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The Voice of God.

(Convention Address.)

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto US by his Son.”—Heb. 1:1, 2.

HAVE we ever stopped to think just how highly honoured are those who have been privileged to hear the voice of God—that is, the voice of God speaking to them in such tones as would show clearly that they had His favour and blessing? Our thoughts go back to the nation of Israel. That nation heard God’s voice through the prophets, as we read in Hebrews, and those inspired mouthpieces were used by God to make many wonderful promises to the Israelites, and also the conditions upon which they could be assured of inheriting their fulfilment.

We know also that God’s voice warned the Israelites of tragedies which would befall the nation if they failed to comply as fully as possible with the conditions of God’s promises to them.

While God spoke to Israel as a nation through the prophets in olden times, He spoke more directly to individuals, but whether the voice of God is heard by individuals in special messages, or by groups through the medium of His servants, the purpose of the message He gives is practically always the same. It is not just to satisfy curiosity, but to invite cooperation in the outworking of His plans and purposes. Thus, while it is indeed a blessed experience to hear the voice of God, we must not forget that it involves a great personal responsibility, for it means that to the extent of the call or invitation one is required to devote himself unreservedly to the task in hand. During this present evil world, it involves the crossing of the will of the person who hears God’s call to co-operate with Him, in order that God’s will may be done. God does not look with Pleasure upon any half-hearted service. With Him it is, all, or nothing.

Let us pause for a moment here and ask ourselves the vital question: How do we know that we have heard the voice of God? Amid all the confusion of religious thoughts and doctrines, how are we to know that what we have accepted as the truth is in reality the voice of God, and in obeying that voice we are fulfilling the Divine will? This, friends, is a question of very great importance, as I am sure we all realize. It is a question which we should be able to answer to our satisfaction, or else we live in a condition of partial doubt and uncertainty.

There are many lines of approach to this question. We know we have heard the voice of God because —and this is important— what we have heard is in harmony with the entire Bible. It is also in harmony with what we should expect the character of God to be; with His infinite justice, His wisdom, His power, and above all His great love. It is also in harmony with all known historical facts and with our own experience as Christians, and our observations. What we have accepted as the voice of God, of truth, leaves no unanswered questions or problems. It does not tell us that there is no such thing as sickness when we know there is, and see evidence of it every day of our lives. It does not tell us that there is no death when we know that day by day people are dying all around us.

There is another manner in which we may assure ourselves that we have heard the voice of God, and that is upon the basis of His unchangeableness. The Scriptures tell us that God changes not, that in Him there is no shadow of turning. (Jas. 1:17.) This being

true, it means that the Divine purpose as revealed through God's prophets of old is still God's purpose. If we have heard the voice of God, we have heard the same things that that voice made known through the prophets. True, the working out of God's plan may vary in detail from age to age, but there is no variation in the plan itself. The great fundamental theme of God's plan, we might say the cardinal theme which characterises His messages through all the prophets, is identified by Peter and recorded in Acts 3:20-23. Here we have the Apostle telling of the blessing coming to all nations following the second advent of Jesus, and he describes these blessings as "Times of Restitution of all things." And note this—"Times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." It was to provide opportunity for restitution that Jesus died. Ransom and restitution, then, are the dominant chords in God's great theme song of love. There are various minor arrangements associated with the outworking of these Divine purposes, but the great objective to which these are leading is the blessing of all the families of the earth during the times of restitution.

Now have we heard and appreciated these great fundamental facts of truth? If so, then we have indeed heard the voice of God. If we have not, then God has not spoken to us. There are many incidentals of truth which are good in themselves, and many of which are understandable by those not fully enlightened by the voice of God. Even a natural-minded man or woman can appreciate to a large extent the value of kindness and mercy and self-control, as well as many other manifestations of righteousness. Those who believe in eternal torture of the wicked may adhere to very high aspirations in holy living. But no matter how valuable doctrine may be to us, apart from the theme song of God's love and His intention to bless all nations, it does not then constitute the voice of revelation.

We have already noted that it is a blessed thing to hear the voice of God, but we know also that it is costly, and we find this exemplified in the experiences of Noah so long ago. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." (Gen. 6:8.)

As the narrative unfolds it shows that Divine favour was manifested towards Noah in that God used him to build the ark, and carry over a few human beings from the first to the second world. God also established a covenant with Noah concerning His intention never again to destroy all flesh. These Divinely appointed experiences of Noah are referred to in the New Testament by both Jesus and Peter, and are used to illustrate different features of the Divine Plan. We read about the building of the ark by Noah, but we may fail to realize what it meant in the way of wearying toil through

the long years it took him and his sons to build it. It was indeed a difficult task, for there was not only the work involved, but the scoffing of the world to endure. Noah preached, we remember, as well as worked. He preached to an unresponsive public, and there was no apparent result from his teaching. Those with limited faith and less appreciation of the fact that God had spoken to them would have been weary in well doing, concluding that God did not intend them to continue to bear witness to the Truth, and that they exerted only wasted effort on an ark, with no evidence of coming rain. But Noah had heard the voice of God, and by it was led to continue serving, irrespective of the result.

The due time had not arrived for a clear unfolding of the Divine programme for the blessing of all nations, but God used Noah as an illustration of certain phases of His plan, and this was a great honour. The covenant God made with Noah, that never again would He destroy all flesh from the earth, afforded a faint suggestion even at that early date of God's intention that mankind should live forever on the earth. Having heard God's voice, Noah was faithful to it, despite seeming failure of his effort and the cold indifference of virtually all by whom he was surrounded. He had heard the voice of God because God had something for him to do, and Noah responded with his whole heart and life to perform the Divine commission faithfully. Was it all for naught? By no means. Two important results accrued. Paul mentions them, saying he condemned the world, and became heir to the righteousness which is by faith. (Heb. 11:

7.) Noah's faithfulness in preaching righteousness to his generation proved the justice of God in destroying the world which then was. (2 Pet. 3:6.)

When God's plan is complete, the knowledge of God will fill the whole earth, the prophet tells us. This means the people will know that all the acts of God have been righteous, and that the suffering of humanity had been permitted for a particular purpose, and it will be seen that the great catastrophe of the flood which destroyed the first world was justified by lack of response to Noah's preaching, and the altogether too prevalent evil in those times.

Thus, while none but his own immediate family then gave heed to his message, Noah's seemingly fruitless preaching will in the coming age be known for what it was worth, and help to fill the earth with God's glory.

In addition to this satisfying result of his service, Noah's faith made him heir to the righteousness which is by faith, and among other things, that includes a "better resurrection." (Heb. 11:35.)

Psalm 45 indicates that those who obtain this "better resurrection" are to be made "Princes in all the earth." We ask ourselves then: Did Noah waste time and effort? Certainly not. He heard God's voice and obeyed Him, and was blessed in his obedience, and will yet be more fully compensated for every sacrifice which he made.

Then we might think of Abraham. In Genesis 12 we have the first definite statement of God's purpose to bless all the families of the earth. Here the melody of the Divine Plan began to sound forth with a definiteness over and above the incidental and harmonious accompaniment which throughout the ages has been associated with it. Surely Abraham was favoured to hear such a message; but as with Noah, it cost him very much. God spoke to Abraham, inviting his co-operation in the outworking of the Divine Plan. The message and the call were heard together. God said, In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed, but I want you to leave Your own people and your father's house and go into a land which I will show you. You shall be a blessing. But the patriarch discovered that in order for the promise to become a reality to him, it meant an uprooting of his whole way of life. The promise God made to Abraham was an unconditional one, and it will be fulfilled, regardless of what any individual may do about it. It means the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It is just so in all God's dealings; He causes His voice to be heard, then invites co-operation. Has it been so with us? How sweet was the voice of God, telling us of the great hope of restoration of the sin-cursed and dying world! It appealed to us as being just like God, and we rejoiced to think of all mankind walking over the highway of holiness, and finally inheriting the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. But we, too, soon realized that there was more than that to it. Together with God's sweet promise of life to all mankind, we heard the words of invitation to us, asking our participation in the Divine Plan. We too, like Abraham, were asked to leave our own people and our father's house (the Adamic household), and we recognised this as giving up the hope of restitution for ourselves, and in its place setting our affections on things above, slot on things of the earth. (Col. 3:2.) This meant more than merely to exchange our earthly hope for a heavenly hope. It meant following in the footsteps of Jesus, in the way of sacrifice and suffering even unto death, until that which remained of our present earthly life was wholly consumed in the service of God.

Yes, it was more than to hear the voice of God; if we continue to respond faithfully it will finally cost us our lives. We do not belong to ourselves, but to Him who loved us and died for us. (1 Cor. (6:19, 20.)) We will endeavour not to live for ourselves, but for God, participating in the sacrificial work of this age, devoting our bodies to God's service and keeping our sacrifice on the altar until it is wholly consumed.

Abraham was asked to give up his home in Ur, and for the remainder of his life he lived in tents, having no permanent home, no continuing city. Not only that, but God continued to test him, finally to the point of asking him to sacrifice his son Isaac, in which test he showed his utter willingness to do God's will. Abraham learned to know the voice of God more familiarly with the passing years, and he knew it was a voice which not only promised wonderful blessings, but which also invited co-operation and much sacrifice.

Time will not permit us to think of the voice of God to Moses and Samuel, etc.; but we will turn to the New Testament, to the time of the greater than Moses, the Prophet whom the Lord had promised to raise up, even Jesus Himself, and those who followed Him faithfully. Surely Jesus heard the voice of God!

When through Jesus God spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road, this Israelite realized at once what it signified. Saul first made sure who was speaking, and being assured he was receiving a message from the God of Israel through the Messiah of Israel, responded with the inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Saul was acquainted with the manner in which God had dealt with His servants in the past. He knew that an experience of this kind implied more than the fact that he was being enlightened concerning the fact that Jesus was the Messiah. God allows people to continue in darkness until He has a place for them in His plan. Saul knew this, and now he was enlightened, he realized that God was calling him into His service. Yes, Paul was a chosen vessel. He had been selected to bear the Gospel to the Gentiles, and also to the children of Israel. What a great honour, but at what great cost! "I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake," the Lord said. God had spoken. Truth had been revealed. Great things were to be suffered. The record of Paul's ministry demonstrates the sincerity of his question, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

In our verse in Hebrews the Apostle explains that in these last days God had spoken to us, to His people, through His Son. That was indeed very true of the early Church, and has been true through the entire Gospel Age. And it is true in a very special sense at this end of the Age, in the "last days" in which we are now privileged to be living.

In Luke 12 is recorded a promise of Jesus that at the end of the Age He would return, and serve the household with meat in due season. This promise has been wonderfully fulfilled. Through God's beloved Son now present among His people at His second advent, the Divine voice of truth has indeed been heard. We know and are assured that it is God's voice, because it is the same message given throughout the centuries, and has not changed. Like God's servants of old, we have rejoiced to learn that by means of the ransom, and by restitution processes, all the families of the earth are to be blessed with life and happiness.

The clear distinction made by the Truth between the heavenly calling of the Church and the restitution hope of the world helps to emphasize the importance of the latter in the plan of God. How truly satisfying it is to know that God has blessings for others besides ourselves! It is surely a lovely thought. How it enhances our appreciation of the Heavenly calling to know that there is a worthwhile purpose behind it, a glorious future work to do! But why have we been so highly favoured with this wonderful knowledge of truth? It is because He has a place for us in His plan. He has a service for us to render, a sacrifice of praise which

we can offer. We knew this when we first heard God's voice of truth and responded to it most enthusiastically. Do we still know it? Are we continuing to respond, or have we become weary in well doing? A crucial test has been upon God's people throughout the age, and this test has been that of holding to the truth. Paul warned the Christians in his day that there would come a falling away from the faith. It occurred, and one of the great manifestations of the apostacy was the dividing into two classes, clergy and laity, of God's people. The laity for the most part sat back, and the clergy received salaries for their service of God. Satan still knows how to foster this great deception. He likes to see only a few trying to serve the Lord, the remainder sitting back and becoming good listeners. But let us not be deceived along this line. Every truth-enlightened follower of the Master is fully commissioned to be a servant of God. All are not given the same service, but there is something for all the consecrated to do, some way in which each one, no matter how small a way, may play some part in co-operating with God in the great Plan which is being worked out.

It is well for us to have the spirit of humility, not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. At the same time, we should not underestimate the matter of the divine call to service. God has not asked us to build arks, or lead His people out of Egypt. He has not given us the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or appointed us to be special Apostles to the Gentiles. But God has given us the truth in these days, and through present truth God has spoken to us. His voice has enlightened us. Let us praise Him for that. And He has called us. We are no longer our own. By His truth He is leading us forth as light-bearers for Him, messengers for the Kingdom. Even the least opportunity to show our appreciation should be very highly regarded, and faithfully used to His glory. Let us not despise the day of small things, for if we are faithful, greater opportunities of service will be ours when we have made our calling and election sure as joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom, even the joy of blessing all the families of the earth.

Passover Memorial, 1950.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on Friday evening, 3 1st March, after sundown. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to keep the Remembrance as our Lord requested.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office; early application should be made for same, and please state the number of friends to be served.

Memorial Services.

Services in remembrance of Christ our Passover will be held in the various States, to which all believers in the ransom sacrifice of Christ will be welcome.

Melbourne—Friday, 31st March, at 8 p.m., at Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.

(For further information, write, or phone Hawthorn 6251.)

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Convention News.

It is a pleasure to report favourably on the Annual Convention held in Melbourne by the brethren in this city over the Christmas season now some weeks past. The Lord's blessing was very truly experienced throughout the four-day gatherings, and we lift up our hearts in gratitude to our Heavenly Father for His favours bestowed.

The Melbourne friends gladly welcomed a number of visiting brethren from Adelaide, Canberra and country parts of Victoria and the fellowship with these dear members throughout their stay in Melbourne was a spiritual joy indeed.

The Convention programme provided for a variety in the gatherings which was very refreshing. Two main Bible studies were conducted on the Scriptural passages in Romans 15:1-7 and Jeremiah 30:3-11. Both these studies proved of much interest and encouragement as the important lessons to all followers of the Lord during this Gospel Age were brought out from St. Paul's message to the Romans, and the prophetic message concerning God's ancient people as portrayed by Jeremiah over the centuries to the closing scenes of this age, with the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth, was viewed in the light of the Scriptures as a whole.

A wide range of subjects were dealt with by the eleven speakers during the Convention gatherings, and each address had its own particular message of encouragement, instruction and exhortation. The titles of the addresses are as follows:—"Rejoicing in the Lord"; "Jesus Wept"; "The Epistle of Christ"; "The New Mind, Its Care and Development"; "Why is the Church Persecuted?" "The Voice of God"; "Not Without Witness"; "Christmas Day Meditation"; "Praise"; "Godliness with Contentment" and "Lest ye be Wearied." It is hoped to be able to pass on some of the helpful thoughts from these addresses in the "Peoples Paper" from time to time.

A Question Meeting for examination of two Scriptures, Amos 9:13 and Matt. 10:29-31, was also helpful and enlightening. It was seen that the prophet Amos had expressed in symbol the closing scenes of the harvest of the Gospel Age when the "plowman" (time of trouble) would "overtake" or complete the Gospel harvest, in accord with the Lord's will. Likewise the further symbols indicated the changing of dispensations and the establishment of Christ's Kingdom when the "sweet wine" will bring blessings to all the obedient of mankind, at which time all the "hills" or governments of earth shall have "melted"—passed away. The verses in Matthew 10 were seen to refer to God's wonderful oversight and care on behalf of His people who walk in the steps of Christ. A further important meaning was observed from the fact that birds were presented as sin-offerings under the Law arrangements, and these were acknowledged of God as representing the heart devotions of the people making the offerings. This being so, the words of Jesus were seen in deeper meaning—"Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Yes, those to whom our Lord spoke, representing all His followers of this Gospel Age, were shortly to be "offered upon the sacrifice and service of faith," "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" (Phil. 2:17; Col. 1:24), to be counted as the antitypical, secondary offering for sin, and as such would be very precious in the sight of God, (Psa. 116:15)—"of more value than many sparrows."

The more informal Fellowship Meetings for praise and testimony and "Hymns we love and why," proved very refreshing as the brethren expressed their sentiments of thankfulness and praise to the Lord in their own words or through the hymn writers.

The messages of greeting to the assembly from various classes and individual brethren were much appreciated and clearly indicated that our dear friends in other parts were with us in spirit, and remembering us in prayer. The blessings received throughout this Convention were reflected in the prayers of thankfulness and remembrance of all other members who had not enjoyed the same favours from the presence of the Lord. As a general greeting from the Convention, the Melbourne friends selected the passage of Scripture in Romans 15:4-7 to be sent with their warm Christian love to the brethren in every place.

The final session with the appropriate Love Feast and hymns "Blest be the tie" and "God be with you" seemed to come all too soon, but the many good things received surely filled to capacity our hearts and minds, and the concluding prayer of thankfulness also besought the Lord's blessing upon the assembly and the Israel of God in every place in the days to come.

On the following week-end, opening the New Year, further very helpful gatherings were held while some of the visiting brethren were still present. Two encouraging and timely addresses were given and two Bible studies were enjoyed on the passages John 12:20-26 and Psalm 84. One of our brethren has prepared some thoughts on this beautiful Psalm 84 which are presented in this issue of the "Paper."

Some Thoughts on Psalm 84.

PSALM 84 greatly resembles Psalm 42, and was probably composed on the same or a similar occasion. These two Psalms are remarkable for beauty of imagery, depth of religious emotion, and a noble and victorious struggle against despondency.

The Psalm expresses the intense longing of the faithful and loyal Israelites for the Temple worship.

Verses 1 and 2: “How lovely are Thy dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” See Psa. 42:1, 2; Psa. 63:1.

How the hearts of the faithful Israelites longed for the blessings and happy associations of the Temple and its worship and services.

Verse 2 (Leeser) : “My soul desired, yea, it also longed for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh shout with joy unto the living God.”

Verse 3: “Even as the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young (have I found) Thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God.”

The little sparrow and swallow show a good example of zeal, earnestness and patient industry in building their nests; they also find satisfaction and contentment in carrying out their natural instincts in raising their little families, so the Psalmist earnestly seeks to find his longings satisfied in the altars of the house of God.

Verse 4: “Blessed (happy) are they that dwell in Thy house.” (Psa. 65:4.)

While it is helpful to see the primary application of this Psalm to the faithful Israelites of past ages, we see also how it applies to spiritual Israel, and the longings we have for the courts of the Lord, and the fellowship the New Creation may now enjoy in connection with building up of the true temple of God—His Church. (Eph. 2:19-22.) “How lovely are Thy dwelling-places, O Lord of hosts.” How good it is to come into a meeting-place of truly consecrated children of God. Each spirit-begotten child of God is a temple of the holy spirit (1 Cor. 6:19; John 14:23), and coming together in a spirit of reverence for God and for Christ our Head, and with loving respect for His instructions as contained in His Word, what a sobering thought it is to realise we are thus coming into the presence of God—the great Almighty Ruler of the Universe. We come to “behold the beauty of the Lord (as reflected in one and another of His children who have His spirit) and to enquire in His temple,” to seek to learn more of His Word and ways. (Psa. 27:4.)

Each truly consecrated child of God is lovely, but we have to be on guard because we have the treasure of the new mind in a fragile, earthen casket, and there is great danger that our “loveliness” may be marred if any spirit of pride or stubborn self-will is allowed to actuate us. We have sometimes seen consecrated children of God contending so earnestly for certain theories or forms of service that the spirit is grieved, and the “loveliness of Thy dwelling places” has been very disturbed and marred. How each one of God’s saints should watch and pray; that we “keep our hearts with all diligence,” so that our every contact with the fellow-members of the body may be helpful to them, and also to ourselves. The spirit of stubborn self-will can greatly hinder our usefulness to others of the Lord’s people.

Verse 5: “Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the high ways to Zion.” (R.V.) There was a blessing for the Israelite of old who trusted in God and who loved the ways of Zion. How much richer and fuller is the blessing now available for the footstep followers of Christ, who trust fully in Him, and find His strength and grace to walk the narrow way of self-denial. We are coming nearer and nearer to the Kingdom—the heavenly Zion. May our ears be attentive to hear the voice of Him who speaketh from heaven. (Heb. 12:25), inviting and encouraging us to walk closely in the footsteps of His Son.

Verse 6: “Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a place of springs; yea, the early rain covereth it with blessings.” (R.V.) The Israelites of old sometimes travelled long distances under slow, tedious conditions. But the delight they had in God’s house made the barren ravines through which they passed seem as lovely as if they were adorned and fertilized by fountains, and rendered the hot and wearisome journey as pleasant as if it were alleviated by refreshing showers. We who represent the Lord here to-day are passing through “the valley of weeping.” (Psa. 30:5.) Sorrow and sadness are about us as we traverse our way through “the valley of the shadow of death.” But thank God for His goodness and love, He has brought us under the “anointing” influence of His gracious spirit; we have the gospel message to bring comfort to those around us; we have a message of hope and cheer to spread abroad for those able to hear it; we can “comfort all that mourn, giving the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” Let us tell others the good news; let us give others the sunshine, and tell Jesus about the things that cause us sorrow and heaviness. It does not help our friends, or others, to burden them by continually dwelling upon and repeating our difficulties and hard experiences. The little hymn, “Go bury thy sorrow,” has a good message for us all.

Let us wait on God in earnest prayer, for a larger infilling of His spirit of love and joy and peace; let us ask Him to make us messengers of comfort in Zion. (Isa. 40:28-31.)

So doing, we may hope to be of those referred to in verse 7: "They go from strength to strength; everyone of them appeareth before God in Zion." The faithful, humble footstep followers of Christ who love God, His ways and His truth above all things else, will make their calling and election sure. Such will not allow earthly things to hinder their heavenward progress. (See Psa. 87:5, 6; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 1:6 and 2 Pet. 1:5-11.)

Verses 8 and 9 contain an earnest prayer for God's favour and blessing to be shown to His people. Israel as a typical people were greatly favoured of God; their kings and priests were anointed of God. From Israel would come the Anointed One—the Messiah. How much more favoured is spiritual Israel—the true Church whose Head is Christ. "Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed." This is an earnest plea for a realising sense of God's favour and blessing. To show the face is a sign of favour. This is in line with that beautiful expression with which the priest pronounced blessing upon Israel—Numbers 6:24-26. "The Lord make His face to shine upon thee," etc. We can do nothing without God's blessing; we need to wait upon God in earnest prayer for His blessing and guidance that we may be led to do His will and understand His ways. (2 Cor. 1:21, 22.)

Verse 10: This verse expresses very deep love for God and appreciation of His laws and arrangements. "For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand (spent elsewhere). I would rather choose to wait at the threshold of the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." This reminds us of the attitude of faithful Moses, who "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach for the anointed greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." (Heb. 11:25, 26.) We want to be where the Lord's people are, though this may bring to us some loss of earthly things.

Verse 11: "For a sun (giving us light and warmth and comfort) and shield (affording us protection from dangers) is the Lord God; grace and glory will the Lord give (through Christ our Saviour and Advocate). He will not withhold any good from those that walk with integrity." (Phil. 4:19; Rom. 8:28 and Psa. 115:9-11.)

Verse 12: "O Lord of hosts, happy is the man that trusteth in Thee." (Jer. 17:7, 8.)

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that they are holding their usual Convention at the Easter season this year, from Good Friday, 7th April, to Easter Monday, at Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to join them for these four-day gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the Class secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

When spiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it with thankfulness: but understand it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine.—Thomas A. Kempis.

The State of Israel

THE following extracts from the Jewish National Fund Calendar will no doubt be of interest to our friends, a clear indication of the fulfilment of prophecy in our days.

“On the fifth day of Iyar, 5708, towards the evening of the fourteenth day of May, 1948, after two thousand years of exile and statelessness, Medinath Israel, the State of Israel—was proclaimed.

“By virtue of the labour of generations of pioneers, and the unflinching courage of its defenders and liberators, strengthened by the historic decision of the United Nations, the Hebrew nation transmuted its dream into a vibrant reality. Half a century ago, the prophetic vision of Theodor Herzl declared: ‘If you will it, this is no legend.’ Today the legend has become a fact. The State of Israel exists. The rapid progress of the Ingathering of the exiles’ will soon double its population. The majority of the nations of the world have extended to it full diplomatic recognition. Its representatives are accepted as equals in the comity of the United Nations.

The State And The Zionist Movement.

“The Zionist Organisation was sometimes described as ‘the State on the way.’ Now that statehood has been achieved, it is necessary to clarify the new functions of the Zionist Movement.

“It is abundantly clear that far from rendering the Zionist Organisation superfluous, the emergence of the State of Israel has intensified its importance. The ‘State on the way’ will henceforth serve both as the bridge between the Jews in the Diaspora and the State of Israel and as the instrument by which the redemption of the soil is to be effected.

Hundreds Of New Jewish Settlements.

“In the eighty years of pioneering endeavour which preceded the foundation of the State of Israel, 335 Jewish settlements were established.

United States	.. 5,200,000	Brazil .	110,000
Soviet Russia	.. 1,900,000	South Africa	98,000
Israel ..	900,000	Iraq . .	90,000
Roumania ..	430,000	Turkey .	80,000
Argentina .	360,000	Poland	75,000
Great Britain	350,000	Egypt .	75,000
France ..	205,000	Tunisia	66,000
Hungary ..	• 180,000	Abyssinia .	51,000
Canada ..	• 180,000	Persia .	50,000
Morocco .. .	•• 175,000	Australia ..	35,000
Algiers ..	120,000	New Zealand	3,500

“In the first year of Jewish Statehood, 75 villages were founded—in the North, in the arid South, in the Coastal Lowlands and in the Jerusalem Corridor, and an additional 20 established up till the publication of this calendar.”

The following comparison of periods of time and settlements founded speaks for itself—“Period 1870-1917 settlements founded 38; 1918-1929 there were 64; 1930-1935 produced 73; 1936-1947 the number was 160; 1948-1949 another 100.

Jews In The World.

“The number of Jews in all countries of the world was estimated at 11,500,000 in 1949, as against 16,643,000 in the year 1939, prior to the Nazi massacre. The following are the largest Jewish Communities in the world:—

“According to cultural-political the Jewish population can be divided as follows: Israel 900,000; Anglo-Saxon Countries 5,935,000; Latin American Countries 610,000; Western European Countries 460,000; Eastern European Countries 2,675,000; Arabian Countries 645,000; Other Countries 275,000; Total 11,500,000.

A Thousand Immigrants A Day!

“In the course of thirty years of Mandatory administration, the average annual immigration figure did not exceed 16,000. Moreover, the Jewish Return was constantly impeded by a mass of regulations and restrictions against so-called “illegal” immigration.

“In the course of the first year of Israel Statehood, when the gates of our country were flung wide open, over 200,000 newcomers entered. Since then, immigration continues at a rate of between 20,000 and 25,000 a month, that is nearly 1,000 per day. The long cherished vision of an Ingathering of the exiles’ is rapidly becoming a fact. From 70 far-flung lands of dispersion the exiles are returning to their liberated Homeland. From east and west, from north and south, by sea, air and land, the sons of Israel return. Their transport to our shores, however, is but the initial step. The second stage, their integration into the fabric of the State, is the decisive stage in the vast process. It is indeed the fundamental problem that confronts our country. The solution of this problem depends upon the provision of suitable accommodation, the finding of productive employment and the cultural absorption of the newcomers into the life of the State.”



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The Memorial Supper.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh which is called the Passover.” Such is the sacred narrative announcing the last Passover Supper of which our Lord partook. Once more we have the Passover with us. It is in some respects the most hallowed occasion of the year, observed by disciples of Christ as a Memorial and celebration of their Master’s sacrificial death, and of their participation with Him in that death ‘in hope of the glory to follow.

Amongst the Jews the term “Passover” was frequently applied as the name of a festival week, otherwise called the Feast of Passover, beginning on the 15th day of Nisan. But we should not confound this with the frequent references to the Passover found in the Scriptures when the word “feast” is not used, which generally refers to the lamb that was killed, the Passover. For example we read, “Then came the day of unleavened bread when the Passover must be killed.” Again Jesus sent disciples to inquire of a friend, “Where is the guest chamber where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” We read again, “And they made ready the Passover.” When the Master sat down, with the disciples to eat of the lamb, He said, “With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will no more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.”

Probably one reason why He specially desired to eat this Passover with them was that He there designed breaking the truth of its significance to them, to the extent that they could receive it; for, “As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is My body.” “This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me.” “And He took the cup and gave thanks, and said, Drink ye all of it; This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you.” We cannot doubt that the design of the Master was to call their minds from the typical lamb to Himself, the Antitype, and to show them that it would be no longer proper to observe a feature of the Law which He was about to fulfil.

And the bread and wine were to be to them, thereafter, elements which, as a remembrancer of Him, would take the place of the typical lamb. Thus considered there is force in the words, “This do in remembrance of Me”—no longer kill the literal lamb in remembrance of a typical deliverance, but instead, use the bread and wine, representative of My flesh and life, the basis of the real deliverance, the real passing over. Hence, let as many as receive Me and My words henceforth—”Do this in remembrance of Me.”

Taking our Lord’s words in their simple obvious’s sense, how beautiful is their lesson. Unleavened (pure) bread henceforth would at this Memorial represent our Lord, the Bread from heaven, of which we may eat and have everlasting life. But this “bread” must be “broken” in order to be appropriated. And so we see that it was necessary not only for our Lord to come from heaven as the “Bread”, but necessary also that He be broken in death—sacrificed for our sins—ere we could appropriate His merit and enjoy everlasting life.

The “fruit of the vine” was also introduced as an important part of this Memorial of our Lord’s loving sacrifice. He explained that it represented His blood—”The blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins.” What a reminder this is of the ransom-price necessary and secured on behalf of the sins of the world. The broken bread

taught a part of the lesson, the “cup” taught the remainder of it.

The Lord’s disciples must, by faith, partake of, “appropriate”, both the “bread” and the “cup”, or they cannot be one with Him.

More than this: the Apostle shows that there is another subsequent view of this Memorial. We who thus eat and drink—who thus partake of our Saviour's merits — are reckoned in with Him as His "members", as His "Body", being broken and our lives sacrificed in His service, under His direction are counted as a part of His sacrifice. The Apostle's words are: "The 'up of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common union) of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the common union of the Body of Christ? For we, being many are one loaf, and one Body, because we are all partaker of that one loaf (Christ)."

The drinking of the Lord's Cup by the Church represents our participation in the sufferings of Christ in the present time. None shall be a member of the Body of the great Mediator of the New Covenant unless he comes in now under the proper terms. The drinking of the blood, then, is the sharing of the Cup. For if we drink not of His Cup, neither shall we share with Him in His glory. He said, "Drink ye all of it." All must drink; and the entire Cup must be drained during this Age.

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. We see that our beloved Lord drank of the bitter Cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember that He gave the Cup to us, that we shall all drink of it. "If we suffer (with Him) , we shall also reign with Him." We shall participate in the inauguration of the New Dispensation, and in dispensing its blessings.

After the institution of the Memorial Jesus went out into the Mount of Olives in company with the eleven. It is believed that the passage was made at midnight across the Kedron and up the slopes of Olivet into the garden of Gethsemane. It seems that the Saviour realised that He was entering this place for the purpose of fighting a great battle that was to win for Him the victory of Calvary; for out of this agony Jesus stepped calm and strong for the final hour, and herein is a great lesson for His followers: We must win our battles before we come to them, in secret prayer and gathered strength.

We observe that the Master realised that His hour of betrayal and fierce temptation was close at hand; He first comforted, counselled, and prayed for and with His disciples, and then His next strong impulse was to seek a solitary place for prayer and communication with God that He might find grace to help in this time of sore need. He wanted to see full and clear the light of His Father's face before He stepped into the final darkness. He sought to fall into perfect submission to the will of God and feel the assuring, sustaining power of His omnipotence; He knew full well that He could then bear the cross. And dear friends, have not all true followers of Christ realised that prayer is the highest preparation for every duty and burden? It quiets the soul and clears the vision so that the path of truth and duty can be seen. In entering any Gethsemane let us enter through the gate of prayer, and then we can endure the agony and may be able to come out calm and strong.

Leaving all but Peter, James and John at the entrance of the Garden, as a sort of outer guard against the sudden intrusion of His betrayer upon His last hour of prayer, He advanced with the three —the three in whose ardent natures He seemed to find the most active and consoling sympathy—and with an earnest appeal to them to watch and pray, He left them and went about a stone's throw beyond.

All realise that sympathy has a wonderful power to lighten burdens. Solitary suffering is doubly hard to bear. It gives us a sense of unsupported and forsaken loneliness that kills all courage and fills us with despair. The presence of a friend rallies our energies and inspires us with new life. We may reasonably suppose that it was the simple presence of these chosen disciples that Jesus wanted, not their talk. There was nothing they could say to Him that would help Him; but their watchful waiting near by would help Him. The best sympathy is not that which is most talkative and fussy. The silent presence, the sympathetic tear, the thoughtful, helpful act, these go deeper. There are chambers of sorrow in which voluble speech is an impertinence and silence is soothing to the soul.

Under the trees of Olivet, the Master' had a good chance to think over the sequence of . events that were to culminate on Calvary. The grass was cool and sweet to Him; the air was balmy and mild. The heavens of that night with all their gleaming brilliance betokened the love-light of His Heavenly Father which seemed as though it were bestowing a silent blessing upon His head. It was a time when lovers walk about in the joy of youth; but He, the greatest lover of all time — the lover of God and righteousness and truth walked alone, for the disciples had been left behind. And there, in that mighty temple of nature, Jesus had the final conflict of His earthly career. Knowing what -was coming, He prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (Matt. 26:39, 42.)

How much depended upon the Lord's fortitude in that awful hour, awaiting the certain arrival of Her betrayer and His persecutors maddened with bat and full of the energy of Satan. Oh, how the destinies of the world and of Himself seemed to tremble in the balances! Even the perfect human nature was not equal to such an emergency without Divine aid, therefore it was that He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save Him from death,—by a resurrection. The necessary comfort was provided, as foretold by the prophet Isaiah, "Behold My servant whom I uphold, Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth . . . I, the Lord, have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee (from falling or failure) and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles . . . He shall not fail nor be discouraged."

Then, though the cup might not pass from Him, His prayer was heard and a special ministry from God strengthened Him. Just how, we know not, but probably by refreshing His mind with the precious promises and prophetic pictures of the coming glory, which none of His disciples had sufficiently comprehended to thus comfort Him in this hour when the gloom of thick darkness settled down upon His soul. It was Jehovah's hand upholding Him, according to His promise, that He might not fail nor be discouraged.

The result of that blessed ministry was a reinforced courage which commands the deepest admiration. With His eye of faith upon the glorious victory of truth and righteousness, when He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied—satisfied with the eternal joy and blessedness of a redeemed world, with the welcome and wealth of the Father's blessing, and the love and gratitude of every loyal creature in heaven and in earth—yes, comforted and encouraged thus with a realising sense of the rewards of faith and faithful endurance to the end, He could now calmly and even courageously, go forth to meet the foe. Yes, this was the victory by which He overcame, even His faith, and so we also are to overcome.

He had passed beyond the need of His disciples' help. His victory was won. The cross was already as good as behind Him. With calm courage that feared no evil, with masterful faith that scattered the darkness of Calvary, He said, "Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand." Mark His calm, dignified fortitude, as He addresses Judas and the Roman soldiers, and its effect upon them. They were so overpowered with the grandeur and nobility of this wonderful man that they could not have taken Him had He not voluntarily placed Himself in their hand. Notice, too, His kind consideration for the bewildered and weary disciples, and His loving excuse for them, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak," and His request to the Roman soldiers at the time of His arrest that they might be permitted to go their way, that so they might escape sharing in His persecutions. So through all the trial and mocking, and finally the crucifixion, His courage and solicitude for the welfare of others never failed.

