem.

But spiritually, hurrying means ardent desire; not hurrying against the clock of the natural world. When, in our hearts, we are eager to be in the presence of Jesus, our love draws us near to Him. Then like the shepherd, we find Mary and Joseph, for they represent the place within our religious life where Jesus comes. The baby lying in the manger represents the new Jesus principle arising in our understanding.

Dec 25 Telling the News

“When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,”

Luke 2:17

Christmas! Its chief joy is to spread the story of Jesus. The shepherds were the first to do this, and in this respect they were the first preachers. And He Whom the shepherds were spreading the word about, was the Good Shepherd Himself, coming among His people to seek and save lost sheep.

In relation to ourselves, when we see the coming of Jesus in our hearts, we spread abroad our love for Him, by a life that is ever changing. Changing from love of ourselves, to the love of God, and good will to all.

Dec 26 The Return

“The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.”

Luke 2:20

The shepherds went to Bethlehem full of wonder. They returned glorifying and praising God.

The shepherds represent in us, those principles that care for what is good and true. Having found their way to the presence of Jesus their wonder is filled with joy. They have now heard and seen, just as the angels of truth from heaven had told them. They must now return to their ordinary duties, but they do so with new loving and thinking. Glorifying and praising God, for all the things made known to them.

Dec 27 The Child Grew

“And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.”

Luke 2:40

As Jesus grew in the world outside us, so must we seek His developing presence in the world within us.

At first there is very little room, even as at Bethlehem there was no room in the inn. But now He has come to us, and we are giving him more accommodation. As we do so, He becomes stronger in our minds. His spirit of truth strengthens us, and His wisdom enlarges and blesses our understandings. Soon we are loving and thinking differently; His gracious presence enlarges our hearts and rest on all we do.

Dec 28 With the Teachers

“After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.”

Luke 2:46

In the temple! In relation to ourselves the temple represents the place in our minds where we worship the Lord. The teachers represent our chief thoughts and knowledge of Him.

Jesus being in the midst, hearing and asking questions, means that He is central in our spiritual seeking and questioning. Its being said to have happened after three days means after a complete period of preparation; our minds cannot properly accept the Lord except through an orderly sequence of events.

Dec 29 Amazed

“Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.”

Luke 2:47

Everyone was amazed! This is one of the passages of the Word that the reader can prove in their own life. Once the Lord Jesus is the centre of your questioning mind, all that is within you will be amazed. Try it yourself. Take your questions to the Lord, in His Word. Listen to His answers.

When Jesus finished talking to the people in what we call, the Sermon on the Mount, we read, “they were amazed at His teaching.” Amazed! That is the right word. If you seriously listen to Him yourself, you will know.

Dec 30 Nazareth

“Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.”

Luke 2:51

Jesus in Nazareth.

Spiritually understood, to “go down” is meant to move from an inner, or higher, state to a lower one. Nazareth in Galilee represents our outer or natural life. In relation to ourselves it pictures Jesus leaving the temple, or spiritual side of our life, to be with us in our natural daily activities. Here, He subjects Himself to the stress and strain we all experience, and shares with us all life’s difficulties. By Mary “treasuring His sayings in her heart,” is represented our inner love for Him, which constantly cherishes His words.

Dec 31 Increase

“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.”

Luke 2:52

Wisdom and stature! Naturally understood is a picture of Jesus growing by stages into manhood, as all His children do.

But spiritually understood it is a picture of our own development in wisdom and stature. As we accept Jesus and live from Him our understandings are enlightened and our love for Him is deepened. Thus we give Him more room in our lives, and He draws nearer to us.

It appears that He is increasing; actually it is we, who in consequence of His nearer approach are increasing in spiritual growth. So we gain favour by loving God and from Him one another.