Let the curtain go down on Calvary, on the darkness of the reeling crosses, on the death of God's beloved Son, the great antitypical passover Lamb. Let it go down on the weeping women, on the disciples, on the Roman soldiers and on the cruel Pharisees and scribes. Then let it rise on the glorious morning of His resurrection, when a mighty angel had rolled away the stone from the tomb, and said to those who came to embalm the body, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

How the Christian feeds on these events—the death and resurrection of Jesus! They are the very essence of life and power at the present time, just as they have been for nearly two thousand years. The feast that God has provided through His Son is to be eaten with unleavened bread—the bread of pure truth — and with bitter herbs of persecution. This feast has continued throughout the Gospel Age.

"Let a man examine himself" says the Apostle; let him see to it that in partaking of the emblems he realises them as the ransom-price of his life and privileges; and furthermore that he by partaking of them is pledging himself to share in the sufferings of Christ and to be broken for others. Through lack of proper appreciation of this Memorial, which symbolises not only our justification, but also our consecration to share in the sufferings and death of Christ, the Apostle says, "Many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep." The truth of this remark is evident; a failure to appreciate and a losing sight of the truths represented in this Supper, are the cause of the weak, sickly, and sleepy condition of many in the Church. Nothing so fully awakens and strengthens the saints as a clear appreciation of the atoning work of our Lord and their share with Him in His sufferings and sacrifice in behalf of humanity. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." These words are not to be taken in the sense of a discouragement by any sincere follower of the Master, but rather in the sense of impressing the solemnity and depth of meaning that should always be associated with the partaking of the emblems. Far from discouraging any who desire to walk in the Master's footsteps His own words are sufficient—"Come unto Me. . . . Take My yoke upon you, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Let us never forget that unless we partake of His Cup, unless we are immersed into death with Him, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory; we can never sit with Him in His throne. Let us then, count all the things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this Pearl of Great Price. As the experiences of our consecrated way come to us, let us not be afraid, nor "think it strange concerning the fiery trials that shall try us" for even "hereunto were we called," to suffer for our beloved Master now, and by and by be glorified together with Him in the Kingdom eternal!

Let us also at this time take warning as well as encouragement, not only from our 'dear Lord's life of sacrifice, but also from the lives of the Apostles who were with Him for the greater part of His earthly sojourn. We might particularly think of three; in the first place how sad is the case of Judas; we all know the terrible result of the wet, selfish desire of the natural heart which allowed Satan to fully enter, as exhibited finally in the betrayal of his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that with a kiss. We may be sure that the details of Judas' act in this way, being recorded by the four Evangelists, are so arranged as a lasting lesson for all the Lord's people. Oh, how we each need to keep our hearts with great diligence, to preserve our first love for the Lord, for if our hearts are right and we make mistakes, which we are all prone to do, we shall soon be restored to the Lord's favour and find grace and strength to be on guard against any weaknesses in the future. Such was the case with Peter; his heart was right, and after the acknowledgment of his denial of his Master and receiving the necessary admonitions, we find that he was recovered and reestablished in the Lord's favour and confidence. The recording of Peter's denials and subsequent forgiveness by the Lord has

undoubtedly been a very great help to many Christians who have been overtaken in a fault, and then sought the Lord's forgiveness with the result that, as with Peter, they have realised much strengthening of character, with greater determination to serve the Lord faithfully in all the days ahead.

Then we think of loving John, the one with whom the Lord seemed to have most fellowship of the twelve; he was ever alongside his Master, even to following Him to the judgment hall, and also to Calvary's hill, and where from the cross his Lord commended the caring of His earthly mother to his charge. Oh, that we might be more like loving John, tender-hearted, affectionate, and fully devoted to our Lord, willing, yes cheerfully rendering our all so fully, so completely to Him, to whom- we belong, since we have covenanted to follow in His steps, and then willing to be used, in the interests of His people and cause as He may direct.

"Saviour, Thy dying love Thou 'gayest me,
Nor would I aught withhold Dear Lord from Thee.
In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfil its vow,
Myself an off 'ring now I bring to Thee.
Lord, I would follow Thee
In all the way
Thy weary feet have trod;
Yes, if I may."

Ah, yes! How deep are the Lord's lessons! And the deeper we look, the more beauty we see, the eyes of our understanding opening more and more as we appreciate and heartily obey.

"Let us keep the feast," then, in both senses, (1) Appropriating and feasting on the great work done for us by our Redeemer and the riches of grace granted us through Him, and (2) Appreciating our privilege of joint-sacrifice with our Redeemer—laying down our lives in His service, for the brethren, and thus "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Left behind, not because our Lord could not suffer enough for all, nor because His sufferings were not sufficient for all, but because He wished to have us with Him to share His nature and His glory, and only by suffering with Him. and as His members could we be allowed to share His glory, honour and immortality.

The hour is late—the end is drawing nigh—
As we gather here,
Brethren beloved, to share this holy feast,
We know the time is near
When all His loved ones shall be gathered home,
Our tears all wiped away,
And all the shadows that oppress us here Shall yield to perfect day.
Then with rejoicing let us now partake ;
Our journey's almost o'er;
The light is breaking o'er the heav'nly hills !
Our King is at the door.

Passover Memorial, 1950.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on Friday evening, 31st March, after sundown. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to keep the Remembrance as our Lord requested.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office; early application should be made for same, and please state the number of friends to be served.

Memorial Services.

Services in remembrance of Christ our Passover will be held in the various States, to which all believers in the ransom sacrifice of Christ will be welcome.

Melbourne.—Friday, 31st March, at 8 p.m., at Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne. (For further information, write, or phone Hawthorn 6251.)

Adelaide.—Friday, 31st March, at 8 p.m., at Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, City.

Sydney.—Friday, 31st March, at 7 p.m., at Child Study Rooms, Liverpool Street (near George Street) , City.

Perth.—Friday, 31st March, at 7.30 p.m., at The Women's Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court., Perth.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that they are holding their usual Convention at the Easter season this year, from Good Friday, 7th April, to Easter Monday, at Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to join them for these four-day gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the Class secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street) —Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street, Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street.—Sundays 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney.—75 Liverpool Street (few doors from George Street) —Sunday, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Women's Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court, Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

The Divine Plan of the Ages.

A new stock of the valuable book "Divine Plan of the Ages" is now available in handy, pocket size. For over 60 years this work has been a means of assisting Christians to a clear understanding of the Bible, and is as valuable today as ever. This edition is bound in blue cloth and priced at 8/e.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

News Item.

Vatican May Moderate Policy.

(Australian Associated Press.)

ROME.—An important change in the Vatican policy towards closer collaboration of the Roman Catholic Church with other non-Catholic Christian churches was forecast by semi-official sources in the Vatican.

A document in five languages is now being prepared by the highest canonical authority chiefly for Anglo-Saxon and other mixed-religion countries. It will, these sources said, substantially ease or abolish previous papal injunctions against collaboration with non-Catholics.

The Vatican, it was added, was aiming at the establishment of a strong, united Christian front to pave the way for future collaboration in the fight against Communism. Since 1325 a canon law has banned Catholics from taking part in religious discussions or conferences with non-Catholics.

The above news item appeared in the Melbourne press on February 9th, and is really in line with the expectations of Bible students for some considerable time. The following, written over fifty years ago, is enlightening in this connection:

“The ‘sure Word of Prophecy’ indicates very clearly that the various Protestant sects will form a co-operative union or federacy, and that Catholicism and Protestantism will affiliate, neither losing its identity. These are the two ends of the ecclesiastical heavens which, as their confusion increases, shall roll together as a scroll (Isa. 34:4; Rev. 6:14) for self-protection,—as distinct and separate rolls, yet in close proximity to each other. . .

“It will be of little consequence that the ecclesiastical heavens (the religious powers, Papal and Protestant) will have rolled together as a scroll. The combined religious power of Christendom will be utterly futile against the rising tide of anarchy when the dread crisis is reached. Before that great army ‘all the host of heaven (the church nominal) shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll (the two great bodies which constitute the ecclesiastical heavens, namely, Papacy and Protestantism, are the two distinct ends of the scroll) ; and all their host shall fall down (fall off, drop out; not all at once, but gradually, yet rapidly) as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree’ (Isa. 34:4) ; and finally these ‘heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements (of which they are composed) shall melt with fervent heat.’ -2 Pet. 4:12.”

While the prophecies of the Bible so clearly indicate the course of events to be expected in connection with the passing of the present religious systems, God’s Word also supplies equally clear information about the “new heavens,” comprising Christ and His Church, which will control the affairs of Christ’s Kingdom throughout the earth. (2 Pet. 3:13.) The overthrow of the present “heavens” will mean that millions of mankind will be liberated from the superstitions and false teachings of men which so often blaspheme the name of the Lord. As for the Lord’s true servants, either on earth or in heaven, we read—“Rejoice over her (Babylon), thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.”—(Rev. 18:20.)

One has commented on this passage in Revelation 18:20 as follows:—“The term ‘heaven’ as employed here, would seem to symbolise the true heavenly, righteous, spiritual class—those who are right with God, who are true co-workers together with Him and who recognise the righteousness of His cause; and this spiritual class is made up of such as those mentioned in the text—‘ye holy apostles and prophets.’ There is a strong contrast between this language and that which precedes. Kings, merchants, and seamen, who had been countenanced and sustained by her (Babylon — mother and daughter church systems) in the indulgence of corrupt passions, or who had been enriched by traffic with her, would have occasion to mourn. But not so they who had been persecuted by her. Not so the Church of the redeemed. Not so heaven itself. The great oppressor of the Church, and the corrupter of the world, was now destroyed, the grand hindrance to the spread of the Gospel was now removed, and all the holy in heaven and on earth would have occasion to rejoice. This is not the language of vengeance, but it is the language of exultation and rejoicing in view of the fact that the cause of truth might now spread without hindrance throughout the earth.”

Rejoicing in the Lord.

(Convention Address.)

THE children of God are called to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the goodness and mercy of the Lord. As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender love. "As thou has sent me into the world," said Jesus, "even so I have sent them into the world." "I in them, and thou in me—that the world may know that thou has sent me." (John 17:18, 23.)

The Apostle Paul says to the disciples of Jesus, "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, known and read of all men." (2 Cor. 3:3, 2.) In every one of His followers Jesus sends a letter to the world. If we are Christ's He sends in us a message to the family, the village, the street where we live. Jesus dwelling in us, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if we are true representatives of Jesus, it may be that through us they will be led to understand something of His goodness, and be won to love and serve Him.

Christians are set as light-bearers in this world of darkness. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service. If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is. Christians who gather up gloom and sadness and murmur and complain, are giving to others a false representation of God and the Christian life. They give the impression that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and in this way they bear false witness against our Heavenly Father. Satan is pleased when he can lead the children of God into unbelief and despondency. He delights to see us mistrusting God, doubting His willingness and power to save us. It is the work of Satan to represent the Lord as lacking in compassion and pity. He misstates the truth in regard to Him. He fills the imagination with false ideas concerning God, and instead of dwelling upon the truth in regard to our Heavenly Father, we too often fix our minds upon the misrepresentations of Satan and dishonour God by distrusting Him and murmuring against Him. Satan ever seeks to make the godly life one of gloom. He desires it to appear tiresome and difficult; and when the Christian presents in his own life this view of Christianity he confirms the falsehood of Satan. Many walking along the path of life dwell upon their mistakes and failures and disappointments, and their hearts are filled with grief and discouragement.

An account was read of a woman who was being conducted along a garden pathway; her guide was pointing out the various beautiful blooms and enjoying their fragrance, when the woman called the guide's attention to some unsightly briars that were impeding her way. There she was mourning and grieving. She was not walking in the pathway following the guide, but was walking among the briars and thorns. "Oh," she mourned, "is it not a pity that this beautiful garden is spoiled with thorns?" Then the guide said, "Let the thorns alone, for they will only wound you. Gather the roses and the lilies." Are not God's promises like fragrant flowers growing beside our path on every hand? Will we not let their beauty and sweetness fill our hearts with joy? The briars and thorns will only wound and grieve us, and if we gather only these things and present them to others we may prevent those around us from walking in the path of life. It is not wise to gather all the unpleasant recollections of a past life — its iniquities and disappointments — to talk over them and mourn over them until we are overwhelmed with discouragement. A discouraged Christian is filled with darkness, shutting out the light of God and casting a shadow upon the pathway of others. We can thank God for the bright pictures which He has presented to us. Let us hold together the blessed assurances of His love, that we may look upon them continually—the Son of God leaving the presence of His Father, that He might rescue man from the power of Satan; and we if faithful unto death will be clothed in the righteousness of Christ and exalted to His throne. These are the pictures upon which God would have us meditate. When we seem to doubt God's love, and distrust His promises, we dishonour Him and grieve His holy spirit.

How would a mother feel if her children were constantly complaining of her, just as though she did not mean them well, when her whole life's effort had been to forward their interests and to give them comfort? Suppose they should doubt her love; it would break her heart. How would any parent feel to be thus treated by his children? And how can our Heavenly Father regard us when we distrust His love, which has led Him to give His only begotten Son that we might have life. The Apostle Paul writes in Rom. 8:32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" God is listening to hear what kind of report we are bearing to the world about our Heavenly Master. Let our conversation be of Him who makes intercession for us before God. We all have trials hard to bear, and temptations hard to resist, but let us not tell our troubles to those whom we contact in the world, but carry everything to God in prayer.

If we make it a rule never to utter a word of doubt or discouragement, we can do much to brighten the lives of others and strengthen their efforts, by words of hope and Godly cheer. There are many who have a wrong idea of the life and character of Christ. They seem to think that He was devoid of warmth and sunniness, that He was stern, severe and joyless. It is often said that Jesus wept, but that He was never known to smile. Our Lord was indeed a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, for He opened His heart to all the troubles of men. But though His life was self-denying and shadowed with pain and care, His spirit was not crushed. He did not have an expression of grief and repining, but always one of peaceful serenity. Wherever He went He

carried rest and peace, joy and gladness. Our Saviour was deeply serious and intensely in earnest, but never gloomy. The lives of those who imitate Him will be full of earnest purpose; they will have a deep sense of personal responsibility. There will be no boisterous merriment or the like, as the religion of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not quench the light of joy; it does not restrain cheerfulness, nor cloud the sunny, smiling face. Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and when His love reigns in the heart, we shall follow His example. If we keep uppermost in our minds the unkind and unjust acts of others, we shall find it impossible to love them as Christ loved us; but if our thoughts dwell upon the wondrous love and pity of Christ for us, the same spirit will flow out to others. We should love, and respect one another, notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing. Humility and a patient tenderness with the faults of others, should be cultivated, and this will do away with selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.

In Psalm 37:3 we read, "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." "Trust in the Lord," says the Psalmist.

Each day has its burdens, its cares and perplexities; and when we meet, how ready we are to talk of our difficulties and trials. So many borrowed troubles-in-trade, so many fears are entered into that one might suppose we had no pitying, loving Saviour, ready to hear all our requests, and to be to us a present help in every time of need. Every day we are enjoying the bounties of God's providence, but we sometimes overlook these present blessings. Why should we be worried or perplexed over the cares of this evil world, when we know that the Saviour has overcome the world? Jesus has promised His aid if there is effort on our part, and while we are casting our burdens upon Him, let us accept our position cheerfully. It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. He knows there are trials and dangers, and He does not promise to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge. Jesus' prayer for His disciples was, pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil." In the world, He says, "ye shall have tribulations; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.) In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through the years, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air, and said they sow not, neither do they reap, and yet the great Father provides for their needs. The Saviour asks, "Are ye not much better than they?"

The great Provider does not drop the food into the birds' bills, but He makes provision for their needs. They must gather the grains He has scattered for them. They must prepare the material for their nests. They must feed their young. Are we not, as intelligent spiritual worshippers, of more value than the birds of the air? Will not God provide for our necessities if we but trust in Him? This lesson of Christ's is a rebuke to the anxious thought, the perplexity and doubt of the faithless heart. The Lord would have all His children peaceful and obedient. Jesus says, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Happiness that is sought from selfish motives soon passes away, and we are filled with loneliness and sorrow, but there is joy and satisfaction in the service of God. If we do not have the pleasures of this life, we may still be joyful in looking to the life beyond.

But even here, Christians may have the joy of communion with Christ, they may have the light of His love and the comfort of His presence. Every step in life may bring us closer to Jesus and give us a deeper appreciation of His love, and may bring us nearer to our blessed home of peace. As we look towards new perplexities in the coming conflict, we can say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." The trials will not exceed the strength that shall be given us to bear them. So let us go forward, believing that whatever may come we will not be left alone to carry our burden, and we will remember the Lord's words, "Be ye faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life."

Correspondence.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have often listened in to your fine session on Sunday mornings over 3GL, and it's great to be able to receive a copy of these addresses we would like to read again and maybe pass around among our friends who have not listened in. Will you kindly forward me today's address, and, if you still have them, copies of your Xmas Day and New Year's Day addresses, as I could only listen in spasmodically on those days. . .

The wireless is a fine means of spreading Christianity to the nations and how sorely this sad world needs the Christian Gospel which is the only thing that can change the hearts of men and women, and so change the world. Whenever you have the opportunity emphasize that Christians and non-Christians read their Bibles, for so many do not. Thanking you in anticipation and wishing you God speed in your fine work. Yours very sincerely.

Dear Sirs—After listening to your broadcast of this morning I would like you to send me a copy of the discussion and the little book you spoke of. You didn't mention any payment for these, but if there is any such, please let me know.

I do enjoy listening to your Sunday morning discussions, Frank and Ernest. . . Your Talks are very helpful and do enlighten anybody who is at all interested. Wishing you the attainment of your objective in your weekly broadcasts. God bless you; sincerely yours.

(Copies of the broadcasts are free to all who promise to read them carefully.—B.B. Institute.)

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I wonder if you will be good enough to let me have two copies of this morning's Talk as I have a few friends who I should like to give them to. I must tell you I enjoy your Talks very much myself, and would like others to share the same beliefs and joys. Thanking you in anticipation; I am, Yours in the soon coming One.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I have been a constant listener to your session over Sydney radio 2KY at 8.15 a.m. on Sundays for about nine months. I find them very interesting and instructive, and take this opportunity of asking for the copy of "Superstition and Facts," and also ask is it possible to ask any question of you by ordinary mail, if the questions are not very involved (only short answers or reference would do) and I pay the cost of returning to me?

The various prophecies of the Bible are what interested me in the session, having been given the first start in them by someone who possibly knows them due to study, but I realise that the session has been going for longer time than I have been listening and therefore I may have missed a lot. Is there any booklet obtainable in Sydney or elsewhere dealing with this subject?

In conclusion, I wish to thank you for the session, however short it is, and let you know that I am not in my own opinion a churchgoer, Christian, or religious person, only after the truth or otherwise of the Bible. Yours faithfully.

(All questions on the Bible are gladly received, and the booklet "Our Lord's Great Prophecy" and other literature are supplied to assist in understanding Bible prophecy.-B.B. Institute.)

The Manager, Radio Station 2KY, Sydney—Dear Sir—I was particularly interested in the religious sessions conducted by Frank and Ernest at 8.15 on two recent Sunday mornings. Could you kindly pass on my request for copies of the scripts of the two Talks "New Bottles for New Wine" and "Facts Versus Superstition." I would be glad also for a copy of the booklet "God and Reason." Thanking you, I remain, Yours faithfully.

Dear Sirs—Would you kindly send the copy of this morning's lecture. I am always anxious to hear your very good lectures every Sunday morning, and try to get people to listen to them; no doubt they are very inspiring. I do not know how you are supported; if I may I would like to send a little at times, for I think it is well worth it.. . Yours very sincerely.

(The cost of broadcasting, as well as the general work of the Institute, is supported by voluntary contributions.B.B. Institute.)

Dear Sirs—Would you please forward me your last four broadcasts over 2KY Sydney. I have now got quite a few of your broadcast Dialogues and read them over and over again till they sink in.

Enclosed 3/- to help in your work in helping us to understand God's Holy Word. Would also like "God and Reason." Faithfully yours.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I have been listening with interest to your Sunday morning Talks from Station 2KY Sydney and would like to read some of your literature. Please send me a list of your literature to above address together with price list of all publications.

I am a seeker for the truth and during the past 20 years have read “Studies in the Scripture”. . . Your Talks seem to be similar to the “Divine Plan” and I am very interested. Yours seeking for truth.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Please accept the enclosed small contribution, and many thanks for the Frank and Ernest Dialogues which come to hand regularly, together with the copies of “Peoples Paper.”

I had lent to me recently a copy of “The Bible Teachings on the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin-offering, Atonement.” It is a reprint of a former publication, the reprint dated 1937. . . I was wondering if any copies of this publication are available today, or if they are now entirely out of print. If a copy is available I would be delighted to forward the purchase price, whatever the cost may be. With all good wishes; sincerely yours.

(It is hoped to produce a supply of the book “The Bible Teachings” again, in the course of a few months; reference will be made in the “Peoples Paper” when these books are ready.—B.B. Institute.)

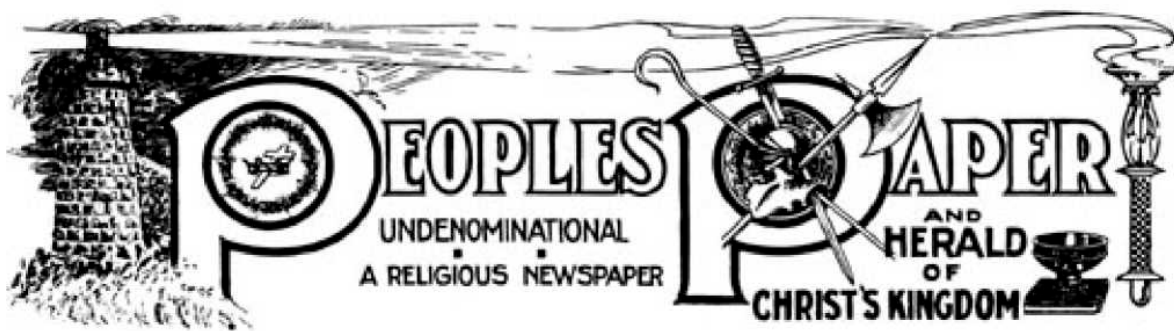
While the above information is most interesting, it is surely strange that the promoters of the Jewish National Fund seem to have no place for the God of Israel in their scheme of things, up to the present time. However, there are, no doubt, many in the Holy Land who are trusting in the God of Jacob, and the events taking place are undoubtedly in preparation for the time when the Lord will deliver regathered Israel from the greatest time of trouble they have ever known (Jer. 30:5-7), which will be the means of their conversion, and then shall the Lord “restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning; afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.” (Isa. 1:26-28.)

“A Word in Season.”

The following letter shows how it is possible to witness for the message of truth, and should be an encouragement to our friends generally.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—It was with very great interest that I listened to your broadcast for the first time this morning on 2KY. The message was very inspiring and so simple to understand. (I find the Bible is hard to understand.) My only regret is that I hadn’t heard you before. I have often tuned-in to hear something concerning the Bible and the Lord Jesus Christ but just at those different times it was jazz music or some other trash. . .

I will just tell you how I came to tune-in to 2KY (your broadcast on Sundays at 8.15 a.m.). Last Tuesday I returned by train from a visit to Sydney and an elderly gentleman and his wife sat opposite me in the train. I guessed they were Christians by their pleasant, smiling faces; the lady smiled at me and I remarked how lovely the scenery was. Then she agreed and said the time wasn’t too far distant when the Lord Jesus would make a new earth and heaven, and we all had a very interesting talk concerning the Bible. I said to her, I often wished there were more broadcasts concerning God and His Son, Jesus Christ. They both said to me, “Did you ever listen-in to 2KY on Sundays at 8.15 a.m., for talks by Frank and Ernest?” I said, “I never knew those talks were broadcast, as at times when I just happen to tune-in there were items that didn’t interest me.” Then the gentleman and lady told me they never miss listening-in to your broadcasts—Frank and Ernest—as do many of their Christian friends. They told me I would find the talks very interesting and inspiring (which I had found this morning). I will be looking forward to your broadcast next Sunday. Have you been broadcasting long on the air? I would be very pleased to receive a copy of last Sunday’s broadcast “The Holy Spirit.” If there is any charge for your leaflets please let me know and I will send you money for them. Hoping to hear from you; Yours sincerely,



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Godliness with Contentment.

(Convention Address.)

“Godliness with contentment is great gain.” (1 Tim. 6:6.)

OFTEN when we take time to think upon a text or verse of Scripture, we find there is more of helpfulness than we may have thought.

Each line bath a pleasure, each promise a pearl,

That all if they will may secure.

Real contentment is a wonderful thing. Like the writer of Proverbs who directs men to animals, insects, etc., to teach them lessons (Prov. 6:6), we might direct our minds to beasts in the field for a picture of contentment. A cow or sheep lying contentedly in the field chewing its cud is a peaceful study—no fear for future provision. But man, who is endowed with so much more than the brute creation, does not seem to be able to experience the same measure of content. Jesus drew attention to this fact during His earthly ministry, when He said: “Behold the fowls of the air, they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they.” (Matt. 6:26.)

Looking up the dictionary concerning the word “contentment” it was found to be simply rendered “satisfaction of mind”, and a better definition probably could not be given. If we were to take a Gallup poll of people in the street and ask them what they believed they needed to make them happy and contented, practically all could be relied upon to state a desire for material gain of some kind. But the spirit - enlightened Christian knows that no amassing of material things will necessarily bring real contentment or satisfaction of mind. In fact, it would be widely acknowledged by even natural men that some of the most discontented are those who have amassed fortunes. Possibly we have all found in our observations and experience that the happiest or most contented people we have known have been those who have not been richly endowed with material things. Often families are much happier through the years when life was a struggle and hardships had to be endured, than when with a turn of fortune they found themselves affluent in worldly goods. This bears out the wisdom of God in setting man to gain his living by the sweat of his brow, amidst the thorns and thistles.

Natural man, out of touch with his Creator, can know no real contentment or satisfaction of mind; but if he is busy with tasks and labours it assists him to keep a better balance than would otherwise be possible. So we know what God meant when He said to Adam, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake.” (Gen. 3:17.)

Now what is this contentment, possible to some, and which the Apostle tells us is great gain to attain? Note that it has a prerequisite—godliness. Meditating upon the words, “godliness with contentment is great gain”, the thought is suggested that there may be forms of godliness without contentment, but there cannot be real contentment without true godliness.

In Paul’s day there were gods many and lords many whom the people worshipped, but to Paul there was only one God and that the true one. (1 Cor. 8:5, 6.) The “gods many” of those days were idol gods, and the people’s worship of them was a superstitious one, and such never gave rise, nor ever can, to a real rest and contentment of mind.

To our own day there are still gods many and lords many—creed gods, torment gods, idol gods, etc.—whom the people ignorantly and superstitiously worship without satisfaction. And these are not confined to heathen lands (commonly so-called) but are rampant in that portion of the world known as Christendom.

For some years past the nominal church seems to have been well portrayed in verse 5, the Diaglott rendering of which is: “Wrangling of men corrupted in mind and destitute of the truth, supposing piety to be gain.” Pulpit and pew have taught and sought a godliness that goes hand in hand with worldly gain.

The story of the wooing of the church to worldly ways is well told in one of the “Poems of Dawn”, one verse of which is as follows:

“Your house is too plain”

“Your house is too plain”, said the proud old World,
“I’ll build you one like mine:
Carpets of Brussels and curtains of lace,
And furniture ever so fine.”
So he built her a costly and beautiful house,
Most splendid it was to behold;
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,
Gleaming in purple and gold;
Rich fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the World and his children were there:
Laughter and music and feasting were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.
There were cushioned pews for the rich and gay
To sit in their pomp and pride;
While the poor, who were clad in shabby array,
But seldom came inside.”

Those who read and study their Bible and endeavour to walk according to its light have no difficulty in recognising the lukewarm condition of the professing church (so manifest over the last half century particularly), and that such is due to the fact that pulpit and pew have succumbed to the wooing of the world to seek present gain. It was the urge and aim for present gain that gave rise to sectarian bickerings—wranglings of men corrupted in mind as the Apostle expressed it. The Diaglott renders 1 Tim. 6:3, 4 thus: “If any assent not to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that teaching which is according to piety, he is puffed up being master of nothing, but is distracted about questions and verbal contentions, out of which arise envy, strife, revilings, evil suspicions.”

So long as the form of godliness offered a present gain—monetarily, socially, nationally, etc.—it always found adherents who were never much concerned about doctrines or creeds. But the few true Christians who adhered to the Word of God, and sought not the emoluments of the world and illicit union therewith, are not amazed to see the coming judgments beginning to fall upon Babylon now, the full extent of which are pictured in Rev. 18 and other places. Though there may have been a period when Babylon enjoyed a measure of content and lived deliciously, it was short-lived and now torment and sorrow are upon her.

Now let us leave the counterfeit and turn to the true. What constitutes true godliness and contentment? A knowledge of the true God and His character, of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and the Divine Plan for the salvation of all who will, culminating in the successful accomplishment of all by Christ’s righteous Kingdom. How do we get this information? Answer again, through His Word—“Thy Word is truth.”

Again, someone says, Does not this Word tell us that if we follow Jesus we shall have much tribulation in this world and have to endure suffering? How can anyone really be contented under such circumstances? They can, but only the spirit-begotten can experience it. Like the writer of Genesis pictures Joseph—“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.” (Gen. 49:22.) There may be difference of thought as to the meaning of this verse, but the thought of one will serve a point here. He pictured a walled-in city (common in Bible times). Over the top of this wall and draping down inside are luxuriant branches of a fruit tree or vine. Outside the wall where it is planted is a well, and the roots draw continually from the water. Those inside the city view in wonderment the green branches and rich fruit, for it is a dry place and the wall of the city was hiding from their view the source that was providing for the rich fruit and green boughs of the tree.

So it is with Christians! As people view and learn of our experiences they wonder and say, How can you be happy and contented through all that? The natural mind of unregenerate man is a wall that shuts off from view the source of a Christian’s comfort and joy. They know not of the hidden springs of the water of life, nor of the songs in the night that He giveth to those who are learning to sing yet another and still more wonderful song that only the 144,000 can sing. (Rev. 14:1-3.)

According to God's Word there is a day coming when all the earth will be at perfect rest. Verses in Isaiah 35 and 65, Micah 4 'and Rev. 21:3, 4 show that in a day to come all who dwell upon the earth will rest in perfect contentment with no sorrow nor sighing, or want of any kind. Finite minds cannot fully comprehend the glory of that coming day, with every mind at perfect rest.

But that time is not yet! No, much of sorrow, due to sin, must still pierce human hearts before that glad day comes. But some minds, even now, enjoy a rest and contentment unbounded, because they are privileged to know God's plan through His Word of truth—the purposes of the present, and the glorious consummation of the future. It satisfies our longings as nothing else could do. When we know the true God and that the way and circumstances in which we are placed are His will and way for us, that He is guiding with unerring skill toward the richest gain it is possible for mortals to attain, then we can rest. But do we? Read 2 Cor. 4:6, 7.

We have great treasure, but it is in "earthen vessels" all right, and we need reminding often that our experiences and circumstances are but working out God's purpose in us, if we are to keep that sweet contentment which this world cannot give and should not take away. We are told in Heb. 2:10 that our Head or Chief Leader was perfected through sufferings, and why should we expect a different method? Is there any sorrow we have been permitted to pass through that has not had a mellowing effect upon our characters? Is there anything that increases sympathy and desire to help troubled ones more, than to have passed that way ourselves?

Could Paul, or we, have better learned the folly of "kicking against the pricks" than to have had just such experiences? Surely we agree that the lessons learned have been the means of richer spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. (Eph. 1:3.) As Paul shows us in Rom. 5:2-5, our experiences increase the love and hope of the glory of God in our hearts. Then let us praise His name and let our minds be at rest—content!

Some little time ago it was my experience to be associated with others in a severe affliction, a sickness of a kind in which experience was lacking. Later again a second affliction, another sickness of another nature, was experienced with still others. Looking back, it is realised that it was an effective way of kindling my sympathies for those similarly afflicted, not only for the sick person, but for others (kinsfolk, etc.) who desired to do all they could to alleviate the trouble and found so little could be done.

These are not isolated cases; one hears of similar cases almost every day, but dismisses quickly from his thoughts and with scant sympathy until the experience comes to his own door, as it were. It was written of Jesus that He is our High Priest and that He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4:14, 15), and as the prophet Isaiah says—"He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." (Isa. 53:4.) Because of this we readily understand how we can have His sympathy and why He is so desirous of helping us when we look to Him for aid. And are we not to be associated with Jesus when His wonderful Kingdom is established? And won't we be better able to serve and bless mankind by having had such a deep appreciation of their great need brought home to us? Surely we will!

The isolated miracles of healing that Jesus performed in His earthly ministry, at His first advent, serve as illustrations of what He is going to do for all at His second advent, when He reigns as King over all the earth. A few of these word pictures are as follows:—Luke 5:12, 13; 13:10-13; Mark 5:1-6, 15; John 5:5-9.

Won't we delight to be known as members of the Christ, helping Him in all His wonderful works for men? And won't we perform our part with so much more pleasure because of our association with such afflictions now? What a wonderful blessing nursing sisters can be to sick folk even now, under all the circumvention of this present evil world. They know just what to do and when, for the comfort of their patients. Thousands daily have cause to thank God for the ministry of nursing sisters. But they were not always able to perform their work with such ease. There was that long period of probation when things were anything but easy at times, yet what sister looks back to lament her training? One was heard to say that although it was nice to have reached the top and won through, she thought that her training days, during which she shewed as fitted for her work, were really the best of all. It gave a sense of satisfaction and pleasure to recall the experiences that taught her to excel in the calling she had chosen.

Do we wonder if it will be like that with us? When we reach the Kingdom, with all the joy and glory of being forever with the Lord and reigning with Him, will we look back on our training days here below and feel that we would not have dispensed with them for anything? Surely they have taught us to excel in the ministry of shedding abroad the love of God from full hearts. If we could keep such thoughts in our minds now, while we are still here below, we could say with Paul—"I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." (Phil. 4:11.)

One has said

“The path of sorrow and that path alone,
Leads to the world where sorrow is unknown.”
There is another nice little poem

“I walked a mile with Pleasure,
She chattered all the way;
But she left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.

“I walked a mile with Sorrow,
And ne’er a word said she;
But, oh, the things I learned from her
When Sorrow walked with me!”

Like Samuel of old who built a stone of remembrance at the Lord’s deliverance of Israel in battle against the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:12) , we can say with true thankfulness—’Hitherto has the Lord helped us.” Hitherto! Ah yes, we thank the Lord for realised past mercies, but what about to-morrow? Our course is not yet finished. Certain it is that we will be called on to face further tests, endure trials, and suffer for righteousness’ sake. Our minds go back over the past—Yes, hitherto we have got through by the Lord’s grace, but oh, how near to complete failure we were time and again! Only for this or that deliverance we would surely have failed, perhaps for ever. What if the Lord does not send the deliverance next time? Perhaps He will want us to pass right through it successfully next time without special help, for His Word tells us He wants us to grow stronger and bear better daily.

The disciples of Jesus, even from the days of His earthly ministry, have needed all the Lord’s persuasive powers to keep their minds from disquiet. We cannot do better than remember the rule of life the Lord laid down for them and for us: “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” “Lo, I am with you always.” “My grace is sufficient for thee.” “As thy days so shall thy strength be.” “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.” “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

There are some nice words of a poet also

“Don’t seek from the future new trouble to borrow,
But leave in Christ’s hands the keys of to-morrow;
Your way may be clouded, your future concealed,
And scarcely the present is clearly revealed;
’Twill strengthen in weakness and comfort in sorrow,
To leave in Christ’s hands the keys of to-morrow.”

In conclusion we quote the first and last verses of one of the “Poems of Dawn” based on Matt 6:8 “Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.” “Our Father knows what things we need

Each step along the way,
His eye of love doth never sleep,
He watches night and day.
Then let us leave it all with Him.
Assured that come what may,
Our Father knows just what we need,
Upon our pilgrim way.”

H-Bomb Scientist turns to Prayer

AS the result of President Truman's direction for the production of the hydrogen super-bomb to the United States scientists some weeks ago, press statements have given reports of the reactions of various leaders in the field of research into the nuclear processes for making hydrogen bombs. From New York comes the following statement, appearing under the above heading in the Melbourne press recently:

Dr. Harold Urey, who played a big role in the development of the atomic bomb, declared in Columbus, Ohio: "I hope the hydrogen bomb doesn't work."

Dr. Urey, one of the world's leading nuclear physicists, said: "Frankly, I am scared to death. Sometimes I feel that prayer is the only solution. I wish I had a direct line to the Almighty to ask Him for guidance."

"Nobody would know the effectiveness of the H-bomb until one was actually exploded," he said. "Furthermore, it was not yet known whether the bomb would work. To hope it doesn't work, however, is no way to solve the problem. We must know what can or cannot be done or someone else will find out before us," Dr. Urey said.

He added that there was no chance of agreement with Russia on atomic or hydrogen bombs. Dr. Urey advocates a strong Western Union or federation to prevent war.

At the time of President Truman's declaration he was reported as follows:

"It is part of my responsibility, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, to see to it that our country is able to defend itself against any possible aggressor. Accordingly I have directed the Atomic Energy Commission to continue its work on all forms of atomic weapons, including the so-called hydrogen or super-bomb. Like all other work in the field of atomic weapons, it is being and will be carried forward on a basis consistent with the over-all objectives of our programme for peace and security."

Another report attributed to Lieut.-General Leslie Groves, who directed the manufacture of the first atomic bomb, is also of much interest:

"I see no other course that we can follow with justice to our present or our future. People died from small bombs in the First World War and from bigger bombs in the Second World War. I cannot see how we can stop now, although God knows I wish we could."

An analysis of the above statements surely proves that the words of our Lord are having fulfilment in our day.

At Jesus' first advent, looking down the stream of time for over nineteen centuries, He declared: "There shall be upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, (the restless masses of mankind in commotion.) Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:25, 26.)

The fact that our Lord made particular reference to the end of the age, the time in which we are now living, is further substantiated by His words—"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:21, 22.)

Bible students, while accepting these statements of Jesus as applying to the closing scenes of this present evil world, have wondered over the years respecting the fulfilment of the words—"Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.

Now, in recent times, with the dread possibility of the mass destruction of humanity with atomic and hydrogen bombs, it is clearly evident that without the intervention of the Lord to "shorten those days" no flesh would be saved.

While it is true that "The wrath of man shall praise Thee, and the remainder of wrath Thou shalt restrain," (Psa. 76:10) , and that following the great time of trouble the Lord will "turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." (Zeph. 3. 8, 9), it is equally a fact that prayers to Almighty God, on the part of fearful men, cannot alter what the Lord in His wisdom sees will work out for the ultimate good of His human creation. Sincere prayer is of course always acceptable to God from those who approach Him in Jesus' name, but in praying to the Heavenly Father His children are required to adopt due reverence to their Creator, and not seek to have their own wills done on earth. For a scientist to assist in creating a weapon of mass destruction and then pray to God that He may prevent its use is, to say the least, a gross

contradiction of desires.

Again, the statement by President Truman that the production of super-bombs is consistent with the over-all objectives for peace and security is the attitude which, adopted by opposing nations, has produced the two World Wars. And the Lord and the Apostles predicted that the same attitude continued in would result in the ultimate passing of this present order of things from the earth. St. Paul, writing of the end of the age, declared; "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child: and they shall not escape." The two World Wars have been notable spasms, in harmony with Paul's words, after which important proclamations of "peace and safety" have been heard throughout the globe. No doubt further spasms are due with increasing intensity and rapidity, which will work out the Lord's designs in preparation for the setting up of His Kingdom, so that His will may be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

The remark by Lieut.-General Groves, "I cannot see how we can stop now, though God knows I wish we could," is a pathetic acknowledgment of man's inability to control this world's affairs. Mankind, with all its boasted civilisation, is shortly to be humbled to the dust, and what will add to the confusion is the fact that also "the powers of heaven shall be shaken." That is, the church systems of to-day will go down in the tumults, and be manifest as really belonging to "this present evil world." (Heb. 12:26, 27; 2 Pet. 3:10.)

No wonder, then, that the Lord is calling His people out from the religious heavens before these systems collapse (Rev. 18:1-5), that they may become united to Him, "receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved," (Heb. 12:28), and so rejoice in the establishment of the "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3:13.)

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The Marriage Feast

Matthew 22:1-14

A CAREFUL scrutiny of this parable, as found in Matthew's record, shows it to be in full accord with the similar parable recorded in Luke 14:16-24, though they differ somewhat in minor details. It is, therefore, wise to study the two records in unison.

Both records show three distinct calls to the marriage supper, or rather three divisions to the call which gathers the guests. There can be no difference of opinion respecting what the parable signifies; the thought brought to our attention is the same which pervades the Scriptures throughout, namely, that God is selecting from among mankind a peculiar people, a little flock, to be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, their Lord, in His Kingdom and in all the gracious work of that kingdom, and symbolised as a "chaste virgin" who enters into a covenant of betrothal to the King's Son, her Redeemer and Lord, in harmony with which ultimately the great marriage shall take place, and the virgin becomes "the Bride, the Lamb's wife."

This thought was enunciated by John the Baptist, who, in introducing our Lord, presented Him as the Bridegroom, saying, "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom, when he heareth the Bridegroom's, voice, rejoiceth greatly; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." John heard the Bridegroom and rejoiced, though he was not invited to become one of the Bride class.

The First Call.

The Lord had specially called Israel as His peculiar people, and had made ready His arrangements by which the first invitation to be the Bride of Christ was extended to the people of that nation. This invitation was given at our Lord's first advent during the three and a half years of His ministry. His message, sent throughout all the land of Israel, was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; repent and believe the good tidings." This was the invitation mentioned in verse 3, which was not heeded by Israel as a people. Following this, their "house", or nation, was left desolate—Messiah was slain.

The Second Call.

But our Lord did not abandon the people of that nation when He rejected the nation as a whole, and hence at His resurrection, in directing His apostles no longer to confine their efforts to Israel, but to preach the Gospel to every creature, He added, "beginning at Jerusalem." And we know that for a number of years following the crucifixion the Gospel message went again to Israel under

the power and blessing of the holy spirit. Speaking of this, the Apostle Paul said to some of the Jews, “It was necessary that the Gospel should be preached first to you”—Acts 13:46.

There was the second call to the marriage, recorded in verse 4. It says: “Tell them which were bidden”—previously bidden, and who had during the three and a half years of our Lord’s ministry refused to come. Moreover, now the servants were commissioned to tell them that “the oxen and fatlings are killed, and all things ready.” This comprehensive statement of readiness could not be made in the first invitation before our Lord’s death, for He Himself, in His own sacrifice for sin, was the bullock that was killed (as typified in Lev. 16), and it is the eating of His flesh, given for the life of the world, that is to bring eternal life to as many as receive Him.

To the first call none seem to have responded, save the servants only who bore the message. To the second call some responded, though only a remnant, as is shown by Luke’s account (Luke 14:21, 22).

Moreover, the second call is shown to have been not to the righteous and prominent ones among the Jews, but to the morally and mentally poor, blind and maimed; not to the Temple class of Israel, the leaders of religious thought, the Scribes and Pharisees, but to the poor, found in the streets and lanes of that city or kingdom. This second message found a considerable number of this apparently inferior and unsuitable class, and gathered them to the wedding, where they were made presentable under the provided “wedding garment.” Respecting the gathering, under this call, notice the record found in Acts 2:41-47 and 4:4—three thousand were found willing in one day and five thousand subsequently.

Nevertheless, as the Apostle Paul clearly shows, these Israelites who received the message of grace after the day of Pentecost, under this second call of the parable, were but a remnant as compared with the whole of Israel, but a part as compared to the entire number predestinated to be the number of the elect Church, the Bride of Christ.

In proof of his assertion that only a remnant of Israel was acceptable to God, Paul quotes Isaiah, in Romans 9:

27—“Though the number of children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” Paul proceeds to show that “the fall of them was the riches of the world”, and that in consequence of their not completing the elect number, not providing the full complement of guests to the great marriage feast, therefore, the invitation was extended beyond them to the Gentiles. He points out that God spared not the natural branches of the olive tree, but broke off the unfit ones, and during this age has been grafting Gentiles into the places formerly reserved for Israelites according to the flesh in connection with the root and fatness of the great Divine promises to Abraham’s seed (Rom. 11).

It was after the remnant had been gathered out from the “streets and lanes”, and after the great and influential of that nation had rejected the Divine invitation to the marriage feast, and had imprisoned the King’s messengers, the Apostles, and had slain some of them (see Acts 8:1-4; 12:1-3, etc.) that God sent His judgments against that city or government, and utterly destroyed it, in a great time of trouble, referred to in verse 7. John the Baptist, speaking of that trouble, likened it in parable to “fire”, which was to burn up the chaff of that nation. This was the baptism of fire which came upon them in contradistinction to the baptism of the holy spirit, which came upon the Israelites indeed, who accepted the invitation to the marriage feast (Matt. 3:11). It was respecting this fire and wrath that John said to the Scribes and Pharisees who came to his baptism, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” (Matt. 3:7, Luke 3:7). Concerning this same destruction of these rejectors of the Divine favour, the Apostle Paul wrote, saying that they “killed the righteous and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved; to fill up their sins always; for wrath is come upon them to the uttermost” (1 Thess. 2:- 15, 16).

The Third Call. , ,

Thus the way was left open for ‘the third division of the call to the marriage feast (the call of the Gentiles) by reason of an insufficient number of worthy ones being found amongst those which were originally bidden—the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham. This third call, mentioned in verse 9 and in Luke 14:23, is in both accounts designated as a call in “the highways” among the nations, the Gentiles, outside the city of the parable, which represents Israel. This call among the Gentiles has progressed for nineteen centuries, and according to various lines of testimony in the Lord’s Word, it has almost accomplished the purpose intended, namely, the filling up of the elect, predetermined number which shall constitute the joint-heirs in the kingdom, by becoming the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.

Both evangelists state that a sufficient number will be found; and Matthew declares that “both good and bad” were amongst those found willing to participate in the feast. His description reminds us of another of our Lord’s parables, illustrative of the same point, namely,

The Parable of the Drag Net,

which, being cast into the sea, caught fish both good and bad-suitable and unsuitable. The separation of the fish, gathering some

into baskets for use and casting the remainder back into the sea, implies a discrimination on the Lord's part, as between the numbers who eventually would profess to be of His kingdom class and seek to share the feast, but who in some way come short, and those whom the Lord will esteem worthy, according to certain conditions and tests of character.

This part of the parable brings us down unquestionably to the close of the Gospel Age, because the Gospel Age is for the very purpose of calling those who shall participate in the marriage feast.

We read in 1 Peter 4:17 that "judgment must begin at the house of God." This judgment of the consecrated church is shown in the parable by the statement that the king inspected or examined the guests. Among them He found worthy ones evidently, and also unworthy ones which, in the parable, are represented by one man—a representative of the class.

The unworthiness of this guest is represented in his lack of a wedding garment, hence it is important for us to ascertain the significance of such a garment. Secular history shows that the custom of that time amongst the Jews was that when any notable person made a feast of this kind he provided for the occasion an outer robe for each guest, so that however different the guests might be in respect of their circumstances, wealth or apparel, on this occasion, while at the feast, as guests of one host, they were on a common level; for the wedding garments were alike, probably of white linen, embroidered.

The significance is readily seen. The Lord's people, gathered from every nation and people and tongue, are dissimilar in their intellectual, moral, physical and financial conditions, but when they have accepted the Lord Jesus, the redemption which His blood provided and an invitation to the wedding, they are reckoned as "new creatures in Christ Jesus", and all are on a common footing, the robe of Christ's righteousness making up for the deficiencies of each one, so that there is no difference as respects previous situation or condition, bond or free, male or female, they are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

Without a Wedding Garment.

The class represented as without this wedding garment of Christ's righteousness is, therefore, very evidently a class which denies the necessity, value or merit of the great atoning sacrifice accomplished for us at Calvary—denies totally any necessity for a covering for their sins—attempting to appear at the feast in the filthy rags of self-righteousness.

It is one of the explicit terms or conditions of the call of the great feast that God has prepared, that all who will come to it must first accept by faith the redemption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, otherwise they can gain no admission. It follows, therefore, logically that the guest found without a wedding garment must have taken off the wedding garment after he had entered as one of the guests, since he would not have been admitted without it. We can readily see the application of this in the Church. While none could have access to the grace of God in Christ without first accepting by faith the merit of His sacrifice as the ransom price for their sins, yet after having entered the grace of God, we find so many who do despite not only to the King who made the marriage feast, but also to the King's Son, by rejecting the robe of His righteousness, while attempting to enjoy the benefits of His grace.

Where may we look for this class? We answer we may look for them -among the others, who still retain the, wedding garment. As we should expect, we find now, at the end of the Gospel Age, that various no-ransom doctrines have come to the front, "denying that the Lord bought them." These theories, in derogation of the ransom, seem to have a special, fascination for certain classes: (1) For a class which is anxious to appear more independent in thought, and to be known as critics and advanced thinkers. (2) They have a fascination for a class whose consecration is lax, or partial only, and who like to take a broad view and to claim universal salvation, partly because they realise that they are not walking in the narrow way of self-sacrifice.

At all events, such a class is to be expected at the present time, and such a class we find quite numerous, some of them openly scoffing at the thought that a ransom was necessary or was given; others tacitly acknowledging the ransom, but in heart and in life denying it, ignoring the logical 'consequences, and propriety of participation with. the Lord in the sufferings of this present time.

The parable shows at this juncture the full number of the guests had been gathered and are now in the house of their host. We may imagine the provision for their entertainment, etc., and these correspond in our case to the blessings enjoyed by the living members of the consecrated Church now; we are enjoying many of the blessings provided by our host, the Lord, and we have before us the menu describing to some extent "the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him." We can even occasionally see some of the preparations for the great feast progressing, and it is from such favourable conditions, into the ignorance, uncertainty and "outer darkness" of the world that all who do not have on the wedding garment shall be thrust.

Into Outer Darkness.

We may question how the latter part of the parable is fulfilled, We see it accomplished by the presentation .of the truth, in contradistinction to the error, the influence of the truth being the binding or restraining influence circumventing the error on this subject. -

It is the duty of all who see the truth on the subject of the ransom to be thoroughly loyal to the King, and to thus assist in binding, restraining with the truth those who may be exercising an influence to the contrary. In the parable it is said that in the outer darkness there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is generally understood to mean “eternal torment” (hell-fire) , although those who offer such interpretation seem to entirely ignore the fact that outer darkness and inner fire would be opposites of thought; wherever there is fire, the darkness is absent. Moreover, they claim that people will be shut up in hell, whereas in the parable the place or condition is an outside place. None of the conditions favour t h e ordinary interpretation, though all favour the interpretation which we are giving. The wailing and gnashing of teeth has not yet commenced; but, as the parable states it, “there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Those who are now ejected from the light and from all participation in the joys and blessings of the present time will have their portion, their share in the great time of trouble coming upon the whole world, which is thus signified,

“a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” None then living shall escape that trouble, except the little flock, the kingdom class, the Bride class, to whom the Lord said, “Watch ye that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things coming upon the world. ‘

Our Lord sums up the significance of this parable as meaning that “many are called, but few are chosen.” How true! Not all have been called to this marriage feast. Hundreds of millions never heard a word about it all through these nineteen centuries, and hundreds of millions are living to-day without the slightest knowledge of it, and none of these can in any sense of the word be reckoned among the “called.” Nevertheless, many have been called—all of the Jewish nation who had ears to hear the message were called, because they, by Divine arrangement, were a covenanted people to whom the first call belonged, but only a few of them were chosen. And so, during the offer of • the Gospel to the Gentiles it has gone to a comparatively small proportion of the whole Gentile world; nevertheless, it has reached millions during these nineteen centuries.

A considerable portion of these, we may reasonably suppose, have had ears to hear, but generally the call has been ignored; the vast majority have found other attractions and ambitions. Comparatively few, therefore, care to accept the invitation. Finally, of those who have accepted, the Lord makes choice and separates and rejects all who do not accept the invitation and all its privileges as a grace, a favour. The others constitute the little flock, addressed by our Lord, saying, “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

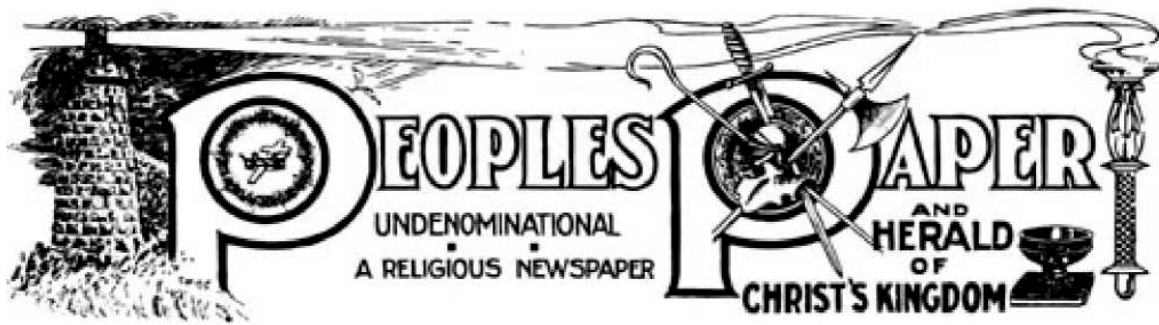
“Go out in the by-ways and search them all:

The wheat may be there, though the weeds are tall;

Then search in the highway and pass none by,

But gather from all for the calling high.-

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Neglect Not So Great Salvation.

(Heb. 2:1-3.) (Convention Address.)

HERE we have a warning given to a very favored people. The very fact of being favored of God seems at times to give to our unbalanced and imperfect condition a false impression of spiritual security and holiness.

It was so with natural Israel. "What advantage hath a Jew?" the apostle Paul asked, and answered his own question "Much every way, chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God." Nevertheless, Jesus warned them not to think that because they were Abraham's children their position before God was secure.

The Apostle reminds us consecrated Christians that the word spoken under the Law Covenant was steadfast and firm, every transgression and disobedient act received a just recompense of reward. Penalties and rewards were attached and enforced. But these experiences and schooling which Israel passed through under the Law Covenant were not final; it did not mean eternal life or eternal death in their case, for they were already condemned in Adam, and the blood of bulls and goats could never take away original sin. These things, says St. Paul, happened unto them for types and are written for our learning. (1 Cor. 10:11.) "Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Heb. 2:1.)

Nevertheless, God showed in no uncertain way His disapproval against those in the past who neglected His favors and the advantages that go along with them. In this comparison, the Apostle gives a warning to Christians—"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation."? How shall we—who have entered into the realities which the Law foreshadowed—escape retribution, for the blood which makes actual atonement for sin has been applied to us who believe?

We have delivered to us a great salvation. It is great indeed when compared to the Law Covenant. The Law, although just, holy and good, was nevertheless weak; because of human imperfections it could not bring salvation, but directed its devotees to Christ. This salvation which consecrated believers have already experienced is also great when compared to the salvation offered during the Millennial Age, which will be a salvation to restitution, limited to human beings of flesh and blood on this planet. However, the salvation offered to the Church, those called out of the world is greater, because it is spiritual.

The word "great" here means, "Such as this," "vast," —a salvation such as this, so vast. Its magnitude reaches into endless space, it explores eternity; its vitality is immortal—deathless; its nature is divine; its spirit eternal love; its power is omnipotent.

When Jesus was made flesh He healed all manner of disease, cripples, blind, deaf and dumb; pierced dark and confused minds with beams of light and truth, and cast out devils and raised the dead. And Jesus promised to you, "greater things than these shall ye do." This is indeed the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Ah, yes, a great salvation is ours; it has already begun in us; the call has gone out and we have responded. When did it begin? Did it begin under the Law dispensation? No! Did natural Israel or their prophets know anything about it?

No! The text is very emphatic—"It began to be spoken of first by the Lord Jesus."

When John the Baptist was imprisoned Jesus began to announce this great salvation by preaching good news—"Repent, the time is fulfilled; the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mark 1:14, 15.) The call to such a great salvation began there. "Of which

salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto us . . . Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the holy spirit sent down from heaven, which things the angels desire to look into.” (1 Pet. 1:

10-12.) Astounding statement — angels desire to look into our salvation. Angels, spirit beings, are not invited to qualify for the prize of the high calling. Truly this is a great salvation, beyond the power and nature of angels; they are not invited to be “heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ,” but you are. That there is intense interest and attention given to this phase of the Creator’s plan by the angels, concerning the suffering and glory of the Christ, Head and Body, is evident. The words “look into” in this text mean to “bend beside, to lean over as to peer within.” This suggests that the outline of this part of God’s Plan is not clearly seen by angels; it requires leaning forward as with fixed attention, in order to observe it more distinctly.

The prophets too were eager to know the time indicated, or the character of those times of which they prophesied. Why does the Apostle Peter refer to the angels and prophets in regard to this matter? Answer, that we should give the more earnest heed, valuing our privileges, and comprehend by faith its greatness and magnitude.

Think of it! Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ — partakers of the divine nature. Who is worthy? “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” That such a position with all its associated privileges, vast powers and magnificent glory should be offered to us, poor, weak, frail and halting creatures, seems unbelievable were it not for the repeated statements in the Scriptures. “The words spoken by Jesus were confirmed (or made sure) unto us by them that heard Him.” The Lord has assured us that He will complete the good work begun in us by His truth. Therefore, let us lay aside every encumbrance and run with patience the race set before us.

We are on trial for this great salvation. We have yielded ourselves to God—to take up the cross, to deny ourselves—and the Lord has accepted us. He has begotten us by His spirit, a vital agreement is entered into, there is no uncertainty, there is only one hope of our calling. It will mean either the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, or if we neglect, there is the danger of losing all. The exhortation is “Look to yourselves . . . that ye receive a full reward.” (2 John 8.)

How shall we escape (condemnation) if we neglect to fulfil our part of the agreement? This word “neglect” is loaded with great and grave possibilities. It means, “to be careless of,” “to make light of,” and is so used in the Parable of the Great King and the marriage supper unto His Son. (Matt. 22:5.) Those who were invited made light of the favour and excused themselves by attending to business affairs.

-Also in Heb. 8:9—”The Lord regarded not”—neglected Israel when they disobeyed His laws, and of course this exposed them to their enemies who overwhelmed them in disaster. The same consequences will overtake us if we neglect our great salvation. If we do not give earnest heed, the Lord will neglect us, and at once we are exposed to the flood of false doctrines surging around us on every side.

Why has “Babylon the great fallen, and become the cage of every unclean and hateful bird”? (Rev. 18:1, 2.) Why is she so thoroughly permeated with the plagues of error and delusion? Why is she and her partner, the world, groping in darkness, doubt and fear? Because of neglect of the Word of the Lord,—”Ye have taken away the keys of knowledge.” How shall they escape the dread calamities of this present world crisis? “If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear”? (1 Pet. 4:17, 18.)

Israel of old is another example. Unto (hem were committed the oracles of God. This made them more responsible than other people; hence, neglect of their privileges and responsibilities brought heavier punishment. Neglect of the Word of the Lord caused their fall from God’s favour as respects the heavenly

calling. "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for." Will we attain the position to which we are called?

Neglect of the truth and its service opens the way to all kinds of false doctrines and conduct, as well as strife over non-essential things, which are pushed forward as absolutely essential. We have seen this repeated often among those who claim to be in present truth. We may be very attentive to many important things in the spiritual life, and yet neglect of one or two things, even small things, can bring us into a crisis and bitter disappointment.

There is a parable which gives us this warning, and it applies to this present time. (See Matt. 25:1-12.) The disappointment was this—"The door was shut." A voice said, "I know you not." The neglect was "No oil in their vessels." There were ten virgins; all trimmed their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five took their lamps and oil in their vessels; five were foolish, having lamps, but no oil in their vessels. The result—too little, too late! Yet, they were so near to the one great and important union with the bridegroom; but "the door was shut." Neglect not so great salvation.

Neglect will soon reduce our spiritual vitality; or carelessness will dwarf the new creature. There is an abundant supply of wholesome, spiritual food of the Lord's providing--meat in due season, things new and old from His storehouse. No, the Lord has not neglected to meet the needs of His people to suit the times in which they live. (Luke 12:37.)

Other neglect may be along the line of opportunity in fellowship with others, to speak out the Word which ministers to the needs of others. We may say to ourselves--"The brethren know all about this portion of the Scripture under discussion; I need not remind them of anything." But are you sure? Some one may have forgotten; it is quite possible!

The Apostle Peter felt his responsibility along this line, and endeavoured to discharge it faithfully. —"I will not be negligent (not neglect) to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them and are established in present truth." (2 Pet. 1:12.)

Each member in the body of Christ knows something which can be imparted to others. Slow of speech, did you say? Not eloquent? That's what Moses said, but he did not neglect to use what he had, and the Lord gave the increase, and he indeed became eloquent.

The Apostle Paul urged a young Christian, "neglect not the gift that is in thee." (1 Tim.4:14.) Talents increase with the using. Cultivated fields become fruitful; neglect them and they soon produce thorns and briars. Fruit-bearing trees will soon produce poor quality fruit and will be attacked by disease if neglected. This is so in nature, and this law applies in the experience of the Christian who neglects so great a salvation offered us.

Another cause of spiritual decline is neglect to assemble with other consecrated brethren when opportunity affords. The Apostle Paul urged the brethren to forget not the assembling together, and this should increase as we enter farther into these last days. (Heb. 10:24, 25.) The difficulty sometimes is the overestimation of their own spirituality and underestimation of it in their brethren. A fear not proceeding from the truth has been injected into the spiritual mind by the fleshly mind; attention becomes focused on a supposed danger of being overtaken in bondage by associating with one or another group of Bible Students. But the real danger of isolationism is neglected, namely, the subtle reasonings of the natural mind has been overlooked; instead of attention being focused on its deceptions, it is turned suspiciously on others. Neglect not the assembling of yourselves; our great salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Angels are sent to minister to the heirs of salvation so great. (Heb. 1:14.) Prophets wrote and spoke of the favour which was to come to you. The Son of the Almighty God was sent to announce it, and was raised from the dead to prepare a place for you. Our gracious Father has engraven thee upon the palms of His hands,—”They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my special treasure.” (Mal. 3:14.) “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.”

Radio Witness on 6KY, Perth.

Our friends in Perth, W.A., are pleased to announce that they have commenced the broadcasts of the Frank and Ernest Dialogues again in those parts over station 6KY Perth at 5 p.m. on Sunday evenings. We trust and pray that this witness may be blessed of the Lord. Reports on the radio witness and general work of the Institute will appear in next month’s “Peoples Paper.”

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Assembling in Spirit and Truth.

FOR the thoughts contained in the following six paragraphs we are indebted to Brother T. Holmes of England, these remarks being extracts from his articles in the periodical “Herald of Christ’s Kingdom” in recent months. Our friends no doubt will appreciate these words of helpful and kindly exhortation on the subject of assemblies of the Lord’s people.

Perhaps the little gathering may be convened in some drab little room down some out-of-the-way back street—no matter, “He” will be there! Or perhaps it may be called in some humble home, where, till the appointed hour, the whole varied round of domestic life would be in full swing; never mind, “He” will be “in the midst.” Be the meeting large or small, ‘neath lofty dome or humble roof, His promise can be trusted to stand good, and “there I am in the midst” is a certainty.

The coming of the hour appointed changes the significance of meeting-room or auditorium. From that moment it becomes the “House of God” a heavenly Bethel, for He, as well as we, will be in attendance there. Happy indeed are they who, going to that gathering, expect to find Him there! For these there will be no disappointing absences.

Now if it be thus true that our Unseen Lord punctually presents Himself “there,” could any child of God consider it an act complimentary to the Majesty of His dear Name to be late (needlessly late) at that meeting place? Surely our early arrival “there” is at least, a first and primary element in that respectful reverence due to that great Name! A mere trifle, do you say, even if we are a little late? Unpunctuality is no trifle in an audience with a King!

Now supposing we have arrived in good and ample time, what shall our demeanour be, and with what expectations have we come? Supposing at such a gathering some old friend, unseen for years, is there, enhancing thus our joys, would we sit and chatter with our friend in all the “small talk” and “tittle-tattle” concerning all those years? Does the pleasure of meeting friends outweigh our expectancy of meeting with our Lord, Naturally our cup of joy is full, and there is much we want to say, but—shall we not remember the other more distinguished Visitor, who has promised to be there, What then is the purpose that brings us together in His Name, Is it first and foremost to ponder and probe some problem of our intellectual faith, to study and discuss the theme or subject for the afternoon or night;

Have we come to listen to some gifted tongue explain the heavenly verities? Well and good is this, for “hearing” and “discussion” have their place, but is there not one further reason for our presence “there”? Have we not come for an audience with our Lord and King? Have we not come to give thanks and praise to His blessed Name for all His shepherd care and tender faithfulness? Have we not come to thank our God and Father for all His excellent Greatness and wonderful Love?

It is here that the value of some dear “man of God” in “addressing” or “presiding” at the gathering is of worth untold. If, out of the academic discussion of an abstract truth, he can bring it (or its application) down and home to the hearts and circumstances of that congregation, how true it is that he can cause every heart to rise up in gratitude to

God, and thus send up before His face that odour of worship and reverence which is, to Him, an incense sweet . . .

On the walls of our homes we sometimes see the motto: “Christ is the Head of this house, the unseen Guest at every meal, the silent Listener to every conversation.” Perhaps if we could register a variation of

this motto upon our minds (and hearts) even if not upon the walls of our assembly halls, to read as below, it might help to bring us up more sharply to a sense of our privileges in Christ in spirit and in truth. Here is the variation: “Christ is the Head of this Ecclesia; the Unseen Guest in all our fellowship; the Silent Listener to every conversation.”

To the above, from the pen of Brother Holmes, may be added some further considerations which are found helpful in the conduct of our gatherings in the Lord’s name. Upon arrival in good and ample time at the appointed place of worship, and following the greetings amongst the friends in a cordial and joyful manner, it is found almost essential for the greatest blessing to be derived from our assemblies that at least about ten minutes silence and meditation be observed by all prior to the opening of each service. A lead in this direction can be given by each chairman for the various gatherings, and the friends should co-operate by taking their places and in silent communion with the Lord centre their minds upon Him and the object of their assembling in His presence. It is really not helpful to other brethren for friends even to take their places in good time and continue a whispering conversation with others until the service commences, as sometimes happens in gatherings of the Lord’s people. No, consideration for other members is an important indication that the truth and the spirit of the truth is really having the effect upon our hearts and minds that the Lord intended.

It is possible also for Class leaders to overlook the importance of example in the conduct of our gatherings. Thoughtfulness for the organist by seeing that the hymns are all in order well before the period of silence prior to each service, adds greatly to the smooth running and helpfulness of our assemblies.

Let it not be supposed that “the form of godliness” so prevalent in the nominal churches is being advocated in our gatherings. It is well known that apart from the ceremony and ritual in many church services little else is in evidence. However, as the Lord has blessed us with His truth, it is surely fitting that our gatherings should reflect the spirit, reverence and order worthy of the truth and of the One into whose presence we enter each time we gather in His name.

Another indication of Christian growth on the part of brethren who are parents is their consideration and love for the Lord and His people by making quite sure that their children do not interfere with the quietness essential for helpful Bible Studies or other gatherings. To illustrate: One Christian parent was asked recently about her child and whether she could bring it to the meetings sometimes. The answer was, “Oh, no! My child is not a Class baby,” meaning, that the child’s natural disposition was such that it would be improper to impose its presence on the gathering, and at the same time it would be improper to suppress the child (if that were possible) to enable it to attend.

Keeping the important purpose in mind in our assembling together, that it must be in spirit and in truth, and with the Lord Himself “in our midst,” truly we should feel that such gatherings are really hallowed of God, and we should be able to say with Jacob of old—“Surely the Lord is in this place . . . This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

Memorial Observances.

Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled on the night of March 31st to keep the Memorial of our Lord's death. Some studies during the preceding weeks on the various features of this observance, from Mark 14:12-25 and 1 Cor. 11:23-28, refreshed the minds of the friends and gave renewed joy and thankfulness of heart to God for the great sacrifice of His dear Son, our Lord and Redeemer.

During the service appropriate hymns (437, 42, 2 and 180 from B.S. Hymnal) were sung; Bible readings included Isa. 53; Matt. 26:17-50 and Luke 23:1-46, and prayers of gratitude were offered to our Heavenly Father with supplication for His blessing upon all dear members the world over.

Thoughts outlining the Memorial in general were also presented, showing that this institution given by our Lord on the night in which He was betrayed was based on the annual Jewish Passover. It was clearly seen that Christ wished His followers to keep this remembrance of Him on its anniversary—He was at that Passover, once and for all time, taking the place of the literal lamb which was slain each year as a picture of Himself. So Christ left us this Memorial Supper to be observed on the anniversary of His sacrifice “until He come”—until all the members of the Christ company have finished their sacrifice in the steps of their Lord and Head.

From the Apostle Paul in particular the deeper significance of the observance was also brought to mind—that those partaking of the emblems were thus showing their willingness to sacrifice, even unto death, as Christ set us the example.

Following the blessing of the emblems the friends solemnly, yet gladly, partook of them with hearts full of gratitude to God and our dear Saviour, and with the concluding hymn the friends quietly withdrew to their homes in solemn meditation, fortified by the Lord's grace for their own Gethsemanes, and final victory through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

Geelong, Vic.

On Friday evening, March 31st, at 8 p.m., the brethren in this city met again in the same room to remember “the passover Lamb, slain for us.”

It was done quietly and thankfully, all present being appreciative of the Lord's sacrifice on their behalf, and the privilege extended through that shed blood of becoming members of the “Body of Christ,” to share His sufferings now, and His glory in the Kingdom.

Hymns (148, 437), prayer, Scripture readings (2 Cor. 5:14-21; Eph. 4:1-6, 17-24), and a short address, preceded the partaking of the emblems, after which the hymn (166) brought the little gathering of remembrance to a close.

Adelaide.

The Memorial of our Saviour's death was observed by the Adelaide Class on the evening of March 31st. It was a very helpful and impressive service.

After reading the portions of the Scripture dealing with our Lord's last hours on earth, also the Scriptures in Exodus 12, etc., and a brief review of the significance of Christ's death as our ransom-price, we partook of the emblems with hearts full of gratitude to God for His goodness in providing such a Saviour to take away our sins, and thanking Him for all He has done for us in granting us the privilege of sharing with Christ in His sufferings at the present time, so that, if faithful unto death, we may also be permitted to share in the great work of uplift for the whole world of mankind in the Kingdom age. "Thanks be unto God, for His unspeakable gift."

Gawler, S.A.

On the anniversary of our Lord's death a small company of consecrated Christians met together at Gawler to celebrate the dying request of our Redeemer—the Memorial of His death.

We each considered again the recorded prophecy of His experiences, sufferings and death written hundreds of years in advance of the event, and we saw it fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. We reviewed also His experience and sufferings as written in the Gospels, all so submissively and voluntarily undertaken in order to successfully bring lasting blessings to us who now believe, and in due time to all mankind.

The Memorial also brought fresh to our minds the privilege which is still ours to demonstrate our willingness to suffer and sacrifice, in order to share in His glory by and by, to which He has graciously invited us. "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him."

We noted that this honour is only for those who faithfully fulfil the conditions placed before us by the Lord and the Apostles.

Perth.

Our Lord's Memorial was celebrated by 18 brethren on March 31st, corresponding to the 14th of Nisan. Our minds were brought back to the Jewish slaying of spotless lambs on that night, so that the firstborns might be passed over during the night and the rest of Israel liberated the next morning. As this prefigured our Lord Jesus as the undefiled One who was introduced as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," our thoughts were on our Saviour who offered up His life at Jordan, and at Calvary could say, "It is finished." The agony and the ignominy that He endured for us all, that He should bear the sin of man and redeem us by His ransom sacrifice, is beyond what we deserve. However, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

In an upper room we remembered our Lord's sacrifice, keeping the Memorial which He instituted that night, that all Christians throughout the age could follow on with it yearly and "do this" in memory of Him. His broken body and shed blood shown in such simple emblems were partaken of by the brethren, each realising the tremendous import it is to us all, and what a favour it is to be able to share with Christ these things, so as to have that communion or participation with Him in His death and in His life, for we know that "if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him." Halleluyah! What a Saviour!

At the close of the service we sang a hymn and quietly dispersed, remembering how diligent we each

need to be to fulfil our “covenant by sacrifice.”

Tasmania.

On March 31st three sisters assembled to celebrate the Memorial of Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us. At the afternoon study an article was read under the heading “Our Gathering at the Paschal Supper.” Also the 9th and 10th chapters of Hebrews were read and meditated upon.

In the evening we had some thoughts on Luke 22 and 1 Cor. 11:23-34. Finally, in giving thanks for so great a privilege, our hearts went out to all those assembled in obedience to our Lord’s request, “This do in remembrance of me.” ‘

Sydney.

The brethren gathered on Friday evening, March 31st, in our usual room in Sydney, included in the 19 present being a few visiting friends. A brother gave the address of welcome, then the hymn, “When I survey the wondrous cross,” was sung, followed by prayer and the address.

After referring to Exodus 12:1-14 the significance of the main types was explained, the antitypical connection as set out in Matt. 26:17-30 was then brought forward and considered, and crowned by the invitation to keep the feast in purity contained in 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. Then the breaking of the bread was mentioned as symbolising how we must be broken with Him in the body, to live in the spirit. Also the cup picturing the poured out blood of Christ was mentioned, the blood of the New Covenant, by which the Church has the promise of life now, and mankind in the Millennium. Then the features of atonement and reconciliation were brought forward by which the Church has fellowship with God now, and mankind has fellowship with Him when restored to perfection. Lastly, the friends were exhorted to strive earnestly in the narrow way and to cast out of their hearts all impure elements of anger and malice, drawing near to God and to the brethren in the bonds of love, with a pure heart, so that they might partake of the emblems worthily.

Then the emblems were administered after a blessing by the chairman, and with the hymn “Man of Sorrows, What a Name!” we quietly dispersed.

Canberra.

This year the Ecclesia met at the home of a brother in Deakin to hold in remembrance the death of our Redeemer. There does not seem to be any event in history that is as outstanding as this one, because of the hope that it brings of release from the grip of death for all who come unto God by Christ.

So gratefully we took this opportunity to show our love for our Lord and remember Him. Also the privilege of becoming associated with our Lord was emphasised at this time. It may not appear to some to be a privilege to suffer with Him, bearing His reproach, but friends in adversity make friends in prosperity, and the reward of faithfulness is not given to the faithless.

The singing of appropriate hymns and reading of the Scriptures gave an atmosphere of devotion and consecration among those present. We look with joy to the end of the journey, for it seems now nigh at hand—the vale of tears giving place to the hills of delight and mountains of joy. Our prayer is that we may soon drink the new wine in the Kingdom with our Lord.

Glenbrook, N.S. W.

At our home in Glenbrook four partook of the emblems at this solemn feast and although only a small company we were reminded of our dear Master’s words that where two or three were gathered together in His name, there He would be in their midst, and truly that was our blessed experience. As we remembered all dear brethren in prayer we had the blessed assurance in

our hearts that on this solemn occasion we were all spiritually drawn together by the invisible hands of God's great and mighty love. Praise His holy name!

From another brother and sister in New South Wales the following is to' hand:

We observed the Memorial together in our own room, with the assurance that, according to His promise, the Lord was with us. The reading and meditating on it beforehand was very helpful indeed, as well as the actual observance of it.

Nth. Queensland.

Just a few lines to advise that a party of eight celebrated the Lord's Supper last evening, March 31st, this being the tenth occasion we have observed this institution annually.

We opened by the singing of an appropriate hymn, then a talk on the origin of the Passover when the Israelites were freed, its annual observance over the centuries, and the change made by the Saviour just before His betrayal and death. The reading of related Scriptures was followed by prayer of thankfulness for the elements and the blessing of the memorial, then partaking of the elements accompanied by readings, and concluding with prayer.

ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, CONVENTION, 1950.

BEREAN BIBLE CLASS.



Back Row—Messrs. W. Pulleine, G. F. Lancashire, J. Forrest, H. J. Bottrill, R. J. Martin, W. A. Smith, H. Bartel, E. E. Martin, and J. Jordan (and Josephina).

Second Back Row—Mr. C. Faehrmann, Mrs. G. F. Lancashire, Mrs. J. Neale, Mr. F. Grivell, Mr. C. Kaesehagen, Mr. C. Beuthin, Mrs. J. Jordan, Miss Eleanor Jordan, and Mr. E. Almond.

Middle Row—Miss P. Barrie, Mesdames H. Bartel, L. Beale, M. Cains, M. A. Bryan, A. Driesner, R. Hooks.

Second Front Row—Mesdames V. A. Downs, E. Almond, E. H. McLean, L. March, A. Richardson, C. Kaesehagen, W. Skurray, Mr. J. Neale. Sitting--Mrs. C. Beuthin, Miss E. M. Langdon, Mrs. R. Hodge, Master John Neale, and Mrs. R. J. Martin.

Convention News from Adelaide

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide was once again a happy and helpful season of spiritual fellowship. The Lord's blessing upon the gatherings of His people during the four days was much appreciated by all. Because of this we offer our thanks to the Giver of all good, to whom all thanks are due. The presence of a number of visiting friends from Victoria and country parts of South Australia, added greatly to the helpfulness and blessing of the Convention.

It was pleasing to note the earnest faith and zeal of the various members. Many times one heard expressions of appreciation and thanksgiving to God for the privilege of being able to attend the Convention. The Apostle Paul, we feel sure, was guided by heavenly wisdom when he urged his hearers to "not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, and so much more as ye see the day approaching." Living in this world of bustle and strain, Christians to-day need the helps provided in the meetings together with other Christians, to offset the pressure of worldly things. We want to hasten our preparation for the kingdom, and we feel that to meet together with other Christians in Conventions and in regular Class meetings is a very valuable means of grace for which we sincerely thank God.

It is good, as time goes by, to see a deepening of the work of grace in the various members. We thank God for this, and pray for the continuance of His favour and blessing, and supply of His gracious spirit, so that our hearts may be more completely sanctified and set apart for His use.

One thing noticeable in our Convention was the loving desire of the various members to serve each other. How happy and helpful our meetings can be when we learn to forget self, to lose sight of self-interest; to come together with hearts prepared to learn more of the meek and lowly Saviour; to be taught of Him and not to think too highly of ourselves and of our own opinions. We may have a great deal of head knowledge of the Bible; we may explain its teachings ably and eloquently, and yet we would be nothing in God's sight if we are lacking in the Christlike quality of love—disinterested love.

The addresses by various brethren were helpful and the topics were—"The Great Physician"; "Our Responsibility to the Truth"; "Neglect Not so Great Salvation"; "The Indwelling of Humility"; "Watch and Pray"; "Treasure"; "Minority Importance"; "Is Communism a Danger to Christianity?"; "The Restitution of All Things Foretold"; "Walking in the Light" and "Ministers of Reconciliation."

Each day a Bible study was taken up and the following passages were considered, from which many helpful thoughts were gleaned:—Heb. 10:19-25; 1 Pet. 4:1-8; 1 Cor. 15:17-28, and 1 Cor. 13:1-10.

A Question Meeting, and Praise and 'Testimony Meetings proved helpful; also the session on "A Hymn I Like and the Fellowship I Find Therein" was, as usual, most interesting and profitable. The discussion on "What are the Special Advantages of Christians To-day?" also brought some helpful expressions. Surely we have many blessings to-day which others in former days of the Gospel Age did not enjoy. How we should value our privileges and seek to avail ourselves of their assistance so that we may run with patience the race set before us.

Many messages of love and good wishes were sent to the Convention from various brethren, and these were much appreciated. The message sent by the Convention gathering to the various brethren and Classes is found in Jude 20, 21, 24, 25.

The Convention came to a close in the usual way. The Love Feast at which we say "good-bye" and sing "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," was followed by the hymn "God be with you till we meet again," and the closing prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The Love that is Perfect.

(Selected.)

WHEN we can say that we are not jealous or pained, or made uneasy at the success, or superior excellence, or reputation of another; that we rejoice to hear another praised, even though it be along a line that rivals us—our love is perfected, in this particular; for “Love envies not.”

When we can say that we have no desire for display or vainglory—no desire that others shall think we have superior talents, abilities; when we always feel an unwillingness to put ourselves forward, as well as a lack of confidence in ourselves—then, in these particulars our love is perfect; for “Love vaunteth (boasteth) not itself.”

When we can say that it does not make us feel that “we are somebody,” when we are praised; when we have a modest opinion of our abilities, successes, or achievements—we are in these particulars made perfect in love; for “Love is not puffed up.”

When we have the inward desire and intent to be kind, polite, and courteous to all; when we would not willingly hurt another’s feelings—we are in this particular perfected in love; for “Love doth not behave itself unseemly.”

When in deciding matters as to what we shall do or say, we are influenced, not so much by how it may affect our own selfish interests, but rather by how it will please the Master, how it will help others—in this particular we can say that the love of God is perfected in us; for “Love seeketh not her own.”

When things do not go to please us; when through others we have been put to trouble, and we are not provoked to anger or impatience—in this particular our love is made perfect; for “Love is not provoked.”

When another injures us in any way, and we can forget it, in the sense of not holding any malignant recollections, but can drop the matter, forget the fault, and act in as far as it will be best for the cause of the Master, as though it had not been—then is our love in this particular perfected; for “Love thinketh no (taketh no account of) evil.”

When we have no feeling of satisfaction or rejoicing on the occasion of another who may have injured us suffering

a like injury; when we have no inclination to say, “he is getting as good as he sent; now he knows how I felt when he injured me”—our love is made perfect in this; for “Love rejoiceth not in iniquity.”

When one trial after another comes, and we do not complain, or murmur, but bear it patiently—we then can say, our love is made perfect; for “Love endureth all things.”

When we can bear being ill-treated, misrepresented over and over again, and can sing and bear it—our love is made perfect; for “Love suffereth long and is kind.”

When we can always put the best construction upon another’s conduct, and say we cannot see the heart, we do not know the motive—then we can say our love is made perfect; for “Love believeth all things.”

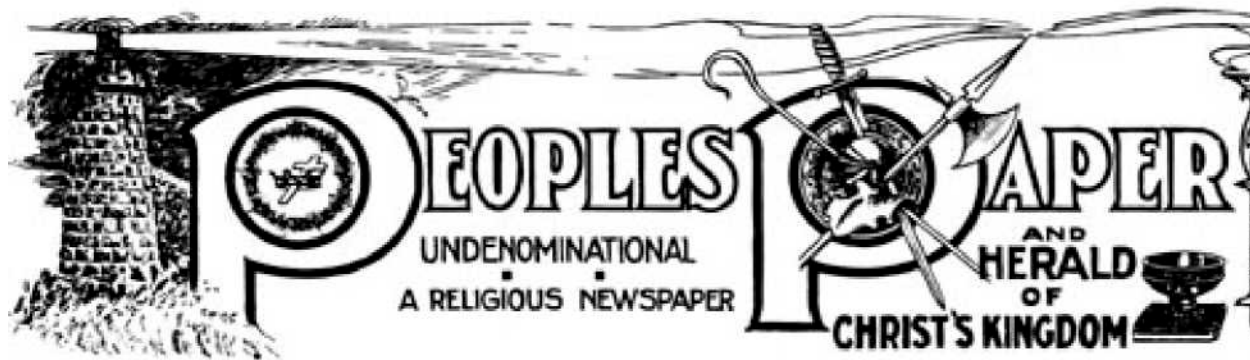
When we can say, after we are compelled to believe that another has gone wrong, “It is so, but I hope it will be better with him later”—then our love is perfect in this particular; for “Love hopeth all things.”

My Soul, be on Thy Guard.

WHILE, as the Apostle predicted, “perilous times” are upon us, in which some in the church will “stumble,” and some “fall,” and when “the love of many shall wax cold” let us not forget that it is “he that endureth (faithfully) to the end (of his trial), the same shall be saved.” Remember the Apostle’s advice, to take trials and oppositions and misrepresentations cheerfully, joyously, patiently, knowing that, so endured, they will • “work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” But, as the Apostle adds, to secure such blessed results from trials, persecutions and oppositions, we must remember to “look not at the things that are seen (earthly things and prospects), but at things that are unseen (the heavenly and eternal things).” We are to endure “as seeing Him who is invisible.” Greater is He that is with us than all that be against us. (Heb. 11:27; 1 John 4:4-8.) “Who is he that will harm you (really) if ye be followers of that which is good?” (Read 1 Pet. 3:13-16; Rom. 8:31-39.) The opposition of evil can work only good to “the elect,” those who are called according to God’s purpose. To all who are of the true Zion the promise is, “No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper.”

When that noble servant of God, John Wesley, was zealous in opposing Satan, and preaching a full consecration to God, he provoked Satan’s enmity, and the latter found mouthpieces amongst ambitious and zealous “false brethren,” who spread abroad vile rumours from time to time, not only assailing his teachings, but even his moral character. His plan was to make no defence. He argued that if he should engage in personal disputes it would be just what Satan would want—a hindrance to his work. Finally, however, when a most malicious rumour reflecting on his moral character, was started by some prominent persons, and the entire work seemed likely to be greatly injured by it, his brother, Charles, and some others came to him and said, “John, you must answer this charge or your reputation is gone.”

John replied in substance thus: “No; I will keep right along with my work. When I consecrated myself to the Lord, I gave him my reputation as well as all else that I possess. The Lord is at the helm! Our Lord Jesus, by His faithfulness ‘made Himself of no reputation,’ and was crucified as a blasphemer and between outlaws, yet He opened not His mouth. No, I will make no defence. A certain class, evil at heart, would believe the evil reports regardless of my denials; and those thus alienated will no doubt, as in the early church, go ‘out from us because they were not of us.’ The Lord knoweth them that are His, and will keep His own; and none shall pluck them out of His hand. Besides the Lord may see that some are thinking of me, rather than of Him. and His message which I seek to declare.”



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Lest Ye Be Wearied.

(Melbourne Convention Address.)

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with SO great a cloud of witnesses, let US lay aside every weight, and; the sin which doth SO easily beset US, and let US run with patience the race that is set before US, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith ; who for the joy that was set before him endured the CROSS, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” (Heb. 12:1-3.1)

THERE is a natural tendency amongst people to tire of a thing when the novelty wears off. Even the hearing of the truth, strange as it may seem, becomes a weariness to some after a time. It is the same in the army with the soldiers— they are happy when they are marching forward with the drums playing, but when the cold weather comes and they encounter wintry conditions, and there are not so many uplifting influences around them, there is a tendency to grow weary, and army life does not seem nearly so attractive as it did at first.

This is true in our spiritual warfare, in “fighting the good fight of faith.” There are times when all around seems joyous. Such occasions are these Conventions, and it is good that it is so, and we are stimulated and encouraged.

There are times, again, when the clouds hang low and darkness and chilliness surround us and we are liable to become discouraged. It is partly for this reason that the Apostle has directed us to “consider Him,” that thereby we might be stimulated and encouraged to press on, and inspire others. He knew just what we would need, so we have this thought, “lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

Then we have St. Paul’s exhortation in Gal. 6:10, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” And 1 Cor. 15:58, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Paul exhorts us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and he says, “so much the more as ye see the day approaching.” Why? Because that day will have its peculiar trials, difficulties, and temptations. The story of the Cross will likely seem old, not as new as some things, and consequently we

will need to bear each other up.; Because cause there is danger of becoming lukewarm spiritually, it is generally recommended that the Lo 111 people meet together, for to do so is stimulating In proportion as we seek to stir up others in the way, we are thereby assuring our own minds. We can therefore see wisdom in all of God's arrangements in respect of His truth and the associations, of his people.

In every Christian there is danger of growing weary in well-doing. Well-doing costs something,, it reams sacrifice.

If you are serving IF Lord's cause you are denying yourself in some way. Unless we have some special love for the Lord and the Truth there' may be a tendency for us to say: "This is a very tedious work, I am pressed in many other directions, there are those who are inviting me to see them. So many things come to us that we might feel tempted to slacken our efforts. The world, the flesh and the Adversary are pressing hard to draw us not exactly from the prize, but from the narrow way leading to the prize. They would slacken our zeal ,and beat our courage down. They would make us faint, so as to say, I am so tired I cannot do any mote. Doubtless we have all had experiences like this. If we become faint in body we may rest ourselves, but if we are faint in mind and discouraged 'it is more difficult to become refreshed. So we must keep this thought of the Apostle before us—what shall we do in case we get wearied and faint in our minds? He tells us, "Consider Him."

We know to whom he is referring here, the bike great "Him" in all the world. We are to consider how much He endured without getting faint 'Or weary, without giving up His work. He undertook to do a certain work, and so have we. In some respects we have undertaken to do the same work that Jesus did. Let us "consider Him" lest we be wearied and faint in following His footsteps. Of course this is directed to the Lord's own people, those who have taken up the cross, seeking to walk in His steps, the way of self-denial. So we are to consider what He endured without getting faint in carrying out God's plan; He endured in contradiction of sinners against Himself. This is the very kind of difficulty which we have in our endeavour to carry out the Father's will. If there were no doubts, or trials, this would be a very pleasant world to go through. It is because we have to swim upstream against the current that we have such a difficult work. Watch a swimmer endeavouring to swim upstream against a current in a river, and note how he must battle against the forward flow of the currents. A moment's relaxation, and the current will carry him down. With us there is a natural tendency, as well in the currents of thought about us in the world, to pull us back in the opposite direction to that in which we are striving to go.

So we must consider Christ, His example, His words, lest we become faint. There are many reasons why we might become so. One of them is that we might consider the opposition against us is too great. Jesus had the opposition of all those of national influence in His day. He was continually misrepresented, until finally the slanders culminated in His being called a profane person, who had spoken blasphemies about God, saying He was like God and as great as God. This was part of the charge against Him. Although the accusation was not true, nevertheless He endured it, even though He had power to stop it. If He could cast out demons and open the eyes of the blind, surely He could have done something to change things in His own case! Why didn't He do it? Because He was doing the Father's will, and it was the Father's will that He should bear witness to the Truth and demonstrate His loyalty in connection with it.

Is it not the same with us? Why does the Father care about our loyalty? Because He is seeking a certain class for a certain purpose. In Jesus' case He was seeking One to be the Head of the Church. In our case He is selecting those who are to be members of the body. God has a great plan which contemplates the overthrow of sin and the blessing of all the families of the earth, and He is now seeking those who are so in sympathy with His plan and arrangements that they are willing to suffer for His sake. He is seeking those who would rather suffer death than shrink from doing His will. So our loyalty, faith, patience, endurance must be tested. This is our glorious position, and we are considering One who never made a mistake in carrying out the Father's will, yet He suffered as though He had made many serious mistakes.

He suffered as a disloyal person, although He had always been most loyal. The judges declared He had no patriotism at all, yet He was loyal to His own nation in every respect. As Jesus said, "They hated Me without a cause."

Let us turn these things over in our minds. Let us consider Him. This kind of suffering is necessary, for the Father would not be wise in exalting to such a high position anyone who was not thoroughly loyal. He could not give even His own Son the Divine nature without a thorough testing. Our Lord, as a New Creature, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was not tempted as a fallen man; the temptations which come to the New Creature are different from those which come to the sinner. Jesus was tempted to become weary and faint in His mind. This is one of the ways in which special temptations from Satan were placed before Him. Satan told our Lord He would get rid of this disgrace if He would co-operate with him, and so avoid those things which would necessarily come to Him if he should continue to walk in God's way. Our Lord's answer was, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Another temptation was to show what great power He had received as a spirit-begotten son, to use this power to satisfy His own natural appetite, or make a show before the people. So with us, we may be tempted to do things in a showy way instead of the humble way marked out for us. We may expect to have the same temptations our Lord had. Therefore we should be on guard, that we may prove loyal to the Father.

"If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." The reason why the Father is so careful in making the selection of the Church class is that they are to reign with Christ. He could not take disloyal or careless ones to be the rulers and teachers of the people in the coming Kingdom. He would not select those who did not resist sin. He must select those who had first learned humility, before He could use them to teach humility to others. God wants priests and judges to be associated with His Son for a thousand years, such as will prove faithful under all circumstances—those in whom He can place absolute confidence, who have been proved faithful under test. This is the reason He tests and proves, during this Gospel Age, every one whom He will receive for that future work.

The call of this Gospel Age is therefore one to sacrifice. Our Lord says, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me." The Old Testament says the same thing—"Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

Whoever would follow Jesus must prove his faithfulness by his willingness to sacrifice. "My son, give me thine heart." That is what God wants, our hearts. We see how Christ endured without growing weary or giving up. What satisfaction has come to us!

We see, then, how we must be loyal to the Truth. We sometimes have not been careful enough in this, or that matter, and consequently made some mistakes. We can often find some fault in ourselves, thus demonstrating we are partly to blame for our sufferings. In our Lord's case it was different. He received the slanders, misrepresentations and everything else that came against Him without having any fault in Him at all. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Still He endured. We, though following in His steps, have not as much to endure as had the Master.

For our encouragement, let us consider the outcome of our faithful endurance. While the Father let Jesus die on the cross as a malefactor, He did not let our Lord go permanently, but kept His promise to raise Him from the dead. We have the promise that as the Father raised up Jesus from the dead, so also He will raise up those found worthy, being faithful unto death. In raising up Jesus, the Father has given us a testimony to His faithfulness. In the case of Jesus, no-one had set Him an example; it was all by faith with Him, none had gone before. It is different with us. Besides, we have not nearly so much to lose as had our Lord. However, if we trust God He is faithful to keep us and do what He has promised, and raise us up

with our Head.

The same power that worked in Jesus to raise Him from the dead, the Apostle says, will work in us in quickening our mortal bodies by His spirit that dwelleth in us. Let us consider, then, what great things God has done for us. Let

us consider also that He has promised us a share in our Lord's glory if we are found faithful. It is almost beyond our conception. Unless God had made it so plain, we would not have been able to receive it. But it has been stated over and over again in so many different ways, that there is no room for doubt. How wonderful it all is!

Consider Him! Consider that God has highly exalted Him. Consider what a great privilege has been afforded us of walking in His steps, especially as our lives are so imperfect and unsatisfactory, even to ourselves, and this little life is all we have to give. What a thought, that God will count our sacrifice as a part of that which Jesus gave! We are to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; having an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those called according to God's purpose.

We are now in the "last time," right at the close of the Age. Although the world in general does not understand the signs of the changing dispensation—"None of the wicked shall understand," as the faithful Daniel said—the wise in heavenly wisdom shall understand. How carefully the people of God should weigh their very thoughts! How carefully we should walk! "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness!" "Ye therefore, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest ye be carried away by the error of the wicked and fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and forever."

In view of what we see ahead of us as sharers with Jesus of His glory, honour and immortality, we should be striving ever to follow Him. We should be living in the future rather than in the past. Do not let us think too much of the past. Let us not dwell upon our mistakes and shortcomings, and permit ourselves to be cast down. Let us believe that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us look forward, keep our faces Zionward, looking unto Jesus. "Consider Him"

We should have such an appreciation of these wonderful mercies of God, wonderful blessings of forgiveness, and show it forth in our conduct. How we should be seeking, in our conduct, to reflect something of the light of the glory of the Lord, showing forth His praise. That is why God is dealing with us, that we should reflect more and more His attributes, feeble though it be, and by means of this fragile, earthen vessel.

Let us give heed more and more, then, to the suggestion of the great Apostle, and "Consider Him" whom the Father has so highly exalted. He has called us, let us remember, to the same high and heavenly calling, and has promised to help us all the way through. If we seek to do this, we shall cease to be weary and faint, and be strong in the Lord. We shall go on from grace to grace, from glory to glory, transformed by the renewing of our minds, proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Then ultimately, by God's grace, we shall attain unto the glorious things He has in reservation for those who love Him, more than parents, or children, or self, or any other person or thing.

"Hold on thy way with hope uncilled,
By faith and not by sight ;
And thou shalt own His word fulfilled,
'At eve it shall be light.' "

Just for a moment we would like to consider some of the qualities of our Lord Jesus, as we endeavour to give heed to the Apostle's directions in these words, "Consider Him." Let us think of His courage. The courage of our Lord under the difficult experiences He went through, is surely good for us to think about. We notice His courage in the hour of temptation, when the Adversary endeavoured to persuade Him to take some other methods than those marked out by Divine providence. He met it by the reply, "It is written." We note how our Lord's heart was loyal to God, it was sufficient for Him to know God's will to enlist His prompt obedience. His courage, born of faith in God, enabled Him to decide promptly and positively in harmony with the directions of the Word of God.

We can consider, also, His courage in doing the work God had given Him to do. There are wonderful lessons for us as we note His zeal, diligence, patient endurance, perseverance in spreading the Gospel message. Nothing would daunt Him. He was bold as a lion, while meek and gentle as a lamb.

We know, also, the Lord's courage in the presence of His enemies. Confidence in God's faithfulness enabled Him to be brave even under trying conditions, and surrounded by conditions which threatened the loss of His life. He knew the Heavenly Father would not permit anything to come upon His Son which would not be overruled for good, so faith in God enabled Him to face the future with courage and confidence and peace of heart.

So may we consider our Lord's courage in the doing of God's will, and try to cultivate this same quality. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

There is a kind of courage which is begotten of self-esteem, lack of humility. But this is not the kind enjoined upon the Lord's people. They are to be both tender-hearted and humble-minded, yet courageous. The spirit of courage possessed by the saints is based largely upon their faith in the Lord. Realising the divine love and providential care, these can apply to themselves the gracious assurance that the Father Himself loveth them, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to His purpose. It is this realisation of Divine all-wisdom and all-power that gives the strength of heart referred to in our text. It will be readily seen, then, that this courage is based upon faith, though of course the faith must have a foundation of knowledge. The proper relationship of our growth is primarily knowledge, faith, courage, activity, and all these continue to grow, and in their maturity will make us wise, faithful, courageous overcomers, in respect of the spiritual matters to which we have been called.

Sometimes we realise our deficiencies and are not able to locate the cause. Someone says: I want to be an overcomer, to gain the victory over the spirit of the world, over the tendencies of my own fallen flesh and over the whiles of the Adversary, but somehow I fail. Such should learn to look for the source of failure, and fortify himself in respect of the same. Let him first ask: Is my failure to overcome due to a lack of courage? Am I fearful, and so unable to fight the good fight of faith and gain the victory? If he has the courage, he may find he has not been sufficiently trusting the Lord, but running too much in his own strength. Such should remember the Apostle's words, "When I am weak, then I am strong." When I am strong in self-assurance I am weak, because the Lord wishes me to rely not upon my own, but upon His strength and grace. If the courage be found sufficient, the reason evidently is that the faith is lacking. It may be a lack of knowledge on which to build faith, or a lack of exercise and development of faith. The knowledge is to be sought from the right quarter, in harmony with the Lord and His Word, and the faith exercised continuously, recognising the Lord's interest in us as His children, noticing the leadings of Divine providence in our lives. The Apostle John says, "Perfect love casteth out fear." There is a proper fear or reverence. Perfect love will not cast out this fear, but rather intensify it. The fear which love casts

out is timidity, a servile fear or dread of the Lord, or Satan, or fallen angels, or men. Perfect love cannot do without knowledge, faith, courage, overcoming.

The spirit of courage needs cultivation by the Lord's people, and this means growth in grace. If calamity befall or threaten us, we should immediately think of the fact that our Lord assures us that even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our Father's knowledge, and we are of much more value than many sparrows. This thought at once strengthens the heart, nerves the arm, provided no earthborn cloud intervenes between our souls and the love He has for us. If a cloud does obscure the Father's love, we must the more persistently get from behind it, by getting our hearts right with God, going to Him with earnest prayer, confessing our transgressions and requesting grace to restore us. "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart." Surely this is one of the blessings assured us in the Word of God. In the Divine Word, courage is necessary in order to gain strength and victory. Someone has said, "One with God is the majority." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" With the courage to grasp this thought, and hold it, things almost superhuman seem possible to the Lord's people, while without this courage they may naturally be weak and easily offended.

Never before, perhaps, was courage so needed as it will be in the evil day now upon us. But the prophet's descriptions of the great troublesome time before us are very figurative when they speak of fire and clouds and pillars of smoke. But the consecrated children of God need have no timidity in respect of these matters if they have proper courage developed by the proper means, and have faith founded upon the knowledge of Divine revelation. Therefore, whether storms and fightings eventuate, whether religious or political or of whatever kind, the child of God rests secure. "Be of good courage."

The Scriptures abound with testimonies to the fact that the severe trials of the near future will be along the lines of deception. Surely we have that around us, even at the present time. The Lord will send strong delusion upon the world, that men may believe a lie. These deceptions are to affect the whole world, including its wise men, and practically everyone except the "very elect," who will be preserved, not through their own wisdom, but supported through the power of God. There shall arise false prophets, and great wonders shall be shown, so as to deceive the "very elect" if possible.

Our Lord in His parable of the wheat and tares tells of the harvest work, and how at the right time He would gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. It is by this gathering that they will be protected, when others will be deceived. They are not to be gathered physically, but spiritually; their minds, hearts, affections, are to be gathered together, centered. Our Lord is the great centre to which His elect must all be gathered if they would have His rest and peace, if they would overcome the world, the flesh and the peculiar snares of the Adversary which will be allowed to come on all, and more or less entrap all except the elect class. So the Psalmist says, "Gather my saints together unto me." "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, in Him will I trust." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

No wonder, then, that no harm shall come nigh them. How could harm come to anyone living close to the Lord, dwelling in the secret place by full consecration? "He shall cover them with His feathers, and under His wings shall they trust." We feel His warmth, and have His pinions to protect us against danger. We have the comfort of His love and strong protection against any possible harm that could come to us. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee . . . Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee." This nearness to God to which the very elect will be gathered will be the source of their protection.

“Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We’re travelling through Immanuel’s land
To fairer prospects nigh.”

(To be continued.)

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 4 6 (85 cents) per annum,
poet paw,

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

The Institute's Work.

THE Berean Bible Institute has covered another ' year's work at the end of April and the opportunity is taken again to present a review of the efforts of our dear friends in this service of the Lord, which has been carried out so gladly by many who have received so much blessing themselves from the truths of God's Word. In so doing, our hearts are lifted up in praise and thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for all His favours and blessings upon the work in His name.

By means of our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom," now in its 33rd year of publication, regular contact is made with our brethren and friends in various lands throughout the world, and many continue to appreciate the message contained in the columns of the "Paper" from Month to month; especially, of course, those who are fully acquainted with the message of "present truth" and are walking in the consecrated way, in the steps & Christ, by the Lord's grace.

- ' The assistance given by our brethren in the pages of "Peoples Paper" is greatly appreciated, and should other friends be able to supply articles of a sound and helpful nature, they are also invited to forward them along.

It will be observed by the balance sheet of the General Tract Fund that a deficiency is supplied to cover the production of the "Peoples Paper." Higher costs of all printing makes especially welcome any extra subscriptions to our periodical, and it is a good help when our friends introduce the "Paper" to others, and suggest that the subscription of 4/6 is not a great outlay for a year's supply of helpful articles on the truths of God's Word reaching them once a month. Extra copies of the "P. Paper" are freely supplied to all who can use them for distribution where good may be done. Considerable numbers of our monthly paper are also supplied free to all who enquire for literature as a result of the various forms of witness work.

Supplies of books and booklets have been despatched throughout this land and overseas during the past year. Special attention has been paid to the booklets "Plan of God—in Brief," "The Manner of Christ's Return and Appearing," and "Our Lord's Great Prophecy." Also the study "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and kindred volumes are going out with good results, as well as the numerous smaller publications. A new edition of "Poems of Dawn" and "The Ten Camels" were produced during the twelve months, and it is hoped to provide new supplies of other helpful books in the months ahead, notification of which will appear in the "Peoples Paper."

Both tracts and Kingdom Cards are a good means of witnessing to the message of the Kingdom in a general way, and supplies are available for all who can place them to advantage. This applies particularly where there is no radio witness, as does also the use of coupon advertisements for literature in suitable newspapers. The Consolation Cards are being used to good advantage amongst the bereaved; various Classes and friends send these through the post from lists of names and addresses found in the newspapers. This is undoubtedly a very good work on behalf of those in sorrow with the loss of loved ones. These Consolation Cards, as well as the Kingdom Cards and tracts, are supplied free to all by the General Tract Fund.

The public witness by "preaching the Word" has not been neglected, as a number of public lectures have been given, and which seem to be appreciated by some new friends as well as by the brethren. The glad story of the Plan of Salvation surely rejoices our own hearts, as well as finding those who may be seeking the Lord, if haply they may find Him and enter into the "so great salvation" still being offered in this harvest time of the Gospel Age.

The General Tract Fund Account reveals the very good financial assistance, voluntarily given by our dear friends from near and far, to the general work in hand, in the service of the Lord. The sacrifices of present-day good things enables the work to continue, by the Lord's providence, and we trust that all using their talents in this way, as in all other ways, may realise God's blessing compensating even now, as only He is able to do. All expenses have been covered, and the credit balance of £ 29 is carried over to commence another year.

The Reserve Fund, made up of two main contributions which are also much appreciated, as unto the Lord, is self explanatory. The credit of £ 111 19/3 in this fund will be available for use in the service of the truth cause, as seems good in the sight of the Lord.

In viewing the days ahead, it is with full confidence and trust in the Lord, knowing that He is in complete control of His harvest work, and that every feature of the Home-gathering is being accomplished on time. There is still much to be done in the harvest field by willing workers, and all such should esteem it their greatest privilege to be associated with the Lord of the harvest in these last days, on behalf of fellow members, and at the same time making their own calling and election sure, by the grace and strength from above. Would all our dear brethren join in prayer that the Lord's guidance and blessing may be upon the harvest work, that His good will may be done, even the harvest-home accomplished, to His glory. "Now good word and work."

General Tract Fund.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/'49	£7 4 6
„ Donations .. .	486 19 1
	£494 3 7
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples Paper" .	£ 101 4 7
„ Hall Rents, Advertising, etc	28 5 1
„ General Expenses (Office, etc.)	35 1 10

our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every

Towards Personal and House Expenses . 240 0 0

Postage 37 18 8

Pilgrim Work, Sundries .. 17 4 0

Free Books and Booklets .. 5 3 0

Credit Balance, 1/5/'50 .. . 29 6 5

£494 3 7

Reserve Fund.

„ Legacy from Estate of the late Brother Straw, New Zealand Exchange on above Legacy ..

„ Credit in hand, 1/5/'50 . . . £111 19 8

The Radio Work.

It is a pleasure to report favourably, at this time again, on another year's broadcasting of the message of truth. This method of witness is now well into the eighth year, in this land, and we give thanks to the Lord who has certainly blessed the efforts of the brethren in carrying on this work, in the interests of His cause.

The two radio stations, 3GL Geelong (Vic.) and 2KY Sydney, have been continued throughout the year, and the number of new responses to these sessions each Sunday has been well maintained. The interest of other friends has also greatly increased by this means of communicating the Lord's plan of salvation; it is encouraging indeed to know of so many who look forward to these weekly broadcasts. We are assured that the Lord will continue to give the increase in the lives of all in true heart condition, as has been the case with quite a number of friends in past years who first heard the truth message over the air.

As announced last month, our friends in Perth, W.A., have been able to take up this work again recently on station 6KY Perth, and while the much lesser population in those parts greatly reduces the number of responses, it is hoped to find those who are really longing for the true message of truth, which alone can give comfort and hope for the future.

The continued offering of the printed Dialogues after each broadcast is proving a means of encouragement to listeners, and when applications for the copies are received some extra literature is supplied, also the "Peoples Paper" is continued free for some months in each case. The printed Dialogues are also forwarded in considerable numbers with the "Peoples Paper" each month to friends desiring them, and can thus be used as tracts in a general way.

The distribution of radio cards for advertising the broadcasts has been continued to some extent, and friends who can give some time to this work should consider it an important service. Cards are available free for use within range of the radio stations. Friends able to co-operate by advertising the radio sessions in suitable newspapers are also doing good service. Information will be gladly supplied in regard to the various means of assisting in this work.

As will be seen from the Radio Fund, the voluntary contributions to this work are considerable, no doubt representing much sacrifice on the part of those able to use their talents in this way, by the Lord's overruling. The credit balance of 1 110/19/- is a good foundation for the new year's radio work, now entered upon. The prayers of the dear friends are requested also on this branch of service in the interest of the Lord's cause. "For we are labourers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. . . . For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Radio Fund.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/'49 .	£97 8 0
„ Donations	39 7 9
	£496 15 9

By Radio Stations 3GL Geelong, 2XY Sydney	£314
13 0	
Recordings and Freight	28 8 11
Printing Quantities of Dialogues	27 3 4
Travel and Sundries	7 11 6
Postage	7 0 0
Bank Charges	1 0 0
Credit Balance, 1/5/'50 .	110 19 0 £496
	15 9

"Daily Heavenly Manna."—A new supply of these books with birthday recording pages is in stock. Strongly bound in cloth, nice appearance, price 4/6. In de luxe binding, thin paper, gold edges, price 9/-.

"Tabernacle Shadows."—This well-known honk explaining the types and shadows of Israel's tabernacle. Well bound in imitation leather, good appearance, price 4/6.

"The Everlasting Gospel."—A 64-page booklet dealing with the Sabbath question and other important connected subjects, highly recommended, heavy paper cover, price 1/6.

To Donation £50 0 0
50 0 0 11 19 8

Adelaide Convention Notes.

Notes on the Adelaide Easter Convention, arranged by a visiting brother, will be available to all friends making application for same. These copies will be supplied free from this office.

"The Plan of God—in Brief."—This 104-page booklet covering the main features of God's Plan of the Ages. Most helpful, heavy paper cover, price 1/-; 6 copies for 5/-.

"The Manner of Christ's Return and Appearing."—This important subject explained in detail in this 64-page booklet. Most enlightening, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy."—Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

The World is Warming Up, Experts Say

New York.—The world's climate is becoming slowly warmer and there is a danger that the levels of the oceans may be raised, causing serious inundations as a result of the melting of glaciers and the polar ice-caps.

This is stated by the Reports and Forecasts section of the U.S. Weather Bureau. Its chief, Ivan Tennehill, says the evidence of this change of weather is becoming too impressive to be ignored.

He says that weather men may not be able to agree on the cause but the rise in temperature has been going on for 100 years. Average temperatures in many places have risen four degrees in that time, fish are moving farther north, and so are Alaskan forests. Most of the world's glaciers are melting faster and in Iowa the length of the growing season has increased by 20 days in 40 years.

The above news item, appearing in the Melbourne press recently, is of interest to all who have faith in the "times of restitution of all things" during the Millennial reign of Christ. Undoubtedly the extremes in climate, as in all other things, will be corrected to produce perfect conditions ultimately for all the world of mankind who will themselves be restored to perfection by obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street, Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street.—Sundays 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney.—75 Liverpool Street (few doors from George Street) —Sunday, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Women's Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court, Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Correspondence.

To Frank and Ernest—Would you kindly send to the above address your Talk of Sunday last over the air, also the book you spoke of.

I look forward to these Talks which have enlightened me and others whom I have induced to listen-in as well. Please find enclosed postal note for 5/- and God bless you both for the part you have undertaken to help your fellowmen to understand. Sincerely Yours.

Frank and Ernest, Sirs—Please send me your broadcasts of Sunday mornings and also your booklets any time you have them to spare; if you wish me to pay postage please let me know. I always listen to your

Radio Talks from Geelong. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institutes Dear Sirs—Thank you for the literature sent to me last week, and in response to the invitation of Frank and Ernest I would like to have a copy of Sunday's dialogue "The Binding of Satan" as delivered over 3GL. Thanking you, yours sincerely,

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Your Biblical Dialogue on last Sunday was most impressing; in fact, I am thrilled to the heart to hear a message of such encouragement, with no gainsaying, no purloining, no selfish intent. It does bring me back to the hope of eternal life promised by God, to man, from times eternal.

I am sending you a contribution of 10/- toward your great work. The flood of truth will sweep away all lies.

If you have any Biblical Dialogues to spare send some to me. May God's blessings be always yours. I remain, your faithful friend.

To Frank and Ernest—I have written once only previously in appreciation of the Talks each Sunday over our local 2KY, and also at the time asked for copies of the Talks and booklets offered, which I duly received, but did not thank the Institute for, owing to circumstances prevailing here at the time. I wish to do so now, and also show my continued support for the Talks and have told others of them, but whether all told have continued to hear them I cannot say.

However, could you please send me copies of the last five Talks over 2KY. Also, there was a booklet mentioned in one of the other papers entitled "Christ's Kingdom," and another dealt with death; I think it was "Where are the Dead?" but am not sure, as I have loaned all the copies to a friend, and it will possibly be a month or so before regaining them.

Enclosed is a postal note for 2/6, and I hope it covers the cost of the booklets; if not, I will send a further contribution along to you to cover the same.

Any further notes or pamphlets on any subjects would be appreciated also, as I am just at the stage of trying to sort out the truth from the lies, or misinformation, so to speak. Thanking you for the previous booklets, and also in advance for any further ones, and all success in any ventures. Yours faithfully.

Dear Brothers in the Lord—After hearing your broadcast over 2KY this morning I was very impressed, and take this opportunity of asking you for a copy of "The Sorrows of Satan."

I am sure you are doing good and causing people to think these dark days, as different ones, even my workmates, comment on it.

May God bless you for your wonderful effort to reach the hearts of all with this glorious Gospel of Christ. I remain, just another labourer in His vineyard.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Brothers—Would you please send me the script, or booklet, for last Sunday's broadcast; I believe it all and can help others if I have that, as you expressed it. I will send you a donation to help broadcasts as soon as I can, and I would like to have each Sunday's if you could send them to me.

Wishing you God's richest blessings in your endeavour to reach so many with God's precious Word. With Christian greetings; I am your Sister in the same hope.

To Frank and Ernest—Will you kindly send to me last Sunday's questions from the Bible, also please enclose any later ones you have given from 2KY. My son, and also myself, are very interested in Bible truths. Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

The Secretary, Berean Bible Students, Dear Sir—Enclosed please find postal note for 4/6 for renewal of "Peoples Paper."

I listen-in to Frank and Ernest every Sunday morning and enjoy their short talks; they explain the Scriptures beautifully, and are very helpful to those seeking the truth of the Bible. From Yours in the service of truth.

Frank and Ernest, E.4, Victoria, Dear Sirs—I listened with great interest to your broadcast dealing with the true Biblical interpretation of the place after death, known to us as Hell. I would be most grateful if you would forward to me, at your earliest convenience, free literature dealing with the subject under discussion, as advertised by the radio announcer. Thanking you; I remain, Yours sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest—We would like the subject "World Destruction," last Sunday's broadcast message. We always listen to 2KY every Sunday to your inspiring messages. My husband is in hospital, so he will welcome your book to read, as he is a Christian too. Yes, we certainly want a new world. Wishing you all the best; sincerely.

The Secretary, Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Over the past couple of years I have read quite a lot of literature published by you and forwarded to me by a friend. I have an earnest desire for a deep knowledge of the truth, and the Berean literature is the finest I have read. I have a copy of "The Plan of God—in Brief," and would like you to forward me some copies for distributing to relatives and friends. Am enclosing 10/- note to cover costs.

I would also like two copies of "God and Reason," one for myself and one for lending. I would like to contribute to "Peoples Paper" from May issue, and any Frank and Ernest Dialogues would be much appreciated. Thanking you to arrange this for me, and wishing you God's blessing on your work. Yours sincerely.



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Is Communism a Danger to Christianity?

(This article, the subject of a Public Lecture, is presented as fully as space permits in response to a number of requests.)

OUR subject is a timely one, for the reason that Communism is an active, world-wide movement, just as Christianity is also world-wide. The influence of Communism was well expressed some little time ago in a press report on statements by General Smuts of South Africa. He said that what was happening in Asia was creating the gravest situation the world had known for , hundreds of years. He went on to say that Asia contained two-thirds of the human race and was developing a new nationalism, because for over a century the people of Asia were led by European men, capital, energy and organising power, but now Europeans were being dismissed. General Smuts concluded by saying that what was happening in the West (in the disagreement over the German and other problems) was in comparison very small.

These statements, from a world leader, show that Communism is considered a power of no mean proportions, and it is really engaging the attention of the statesmen of our day in every land.

However, not only the world's statesmen are concerned about the advance of Communism, as was revealed recently in a press statement from Rome. It stated that an important change in the Vatican policy towards closer collaboration of the Roman Catholic Church with other non-Catholic Christian churches was forecast, and mentioned that since 1325 a canon law has banned Catholics from taking part in religious discussions or conferences with non-Catholics. However, the Vatican, it was added, was now aiming at the establishment of a strong, united Christian front to pave the way for future collaboration in the fight against Communism.

Inasmuch as the heads of the Protestant churches are mainly in agreement with the Vatican on this matter, thus the leaders of both church and state are united in their determination to use all possible means to prevent the spread of Communism throughout the world.

The meaning of the word "Communism" is also of interest. Webster's Dictionary gives it as follows—"A scheme of equalising the social conditions of life; specifically, a scheme which contemplates the abolition of inequalities in the possession of property, as by distributing all wealth equally to all, or by holding all wealth in common for the equal use and advantage of all." Now, this definition is not really terrifying, but whether Communism, as practiced today, is administered along these lines, by imperfect men, is quite another matter. However, our purpose is to determine, from the Bible, if what is now called Communism is really a danger to Christianity.

The dictionary meaning of the word “Christianity” is—”The religion of Christians; the system of doctrine and precepts taught by Christ.” Passing to the words of Christ Himself, we read—”I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” And again—”My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.” (John 5:30; 7:16.) These verses help us to see that the teachings of Christ were truly from the Heavenly Father, and that is a most important point in connection with our subject.

From the inspired Apostle Peter we have a most significant record respecting the sacrifice of Christ in the Plan of God. He states—”Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conduct received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.” (1 Pet. 1:18-20.) Also from the Revelator we have the testimony that our Lord was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev. 13:8.)

The Apostle Paul revealed a further striking truth in respect of the Church, the Bride of Christ, when he declared—”Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” (Eph. 1:3, 4.)

Further, our Lord Himself, in one of His parables, referring to the earthly inheritance of all the obedient of the world of mankind at the close of the Millennial Age, stated—”Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matt. 25:34.)

To summarise, it will be seen in God’s plan, firstly, that Christ, as the Redeemer of mankind, was “foreordained before the foundation of the world,” and the Lamb slain “from the foundation of the world”; secondly, that the Church was chosen in Christ “before the foundation of the world”; and thirdly, that the earthly kingdom was prepared for the world of mankind “from the foundation of the world.” In view of these truths, who can doubt that God’s plan of the ages was arranged and ordered “from the beginning of the world.”? (Acts 15:18.)

God’s Old Testament prophets also gave testimony in harmony with the records of the New Testament. Isaiah, under the influence of the spirit of God, declared—”The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? . . . So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa. 14:24, 27; 55:11.)

The Apostle James adds confirmation to the surety of God’s purposes being accomplished, when he stated—

”Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” What a great help it is to know that God’s plan of the ages, formulated before the foundation of this world, has the assurance of God’s promises that it cannot fail, but will be fulfilled in His own good time. Viewed from this standpoint, it will be seen that the principles of Christianity are really based on God’s eternity.

Casting our thoughts back to the time of the first advent of Christ, we are informed, that, “When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” (Gal. 4:4, 5.) The point of particular

interest is, “When the fulness of time was come”; in other words, at the appropriate time, in harmony with all the features of His great plan, God sent forth Jesus into the world to be the Redeemer.

The absolute control over our Lord’s life on earth is also revealed in His answer to Pilate, as His sacrificial life was nearing completion. We read, “Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.” (John 19:10, 11.) Power was permitted against Christ, in accord with His mission to this earth, and following His crucifixion, it is recorded—“Behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. . . . Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.” (Matt. 27:51, 54.) No doubt these manifestations from heaven have had a marked effect upon all who have been able to view them in the same manner as did the centurion—as convincing evidence that Jesus was the Saviour of the world, and that His sacrifice in death was an all-important part of God’s plan of the ages.

The disciples did not have long to wait for further outstanding evidence of God’s power on behalf of Jesus, who had willingly laid down His life on behalf of humanity. The account given in Matthew’s Gospel is most enlightening—“In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven; and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. . . . And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word. . . . Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. . . . And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:1, 2, 4-8, 16, 18.)

The words of our risen Lord—“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,”—are most significant in relation to our subject. Likewise is the statement of St. Peter’s with reference to the elect class of this Gospel Age, whose inheritance, he states, is reserved in heaven for all “who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Pet. 1:2-5.) The assurance, also from St. Paul, that since our Lord “gave himself for our sins” and was highly exalted to God’s right hand, and will “deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father,” (Gal. 1:4) adds weight to the abundant testimony that nothing can hinder the accomplishment of all God’s purposes.

Thus, all power in heaven and in earth is invested in Christ; the members of the Church are “kept by the power of God,” and shall be “delivered from this present evil world,” culminating in the heavenly inheritance being gained, as promised in the words of Jesus—“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matt. 13:43.)

The assurance also that, at Christ’s second advent, His Kingdom on earth shall accomplish the “restitution of all things,” is substantiated “by the mouth of all God’s holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20-25.) Isaiah, as one of the numerous, holy prophets of God, gives many graphic pictures of the wonderful restoration which will be accomplished throughout the earth, under the administration of Christ and His Church from above, and the ancient worthies, raised from the dead, as “princes in all the earth” directing affairs on earth for the benefit of all who will obey the laws of that Kingdom. (See Isa. 2:1-4; 11:1-9; 35, etc.) Truly “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the deep,” when “the ransomed of the Lord (all

mankind) shall return (from death), and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

St. Paul agreed with St. Peter and all God’s holy prophets respecting the restitution of all things, in the Kingdom of Christ, when, in other words, he declared, that “God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained (the man Christ Jesus) ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17:31.) From the Revelator we have, also, an all-comprehensive picture of the exalted Kingdom of God, showing the harmony between the heavenly and earthly phases of the kingdom, in the vision presented in the fifth chapter—”And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Rev. 5:11-13.)

In view of the sure testimony of the Scriptures, respecting the outworking of God’s plan which was formulated before the foundation of the world, what power on earth, however great, could be a danger to Christianity? There is absolutely none! Well might men seek to stop the rotating of the globe. The leader of Nazi Germany, Hitler, declared in 1939, that he would change conditions in the earth for a thousand years. He lasted about five years and in the resurrection will be required to bend the knee to the laws of Christ’s Kingdom, or be destroyed from among the people, in the second death, from which there will be no resurrection. (Acts 3:23.) The same will be true of the leaders of all nations, including the leaders in Communism—those who have died, and those still living.

It does us all good to meditate upon the words of the Psalmist, where he says—”When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3, 4.) Yes, indeed! What is man that thou art mindful of him? What

condescension is shown on the part of our Heavenly Father that He is so mindful of mankind as a whole! Whether in the United Nations Organisation, the Atlantic Pact countries, or behind the Iron Curtain, if only the leaders of nations to-day could be brought to the point of realising their own insignificance in the sight of God, how much better it would be for the world of mankind.

. At the time of the crucifixion of Christ we have recorded an instance of insignificant, fallen men, using such boasting and blasphemous words at the time of our Lord’s agony on the cross—”And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.” (Matt. 27:39-42.) And in the 2nd Psalm we have a prophetic picture of similar opposition to God and His anointed, in the setting up of Christ’s kingdom on earth, at the end of this Gospel Age, the time in which we are now living—”The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.” However, the outcome is shown—”He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king (Christ) upon my holy hill of Zion.” (Psa. 2:2, 4-6.) Yes, the Kingdom of Christ shall be established, all the opposition of the world’s greatest leaders cannot hinder, nor interfere in the slightest with the progress of God’s predetermined plan for the ultimate blessing of all the obedient of the human family.

Is it asked, then, Is Communism not a danger at all in the world? We answer, that there are some systems in this “present evil world” to which Communism may be a very real danger. All systems of men, comprising the religious, political, financial and social elements, must be removed from the earth, to make way for the Kingdom of Christ, and it is very likely that Communism, as we have it to-day, may assist to that end. Let it be understood, however, from the Word of God, that Communism itself, as formulated by imperfect men, will also be removed from the earth in the great time of trouble it may help to produce. (Zeph. 3:8, 9.)

Some people have hopes that Communism will survive; other have hopes that Britain may survive, but no nation or system of men can survive this great shaking time for “the removing of those things that may be shaken, as of things that are made (man made), that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” (Heb. 12:26, 27. See also Dan. 2:44, 45; Mal. 4:1, etc.) Our Lord Jesus, re-referring to the same time in symbolic language, declared—“Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.” (Luke 21:33.) The “heaven” pictures the religious systems of Christendom, mother and daughter ‘systems, which St. Peter says, “shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.” The “earth” represents the political, financial and social order of things, which is to be symbolically “burned up.” (2 Pet. 3:10.) The removal of “heaven and earth” is therefore necessary, so that the “new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” may function for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (2 Pet. 2:13.)

While, then, Communism, Churchianity, etc., will pass forever from the earth, Christianity will be in no danger at all, because it is based on righteousness and contains the laws of God by which all beings, obedient thereto, may live forever. By our Lord using His “all power in heaven and in earth,” and reigning till He has put all enemies under His feet, the Kingdom will then be handed over to God, a Kingdom of perfect beings both in heaven and earth, to God’s praise. (1 Cor. 15:24, 25; Eph. 1:10.) “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

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The Talents.

Matt. 25 :14-30.

AS seen in the preceding parable, even the arrival of our Lord at His second advent would prove to be a testing time among those who were looking for Him. This parable shows that the first work in which Christ will then engage will be in connection with believers, inspecting their condition and progress and rewarding them according to their faithfulness respecting their talents and opportunities.

The man travelling into a far country is identical with the “young nobleman” of Luke 19:12, and represents the Lord, who ascended to the right hand of the Father until He would come again to claim His Bride, the Church, and exalt her to reign with Him. “Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20, 21.) The “long journey” intimates that the interval between these two events would be a long period of time.

Every Christian has been entrusted with certain talents, an account of the use of which the Lord will, in due time, require. The position in the kingdom depends upon faithfulness. If James and John were to occupy the chief places next to the Lord, then they must be “baptised with His baptism and drink of His cup” of suffering.

In the parable but three illustrations are given: one man receives five talents, another two, and another one. These talents would represent such things as the opportunity of entering the race for the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus”—health, time, money, ability to speak, or sing, or other means of serving the Lord, His cause and His people. Then the Apostle says, “A measure of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” We must use all our talents for the Lord as good stewards in His service and for our own spiritual progress.

When we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ we were “justified by faith,” and were then in a position to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God. (Rom. 12:1.) We there devoted ourselves entirely to God, all we are, all we have or hope to have. The Lord accepts the offering but leaves us in possession of such talents (circumstances, etc.) as we have; not, however, to be used according to our own will, but as good stewards of God’s gifts, to make the most of such health, time, money, business ability, etc., to God’s glory, in His service, and for our own growth in grace and character building.

According to the use of our talents is the reward in the Kingdom.

The same commendation is to the one who only having two talents had faithfully used them, as to the one who had been faithful with five talents,—“Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter into the joys of thy Lord.”

The man who hid his talent illustrates those who, having received the opportunity of running the Christian way, do not appreciate the privilege of sacrifice in the cause of Christ. Hiding his talent in the earth seems to indicate that he loved the world and the things of the world, socialities and pleasures of this life. He sought to save his life and thus lost it. “He that loses his life for My sake shall save it.” This man lost all the privilege he had had. “Take the talent from him and give it to him that hath ten talents.” “Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” That is, that such an one has the light of truth taken from him and he goes into the outer darkness, losing even the justification which he had by faith, he becomes an outsider, an unbeliever, in sorrow realising how great reward he has missed.

It is when the Lord's work of rewarding His saints is complete and thus all His joint-heirs in His kingdom are selected and initiated in their respective positions in glory that the great work in connection with the world of mankind will begin, as illustrated in the next parable.

“Take my life, and may it be,
Lord, acceptable to Thee:
Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet and let them be
Swift on errands, Lord, for Thee;
Take my voice, and let it bring
Honour always to my King.

Take my lips and let them be
Moved with messages from Thee;
Take my silver and my gold;
Nothing, Lord, would I withhold.

Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in constant praise;
Take my intellect and use;
Every pow'r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is thine own;
Thus in me Thyself enthrone.

Take my love, my God; I pour
At thy feet its treasure-store:
Take myself—I wish to be
Ever, only, all for Thee.”

FR.H.

Building a Disposition.

“Well, I do hope that when I reach the age when I have to be taken care of, I shall be willing to let other people have their way instead of insisting upon my own and making it hard for everybody else,” said a clear, decided voice as three women parted at the street corner.

They had been discussing the troubles of an acquaintance. As the speaker departed, the other two looked at each other with a significant smile. This friend of theirs was one who had great faith in her own wisdom.

“I am afraid that virtue does not develop suddenly,” remarked one. “I suspect that the person who is to be gentle and unselfishly considerate in old age has to begin to cultivate that spirit much further back.”

That is the story of so many of our failures to attain our ideals. We do not begin to practice their graces early enough. The strong, self-controlled, useful manhood or womanhood does not grow naturally from a careless, self-indulged youth, and the beautiful old age that is a benediction is not likely to spring from the hasty, domineering spirit that has been allowed to rule middle life.

Character is a garden whose gracious flowering calls for early planting.

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Lest Ye Be Wearied

(Continued from June issue.)

THERE is one other characteristic in reference to this important matter, and we notice it very prominently in the life of our Lord; it is one which we, too, must possess if we would be pleasing to Him. We refer to the grace of humility. Both by His words and by His example our Lord taught us we should cultivate carefully this humility. Our Lord assured His disciples that unless they became humble as little children, they would in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven. He also set an example of humble service when he stooped to wash the feet of the disciples. Let us carefully follow His example in this respect too. Let us not make the mistake of seeking praise from those around us, but rather seek to please God, humble ourselves under His mighty hand, and He will exalt us in due time. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," this mind of humility. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but let each esteem other better than themselves." (Phil. 2:3.) Let us see in others something which is better than what we have, and to appreciate our brethren in this way. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." The Apostle goes on to show what this disposition was—it was that of humility. Christ did not aspire to be like God, He did not meditate a usurpation, but made Himself of no reputation and took the form of a servant under the Law, and became obedient unto death. Made in the likeness of men, He humbled Himself that He might become obedient unto death. "Therefore God has highly exalted Him." So the Apostle goes on to say in Phil. 2:12, 13, "Wherefore, ye beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

When men aspire to be something in the world, they think of getting higher and higher, believing better things to be at the top. With the Christian, it seems to be reversed. We find the better things are right down, and as we humble ourselves and become lower in our own estimation, and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, we find we have the better things. God's best things are found in the lowly places. So let us aspire to be great in the Lord's way, that is by keeping ourselves under His mighty hand.

We have the beautiful words of the faithful prophet Jeremiah (9:23. 24)—"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

Then Paul, when he would reprove the ambitious spirit of the Corinthians, their glorying in worldly learning and wisdom, says (1 Cor. 1:20)—"Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" The cross of Christ is the only thing that can be gloried in. Things highly esteemed among men are wisdom, power and riches. But this is not the wisdom that cometh down from above, nor the power of godliness, nor the true, heavenly riches. Men of the world have not learned the value of this, and therefore spend their strength for nought, and labour for that which satisfieth not. "The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Faith that lays hold on the might of the Lord is the beginning of power, and the poverty that freely surrenders all things to the will and service of God is the beginning of true riches.

Worldly wisdom tends to self-exaltation and pride. Riches among those who have not learned from God the responsibility of stewardship tend only to render the soul impervious to the inspired sentiments of love and brotherly kindness. The man who by dint of labour and strife succeeds in obtaining one or more

earthly prizes generally considers himself a wise man; but he does not realise how unsatisfactory and transient they are, what snares are in them, nor how great is the value of the heavenly treasure he has missed while grasping for the fleeting earthly things. To the worldly, who have never known the treasures of Divine grace, these things are of paramount importance, but to the child of God they only increase the responsibilities of his stewardship, for they are not his but the Lord's, all being included in his consecration. Whatever he has in learning, education, must be held in subservience to the will of God. No human theories may be entertained. A "Thus saith the Lord" must be the end of all controversy when human reasonings come in conflict with Divine wisdom, for the wisdom of this world that would raise itself in opposition to the heavenly wisdom is foolishness with God, and will later on be brought to the most ignominious humiliation.

So with human might, it shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. The heaped riches shall be scattered to the wind. What folly it is for anyone who has been enlightened by the truth and made a child and heir of God, to forget the importance and value of the heavenly treasure, and turn to minding earthly things! Let it not be so with us. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "This is life eternal," said Jesus, "that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." This is the knowledge that does not puff up, the wisdom that cometh from above. The beginning of this wisdom is indeed in the Lord, and we must grow in it by growth in reverence of the Lord. If in any degree we cease to reverence supremely His Word and seek to cultivate His graces by communion and prayer and study of the Word, meditation upon His glorious character and teachings, to the extent of our neglect we fail to realise the blessings that come from above. But if in the use of these privileges we open our hearts to receive all that Divine grace has intended for us, then indeed we may glory in the Lord. "Let such an one glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me."

To "know the Lord" is not merely to know something of His works and ways, but by intimate fellowship and communion and in living faith to have the seal of His Word upon our hearts—that which makes us realise that His promises are ours personally, that the Lord Himself is our Friend, our Helper, our Counsellor, our Guide. We thus become acquainted with His spirit, principles, methods of action. We understand Him, in the same way that we understand our friends. We learn to know our friends, so we know what they would do, how they would act under various circumstances. This is the way we learn to know God, how He will act, what He will do. We learn this through His Word, and by our daily experiences in life. We thus become acquainted with Him more and more. We know how to interpret His providences, to note His leadings, to observe His attitude towards us, and thus we can walk with Him. We are led to a fuller appreciation of the Lord's righteousness and loving-kindness, which will in due time establish justice in the earth. We may glory in the Lord personally when we come to understand and know Him.

In this blessed sense of the Divine love and care we may surely say, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord."

"I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth." "O magnify the Lord, and let us exalt His name together." "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is gracious; blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye His saints."

How precious are these experiences of a child of God, which can never be the experiences of a proud heart, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." It is hard for those who are rich in the wisdom, or power, or wealth of this world, to do this. Our Lord referred to this fact, saying (Matt. 19:24-26)—"Again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then

can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”

How difficult it was for the camel to go through the eye of a needle. Some have interpreted this as being the smaller gate within the larger gate into the city. With great difficulty the camel could be got through the gate, but it must kneel and unload everything, and then it could just get through. This is the picture of how the rich man may enter the kingdom of God. By kneeling down, humbling himself, unloading his wealth, whatever it may be, perhaps intellectual wealth, money or property; but like the rich young ruler, he must be prepared to set his heart on the higher things, otherwise he cannot aspire to membership in this heavenly kingdom class. How hard it was for the Scribes and Pharisees, and for the whole Jewish nation, who were proud of being the seed of Abraham, to whom pertained the promises of God—how hard for the Greeks, proud of their wisdom and intellectual attainments—how hard for the Romans, proud of their power and prestige among the nations. And it is hard to-day for all who have pride in anything. We all have in us something of this pride, and it must be humbled. We may often, even, have a sort of pride in our humility. But God can help us as we humble ourselves under His hand. The Apostle intimates that the greatest struggle is along this line. After pointing to the severe humiliation of the Lord Jesus he says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

Those who have endeavoured in all sincerity to do so have always found the grace of God sufficient for them; but very few are ever disposed to make the effort. To all the worldly ones, the preaching of the Cross is foolishness, and they have no disposition to take up their cross daily and follow Christ. It is for this reason that not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble, are called to share with our Lord, the glory of His kingdom. They are generally so engrossed with the things of the present life, its pursuits, cares and pleasures that they have no ear for the Lord’s call. They are not humble enough to hear and obey the call and walk the narrow way of self-sacrifice. God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, those not noted for worldly wisdom or wealth, to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty. How truly does the power of God operate in the humblest of God’s people! Systems of error, the growth of centuries, do their best to confound, but the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall fail.

Why has God chosen these weak, inferior instruments for His great work? Why doesn’t He employ the eloquent tongues, the ready orators? It is in order that no flesh should glory in His presence. The great work of destroying sin and establishing righteousness is the Lord’s work. No human power is equal to the emergencies of the case, yet God is willing to let instruments be used which can be used without injury to themselves. If God used the proud, they would arrogate to themselves the glory that belongs to God, instead of bringing honour to Him in appreciating the privilege of being humble instruments for the Master’s use. Not only the wealthy and educated, but the poor, may become puffed up. It is sad to see a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, thus deceiving himself, but especially so, when even the rudiments of education in Christlikeness are lacking. We believe that modesty and simplicity should be cultivated by all followers of the Master.

Whatever may be the triumphs of the Truth through us, let us remember we are among the things that “are not.” Let us therefore endeavour to make the Apostle’s experience our own, “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to abound, and how to be abased. I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.”

In God’s dealings with His people at all times we can see His care in guarding them against pride and selfsufficiency. If He chose Israel to be His peculiar people, we find them first of all enslaved, then with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm He gathers them to the promised land. Moses, too, the chosen Deliverer, was of humble birth, slow of speech. Paul had his thorn in the flesh, from which the Lord was

not pleased to deliver him. “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” That is, my strength will be more manifest than if the vessel were a perfect and polished one. In that case men would ascribe the greatness of the work to him alone, and by and by presume that as he is only a man, it is only presumption for him to teach other men. But if the power is seen to be of God, then the testimony of the grace of God will be weighty with them; and so it was. To this assurance from the Lord, Paul meekly replied, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

The Lord, with unerring wisdom, has always chosen the meek for every great work. Moses was the meekest man in all the earth. Meekness was a characteristic of all the prophets and Ancient Worthies. The Lord Jesus Christ was meek and lowly of heart. Though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor. Of humble birth, laid in a manger, reared in the humble town of Nazareth that He might be called a Nazarene. The Apostles were plain fishermen. The true Church, whose names are written in heaven, have been chosen from the poor of this world, that more and more the power of Christ might be shown through them. Let us, then, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. This is not the time for exaltation, but humiliation and trial. Let our present glory be, that we understand and know the Lord, and that He condescends to make use of these poor, earthen vessels, showing through us the excellency of His power.

Let us try to “Consider Him.” Let us keep the character of Christ before us in the days ahead. “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” Let us consider His faith, His courage, His meekness, His humility, His love. Let us strive that by God’s grace we humbly trust Him more.

We all are sometimes lacking in faith. How we need to draw near to God, to exercise our faith and confidence in His great power, and let our eyes look up and consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds.

Question Box.

Question.—There are many words in the Old and New Testaments in italic letters; why is this, and why are there less of these in the Revised Version than the Authorised?

An ewer.—All the words in the Bible printed in italics have been supplied by the translators, and are not found in the original. In translating it is sometimes necessary to supply additional words to convey the sense or proper meaning of the thought expressed by the original. These additions make a considerable difference; some helpful, emphasising the thought, but some the reverse, obscuring the real sense, and giving the thought in the mind of the translator, which was not always the correct one. It has been claimed that the Authorised Version has over 20,000 mistranslations.

The Revised Version was prepared under greater religious liberty, and with the aid of 700 manuscripts compared with only eight (and none of these earlier than the tenth century) when the Authorised Version was prepared. This, no doubt, would help to explain why the Revised Version has fewer italicised words than the Authorised Version.

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Applying the Truth to One's Self.

TO be established in the present truth signifies that I have carefully studied and thoroughly proved it by the law and the testimony (Isa. 8:20) , and that as a consequence I am convinced of its verity, so that my faith is stedfast and immovable.-1 Peter 5:9; 1 Cor. 15:58.

That I know in whom I have believed.-2 Tim. 1:12.

That I have tasted and seen that the Lord is good. —Psa. 34:8.

That I have partaken of the sweets of fellowship with Him.-1 John 1:3-7.

That I have partaken of His spirit of meekness, faith and godliness to such an extent as to be led into a joyful realisation of the fullness of His grace as manifested in the wonderful divine “plan of the ages.”—John 14:26; 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:10-16.

That I have been permitted to see not only the various features of that plan—the Worlds and Ages, Permission of Evil, Restitution, Kingdom of God with its Human and Divine Phases, Second Death, Great Time of Trouble, Times and Seasons, the Days of the Son of Man, Harvest and Its Work, etc., but also the necessity and reasonableness of its various measures in order to the full accomplishment of its glorious outcome in the fullness of the appointed times.

This is what it is to be established in the present Truth. It is indeed a most blessed condition, bringing with it such peace and joy as the world can neither give nor take away.

But though I be thus established in the present truth, there are quite a number of

THINGS WHICH I MUST REMEMBER.

That my election to the high position to which I am called is not yet made sure—the race for the prize of my high calling is still before me.

That I am yet in the enemy's country, surrounded by many subtle and powerful foes.

That if I would be successful I must fight the good fight of faith.

That the weapons of my warfare are not carnal, but (God's truth is) mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of error, superstition and inbred sin. —2 Cor. 10:4.

That I wrestle not (merely) with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Eph. 6:12.

That it is in view of the warfare before me—the subtlety of my temptations, the weaknesses of the flesh—that the faithful Peter urges all diligence in the cultivation of the Christian graces, and a continual calling to remembrance of the precious truths I have learned—that I may be strengthened for the conflict, and thereby able to make my calling and election sure.

That faith is a good thing (without which I cannot please God, I cannot be justified, I cannot maintain my justification or have access into the additional favour, I cannot be an overcomer) ; yet faith without virtuous works is dead; and to hold the truth in unrighteousness is worse than never to have received it.

That the truth is given to me for its sanctifying effect upon my heart and life—it should have free course and be glorified its precious fruits should appear more and more from day to day.

That I must add to my faith, virtue—true excellence of character that will mark me as separated from the world and its spirit.

That in me the world should see those moral qualities which they must approve—however they may oppose (the objects of) my faith.

That I must add sterling honesty, truth, and fair dealing in all business relations; moral integrity in all social relations, manifestly clean hands, and a pure heart, and a bridled tongue that works no ill to a neighbour.

That all of these the world has a right to expect from me and all others who call themselves Christians; and that all of these are indispensable features of that virtuous character which must be added to my faith.

That if my hands be clean, they will not dabble in anything that is not virtuous—they will have nothing to do with unrighteous schemes or projects in business.

That if my heart be pure, it will not devise evil things, or harbour evil thoughts, or plot mischief.

That if my tongue be bridled, it will not be given to evil-speaking, but will hold its peace when it cannot speak well and wisely.

That the promptings of virtue go further than merely these negative features which refuse to do anything which would work ill to a neighbour—they incite not only to passive, but also to active, goodness—in benevolent charity which seeks to alleviate suffering; to sympathise with sorrow, to comfort those in distress, and to elevate and bless others; to assist “all men as ‘I’ have opportunity.”

That I must gain a knowledge of God's character in order that I may the more thoroughly imitate it, and of His truth, that I may more fully conform to its teachings.

That I must exercise temperance—or self-control—in all things, letting my moderation be known unto all men, and taking care not to be hasty, hot tempered, rash or thoughtless; but endeavouring to be evenly balanced, thoughtful and considerate.

That my whole manner should be characterised by that carefulness which would indicate that I am ever mindful of the Lord's pleasure, of my responsibility to Him as His representative, and of my influence upon my fellow-men to see that it always be for good, never for evil.

That I must let "patience have her perfect work, that I may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

That this grace smooths the way for every other because all must be acquired under the process of patient and continuous self-discipline; and that not a step of progress can be gained without the exercise of this grace.

That not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, wins the approval of the world's conscience or glorifies the God of all grace, whose truth inspires it.

That it is long-suffering meekness earnestly striving to stem the tide of human imperfection and weakness, and endeavouring with painstaking care to regain the Divine likeness.

That it is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; quick to perceive the paths of truth and righteousness, and prompt to walk in them; mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others.

That I must add to "patience, godliness." I must carefully study and imitate the divine character as presented in the Word.

That I must exercise brotherly kindness towards my fellowman.

That I must add to brotherly kindness, love.

That kindness may be manifested where but little love exists toward the subject of such kindness; but I cannot long persevere in such acts of kindness before a sympathetic interest is awakened; and by and by that interest, continually exercised, deepens into love, and even though the subject may be unlovely in character the love of sympathy for the fallen and the degraded grows, until it becomes tender and solicitous and akin to that of a parent for an erring son.

That Peter describes a most amiable character—one which cannot be acquired in a day, nor a year, but the whole life must be devoted to it.

That day by day, if I am faithful, I will be able to realise a measure of growth in grace and development of Christian character. I must see to it that the truth is having its legitimate and designed effect upon my character.

That if I receive the truth into a good and honest heart, I have the assurance of the Apostle that I shall never fall, and that in due time I shall be received into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

That I should see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts of the Lord fresh in my mind, and of drinking deep into their inspiring spirit —although I am already established in the faith.

That to be established in the faith is one thing, and to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the spirit is quite another.

In claiming to be a divinely recognised child- of God and a follower of His dear Son, I stand before the

world as God's representative; and, presumably, all my words and actions are in harmony with His indwelling spirit.

I stand as a guide-post in the midst of the world's dark and uncertain way; and if I am not true to my profession, I am a deceitful sign-board, causing the inquirer to lose the right way and to stumble into many a snare. Therefore, to take the name of God, claiming to be His son, a Christian, a follower of Christ, without a fixed determination, and careful effort to fairly represent Him, is a sin against God of which I will not be held guiltless!

I realise that to undertake the Christian life is to engage in a great warfare against iniquity; for, though the grace of God abounds to me through Christ to such an extent that my imperfections and short-comings are not imputed to me, but robed in Christ's imputed righteousness I am reckoned holy and acceptable to God, I am not, says the Apostle (Rom. 6:1, 2) to continue in sin that grace may abound; for by my covenant with God I have dedicated myself dead to sin, and that I have no longer any desire to live therein. But having made such a covenant with God, and having taken upon myself His holy name, if I continue in sin, or cease to strive against sin, I am proving false to my profession (Rom. 6:1, 2, 11, 12). This means a great deal. It means a constant warfare against the besetting sins of my old nature; and the struggle will be long and constant until the power of sin is broken; and then only constant vigilance will keep it down.

If I be true to my profession, I will daily strive to realise an increasing mastery over sin in myself, and will be able from time to time to distinguish some degree of advancement in this direction. I will grow more like Christ — more self-possessed, more meek and gentle, more disciplined and refined, more temperate in all things, and more fully possessed of the mind that was in Christ Jesus. My old temper and unlovely disposition will disappear, and my new mind will assert its presence and power. And thus the silent example of a holy life will reflect honour upon that holy name which it is my privilege to bear :and to represent before the world, as a living epistle, known and read of all men with' whom I come in 'contact. I realise that the formation, of such a noble :and pure character is the legitimate result of the reception of divine truth into a good and honest heart. or, rather, such is the transforming power of divine ,truth upon the whole character, when it is heartily received and fully submitted to. "Sanctify them through thy truth:- thy Word is truth," was the Lord's petition on the Church's behalf; and may I not fall into the error of some, of presuming that the sanctifying work can go on better without the truth than with it?-2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:3; John 15:3; 17:17; Eph. 5:26; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Psa. 19:7-14; 1 Tim. 4:16.

I need the instruction and guidance and inspiration of the truth for holy living, and our Lord's words imply that all the truth that is necessary to this end is in the Word of God, and that, consequently, I am not to look for any further revelations through visions or dreams or imaginations of myself or others. The Word of God, says the Apostle (2 Tim. 3; 16, 17), is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (Heb. 4:10), that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. It reveals to me the spirit, mind or disposition of God, and exhorts me to let the same mind dwell richly in me; and in conjunction with the study of the mind of God as revealed in His Word and communion with Him in prayer, I receive the blessed influences of His spirit, which brings me more and more into conformity with His perfect will. I realise that to live a holy life is not to do some great and wonderful things; it is to live from day to day a life of quiet unostentatious conformity to the will of God — of secret communion with Him in my closet, devotions, and daily work, and of zealous activity to the extent of my ability and opportunity in His service. As I have named the name of Christ (2 Tim. 2:19), it is my determination—God helping me—to depart (more and more) from iniquity and apply my heart unto instruction, confident that I shall be led of God into green pastures and beside still waters; my table will be richly and bountifully spread, and my cup of blessing and joy and gladness will overflow; while the wrath of God will in due time be revealed against all who take His hallowed name in vain, however they

may band themselves together, and however loudly they may proclaim themselves heaven's appointed messengers.

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Fear—Man's Worst Enemy

THE following thoughts, under the above heading, were sent in by one of our friends recently. They are by Mr. W.

E. Roberts, N.D., President of the Australian Vegetarian Society, and appeared in a recent number of the Australian Vegetarian journal.

All life upon earth that has a brain is more or less guided by fear, but in bird, animal or fish it is rendered harmless by the instinctive "Fight or Flight" action that it causes.

When fear grips the body it causes the endocrine glands to secrete larger quantities of their particular secretion, and this acts as a powerful stimulant, thus giving extra strength for fight or flight.

If the natural fight or flight action is not carried out, then the gland secretion acts as a poison which does considerable harm, and can even kill.

Man, who has developed the power of individual thought, has in the main dropped the instinct of fight or flight, but fear has become a major cause of disease and early death.

Out of fear worry had developed.

Few of the worrying type of persons realise that while they are worrying they are not only poisoning themselves, but they are sending out very harmful, negative vibrations that have a bad effect upon all life around them, helping to worsen the minds of other people.

Remember always that fear and worry are based upon ignorance and selfishness. You, reader, may not agree, but just think a little right now. Has worry ever done you any good, has it solved any of your problems? Is it not a fact that some time after, you have looked back and realised that all your worry and fear was not needed? It was really a soul-destroying weakness on your part, that did only harm.

Many people have told me that they just can't help it. Worry just gets them down. They admit that their mind gets out of control at any untoward happening, or at any fear of something happening. What a poor excuse, what a poor use of the wonderful powers of thought, what a lack of intelligent thinking, what a waste of man's greatest possession, what a tragic condition to allow oneself to get into. It is really worse than the tram or bus driver who lets the controls go at every sign of danger. The good driver controls the engine, thus guarding the lives of himself and others, and the safety of the thing he is in control of. His controls are just the same as the mind—it has to be controlled at all times or there is trouble.

Some additional facts, in harmony with the above, were noted recently in a publication of many years ago which should prove helpful to our readers. The following appeared under the heading "Mental Toxin and Anti-toxin."

That thoughts may poison is a well-proven fact. Depressing thoughts interfere with the cerebral circulation, impairing the nutrition of the cells and nerve centres. The result is that the organs and tissues manifest lost or impaired function—loss of general nutrition follows—and a break-down is inevitable. Fear, worry, anger, envy, jealousy, and other negative thoughts reflect themselves most disastrously in the human system. Fear has paralyzed nerve-centres and turned hair white over night. A mother's milk has been poisoned by a fit of anger. Fear and hate—father and son—have produced insanity, paralysis,

cholerina, jaundice, sudden decay of the teeth, fatal anaemia, skin disease, erysipelas and eczema. Epidemics owe their rapid death and heavy death rate to fear and ignorance. Epidemics may kill their dozens—fear kills its thousands. All the brood of negative, fearful, selfish, hateful thoughts manifest themselves in physical conditions. Stigmata or marks upon the body, caused by fear or desire, are quite common in the annals of medical science and psychology.

Bad and unpleasant feelings create harmful chemical products in the body, which are physically injurious. Good, pleasant, benevolent feelings create beneficial chemical products which are physically healthful. These products may be detected by chemical analysis in the perspiration and secretions of the individual. More than forty of the good, and as many of the bad, have been detected. Suppose half a dozen men are in a room; one feels depressed, another remorseful, another ill-tempered, another jealous, another cheerful, another benevolent. Samples of their perspiration are placed in the hands of the psycho-physicist. Under his examination they reveal all these emotional conditions distinctly and unmistakably.

Remember this is not “the airy fancy of some enthusiastic mental scientist,” but is the testimony of a leading scientific investigator in the laboratories of one of the best known scientific institutions of the world. “Chemical analysis,” mind you—not “transcendental imaginings.”

Now, enough has been said about the toxin and a little about the anti-toxin of the mind. We might go on for hours, stating example after example, illustration after illustration; but the tale would be just the same. Now, what are you going to do about it? Are you going to keep on poisoning yourself and those about you with vile, malignant thoughts reeking with the miasmatic effluvia of hate—emitting the noxious exhalation of fear and worry? Or will you cease being a psychic pest-house, and begin to fumigate and disinfect your mind? And after getting rid of all the microbes of fear and worry and the bacilli of hate, jealousy and envy, open wide the windows of the mind and admit the bright sunshine of love, and the bracing air of confidence and fearlessness.

Come, friends, let us get out of this habit of poisoning, the air with fear, worry and hate thought. Let us join the ranks of the Don't Worry company—the fearless brigade, the invincible, conquering army of Love. Let us be bright, cheerful and happy—the other things are not worth while. Let us be confident, expectant, hopeful and cheerful—these things are winners. Let us be filled with love for all men and God, and we will find that life is one sweet song. Love, faith and fearlessness are the ingredients of life's great anti-toxin. Try it and be blessed.

From our Lord and the Apostles we have definite instructions how we may overcome the fear and worry which besets so many who have not the help of His truth and spirit, without which victory in this matter would be impossible. For those who would seek to walk in the Divine path, which God has marked out for the Gospel Church, fear and anxiety are special hindrances. The Saviour had this fact in mind when He said to His disciples, “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.” (Matt. 6:28.) He would have His followers to be without worry, to be restful of heart. But He would not have them be without carefulness. There is a carefulness which is entirely proper, yea, necessary, on our part, but not this extreme worry—this inability to enjoy the blessings of the present moment because of thoughts, fears, respecting to-morrow. When the Apostle said (Phil. 4:6) “Be careful for nothing,” he was not referring to a proper care and sense of responsibility, but to an anxiety which would rob the soul of rest and peace, and which would indicate a lack of faith in the Lord and in His care for His people. The word rendered “careful” here is from a Greek word meaning over anxious.

In giving a forceful lesson to His disciples on trustfulness in God, the Master used the illustration of the lilies of the field. The lilies of Palestine are quite common—rather a small flower, many of them red. They persist, live, grow, notwithstanding that no special provision is made for their cultivation, and that they are trodden down by those who pass through the fields. Yet they develop and mature and blossom,

and have an exquisite organism, which microscopic examination shows is very beautiful. Jesus declared that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. There is a perfection in the texture of a flower that is wonderful. The finest clothing cannot approximate the delicate structure of the flower, created by an Infinite Hand.

The lesson seems to be that although the flowers may be in an unfavourable environment, unable to do for themselves or to take any anxious thought in the matter, nevertheless, God's providence has so arranged for them that they thrive and become very beautiful. These lilies did not look up and wish that they might become great trees, nor wish that they might climb up higher in the world and nearer the sun, as do the vines. On the contrary, they were content with the lot chosen for them by their Infinite Creator.—Matt. 6:30.

And so God's people are to take a lesson from the lilies. They too are to be content with the Lord's arrangement for them--as the poet expresses it:

“Content whatever lot I see,

Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.”

In proportion as we approximate this condition it will give us peace and rest of mind. We are not to worry, and not to be slothful, but are to be diligent, “fervent in spirit serving the Lord,” doing with our might what our hands find to do. When doing this, we are to be content and trustful that He will work out all things for our good. He wishes us to learn this important lesson of trust.

Those who neglect to learn this lesson will be unprepared for the great work God has in mind for our suture under Messiah's Kingdom. God will not have any in that Kingdom, we are sure, who are not full of trust. As the flowers flourish under God's providential care, so are all of His people to flourish --to grow in knowledge and beauty of spirit, in beauty of character. And this is not accomplished by some great things that they do, but by the spirit in which they meet the little things, the every day experiences of life. God's people are to grow steadily, though unobtrusively.

The lily would always have a humble place; it would never be great like a tree. So it is with us here in the flesh. And the Lord puts each one in the place He designs for him. We shall learn better the lessons for the future by being placed under humble conditions now, where we may grow, where our entire loyalty to the Father's will may be fully tested, where all the beauties of our character may be the most fully developed.

Tracts Available.

The article “Is Communism a Danger to Christianity ?” which appeared in July “Peoples Paper” is now available in tract form. Friends desiring copies are asked to state the number they can use to advantage ; these, tracts are supplied free from the General Tract Fund.

Labourers in the Vineyard.

Matt. 20:1-16.

UNLESS this parable be correctly located respecting the time of its application and of whom it is spoken it would indeed be difficult to explain. If we were to apply the different intervals mentioned to different epochs in this Age, we would have difficulty, for the Apostles and others, called early in the Age, did not live and labour throughout the entire period. Again, in so applying it, we would face the proposition that only those at 'the beginning of the Age had definite promises respecting a reward—that all others got merely the assurance that they would receive what would be right.

Another difficulty which we encounter in interpreting the parable is how to apply the murmuring of those who were first called and last rewarded. Other Scriptures show us that the Apostles and others first called in the Gospel Age will experience their resurrection change before those who will be living at the Second Coming of Christ. St. Paul declares that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and that then those of us who are alive and remain shall be changed. Furthermore, it would be unthinkable that the Apostles and others of the early Church would murmur at the reward to be given them.

All of these difficulties must be borne in mind when we attempt to find a solution of this parable that would fit the experiences of the Church as a whole during the Gospel Age.

If we attempt to apply the parable to the individual experiences of God's people, we have trouble also. Applying it thus, we might say that those who begin a Christian life early, and are found faithful in the Lord's service at the evening-time of life, would be the ones first called and promised a reward. Others coming in later, and serving the Lord's cause with only a portion of their time, strength and talent, would correspond to those who heard the later call—some even at the eleventh hour. If we interpret the parable as meaning that all these will get a similar reward regardless of the time spent in the Master's service, we would still have difficulty with the fact that those called earliest murmured, complained, were dissatisfied.

On the contrary, we are surely convinced that any who would murmur against the Lord's will and His just and loving arrangements for His people, will never obtain the Kingdom reward beyond the veil. We may feel assured that any who receive the Master's "Well done" and the resurrection change will be far from murmuring. They will rejoice and be glad, and feel more than rewarded for every little service and sacrifice. How, then, can we apply this parable consistently, in harmony with the teachings of other Scriptures respecting the reward of the Kingdom class?

For about sixteen hundred years the Jews waited for the First Coming of Messiah and the blessed opportunities which then would come. When Jesus began His ministry, He preached, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," and gave the Jews the privilege of entering into it. That privilege was a "penny," or a reward for their faithful endeavour to keep the Law all their lives. But when the offer of the Kingdom was promulgated, some publicans and sinners were attracted—some who had previously neglected God's service and labours in the vineyard. These new labourers were received by the Lord Jesus and given an opportunity to become His disciples.

The privilege of discipleship was the penny, or reward. The Scribes and the Pharisees, who had been faithful to the Lord God all their lives, considered that they should have had some pre-eminence or preference over the publicans and sinners; and they murmured at any arrangement as unfair which would not give them preference respecting the Kingdom. If publicans and sinners were to obtain the blessed privilege or discipleship with Messiah, then surely, they thought, some still higher favour should come to

them. They murmured that Jesus received publicans and sinners and ate with them.

One of the Master's parables was intended as a special reproof, to the Pharisees along this line. The prodigal son represented a class of Jews not living up to their privileges, while the elder brother represented those who had continuously sought to be earnestly and actively engaged in the Father's business. When some of this prodigal class received the Message of God's Love from the lips of Jesus and His disciples, and returned to the Father's House and were treated graciously and given the same privilege of sonship as those who had not gone astray, but who had laboured faithfully, the elder-brother class was offended. They murmured, and refused to participate in the feast. Thus there were some who were first in opportunity, but who were last so far as the blessing was concerned, and others who were last and least found opportunity for receiving the Divine blessing sooner and more effectively.

Applicable to the Jews.

It would appear to be clear that the intention of the Lord in giving this parable was in connection with the Jews.

It was given in those days when the Scribes and Pharisees realised that the parables He was speaking were directed against them. For instance, in regard to the Parable of the Vineyard (Luke 20:19). The chief priests and scribes . . . perceived that He had spoken this parable against them. All will admit that certain parables apply only to that time, while others apply all down the Age, and again some apply only to the end of the

Age. It would seem necessary that we rightly divide the word of truth in this way, and thus place each interpretation in its appropriate season. This would not, however, hinder us from using the same as an illustration or as a correspondency.

Among other parables which can only apply at the time they were spoken would be the following:--The Rich Man in Hell and Lazarus in Abraham's Bosom, The Unjust Steward, The Prodigal Son, The Vineyard and Wicked Husbandmen, and The Great Supper.

We find, then, that the Parable of the Penny has had its fulfilment. First the priests and scribes had the opportunity of entering the Service. Those who responded were rewarded with the penny or the privilege of entering into the Kingdom Class, "the Law and the Prophets were until John, since then the kingdom of heaven is preached." "To as many as believed gave He power (or privilege) to become the sons of God." The "penny" was handed to the labourers by the Steward who would represent the Lord, and when the Law was satisfied the Steward could hand the penny, which might then represent Justification. This opened up the way for the Kingdom.

After the first call to the priests, Scribes and Pharisees, the Lord turned to the publicans and sinners. Then the Scribes and Pharisees did the murmuring. (See Luke 15:2;19:7.) The offer of the Kingdom later went to the Gentiles, and even among the disciples there were those who could hardly accept the thought that Gentiles might also be fellow-heirs of the Kingdom and they would anyway insist that they should be bound under the Law. On this question the conference was called at Jerusalem, and the Lord made the matter plain through the Apostles. While, as stated, there may be a correspondency in conditions which now exist in Christendom, it would appear certain that the Lord's intention in connection with the parable of the penny was to reprove a wrong condition of heart in the Scribes and Pharisees of that time.

The "Vineyard" of the Householder would be in accord with Isaiah 5:7—"For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant," and the Lord uses the same word in the Parable of the "Wicked Husbandmen." (See also Psalm 80:8, etc.)

We find a similar expression in the Parable of the Good Shepherd, where the word “Porter” is used in the same way. By the death of Jesus the Law was satisfied and the “Door” was opened to allow the sheep to pass out in response to the voice of the Good Shepherd, who was “an end to the Law to them that believe.” “That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit” (Rom. 8:4).

Lessons to Christians.

The general lesson of the parable would seem -to be that we should appreciate the fact that whatever God has to offer is a gift. We should enter His service with loving loyalty to principle, to righteousness. If we have served for many years, that privilege of service should be esteemed; and our interest in the Lord’s cause should make us happy. From such a standpoint of appreciation of the privilege of service we should be glad to see the Lord’s work going on, glad to see others enter the service and glad to see them get the same reward that we hope for ourselves. Only those who have such a broad spirit, such an appreciation of the privileges of the vineyard, such a sympathy for “as many as the Lord our God shall call”—only these will be fit for the Kingdom proper and in readiness to receive the special privileges of knowledge and opportunity when the Kingdom is ready to be announced.

As the typical kingdom was offered to the Jews in Jesus’ day, and as those who were newest in Divine service received the same opportunities for a share in the Kingdom with those who had been long engaged, so apparently it is to be in the end, or Harvest time, of the Gospel Age. Those who have all their lives been seeking to be faithful to the Lord and to serve His cause should remember that they have had that much more of privilege and blessing. If some shall enter the Divine service later, they should be rejoiced with as fellow-servants.

Let us rather rejoice in the Lord’s ways. Let not our hearts be angry because of His graciousness to those who have come into the service even during the eleventh hour. Are they not brethren? Under the terms of the Golden Rule should we not wish them to have the same blessings that we enjoy? Any aloofness on the part of those who have been longer in the Lord’s service—any feeling on the part of such that they must have more manifestation of the Lord’s favour now—is evidently wrong.

More and more we are learning that in a very large and important sense our forefathers during the Dark Ages lost the proper conception of God’s character and of His Plan for human salvation. Instead of picturing Him in the creeds as loving and gracious, they portrayed Him in very different colours. The creeds of the Dark Ages, which have been handed down to us, have given us coloured and distorted views of the teachings of the Bible. Only in recent years are Bible students beginning to discern this fact. Nearly all people of intelligence have now cast away the creeds as irrational in the general trend of their teaching—in their representation that God from the beginning purposed a Hell of fire and everlasting torture for nearly all His human creatures, numbering thousands of millions, and a Paradise of bliss for only a saintly handful, an elect few.

But, alas, while we have been realising the errancy of our creeds, and have been discarding them, many of us have failed to notice how different their teachings are from the teachings of the Bible! But the Bible is being sought after again. The coloured creed-spectacles which distorted our view are being broken to pieces. We are learning to read the Bible in its own clear light, and a blessing proportionately is coming to us.

Notice, for instance, this text: “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven.” Many during the Dark Ages committed horrible atrocities in the name of religion, in the name of Jesus, in the name of the Father, thinking that they were copying God, being like their Father in Heaven. But, alas,

they knew Him not aright! They had been following demon-drawn pictures which represented the almighty, gracious God, the Father of mercies, as most devilish in His plans and arrangements for His human creatures. Now we are seeing what Jesus really means when He said, “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven.” Now we are including the remainder of His statement: “for He is kind to the unthankful”; and “He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Two of the very noblest of Jesus’ disciples caught the wrong thought, even though they were for awhile personally present with the Master. How much more should we excuse those who, during a long period of energetic creed-making and of neglect of Bible study, lost all proper conception of the Divine character!

The two disciples referred to were James and John, the sons of Zebedee. When the Lord and His disciples had run short of food, James and John went to a city of Samaria to purchase bread. The Samaritans inquired why Jesus did not come to their city to heal the Samaritan sick, as well as the Jews. When they learned that His mission for the time was exclusively for the Jews, they were offended and said: Buy your bread from the Jews, then; we will sell you nothing. Then it was that James and John, indignant that their Master, the Heir of all things, should be thus dishonoured, asked permission of Jesus to call down fire upon the Samaritans, to consume their city. These disciples thought that they had the spirit of God. But Jesus said: “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”

And if these two dear disciples needed to be corrected—needed to be shown that they had a wrong spirit in wishing to destroy the Samaritans—how much more would Jesus’ reproof be appropriate to those who in the name of God would consign all opponents to an eternity of torture!

But such were some of us in our ignorance, in our superstition, in our creed-intoxication—as a result of drinking the wine of false doctrine (Revelation 17:1-5 ; 18:3). Thank God for the deliverance! Praise His name for the saner views coming to His people. The dawning of the Morning of a New Dispensation is giving enlightenment! “Tell the whole world these blessed tidings.”

Take Thine Own way with me, dear Lord,

Thou cannot otherwise than bless.

I launch me forth upon a sea
Of boundless love and tenderness.

Every Day Cheer.

We have nothing to fear
Though the journey be long;
Though our weakness be great
And our enemies strong.

There is nothing to fear ;
Perfect love claims the right
To direct or by day,
And defend us by night.

He knoweth our frame,
Counts it nothing but dust ;
And He calls us by name,
And delights in our trust.

He sees all that's future,
Understands all that's past,
And knows how much longer
The journey will last.

For our comfort He'll care
Every step of the road,
Till His glory we share
In the house of our God.

Though some of His ways
May seem past finding out,
The thought of His love
Must exclude every doubt.

These myst'ries when solved
In His presence above,
Will but add further charms
To the story of Love.
—Geo. C.

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Volume XXXIII. No. 9 MELBOURNE, SEPTEMBER, 1950 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

Come Out of Her, My People.

“Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”
(Rev. 18:4.)

THE revelation of our Lord to St. John is a Book of signs, in which the things stated symbolise the things meant.

To illustrate: In this Book a woman is used to represent a Church—a pure woman a pure Church, a false woman an apostate Church. In Rev. 17:1-6 a picture is given of a false woman, disloyal to her engagement, and, therefore, no longer worthy to be the Bride of Messiah. This unfaithful woman is branded “Babylon.” We read that she sat upon a beast, a symbolic statement of her control of the power at Rome.

In her hand this woman held a golden cup full of abominations, and thus symbolically she is represented as making all nations drunk with the wine of false doctrine. The cup suggests that the unfaithful Church, symbolised by this woman, had once been the receptacle of Divine Truth—“Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord’s hands,” (Jer. 51:7.) In Revelation 17:5 she is called “The Mother of Harlots”—a term suggesting a mother church, and daughter churches which are said to closely resemble the mother. As the mother was called “Babylon,” the daughters—so like their mother—bear also the family name.

Babylon—Mother and Daughters.

All about us we see the fulfilment of this prophecy. We see that the daughter systems have proceeded out of the mother system; that they are all developed from her. Some years ago, a very prominent Presbyterian minister said, “Wince as you will, you must admit that this (the Catholic Church) is the Mother Church. She possesses an unbroken history extending back to the times of the Apostles. For every fragment of religious truth which we prize, we are indebted to her as the depository. If she has no claim to being the true Church, then we are bastards and not sons.”

A fair examination of the denominations shows that they are more or less in sympathy with the mother system. Revelation 18 traces the history of the Apostate Church and foretells that Babylon—both Papal and Protestant systems—will fall. But the Lord has a true Church, to which He says, “Come out of her, My People!” In other words, some of the saints of God are scattered throughout the denominations. But now, in the closing of the Age, God sends forth the Message that His people shall no longer remain in the

denominations; for the time is coming when the doom of Babylon will be upon her and she will fall (Isa. 13:1-22).

Prophecy a Graphic Picture of History.

When we examine the Scriptures with the purpose of understanding prophecy, we find that during the Jewish Age, God made various types and pictures. The Jews themselves were typical. The Scriptures also show that there are two Israels, one of which is to be as the “stars of heaven” and the other as the “sand of the seashore.” (Gen. 22:17; Isa. 8:14; 1 Cor. 10:1 8 ; Gal. 6:1 6.) Natural Israel was used of God to make types of the spiritual things—the “better things.” Their Jubilee years were types of the antitypical Jubilee of better times; their Levitical priesthood was a type of the Priesthood in glory, etc.

During the great Babylonian captivity the Jews were compelled to live in Babylon, to be a part of her, to support her, although their bondage was not severe. So to-day some of God’s people are in Mystical Babylon, and support some of her wards and denominations. Therefore, it becomes a difficult matter to flee out of Babylon. But we find in the Scriptures graphic pictures of what is coming upon Mystic Babylon, and those who would escape must flee. As Cyrus, a type of Christ, overthrew Babylon, so a part of the work of the Second Advent will be the overthrow of antitypical Babylon (Jer. 51:6; Rev. 18:21).

Babylon the Symbol of Confusion.

Originally “Babylon” signified “Gate of God.” But the word came subsequently to have the meaning of confusion, mixture; and in this sense it is used in the Revelation. Babylon is a symbol of confusion. God’s people in Babylon are dishonoured: they are held in restraint. Now, through the prophecy we hear the command, “Come out of her, My people!” This call applies not only to those in Babylon the Great, but to those in other denominations—mother and daughters. “Come out of her, My people, that we be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. 18:4.) Be not of those who cannot see the errors of Babylon and who, consequently, are not of the called ones.

The object of the call to come out is not for people merely to withdraw from a nominal Church; but whenever any true Christian comes to see the error in which he has been held, and which Babylon has taught, he will see that he will misrepresent not only himself and the denomination to which he belongs, but also the Heavenly Father and the Word of God, if he remains connected with what he sees to be error. As he realises his position, the voice of the Lord through His Word tells him that he must stand for truth and righteousness.

No one is called out of Babylon until he sees her true condition. If they have “ears to hear,” God’s voice tells them plainly to take this step, and gives the reason why they should do so. This Book of Revelation shows us by symbols that dire trouble is coming upon Babylon. The nominal Church claims that Christ’s Kingdom was set up hundreds of years ago. Consequently, they are not looking for Christ to come to establish His Kingdom, for they think that He set up His Kingdom at the time of His First Advent.

“Gather My Saints Together Unto Me.”

The expression, “Come out of her,” signifies that the Lord’s people are to separate from all things which are in conflict with the Divine Word. We are to come out of the errors and systems of error which are contrary to the Word of God. But we are not to organise another denomination, for the original call was to membership in the Body of Christ.

“Come out of her, My people,” is a call to associate with Christ, with Messiah. This call is given by the Lord through the Prophet when He says, “Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a

Covenant with Me by sacrifice.” (Psa. 50:5.) They were to be gathered, not to the Roman or other systems, but to the Lord, to become one with Him. Therefore, they could not be gathered to all these different denominations, nor to any one of them. Those who hear the call should come out of Babylon and take their stand with the Lord. They are no longer to be mis- representatives of God and of themselves.

Those who see these things and have sufficient courage will come out. Those who see these things and lack the courage to come out are more responsible than are the majority of people who are in Babylon, but who do not see. If those who see do not have sufficient courage to obey the Lord, they will surely receive of her plagues by remaining in, and will probably have a large share in the punishments of the day of vengeance.

Many Becoming Irreligious.

Many people who have been identified with the different denominations are not coming into the Truth, but are becoming irreligious. They are by no means bad people; and they feel convinced that there has been a great error connected with Christianity. They repudiate much that Babylon does and says. Babylon claims that she has civilised the world; but she forgets that civilisation existed before Christianity began. She forgets that Jews are just as civilised as Christians; and that Mohammedans are more temperate than many so-called Christians. By no means do we wish to say anything against whatever good people have received from her. If they get a still further blessing, they will probably find that while the blessing which they had previously had was better than a message from heathendom, yet Babylon’s best is far inferior to the Truth, the Light.

The Lord’s people are permitted to enjoy wonderful things! By the grace of God, we are privileged to see the meaning of things that were once mysterious, not only to us, but to our parents. While some in Babylon are going into infidelity, some out of Babylon are becoming stronger spiritually, entering by hope “into that which is within the veil.” If Christ is our Forerunner, we shall enter there with Him. To do so will mean to become partakers of The Messiah, by becoming the Bride of the Messiah, as symbolically represented. The true Church is to become associated with Christ in His Kingdom. Then will come the promised blessings to “all the families of the earth.”

As we perceive the consistency of the Divine Plan of the Ages, our hearts are full of thanksgiving to God. We see that the New Dispensation will be ushered in with “a Time of Trouble such as never was”; and that this Time of Trouble is located, among other ways, by that prophecy which tells that “Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased”; that there will be a time of trouble; but that “the wise shall understand.” From what source do the wise receive their instruction? They will understand according to the wisdom from on high—in humility accepting the Divine Word and being blessed in so doing (Dan. 12:4, 10).

(In a later issue, it is hoped to present a short article revealing some of the erroneous teachings. etc.. which clearly distinguish the “sins” of Babylon.)

Tracts Available.

The article “Is Communism a Danger to Christianity?” which appeared in July “Peoples Paper” is now available in tract form. Friends desiring copies are asked to state the number they can use to advantage; these tracts are supplied free from the General Tract Fund.

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Making Friends of the Unrighteous Mammon.

“And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation.”—Luke 16:9.

GOD’S chosen heritage was the Jewish people. Under the Mosaic Covenant there were certain members of that nation who were representatives of God and of the people of Israel. Therefore Jesus could say to His disciples, “The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Whatsoever, therefore, they bid you do, that observe and do; but do not after their works; for they say, and do not.” (Matt. 23:2, 3.) God had committed to them these special responsibilities, blessings, privileges and knowledge, and the people were more or less dependent upon them; and they were unjust in their dealings with the people.

Through His Son, the Lord sent word to these Scribes and Pharisees that they were to be cast out of the stewardship. They had come to understand in a general way that a New Dispensation was coming in—the Gospel Age. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, had also proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. Now Jesus gives a parable, which explains the reason for the course which these classes should take. He assumes the case of an unjust steward who was called upon by his lord to render up his accounts, because his stewardship was about to end.

When notified that his dismissal was at hand, this steward tried to make friends of all who were debtors to his master. No matter how unjust the steward had been with these debtors before, he now minimised their accounts, as he had a right to do. In olden times a steward had the right to make contracts, etc., for his master. So this steward cut down the accounts and made friends of the people. Commenting upon his course, our Lord said that this was a very wise procedure on the part of the steward, for thus he would be ingratiated into the favour of those who could help him. While our Lord commended this course as good worldly wisdom, He did not commend the steward’s injustice, but his shrewdness in adopting a policy which would win the favour and friendship of those whom he had unjustly treated before.

Applied to His time, our Master’s words would teach that the Scribes and Pharisees should have sought to win the love and gratitude of their Jewish brethren. Had they tried to make the people happy and contented, it might have gone better with them afterward. But they did not do this; and when the great time of trouble came upon the nation, in the year 70 A.D., these religious rulers were among the chief mourners and sufferers in the trouble. They had not been as wise as the unjust steward.

Our Personal Responsibility as God’s Stewards.

Then our Lord applied the parable to His disciples, and gave them a lesson. “Likewise I say the same unto you.” The application of the parable to His followers is somewhat different from its application to the Scribes and Pharisees. “I say unto you: make for yourselves: friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.” In other words, the Lord’s people are here advised to use whatever of the unrighteous mammon they have in doing as much good as possible, in blessing and assisting others; and thus they will make grateful, appreciative friends.

This does not mean that our good deeds and our use of whatever means the Lord has given us should be with a view to bringing commendation and material advantage to ourselves, but with a view to being of real service in blessing others along the lines laid down in the Scriptures. Thus the Lord’s children make themselves truly worthy and pleasing to God. We believe this is a good plan to follow now. The Master declared that the children of this world are generally wiser than the children of light in recognising what is for their best interests.

Time of Trouble Pictured in French Revolution.

The ecclesiastical powers of to-day are professedly sitting in the seat of Christ. The masses of the people know nothing better than what their religious rulers tell them. Now that these Doctors of the Law see the present Dispensation coming to an end, they should seek to correct their former mistakes in dealing with their flocks, should seek to make some reparation for all their past delinquencies. They have been to a greater or less extent hiding “the key of knowledge” (Luke 11:52) to a greater or less extent imposing on the superstitions of the people, and taking the people’s money under false pretences. They should now seek to rectify all this so far as possible by telling the people the truth. They should try to save themselves from the violence of the fall which is coming to them. Were they to do so they would not fall so hard when the great disaster comes. But in antagonising the interests of the people more and more they are adding to their own distress in the near future, as the Scriptures point out.

We should not be surprised if the priests and ministers will suffer more distress in the great trouble time nearing than will the people, because of their having hoodwinked the people. The Catholic priests suffered terribly at the time of the French Revolution, which was a picture on a small scale of the approaching great cataclysm. The French Revolution, we understand, is clearly referred to in Rev. 12:15, 16. We believe that the nominal church clergy and leaders will particularly suffer in the universal overthrow of the Present Order near at hand—some of them because they have actively opposed the Truth; some because of posing as representatives of truth and enlightenment and the liberties of the people, and failing really to stand for the truth which they recognised—keeping quiet about it for policy’s sake. They have failed to conserve the interests which they pretended to serve.

Application of Parable to the Saints.

In applying the words of Jesus to ourselves, they would seem to teach that to whatever extent we have the mammon of unrighteousness, worldly goods, we should be inclined to be liberal, according to the measure of our ability. We take it that the Lord is showing us here that we as His followers have more or less of means, opportunity, influence, etc., and that we should use these talents He has given us in forwarding His Cause. And if in our presentations of Truth a certain amount of denunciation may be met with, we should rather let the matter go unnoticed and seek to ‘be generous, so far as is compatible with faithfulness to the Lord and the spirit of His Word.

The Master adds, “that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.” Those who could receive us into everlasting habitations would be only the Lord and His angels. He has promised to receive all His faithful ones. Our use of the unrighteous mammon, our sacrificing of earthly interests, which might in some cases bring us blessings from men, would surely at last bring us the crowning blessing from the Lord, as is promised. Our failing will be the reaching of the end of our sacrificial course. All of the Lord’s people are to die—that is the purport of their consecration; it is a sacrifice even unto death. If they are of this class who make friends with, or of, or through, the mammon of unrighteousness, if they sacrifice these earthly things, then when they fail, when they die, when they have finished their course, they will be received into everlasting habitations—the place prepared for the faithful class of “more than conquerors,” the “House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.”

We would not apply the word “they” necessarily to those of whom we made friends. God is our Friend, if we as His children live a life of self-sacrifice and ignore the selfish use of earthly mammon in favour of the service of the Lord. Then our friends, those who will receive us when we fail, will be not those alone or those necessarily who may have been benefited by our sacrifices, but will be especially those beyond the veil—the Father, the Lord Jesus, the glorified saints, and all the holy angels. Blessed expectation!

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The Good Shepherd

“I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”—John 10:1 1.

THE parable contained in the opening verses of John 10 followed closely the account in the previous chapter, where it is revealed that the reverend doctors of the law were incensed at the man whose eyes had been opened, so that they cast him out of the synagogue, because he confessed Jesus as the channel of divine favour. It was doubtless as a reproof to such false shepherding that our Lord spoke this parable. The very ones who should have been helping the poor scattered sheep of Israel to recognise the true Shepherd, and to come to Him and become inheritors with them of the long-promised kingdom, were seeking to prevent the Lord’s sheep from recognising the Shepherd — seeking to hinder men from entering the Kingdom which they themselves also refused to enter.—Matt. 23:13.

The illustration of the Lord as a shepherd, and His people as sheep, is common to the Scriptures, and very fitly represents their close confidential relationship, but it is a figure that is quite contrary to the spirit of the world. The “natural man” sees little in the figure to admire, and when he expresses his sentiments he would rather represent himself to others and have them regard him as a wolf, a lion, a tiger, or some other ferocious creature, which they would best not stir up, lest he devour them. We find this characteristic well borne out in the emblems of heraldry; the escutcheons of the great are emblazoned with figures representing beasts of prey, birds of prey, and nondescripts, blending various natures—but all of them ferocious, snarling, howling, screeching, or otherwise implying fierceness

and intimidation of foes. But when God would represent the emblems of His royal family, His only begotten Son is called the Lamb of God, and all His people are styled His sheep,—symbols of meekness, gentleness, harmlessness. “Jehovah is my shepherd” is properly represented as their sentiment.—Psa. 23.

Sheep-raising in Palestine, and more or less throughout that vicinity, was carried on quite extensively, and yet very differently from present methods in this and other lands. The owner of the flock or his son usually did the shepherding, or sometimes an employee who was given an interest in the increase of the flock—as, for instance, Jacob, with his father-in-law Laban. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the relationship between the sheep and their shepherds was very different from now—much more confidential. The shepherd was acquainted with his sheep and loved them, not merely as so much wealth and merchandise, but as friends, companions, with whom he conversed, and whose welfare he defended. Travellers tell us that the peculiarities of this parable are fully illustrated in eastern countries, even to this day; that a shepherd will know every individual sheep in his flock, and have a name for it, and that the sheep know their shepherd, and discern readily the sound of his voice, and cannot be deceived. Some tell us how they have experimented and proved these peculiar statements of the parable: one asked the shepherd to call some particular sheep by name, to see whether or not it would come to him; the shepherd called one that was far off, and it immediately lifted its head, looked toward him, and when the call was repeated, started, and wending its way in and out through the flock, came to his feet, where he patted its head in reward for its obedience. Thinking this possibly a solitary instance, requests were made for repetitions of the test, with similar results. Another traveller imitated the shepherd’s voice, and called the sheep, but they paid no attention. Thinking that it was because he had not on the shepherd’s garments, to test the matter he and the shepherd changed raiment, but still the sheep would not heed the voice of the stranger; but when the shepherd spoke to them, even though clothed in the garments of the stranger, they knew his voice and at once responded.

Our Lord used these facts, well known to His hearers, to illustrate His relationship to the Lord’s people, as their Shepherd, the Son of the Great Shepherd; and He pointed out that all who were truly of His flock

would hear His voice, would not be deceived by the Adversary, though he should disguise himself in garments of light, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. The important thing, then, is that we should become true members of the Lord's flock, intimately acquainted with Him, and familiar with His Word, His voice—disciples indeed. He is seeking no others than these for His present flock. Nor has He at the present time two flocks, one of them hearing and obeying His voice, and the other heedless of His words. He declares, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Those who are not following the Lord, in obedience to His voice, expressed in word and example, are not of His flock; they are not being led to the green pastures and still waters of present truth; their table is not furnished in the presence of their foes, nor are they in the way marked out by the divine goodness and mercy, to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.—Psa. 23.

God established a typical kingdom or sheepfold, and accepted the nation of Israel as His sheep, but as a nation they were wayward sheep and knew Him not. Nevertheless, with a Law Covenant he fenced them in. They desired a king, a ruler, a caretaker, a governor and God let them have their wish; but none of these was the true shepherd, neither did any bring the sheep into desirable conditions. And when these were finally done away, various others presented themselves as the Messiah, falsely claiming the right to lead Israel—false Messiahs. These, as our Lord declares, were thieves and robbers, who sought the control of the sheep, not from interest in the sheep, but from selfish motives, for self-aggrandizement and exaltation. These attempted to lead out the Lord's people, not by the door, but by climbing up other ways: by climbing over the Law, or by digging under it, they would reach the sheep and become leaders; and altogether in various ways a large proportion of Israel had been led astray out of the fold, some to idolatry, and some simply to wander in the wilderness.

At our Lord's first advent this was the condition of things: God's covenant with Israel was standing as a wall around that nation, but its door was barred by justice, as represented in the Mosaic Law—Israel's covenant. There could be no proper ingress or egress; all were prisoners of the Law,—shut up unto that hope which should afterward be revealed, namely, Christ the door or "way" of life. Meanwhile, though the door was guarded zealously by the scribes and Pharisees, the fact was entirely neglected that thieves and robbers, Satan's servants, were at work plundering the sheepfold.—John 10:1, 2, 7, 9; Gal. 3:24; John 14:6; Zech. 9:9-12.

Nor could our Lord Jesus rightfully open the fold and take charge of the sheep, except at the cost of His own life. This was the purpose of the Father, the Great Shepherd, and with this in view He shut up the sheep under the Law, to the intent that they would need to be redeemed by His Son (the appointed Shepherd), from under the dominion of the Law, before they could be made free with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free His people. And this was the first work that the Good Shepherd did for the sheep; the laying down of His life began at the beginning of His ministry, when He made a full consecration of Himself even unto death, and symbolized this in baptism. It was in view of this sacrifice which He had already devoted, and was even then offering, and which was finished subsequently at Calvary, that our Redeemer announced Himself as the Good Shepherd who giveth His life for the sheep.

The Apostle declares that our Lord's death redeemed Israel from under the curse (sentence) of the Law—but it not only satisfied the Law. "the porter," so that he opened the sheepfold, but it gave to the true Shepherd the ownership and control of the sheep, that He might lead them out to green pastures, and that they might go out and in with perfect freedom, as His sheep, following Him. Our Lord testified, however, that many true sheep had gotten out of the fold, and were lost in the wilderness of sin. His ministry was a call to these as well as to those who remained in the fold,— to the publicans and 'sinners as well as to those who were endeavouring to live near to God.

Thus the true Shepherd showed His interest in all His true sheep, including the lame, the weak, the starved. He called sinners to repentance, and the true sheep, realising their shortcomings under the Law,

responded and came to Him as the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. But inasmuch as many of the flock had wandered far from the position of true sheep, so that there were not enough who heard His voice, to complete the elect number of His flock, this Good Shepherd has, during this Gospel Age, lifted up His voice (speaking through the members of His body), and has called sheep from amongst the Gentiles. Our Lord seemed to refer to these “other sheep” from the Gentile nations in verse 16 of this 10th chapter of John, when He said—”And other sheep I have which are not of this fold (the Jewish fold or enclosure) ; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shalt be one flock (‘flock’ is the correct translation, not fold) and one shepherd.” In other words, the Gentile Christians would be of the same sheeplike disposition as the Jewish “sheep”; they also hear the Shepherd’s voice, responding joyfully and gladly to follow Him, and make up the sufficient number to complete the original, predestinated flock for the heavenly kingdom. The call of this present time is not a general one, but as this Scripture declares, “he calleth his own sheep by name,”—it is therefore a special call. “The Lord knoweth them that are his.” They manifest relationship to Him as His flock by their obedience to His call—by following Him. The flock which is now being called, and which eventually will make its calling and election sure, the Scriptures inform us, will be only “a little flock,” and the fold provided for these is a special one; namely, the kingdom.-- Luke 12:32.

Throughout this Gospel age the Lord has been caring for this class; He has specially led and fed and blessed them, notwithstanding that to the appearance of others they have passed through severe trials, disciplines, sufferings. Yea, as our Shepherd Himself declared, whosoever lives godly suffers persecution. Indeed a part of the key to this parable, as it is also the key to many other features of the divine plan, is found in the fact that the sheep of the “little flock,” now being called and selected to joint-heirship in the kingdom, are to be sacrificed: as the Shepherd, the King’s Son, Himself was sacrificed as the Lamb of God, so the sheep of the “little flock,” now being called, are all to suffer with Christ—with the Lamb of God,—are all to be “living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1.) As the Apostle elsewhere declares, “Hereby we know love, because he laid down his life on our behalf: and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren,” for the fellow-sheep.¹ John 3:16.—Diaglott.

From this standpoint it will be seen that as our Lord was the Father’s Lamb, and the sin-offering for the world, so we who are of Jesus’ flock are to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in the interest of His body, which is the Church. (Eph. 1:22.) And other Scriptures show us that all of the flock thus faithful, in following the Shepherd even “unto death,” are counted as members of the body of the Shepherd. Thus the entire Gospel age has been the period of suffering with Christ, of dying daily, of laying down our lives for the brethren; and not until this sacrifice is complete in the close of this age will the New Covenant be thrown open to Israel and the world of mankind in general, and the great Shepherd be complete—Head and body. Then the spirit and the bride will say, Come, and whosoever will may come,—whereas now, “No man can come except the Father draw him,” and in all a “little flock.”

The spirit of the great Chief (or Head) Shepherd of the flock is to be in all those now being called to association with Him in the kingdom. As the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the flock so all of these will lay down their lives in the service of the truth. As the Good Shepherd was not indifferent to the necessities of the sheep, caring for Himself, and how much He could get out of the sheep, so it will be with those who have His spirit—their service of the body of Christ will not be for filthy lucre’s sake, nor for honour among men, nor for earthly gain, in any sense of the word; but for the love of God, the love of the truth, the love of the flock.

Wondrous the thought—that the Father
Knows of our every care;
Feels for us when the shadow
Lurks where the sky was fair :

Knows of the pent-up sorrow,
Feels for the eyes that weep ;
Tells of a brighter Morrow
Where shadows never creep!

Precious to know the Good Shepherd
Tenderly guides His sheep
Over the stony places;
Cares when the path is steep :

Watches for greenest pastures,
Tends them with loving skill;
Guards them from fright and danger,
Leads them by Waters still!

Joyous the thought--that the angels,
Guardians are, to keep ;
Bearing in hands so tender
Weary and wounded Feet.

Daily are gaining access
To the dear Father's face;
Hourly are seeking succour
For those who crave His grace !

Blessed to feel we are dwelling
Safe in the Secret Place;
Under Jehovah's shadow,
Trusting till we can trace:

Knowing no ill can harm us,
Knowing His Arm of Love
Safely will shield, till He calls us
Unto His Home above!

—Mary C. Jewell.

Correspondence.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would you please send me copies of your Bible Talks for the last six or eight weeks if you can? I have been listening but have had to just miss the place where to write to. Hoping you can oblige; if there is any cost kindly let me know. Your listener.

P.S.—I do enjoy your programme very much; keep up the good work.

(Copies of the broadcasts are gladly supplied free from the Radio Fund.—B.B. Institute.)

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Christian Friends—We would appreciate it very much if you would please forward to above address a copy of today's Talk over the air. This subject was talked round at our last Wednesday night prayer circle and today you brought out some fresh thoughts which we could use at a future prayer meeting. We appreciate your Sunday morning Talks and always listen in. Again thanking you; Yours in His service.

Dear Sirs—Send me your last two copies and the little book you mentioned over the wireless. Yes, I love to listen to your broadcast, for my heart is in it, where the Bible is. And it is so plain to see what you have spoken about, but it is hard for some to stop and think; but I always watch the clock for your broadcast and would like the copy of them please. I will forward something later for them, to help carry on. Yours sincerely.

Messrs. Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—In response to your invitation over 3GL this morning I am writing for a copy of your discussion today entitled "Paradise and the Thief," also any other literature you may care to let me have. Yours faithfully.

Dear Sir—Would you forward me the literature concerning the prophecies spoken of in your broadcasts. Many thanks for your interesting Talks. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Will you kindly forward me your Talk on "Life After Death." I find your Sunday morning Talks helpful. Thanking you in anticipation.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I am very interested in your Talks on Sunday mornings over 2KY. I would be pleased to have any of your literature that you may have to give. I have not had any of your pamphlets, though I have listened in for some considerable time and like the way you put the questions and answers. Wishing you every success in your Talks. Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was very interested in your broadcast last Sunday morning from 2KY, firstly, because I have never heard a religious message from that station before, and was mighty glad to hear it, and secondly, because of the manner in which it was given. Your message on the love of God was beautiful; please send me a copy, also "God and Reason" and, if possible, next Sunday's message—"The End of the World." I am a Sunday School teacher so will be able to use them to good advantage. Thanking you in anticipation. I remain, Yours faithfully.

Dear Sirs—I have been listening to your session on Sunday mornings for two or three Sundays and have become very interested. It is wonderful to think that Christ's Kingdom is coming on this earth and it makes the sorrows and hardships of this world much easier to bear, and I will be looking forward with much interest to hearing your discussions from now on.

Would you please send me a copy of the book "God and Reason," and I am not sure whether you spoke about one called "The End of the World;" if so, would you please send me a copy of that too. Thanking you for same, I am, Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Today is the third Sunday that I have been listening to your broadcasts. The first broadcast that I heard dealt with the end of the world, and as I was interested I wrote asking you to send me some more information which I have received and am studying. With each broadcast that I hear I am more convinced that your understanding of the Scriptures corresponds with our understanding—that is, the independent group with which I study. For this reason I would be pleased if you would send a printed copy of the broadcast for today and also for last week. I am enclosing some stamps with this letter. Yours sincerely.

P.S.—We are very grateful for the literature which you have already forwarded including the booklet "God and Reason."

Frank and Ernest, 6KY Perth, Dear Friends—Will you please send me the printed scripts of these Dialogues each week? 6KY is rather weak down here and an old lady who is rather deaf would like to read these interesting discussions. I am "enclosing £ 1 as I would like to help in the good work. Yours sincerely.

Dear Friends—We were very interested to listen in to Frank and Ernest in the Berean Bible Society discussion this afternoon and would be very grateful for a copy of "Chosen People." Thank you very much; Yours in the Master's service.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I am very interested in your announcement recently made in the "Adelaide Chronicle" and would be very pleased if you could forward to me, at the above address, your free literature as described on enclosed coupon. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother in Christ—Would you advise me if I could get the "Divine Plan of the Ages"?

A friend of mine had one sent to her from Melbourne and she lent it to me to read; I would like to have one for myself. If you would send me one I would send the price by return of mail.

I have known for years the churches do not give the people the truth of the Bible. God said He would bring the people of Sodom back from the land of the enemy . . . and He promised Jeremiah that all Israel would be saved.

I could not help feeling that God would treat all in the same way. I know that death is the penalty for sin and not everlasting punishment. I often talked it over with the friend who had your book sent to her; she could not understand and I nearly lost her friendship; however, she is studying the "Plan of the Ages" now, and does not seem afraid to talk over the Scriptures with me. I have lost several friends for the same reason; they will not see that "fire" is only a symbol; it is so hard to get people to see anything different to what the churches teach. I have read several books on the plan of the ages but I think yours is the best; it is simple and to the point and keeps to Scripture teaching. Revelation tells us the church would leave the first teachings and turn to fables. I remain; Yours in Christ.

(The study "Divine Plan of the Ages" is supplied in handy size, cloth bound, for 3/6 at the present time. B.B. Institute.)

Dear Brother—I was pleased to get your letter of 27th July, and to hear of the good response from 2KY

just previously, and especially that some of them had been “listening in” appreciatively for some time. It may be that a good deal that is going out over the wireless at the present time is in preparation for the incoming age.

It seems to me to be getting to look more and more as if we are approaching a third world war, and with it the final great crisis which is to open the way finally for the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom. According to today’s paper there is great fear in Britain and several other nations belonging to the U.N., that U.S. attitude towards Formosa may quite possibly involve her and the United Nations in a war with Communist China, which would play right into the hands of the Soviet, and ultimately bring on the third world war, which nearly everybody seems to have made up their minds is coming. Thank God we can confidently continue to pray “Thy kingdom come” in whatever way the Lord’s wisdom and love sees is best.

By the way, will you please send me about three each of the following Frank and Ernest Talks—”Rich Man and Lazarus,” “The Love of God,” also the last three that have come over 2KY. I am enclosing the usual cheque herewith for —. With Christian love from us both; Your Brother in Christ.

(From the radio witness over the years quite a few friends, found in this way, have accepted the truth fully and have consecrated their lives to God; in this we surely rejoice. However, considerable numbers hearing the message with appreciation from week to week are no doubt receiving, help which will benefit them fully in the kingdom age. We rejoice also in this, and have confidence that the Lord will give the increase in the best way and time, to His praise.— B.B. Institute.)



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Jehovah Our God is One.

“TO US there is but one God. the Father, of whom are all things.”—1 COR 8:6.

NOTWITHSTANDING the widespread acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, we have held closely to the Bible teaching that there is but one God. Jesus called God His Father, and spoke of Himself as the Son of God. A father is a life-giver. A son is an offspring, one who receives life from a father. This distinction implies that the father existed first. And so Jesus says of Himself, “I proceeded forth and came from God.”—John 8:42.

In our writings we show the clear teachings of the Bible, that Jesus in His pre-human condition was the Logos, the Word, or Message, from the Father; and that as such He was called a god, but not the God—the Father. On so important a question as the equality of the Father and the Son, we must not rely upon any man’s testimony except that of the inspired writers of the Scriptures. We should accept no dictum save that of the Divine Word itself. Let us ask Jesus.

He replies, “My Father is greater than I”; “I can of Mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge”; “My Father is greater than all”; “I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God”; “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”—John 14:28; 5:30; 10 :29; 17:3; 20:17.

In our writings we point out that Jesus was the first of God’s creatures, the only being directly created by Jehovah;

and that Jehovah did all subsequent creating through the Son. Thus we read that Jesus was “the beginning of the creation of God,” “the First-born of every creature,” “the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” of the Father’s direct creation. (Rev. 3:14; 22 :13; Col. 1:15.) The Apostle John declares (John 1:1-3), “In the beginning [not Jehovah’s beginning, for He had no beginning; but the world’s beginning, or man’s beginning] was the Word [the Logos], and the Word was with the God and the Word was a god. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” Could this subject be made plainer? Why confuse ourselves needlessly? Why fight against the plain statements of God’s Word to uphold a theory which is without Bible support and was formulated in the Dark Ages.

We teach, as does the Bible, that the Lord Jesus came from Heaven to earth; was born of a virgin mother;

that He, “the Logos, was made flesh and dwelt among us,” and His disciples “beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14.) Jesus had not two natures, but one nature, having changed the higher, the spiritual nature, for the human nature. As the Scriptures declare, “He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9.) And as He grew to manhood He grew in favour with God and man. He was perfect—“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” — Luke 2:52, Heb. 7:26.

Jesus Became A New Creature.

At thirty years of age, this Perfect One, having reached the perfection of manhood according to the Law, consecrated, or devoted, His life to God as the great Sacrifice for human sin, fulfilling the Scriptures, “a body hast Thou prepared Me,” “for the suffering of death.” (Heb. 10:5; 2:9.) That consecrated sacrifice of the Man Jesus,

God accepted, indicating His acceptance by the anointing of Jesus with the holy spirit at Jordan. Thenceforth He was dual—a perfect human body with a newly begotten mind—spirit-begotten. He then, as a New Creature, was to complete the sacrifice of His flesh; and His new mind—the New Creature—was to go on to perfection. He prayed that the Father would restore Him to the glory which He had with the Father “before the world was.” (John 17:5.) In His humility He asked no higher glory. His sacrifice was finished at Calvary, and His new mind, His spirit-begotten new nature was, in the resurrection, granted the new body which the Father had promised “Sown in dishonour,” He was “raised in glory”; “sown in weakness,” He was “raised in power”; “sown a natural body,” He was “raised a spiritual body.”- 1 Cor. 15:43, 44.

Our Lord was not originally created in the way the angels were: for He was the direct creation of the Father, whereas the angels were the indirect creations of God, through the Son. St. Paul declares that all things are of the Father, and all things are through, by the Son. (1 Cor. 8:6.) He was the Father’s honoured agent in all other works of creation.

Our Lord Jesus became the Christ, the Anointed, when He received the anointing of the holy spirit at His baptism.

He was perfected as the Christ at His resurrection. He was a god (Mighty One) before He came into the world; He also was a god from the time He received the begetting of the holy spirit at Jordan; and He is still a god, set down at the right hand of the Father. But He is not The God, He never was and never will be. Note again His own words after His resurrection, when speaking to Mary Magdalene: “I ascend to My Father and your Father; to My God and your God.” (John 20:17.) Hear what St. Paul says, “To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by [or through] whom are all things.” (1 Cor. 8:6.) Again, in referring to Jehovah, the Apostle calls Him, “God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and again, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.”-2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3, 17.

A Common, But Unscriptural View.

The Lord Jesus is not the second person of a triune God. The word “triune” is unscriptural; so is the thought. St.

Paul sets the matter straight in his words quoted above. He also declares that Jesus “thought not by robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation.” No translation of this passage (Phil. 2:6), save in our Common Version gives the thought that Jesus considered Himself equal to God the Father, but all are to the contrary of this.

Our Common Version rendering is evidently a mistranslation. The entire argument of the Apostle shows that Christ humiliated Himself, not that He claimed equality with Jehovah!

The word “trinity” is not found in the Bible. The only text in the Bible which seems in any way to suggest a trinity is acknowledged even by trinitarians themselves to be a forgery, incorporated into the text about the fifth century. This interpolation forms a part of 1 John 5:7, 8. We quote the passage, with the interpolated words enclosed in brackets: “For there are three that bear record [in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth], the spirit and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

See Revised Version, Emphatic Diaglott, American Standard Union translation, Young’s translation, etc. This passage is pronounced an interpolation by such eminent authorities as Sir Isaac Newton, Benson, Adam Clarke, Horne, Griesbach, Tischendorf and Alford.

There was a time when our Lord Jesus did not exist, when Jehovah was alone. How else could the Bible declare that Jesus was the “beginning of the creation of God,” (Rev. 3:14.) What is the value of language, anyway, if we do not give words their manifest meaning? Jesus undoubtedly had a beginning. This beginning was ages before He came to earth as a human being to die for Adam and his race.

The Logos Transferred From Heaven To Earth.

The Lord Jesus had a Heavenly nature before He came into the world. He exchanged that nature, as we have stated, for an earthly one, in order that He might give His flesh, His humanity, a Ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. Having accomplished this great work, He was granted by the Father an exaltation still higher than His previous glorious position and nature, even though His previous station had been second only to Jehovah Himself. St. Paul declares of the position given Christ at His resurrection: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth [those now in the tomb, but yet to be raised to learn the Truth as it is in Jesus] ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:9-11.

When on earth Jesus was not a sinful man in any sense. His birth of the Virgin Mary was miraculous. His holy life was transferred to human conditions. He was made a man—”holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,” and fit, therefore, to be the great Sin offering for Adam and all his posterity. He was simply the Man Jesus up to the time of His immersion in Jordan; but the anointing He there received constituted Him the Anointed of God, the Christ, the Messiah.

Made “Partaker Of The Divine Nature.”

Jesus was a god, a Mighty One, higher than the angels, before He became a man. When born a babe, He was not a god at all, but a human being; and as the perfect man of thirty He was not a god. But when He received the anointing of the holy spirit, of Divine power, He became a Mighty One, because of this spirit-begetting. And since His resurrection He is a god, greater than ever before, “partaker of the Divine nature”; for His Church are called to this great exaltation, and they are called to the obtaining of the glory of their Lord, that they may be with Him, as His Bride, and be like Him, members of His glorious Body.—2 Thes. 2:14; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 12:12, 13, 27; 2 Pet. 1:4.

Our Lord is the great Head of His Church, and Head and Body must partake of the same nature in glory. He gave up His human nature in death to purchase the human race. For parts of three days He lay dead in the tomb—not alive in any sense; for death is the absence of life. He had given up His human life never to

take it up again. It was the purchase-price for the world. He was resurrected to the Divine plane, an exaltation never before given to any creature of God. His Bride is called to the same glorious nature as her Head, whose inheritance she is invited to share. Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God.—Rom. 6:4; 8:11; Acts 2:22, 24, 32, 33.

Confusion of Trinitarian View.

Notice for a moment the great confusion from which we are saved by following the Bible's own testimony respecting our Lord Jesus and by throwing out the ridiculous nonsense of the Dark Ages. We are saved from thinking of our God as three beings with only one body or one being with three bodies. Trinitarians do not know which of these creedal statements to take—some say one and some say the other. But both are wholly irrational: three are not one and one is not three. The oneness between the Father and the Son is explained by our Lord Himself. He prayed that His disciples might become one in the same sense that He and the Father were one—surely not that His disciples might become one person, but that they might be one in spirit; in mind, in purpose, as were the Father and Himself. See John 17:20-23. The followers of Jesus become one in mind and purpose by each giving up his own will to do God's will. And Jesus and the Father are one because Jesus surrendered His will to the Father's will, saying, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"; "Lo, I come; I delight to do Thy will, O My God!" These are the words of the Lord Jesus to the Father.

Touching the rise of the Trinitarian view, Abbott and Conant's Religious Dictionary, page 944, says, "It was not until the beginning of the fourth century that the Trinitarian view began to be elaborated and formulated into a doctrine and an endeavour made to reconcile it with the belief of the Church in ONE GOD." "Out of the attempt to solve this problem sprang the doctrine of the Trinity." Trinity "is a very marked feature in Hindooism, and is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese and the most ancient Grecian mythologies."

Like some other doctrines received by Protestants from Papacy, this one is accepted and fully endorsed, although its educated adherents are aware that not a text of Scripture can be adduced to its support. Yea, more; whoever will not affirm this unscriptural doctrine as his faith is declared by the articles of the Evangelical Alliance to be nonorthodox—a heretic. Heb. 1:8 has been used by Trinitarians as a proof text that Jesus is Jehovah, and the fact is cited that the word God here is theos, the same as verse 9 which refers to the Father. They seem not to have noticed that the word god in 2 Cor. 4:4, which refers to Satan, is also theos in the Greek. Theos is used of any mighty one, the same as Elohim in the Hebrew.

Phil. 2:8, 9 implies that our Lord's present glory is greater than the glory which He possessed before He became a man; otherwise it could not have been an exaltation. Now having the Divine, immortal nature He cannot die. "Christ dieth no more." How straightforward and simple and reasonable is the Scriptural presentation compared with human traditions! In what a jumble of contradictions and confusion do they find themselves who say that Jesus and the Father are one God! This would involve the idea that our Lord Jesus acted the hypocrite when on earth and only pretended to address God in prayer, when He Himself was the same God. Such should conclude, too, that since we read that God cannot be tempted of any, it was only a farce when Jesus was tempted of Satan. Again, the Father has always been immortal, hence could not die. How, then, could Jesus have died? The Apostles are all false witnesses in declaring Jesus' death and resurrection if He did not die. The Scriptures declare, however, that He did die—"He poured out His soul [His being] unto death," not merely His body, as many assert.—Isa. 53:12.

If they admit that Jesus really died, they take the other horn of the dilemma; for believing that their three Gods are all one person as many do, when Jesus died they must all three have died. If they all died, who raised them to life,

How foolish all this sounds! Yet if Jesus and the Father are the same person, the same Being, then when Jesus died the Father must have died. Shall we thus contradict the Apostles and Prophets and Jesus Himself, and ignore reason and common sense, in order to hold to a dogma handed to us from the dark, superstitious past, by a corrupt apostate

Church? Nay! "To the Law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

Testimony Of Scriptures Re The Holy Spirit.

We next inquire, What say the Scriptures with regard to the holy spirit? The nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic, affirm that the holy spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. They claim that all this is "a great mystery." Yes, truly it is a mystery, such as is characteristic of the confusion of man-made creeds held by Babylon. But to those who turn to the Word of God and let it speak, all is clear and plain. We suggest that whatever definition of the term "holy spirit" will meet all known conditions and harmonise all Scriptures bearing thereon may be understood to be the true meaning of the term. We will first give what we conceive to be such a definition, and then ask the reader to subject every Scripture where this term is used to this definition and see if it does not make harmony of all.

We understand the Bible to teach that the holy spirit is the Divine will, influence, power or disposition, exercised everywhere and for any purpose, at the Divine pleasure. God exercises His spirit or energy in a variety of ways, using various agencies, and accomplishing various results. Whatever God does through agencies is as truly His work as though He were the direct actor, since all His agencies are His creation — created by His own power; just as a contractor for building is said to build a house, though he may never have lifted a tool upon it. He does it with his materials and through his agents. Thus, when we read that Jehovah God created the heavens and the earth, we are not to suppose that He personally handled them. He used an Agent. "He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast." His holy power was exercised through His Only Begotten. God's spirit was exercised in times past through the Prophets. "They spake as they were moved by the holy spirit" [power] of God. The masculine pronoun is often used in our Common Version Bible in referring to the holy spirit of God, because God, who is a spirit, is represented as masculine, as indicative of strength. The pronoun translated "he" when referring to the holy spirit can with equal consistency be translated "it," and is often so rendered. See Diaglott rendering of John 14:17, 26, as an example. For further elucidation of this subject of the holy spirit, we refer the interested reader to the Fifth Volume of Studies in the Scriptures, chapters 8-11, where the subject is treated at length.

"One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;

Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what they thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;

And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.

Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of to be taught."

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Thy Word is Truth

IN last month’s “Peoples Paper,” at the close of the article, “Come Out of Her, My People,” it was indicated that articles would follow referring to the “sins” which clearly mark the systems of religion described under the general term of Babylon. In this issue the three articles presented explain from the Scriptures, as far as space permits, the truth on the Immortality of the Soul, the Trinity, and Everlasting Punishment. The errors held on these three subjects (and there are others) by the systems of Babylon have been a contributing factor in their fall from God’s favour.

In Rev. 18.2, 3, in particular, the reason for the Lord’s rejection of the Babylonian systems is clearly and forcefully described--For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication (intoxicated with her false doctrines and worldly affiliation) , and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance (margin—power) of her delicacies.” Illegal union with the world and its ways is therefore the deciding factor with the Lord in rejecting once and for all time such systems which have “become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit (a dwelling place for impure principles and erroneous doctrines) , and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

There can be no doubt that doctrinal errors, handed down from the Dark Ages, have done much to bring about the downfall of the systems comprising Babylon—mother and daughters—allowing the spirit of the Adversary to supplant true love and reverence for an all-loving and gracious heavenly Father. Nominal Spiritual Israel is in a dilapidated condition because of the lack in understanding God’s Word. We seem to be in the time referred to by the Prophet, saying, “There shall be a famine in the land,” saith the Lord, “not a famine for bread. neither a famine for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord.”—Amos 8:11.

Many imagine that they are familiar with the teachings of the Bible, when in reality they are familiar with one or another of the creeds of the darker past, all of which contain some truth with considerable error, we must all admit.

Our great mistake has been in assuming that our confessions of faith and all of our creeds strongly and fully represent the Bible's teachings. This mistake has already been costly. Thousands of the most generous minds have been turned away from the Bible by the mistaken supposition that the creeds properly represent its teachings.

The necessary thing to be done is to resume Bible study, and that without our creedal spectacles. Our forefathers who made our creeds participated more or less in persecutions of each other which we to-day entirely condemn.

The belief that God is torturing thousands of millions of His creatures led some of our well-intentioned forefathers to torture one another in God's name, in a manner which we to-day cannot endorse as being either just or loving or Christlike.

Why then should we assume that those creeds are correct in all particulars? Should we not the rather see that if so good a man as John Calvin committed so great a mistake as to sign the warrant which sent a brother Christian, Servetus, to the stake, this proves that there was something wrong with Calvin's theological ideas, which lie at the foundation of nearly all of our Protestant creeds?

With the wonderful Bibles which we possess today, found in nearly every home, 'we should know more of its teachings than any of our forefathers could possibly have known. Not only has education aided in this respect, but our Bibles are conveniently formed, and we have study aids, in the form of concordances, translations, etc. Is it not time to strive as Levites and spiritual Israelites to turn afresh to the Bible and instruct the people respecting its teachings?

We are not advocating merely the reading of so many chapters a day, or the committing of verses to memory, etc.

We advocate a reconstruction of our faith upon the basis of the Bible only. Surely if all of God's people could take from their minds their creed spectacles and study the Word afresh in its own light, a great blessing would speedily follow. And for intelligent and diligent Bible study it is essential that exhaustive concordances be used. Only by an understanding of the original Scriptures (Hebrew and Greek) can any student be "thoroughly furnished unto all, good works," as St. Paul exhorted.—(2 Tim. 3:16, 17). How helpful it is in a study circle when those taking part really understand and present the truth on the passage of Scripture under review, and are not just depending upon a margin reference or guess work in presenting thoughts.

There is a power for good in the Word of God which can be found nowhere else. Higher criticism has much responsibility in connection with the growing lawlessness of the world. "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul"—transforming the being. The higher critics in all of our colleges and seminaries are doing a terribly destructive work. It is safe to say that three-fourths of all the graduates of all colleges within the last fifty years have been unbelievers in the Bible, and that their influence has been used persistently to undermine the faith of others. The errors which led to infidelity are liable to influence others. The Bible itself is a study, and only what it teaches should be believed whether favourable to or contrary to our former creeds.

How truly informative and instructive is our Lord's prayer to the Father on behalf of His true followers—

”Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” (John 17:17.) This is a clear indication that only truth can sanctify, and that error on any subject has the opposite effect, turning the minds and hearts of people away from the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He Has sent. How encouraging, however, are the words of our Good Shepherd again—”My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27.) Yes, though it may take considerable time, from our standpoint, all those of right heart condition shall be found, now in this harvest time of the age, and come fully into the truth which will sanctify and develop them for the heavenly Kingdom. And what privilege is now committed to those who are already numbered amongst the Lord’s “little flock,” of searching for and assisting the other “sheep” into all truth, by the Lord’s grace, and in harmony with His words—”He shall send his messengers with a great trumpet (the harvest truths) and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (from the ecclesiastical heavens, the systems of Babylon). (Matt. 24:31.)

Further articles on other important subjects connected with the “sins” of Babylon will follow in later issues, including the very important harvest truths, by which means “the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads” (Rev. 7:1-3), as well as in their hearts, in this harvest time of the Gospel Age.

. * *Both. Strong’s and Young’s Concordances are recommended for all earnest students of the Bible. At present Young’s Concordance only can be supplied, and while the retail price of nearly .£ 4 may seem high, it is no doubt cheap in view of the wealth of information it contains, in comparison with worldly things. A discount will be allowed to all who earnestly desire to procure one of these essential Bible study aids, and further information will be gladly supplied. Early application should be made.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren in Melbourne wish to advise all friends that they propose holding the usual Convention at the Christmas period this year (D.V.) . The dates of the gatherings will probably be December 23rd to the 26th, inclusive, also further meetings on the New Year weekend. A cordial invitation to attend these gatherings is extended to all who love the Lord and His truth. Further information will appear in later issues of “Peoples Paper,” and is obtainable also from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Warn, 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

The Truth on Immortality.

THE following article, dealing with this important subject, was published many years ago, being prompted at the time by a statement appearing in a religious journal under the heading, “What is the Soul?” which reads:

“To man is given the power to create an immortal soul, and father and mother walk hand in hand with God. It is fitting that the halo of love should shine around the mated pair, and that the new home should glow with light from the glory-world, for Eden’s morn is dawning again to sweet new souls—souls that are born of man and also born of God.”

When our friends of the religious denomination get sufficiently awake to inquire for a Scripture authority for all religious teaching, the editor of the journal and others will criticise what is published much more thoroughly than they do now; and a totally unscriptural article of the kind referred to will not appear in journals claiming “No creed but the Bible.”

The idea that God would go into partnership with the majority of parents who know Him not or who are His enemies through wicked works is absurd on the face of it, as well as unscriptural. Worse, it is blasphemy against God! The very idea! That God should be charged with the responsibility of the direct creation of the poor, misshapen, diseased little babes, the one-half of which have not vitality enough to reach maturity, is surely the product of a deficient or sadly misdirected reason. Let God be true, though at the risk of making out that many men are liars or foolish. God’s Word declares that infants are “born in sin, shapen in iniquity”; and the only exceptions to this rule are the comparatively few children of the sanctified. (1 Cor. 7:14.) That the image of God has largely given place to the image of Satan is manifest in the many who “go astray as soon as they are born” (Psa. 53:3), and respecting some of whom our Lord declared, “Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do.”—John 8:44.

Alas that we must admit it, but who will deny that some dogs are far better born than are some of Adam’s degenerate race? Yes, some of them with better dispositions, too—more of meekness, gentleness, patience and love; and less of anger, hatred and strife. If God has so arranged His laws of nature that each can bring forth after his own kind, why should not man, the highest of earthly creatures, have the same powers? Why should it be claimed that in man’s case God interferes and helps produce the idiotic and mentally and physically unbalanced which constitutes so many of our race? Why should this be urged, not only without Scripture proof but contrary to the Bible’s express teachings?

There Is Always A Reason.

The reason is the desire to prove the immortality of the soul, which centuries of Platonic philosophy has foisted upon the world as essential to any hope of a future life. Plato’s followers tell us that this wisdom of a heathen poet is implied in the Bible though never stated in it. We answer, to the contrary, that the Bible most explicitly limits immortality to the Father and the Son (1 Tim. 6:16), and holds out to the saints the hope of “glory, honour and immortality” at the end of life’s race.—Rom. 2:7.

The hope of eternal life, according to the Bible, is not a power in man to live for ever, but a power in God to raise man from the dead and to perpetually supply the conditions essential to an everlasting existence. Death is the wage or penalty of God’s law ‘against sinners; the death of Jesus was the ransom for sinners; and the resurrection promised in the Millennial morning is the salvation provided—a salvation from death, a raising up from the fallen condition of sin and its penalty to the life and perfection originally lost. “By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in

Christ shall be made alive.”-1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

Note the inconsistencies involved. (1) For God to interfere with human pro-creation and insert a Planonic “spark of deity” into every idiotic or degenerate babe to make them death-proof would be in direct contradiction to His sentence against the race, “Dying thou shalt die.” (2) It would make meaningless our Lord’s words, “Ye must be born again” (John 3:7), by implying that man’s begetting and God’s begetting are simultaneous. (3) According to this false theory the whole matter of eternal torment is God’s responsibility and fault; because if God would but exercise reasonable discretion in bestowing the gift of immortality and not co-operate in the birth of those unfit for everlasting bliss there would be none to torment.

What serious confusion comes from false reasoning, human guessing, contrary to God’s Word. We devote some space to this matter, not from opposition to the no doubt well-meaning writer, but because the error is widespread. Yes, we are ashamed to say it, this is the distorted view of Christendom as a whole. Let us whose eyes the Lord has opened to a clearer, saner, holier view of His divine plan be vigilant and wise and lovingly kind in helping to the light and food now provided all who give any evidence of hungering and thirsting after truth.

Reformation By Surgery.

The newspapers recount a peculiar case which contains a lesson. A boy of 12 years was about to be sent by his parents to a Reform School, because he was so incorrigible. An officer of the particular Juvenile Court noticed a scar on the boy’s head, and inquiry revealed the fact that it came from a fall when the boy was five years old, and that his incorrigibility dated from about that time. He was sent to a hospital where a surgical operation was performed, and the pressure of a broken bone was removed from the brain. Gradually the boy returned to his former condition of mind and became obedient. His mother is quoted as saying:

“The Doctor states that the pressure of that piece of bone upon the brain had gradually dulled all the highest sensibilities, and if it had gone on my son would, in time, have become an utter degenerate. No one knows how thankful we are to-day that our boy has been saved from the Reform School, where he would have been constantly punished for things for which we now know he would not have been responsible.”

It is impossible for us to know what proportion of the morally weak and bad, the wicked, the merciless and the untruthful are to some extent what circumstances and conditions, mental, moral and physical have helped to make them. Yet according to the general view the boy above described would have gone to eternal torment. That is to say, no one would claim that he was fit for heaven, and under the general assumption there would have been no other place to put him.

How grandly reasonable is the plan of God, which, while telling us that only a “little flock” of overcomers of this Gospel Age will, go to heaven, tells us also that God has provided that “times of restitution” shall shortly begin, in which all the weak and depraved and ignorant, however unfit for heaven, shall have one full chance of restitution to the full perfection of human nature in the Paradise of God on earth, under the whole heavens. All of this glorious provision, let us never forget, is in and through the ransom paid by our dear Redeemer who “gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”-1 Tim. 2:6.

Great truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walk of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.
Great truths are dearly won; not found by chance,
Nor wafted on the breath of summer dream ;
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.
Sometimes, 'mid conflict, turmoil, fear and grief,
When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Ploughs up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,
It brings some buried truth-seeds to the light.
Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine;
Not in the merchandise of gold and gems;
Not in the world's gay hall of midnight mirth,
Nor 'mid the blaze of regal diadem;
Not in the general clash of human creeds,
Nor in the merchandise 'twixt church and world,
Is truth's fair treasure found 'mongst tares and weeds;
Nor her fair banner in their midst unfurled.
Truth springs like harvest from the well-ploughed fields,
Rewarding patient toil, and faith, and zeal;
To those thus seeking her, she ever yields
Her richest treasures for their lasting weal.
—Longfellow.

Everlasting Punishment.

The wages of sin is death (everlasting destruction, 2 Thess. 1:9), but the gift of God is eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

THE everlastingness of the punishment being thus established, only one point is left open for discussion: namely, the nature of the punishment. Take your Concordance and search out what saith the great Judge regarding the punishment of wilful sinners who despise and reject all His blessed provisions for them through Christ. What do you find? Does God there say—All sinners shall live in torture forever? No; we find not a single text where life in any condition is promised to that class.

God's declarations assure us that ultimately He will have a clean universe, free from the blight of sin and sinners— because "All the wicked will He destroy" (Psa. 145:20).

But while we do not find one verse of the Bible saying that this class can have life in torment, or in any other condition, we do find numerous passages teaching the reverse. Of these we give a few merely as samples—"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23.) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4, 20) . "The wicked shall perish" (Psa. 37:20). "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be" (Psa. 37:10). Thus God has told us plainly the nature of the everlasting punishment of the wicked—that it will be death, destruction.

The false ideas of God's plan of dealing with the incorrigible, taught ever since the great "falling away," which culminated in Papacy, and instilled into our minds from childhood, are alone responsible for the view generally held that the everlasting punishment provided for wilful sinners is a life of torment. This view is held, notwithstanding the many clear statements of God's Word that their punishment is to be death. Here St. Paul states very explicitly what the punishment is to be. Speaking of the same Millennial Day, and of the same class, who, despite all the favourable opportunities and the fulness of knowledge then, will not come into harmony with Christ, and hence will "know not God," in the true sense and "obey not," he says: "Who shall be punished." Ah, yes! but how punished? He tells us how: They "shall be punished with everlasting destruction" [a destruction from which there will be no recovery, no redemption or resurrection—Heb. 10:26-29] from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thes. 1:9). This destruction is represented in the parable as the everlasting "fire" prepared for the devil and his angels; it is "the lake of fire and brimstone," which is the Second Death (Rev. 20:14), into which the "goat" class of this parable are sent (Matt. 25:41).

Thus the meaning and reasonableness of this statement concerning everlasting punishment are readily seen when looked at from the correct standpoint. The fire of the parable, by which the punishment (destruction) is to be accomplished, symbolises destruction, and not in any sense preservation.

We might well leave this subject here, and consider that we have fully shown that the everlasting punishment of the "goat" class will be destruction; but we direct attention to one other point which clinches the truth upon this subject. We refer to the Greek word "kolasin," translated "punishment" in verse 46. This word has not in it the remotest idea of torment. Its primary significance is to cut off, or prune, or lop off, as in the pruning of trees; and a secondary meaning is to restrain. The wicked will be everlastingly restrained, cut off from life in the Second Death. Illustrations of the use of "kolasin" can easily be had from Greek classical writings. The Greek word for "torment" is "basinos," a word totally unrelated to the word "kolasin."

"Kolasin," the word used in Matt. 25:46, occurs in but one other place in the Bible, viz., 1 John 4:18,

where it is improperly rendered “torment” in the Common Version, whereas it should read, “Fear bath restraint.” Those who possess a copy of Young’s Analytical Concordance will see from it (page 995) that the definition of the word “kolasin” is “pruning, restraining, restraint.” And the author of the Emphatic Diaglott, after translating “kolasin” in Matt. 24:46 by the words “cutting off,” says in a footnote:

“The Common Version and many modern ones render ‘kolasin aionion’ as ‘everlasting punishment,’ conveying the idea, as generally interpreted, of ‘basinos’—torment. ‘Kolasin’ in its various forms occurs in only three other places in the New Testament: Acts 4:21; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 4:18. It is derived from ‘kolazoo,’ which signifies: 1. To cut off; as lopping off branches of trees, to prune. 2. To restrain, to repress. The Greeks write: ‘The charioteer restrains [kalazei] his fiery steeds. 3. To chastise, to punish. To cut off an individual from life, or from society, or even to restrain, is esteemed as a punishment; hence has arisen this third or metaphorical use of the word. The primary signification has been adopted [in the Diaglott], because it agrees better with the second member of the sentence, thus preserving the force and beauty of the antithesis. The righteous go to life, the wicked to the cutting off from life, death (2 Thes. 1:9).”

Now consider carefully the text, and note the antithesis, the contrast, shown between the reward of the “sheep” and the reward of the “goats,” which the correct idea of “kalosin” gives—the one class goes into everlasting life, while the other is everlastingly cut off from life—forever restrained in death. And this exactly agrees with what the Scriptures everywhere else declare concerning the wages or penalty of wilful sin.

Consider for a moment the words of verse 41: “Depart from me, ye cursed [once redeemed by Christ from the Adamic curse or condemnation to death, but now condemned or cursed, as worthy of the Second Death, by the One who redeemed them from the first curse], into everlasting fire [symbol of everlasting destruction], prepared for the devil and his messengers (servants).”

Remember that this is the final sentence at the close of the final trial—at the close of the Millennium; and that none will then be servants of Satan ignorantly or unwillingly, as so many now are; for the great Deliverer, Christ, will remove outside temptations, and provide assistance toward self-improvement, which will enable all who will to overcome inherent weaknesses and to attain perfection. These “goats” who love evil and serve Satan, are the messengers (“angels”) of Satan. For these and Satan, and for no others, God has prepared Second Death—the everlasting destruction. Fire will come from God out of heaven and consume them. Consuming fire and devouring fire all can appreciate, unless their eyes are holden by false doctrine and prejudice. No one ever knew of a preserving fire; and as fire never preserves, but always consumes, God uses it as a symbol of utter destruction (Rev. 20:9).

There are other symbols and figures of speech in the Scriptures which have been greatly misunderstood or misrepresented as supporting the Eternal Torture theory. When rightly understood these will be found to teach something quite different and to be in perfect accord with justice and love. God’s great purpose for mankind is a benevolent one, reasonable and satisfying to both heart and mind. We invite all interested to write to us if they have any difficulties regarding this subject. Every passage in the Bible where the word “hell” occurs has been thoroughly examined, and there is nothing in the Bible to teach so terrible a doctrine as that God would preserve the wicked alive just in order that they might suffer eternally.

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Volume XXX111. No. 11 MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER, 1950 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

Why Do the Nations War? Is Christianity at Fault?

THIS subject is very important, as well as timely. The Scriptures, however, undoubtedly contain a complete and satisfactory answer to all right-thinking people, and it is equally true that this answer cannot be gained from any other source than the Bible.

When this question is presented to us—Why do the nations war?—our thoughts may formulate another question— Why should the 'nations war? Truly, it is most repulsive to all noble-minded people to meditate upon actual warfare, and yet there has hardly been a time, over centuries past, when there has not been a war raging, either large or small, in some quarter of the earth.

When we were children at school and were called on to learn history, the main lessons on this subject were connected with the various wars which took place over the centuries past. With some of us, great impressions were made on our minds by the numerous campaigns described: for instance, when we became acquainted with The Hundred Years' War, the very title seemed to leave us aghast, the implications were past our comprehension. Not that war raged, as we know it to-day, for one hundred years on end, but, nevertheless, that particular war lasted for a century, on and off, so we were told.

However, respecting our own century, many of our readers have clearly in mind the events covering the last two World Wars, and other friends will remember other conflicts as well. Casting our minds back about forty years, it will be remembered there was a claim quite prevalent amongst the nations at that time that the world was becoming too civilised to go to war. That was definitely the opinion expressed by statesmen of the world as the German Kaiser was training and equipping his soldiers in preparation for 1914.

One of the saddest features of that period was the fact that this militaristic power of Germany arose in the very land of the great Reformer, Luther, and some may be inclined to ask: What did Luther's Christianity do for Germany? We answer: No doubt there were millions of people in Germany who were ashamed of that nation's military power, and the reason many more of the German people did not follow Luther's example is shown in one of our Lord's parables— The Wheat and the Tares. (Matt. 13:24-43.)

In this parable our Lord showed that after the sowing of the good seed in His day, and when the Apostles had fallen asleep in death, the Adversary sowed tares in the wheatfield. On being queried as to why the tares were found with the wheat, the answer was given—"An enemy hath done this" (verse 28). So it was with the nation of Germany (as with other nations), the spirit of the Adversary hindered the growth of

Luther's Reformation, and this was allowed of God as a part of His wise permission of evil for a limited time.

While, then, this parable of our Lord's had its beginning at His first advent, and in the days following the establishment of the early church, it has been re-enacted, so to speak, throughout the Gospel Age. This parable will come under review later in this article, but just now attention is directed to the assurances of world statesmen at the time of the 1914-18 War, that the great conflict then, was "A War to end War."

There was certainly a noble effort on the part of some nations to make war a thing of the past, with their generous Disarmament Conferences, following the 1914-18 War. However, we are all aware of the rise of the dictators of Europe and the rearming of millions of men, such aggressive tactics bringing on the Second World War. Then came the renewed assurances by leading statesmen of the world, that with the 1939-45 War over, "It must not happen again."

The Atlantic Charter and other Agreements were well meant, but what we have seen in the last five years gives little hope of preserving the peace of the world; indeed, the outbreak of war in Korea, over the last few months has so energized the nations in rearmament that most people believe that only a miracle can prevent a Third World War.

It is not necessary to touch on the dread possibilities of another war amongst the great powers; most people have some idea of the ghastly destruction of human life and property which would be possible with the atomic bombs and other deadly weapons. Our main consideration at this time is: Why do the Nations War? Why was it that the courageous work of the Reformer, Martin Luther, failed to inspire the nation of Germany to better things than that of military conquest? Was it the fault of his form of Christianity? If so, is there a form of Christianity to-day that can save the world from war?

In answer to the first question, we have the Apostle Paul's inspired review of mankind, looking back over the centuries prior to our Lord's first advent, and which helps us to understand the position to-day. Following the fall of our first parents into disobedience and sin, we have a clear picture of the effect upon succeeding generations presented by the Apostle in the first chapter of, his epistle to the Romans, as follows:—"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. . . . Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever . . .

. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind (margin—a mind void of judgment) to do those things which are not convenient." (Rom. 1:21-25, 28.)

The expression, "God gave them over" is significant, showing that God permitted the free-will of men to operate, even though their own choice was detrimental for the race as a whole; nevertheless, this permission of God will not be in vain in the end, it will provide a lasting lesson for humanity, so that they shall not wish to eat the sour grape again, when the Kingdom is established.

The prophet Isaiah agrees with Paul's description of the fallen condition of mankind, when he states: "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isa. 57:20, 21.) Then, from the wise man, in Ecclesiastes 7:29 we read—"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."

The Hebrew word translated "inventions" means "a contrivance, a warlike machine, or mental (a

machination.)”

This same Hebrew word is translated “engines” in 2 Chron. 26:15, to describe the warlike activities of one, Uzziah, in Jerusalem, which reads—”And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal.” Thus, we see that God made man upright—perfect, noble and peace loving—but with the fall into sin, mankind “sought out many inventions,” warlike machines, to gain advantage over their fellow men. Or, as the Apostle Paul explained in Romans—”Their foolish heart was darkened,” obscured, from the ways and desires of the Lord.

If it was truly said of mankind in those ancient times, “they have sought out many inventions” (contrivances, warlike machines), what can be said of the activities of mankind in the last half-century, with the same meaning in the word inventions? It is not necessary to enumerate the mass of warlike machines in the world to-day; this information appears in our daily press and is common knowledge. However, we believe that the fulfilment of the Scripture, “They have sought out many inventions,” provides the correct answer to our question: Why do the nations war?

God created man upright, in His own image (an earthly image of the heavenly Creator) with a freewill to choose obedience or disobedience; by disobedience and sin, mankind has gone its own way, and except for a few who have returned to God, the mass of humanity is described by the words of Hosea —”They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.”

However, what of our further question: Is Christianity at fault, in the world outlook to-day? Is it the failure of the message of Christ to-day (or in Luther’s day) or the lack of zeal on the part of His followers that accounts for present world conditions? Our Lord gave a graphic picture of events to be expected throughout the Gospel Age, in answer to questions presented by His disciples, in Matthew’s Gospel, chapter 24, as follows:—”Ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. . . Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matt. 24:6-14.)

There can be no doubt that our Lord thus reviewed the Gospel Age, first, from the worldly standpoint, in describing the wars, rumours of wars, famines, etc., and then warned and exhorted His followers how they should act in the face of severe persecutions, even unto death, in their loyalty to His cause of truth in the unfriendly world through which they would walk in His steps of sacrifice. He predicted how many would forsake the Christian way because of the hardness to be endured, but no doubt inspired confidence in the hearts of His true people by assuring them—”He that shall endure unto the end (faithful unto death) the same shall be saved.” What help these words of our Master’s have been to us, as no doubt they have been to many who have taken up the cross to follow Him. Then, the most important instruction continued from the Lord—”This gospel of the kingdom (the glad tidings of the heavenly and earthly phases of the kingdom) shall be preached in all the world for a WITNESS unto all nations, and then shall the end come,” the end of this particular age for the heavenly calling.

How important it is that the Lord’s people discern the truth respecting the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom during this Gospel Age—that the Lord has never commissioned His followers to attempt world conversion, but rather to give out the glad message as a witness to the world, and thus attract to the Lord

those who would be willing to lay down their lives in His service—"to take out a people for His name." (Acts 15:14.)

The result of the witness of the gospel of the kingdom is shown in some detail in the parable previously mentioned—The Wheat and the Tares. In Matt. 13:36-43 the Lord explained this parable in response to the request of His disciples—"Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." In verse 38 we read—"The field is the world." The word "world" is translated from the Greek word "kosmos," meaning order of things. Then, in verse 39, our Lord stated—"The harvest is the end of the world." This word "world" is translated from another Greek word "aion," meaning, age. Thus, we have it explained that the "wheat," the true children of God, are gathered out of the present world, or order of things, during the harvest, or end of this Gospel Age, to inherit the heavenly kingdom with Christ, as shown by verse 43—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

That the true message of Christianity was never intended to encourage the followers of the Master to endeavour to control world affairs, is evident from His own words before Pilate—"My kingdom is not of this world (kosmos—order of things) ; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18:36.) Another important statement in this connection is recorded in Matt. 26:51-53, when, a few hours previous to our Lord's statement before Pilate, He rejected the offer of Peter to defend Him with a sword. The account reads—"Behold, one of them which were with Jesus, stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels." Nothing could be plainer, from these words, than that the Lord sets a definite instruction to all His followers to refrain from engaging in any conflict for Him and His cause, however important any emergency may appear to their imperfect minds.

The Apostle James adds a striking testimony to the Biblical records respecting the conduct of the disciples of Jesus, as follows—"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27.) To keep oneself "unspotted from the world" means a great deal, the fulfilment of which, by the Lord's grace, will carry the sincere Christian far along the strait and narrow way to life, while removing from his mind any deceptive thoughts which may crowd in, claiming attention on behalf of any system or section of this "present evil world."

Thus, we find that Christianity is not at fault because the nations do war, one with another, inasmuch as the great Captain of our salvation at no time authorized any of His people to strive to control this world and its affairs, so that wars may cease at the present time.

What, then, is to be done about present world conditions, with the threat of a world war again so real? A leading church minister of Melbourne was reported recently as saying, that the United Nations' forces should be kept together after the Korean War was over, to act as a World Police Force, to preserve peace. But does the Bible agree with this idea, that Christians should look to worldly arms to keep the peace of the world? No; definitely not! It is human, worldly reasoning, that looks to the arm of flesh. Must wars continue for all time then? as some people are apt to say—"There always have been wars and always will be." No; definitely no! However, the Scriptures reveal that while the Lord will ultimately deliver a humbled world of mankind from its own chaos and ruin, yet it must be a truly humbled humanity, before He can bless with lasting peace and happiness. This is shown from Proverbs 1:24-31—

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will

mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof; therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.”

The prophet Nahum reveals additional information concerning the Lord’s dealings with the human family, and which is due for fulfilment in the near future. It is expressed in symbolic language as follows—”The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked; the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea (restless masses of mankind), and maketh it dry, and dryeth up all the rivers . . . The mountains (kingdoms) quake at him, and the hills (lesser governments) melt, and the earth (social order of things) is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks (fortresses of society) are thrown down by him. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies. What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end; affliction shall not rise up the second time.” (Nahum 1:3-9.) Thus doth the Lord give the assurance that affliction in the earth will be no more, when once the human family has lost faith in all its own schemes and devices, and is ready to be instructed in the laws of Christ’s Kingdom which will operate for the blessing of all the willing and obedient upon the restored earth.

The Psalmist provides us also with enlightening information respecting the closing scenes during the transition period from “this present evil world” to the kingdom of Christ. He declared, under inspiration, looking back upon the events accomplished—”The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.” Thus does the Psalmist attribute the overthrow of the present world order to the Lord Himself, in harmony with another of his declarations—”Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” (Psa. 76:10.) Continuing from the statement respecting the Lord making the desolations in the earth (which agrees also with Joel 2:10), we read—”He (God) maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear asunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.” Thank the Lord for this assurance through His servant, that He will overrule the great forces of human passions, to prostrate all the nations of the earth to a common level of exhaustion, that all humanity may then obey the Lord, if they will, or be cut off from among the people. As the Psalmist continues, speaking for the Lord—”Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” (Psa. 46:6, 8-10.)

How important it is that Christians, and ultimately all mankind, learn well the lesson of waiting upon the Lord for His outworking in connection with the international, national and individual affairs of this life. Should a Christian become involved in the political, financial, ecclesiastical or social systems of the present world order, he can expect to receive nothing better than the strife and tumults associated with these decaying elements, which, the Apostle Peter assures us, are to be “burned up” or “dissolved,” to make way for the Kingdom of Christ—the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:10, 11, 13.)

It is to encourage those who have ears to hear, to “wait upon the Lord,” that the prophet Zephaniah was moved of God to proclaim—”Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth (order of earthly society) shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.” Then, with the great humbling process completed, with humanity humbled to the dust, we read—”For then will I turn to the people a pure language (the glad tidings of salvation

through Christ, which so few have heard in this life) , that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” (Zeph. 3:8, 9.)

From that time onward, throughout the Millennial Age, the general resurrection of the human family will proceed, for “all in the graves (death condition) shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth,” to inhabit the restored earth, where “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom) ; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” (Isa. 11:9 ; 2 :1 -4.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren in Melbourne wish to advise all friends that they propose holding the usual Convention at the Christmas period this year (D.V.) . The dates of the gatherings will probably be December 23rd to the 26th, inclusive, also further meetings on the New Year weekend. A cordial invitation to attend these gatherings is extended to all who love the Lord and His truth. Further information will appear in later issues of “Peoples Paper,” and is obtainable also from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E.12,

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A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

The Truth on Baptism.

SOME weeks ago the Melbourne “Argus” published an interesting news item which attracted the attention of one of our friends, who in turn kindly passed on the paper cutting. Under the heading, “Christening Wrong, says Vicar,” the report stated:

“After baptising 4,000 babies, 70-year-old Rev. George R. Mortimer has resigned because he disagrees with infant baptisms. Mortimer, who is the vicar of Barston, in Warwickshire (England), will auction his furniture, move out of his creeper-clad vicarage, and sacrifice a £500 sterling yearly stipend for his views. ‘To suppose that sprinkling water on a baby’s head really achieves anything, is too much,’ explained the vicar.”

It is indeed good to find that the elderly Mr. Mortimer is able to take such a fine stand against such a “form of godliness” as infant baptism. Even though it has taken this gentleman a considerable time to arrive at the truth on this subject, the important thing is, that he is prepared to make a decision that very few in his position are willing to make, should they come to the same understanding on this subject.

This information from England recalls a similar statement on the part of another minister of religion in U.S.A., many years ago, an account of which appeared in a journal as follows:

‘Baptism never saved a human soul. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration is both unreasonable and unscriptural. The superstitions that have gathered about infant baptism form one of the saddest chapters in church history. Thousands through all the ages have believed that a child dying without being baptised was eternally lost. This dark and dreary superstition has cast a gloom over the history of the church for centuries.

“This doctrine is heathenism, pure and simple. The idea that God would forever condemn an innocent babe because some one had not put: a few drops of water on its head and face makes God a tyrant. Rather than believe in such a God I would be an avowed infidel.

“This doctrine of baptismal regeneration makes the minister of religion a worker of magic, a fakir, a performer of ecclesiastical miracles. Such teaching is a violation of all sound reason and., true scriptural teaching.”

It is always refreshing to learn of those who are getting clear on any of the “sins” of Babylon, for truly the doctrine of infant baptism is another of these “sins” formulated in the dark ages without the slightest Biblical support: Those who are educated church ministers and teach and perform such erroneous ceremonies, without proper examination of the Scriptures, are no doubt more responsible in the eyes of the Lord than the average churchgoer. The danger of this particular error is the feeling of security imparted to parents for themselves and their children when they have complied with the ceremony arranged by their particular church; it helps to lull them to sleep in a false security, whereas a little investigation of the Bible on their own account would at once reveal the deception conveyed by this ceremony of churchianity.

Nowhere in the Bible is there any authority for the baptism of anyone during this Gospel Age who has not made a full consecration of his life to God, and seeing no one can intelligently present their all to the Lord until they reach years of discretion, all ceremonies of this kind for infants and children are so much traditions of men. As illustrating this matter, an anecdote is told of a certain doctor who was called late at night to attend a dying infant. He arrived just a moment in advance of a clergyman, sent for at the same

time. It being evident that the physician could do nothing further for the child, he at once stepped aside, while the minister hastily took a bowl of water, sprinkled a few drops in the face of the child, saying, "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy spirit." The child a moment or two after expired, and as the doctor and the clergyman left the house together the former remarked to the latter,

"You arrived just in the nick of time; two minutes more and you would have been too late. May I ask what kind of shoes you wear?" "Congress gaiters," responded the clergyman. "Ah, how fortunate!" said the doctor. "Had you worn laced boots you would not have been in time, and think what disaster that would have meant for the child!"

True, many of the more enlightened Christian people would deny any such false, superstitious thought as that God would hand over an unbaptised infant to devils, eternally to torment it, or do anything else to its detriment. Nevertheless, many of these same people manifest great concern if by any means one of their children should die without this ceremony; and some of the more illiterate certainly have a most positive belief in the necessity of the rite and a most torturing fear of the consequences if it is omitted—so strong is the influence coming down to us from the centuries of false beliefs — "the dark ages."

In the Scriptures two kinds of baptism are clearly presented—John the Baptist's baptism and Christian baptism- each being for adults only. Briefly stated, John's baptism, at the time of our Lord's first advent, was for Jews only, who were already recognised as typically cleansed, by the Atonement-day sin offerings. TO that John's baptism signified repentance from recognised sin, violations of the Law Covenant, and a typical cleansing from them. The motive behind John's preaching and baptising was a preparation of the people for the Kingdom of God and for a revelation of Messiah, which John's preaching declared to be imminent, and for which the Jewish people would need to be in a condition of heart-readiness if they would receive an appropriate blessing.

Christian baptism, first introduced by our Lord and symbolised by His immersion in the river Jordan, signifies complete consecration to God. For the Lord's followers the Apostle Paul has presented the matter so clearly and beautifully in Romans 6:3-5—"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death." It will be seen that Paul is not writing here about the baptism in water, but the immersion of our wills into the Will of Christ, which is followed by the begetting of the holy spirit to newness of life—to a new nature.

(Additional information and literature on the important subject of Baptism will be gladly supplied free. The book, "The New Creation," chapter 10, is especially recommended for a detailed explanation. In new edition, this book is supplied at 6/-, post paid.)

Ministers of Reconciliation

(2 Cor. 5:18, 19.) (Convention Address.)

THERE are various kinds of ministers—ministers of state, of religion, and so on. A minister of state has a good deal of authority and power. In religious circles we think of the word more as describing a person who serves, but unfortunately even here, those generally known by the title delegate to themselves more authority and power than is justifiable. Some of them even claim that they have the power to relegate men and women to everlasting torture in hell fire, if they do not strictly conform to the religion they serve. We would not think much of a God who needed ministers like that.

Other ministers claim to be servants of the true God and to serve His people, yet spend their energies proclaiming and acclaiming Satan's kingdom as a blesser of mankind. They have been telling the world for centuries that it is making good progress—that it is surely evolving toward the golden age.

I remember sitting in a church pew shortly after World War 1, and listening to a minister of religion telling his congregation what a salvation the then newly-formed League of Nations was going to effect, and that here was constructive evidence of the increase of Christ's Kingdom. To-day, this man is still in the same ministry, occupying the pulpit of a city church, and possibly exhorting the people to rally to the present United Nations set-up, while the short memories of his earlier congregation knife forgotten or overlooked the clear failure of his earlier prophecy. We do not think much of ministers like that, either, though we bear no personal ill-feeling.

We are sorry that there are ministers so poorly instructed concerning the true God and His methods or plans, and more especially sorry to think, that for the greater part, the people "love to have it so."

Who, then, are these ministers mentioned in our text, and what is their ministry? Have they any ordination of man? Do they wear any robes? Have they any titles? No, the Scripture simply says that they are "ambassadors for Christ" (verse 20), and that their ministry is "a ministry of reconciliation" (verse 18).

We find the meaning of the word "reconciliation" given as—"to effect a thorough change," and also as "renewal of friendship." We can see that these definitions incorporate the thought generally connected with the word reconcile those who were enemies being reconciled to each other.

Who are the enemies that need reconciling? The Bible tells us it is God and men. We read that all men were "alienated from God by wicked works." The same Book makes it very clear that God was not responsible for the enmity, but that it was all man's fault. But God who is rich in mercy, full of love and compassion, so loved the world that at great cost to Himself He moved to make it possible to restore proper relations between Himself and His creation; a creation that, before sin entered, was so delightful in every respect- that all the angels shouted for joy. (Job 38:7.)

Yes, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to effect reconciliation, and restore the shouts of joy that, because of sin, were replaced by sadness, and the groaning and travail of the people. But He didn't do it all at once. He has a long range plan in view which is working out gradually, in order that the reconciliation aimed at will be as perfect and thorough as possible.

The whole plan hinges on two points mentioned in the two verses of our text—first, that God has reconciled us (the Gospel like believers) to Himself by Jesus Christ; and having done that, He has committed unto us a ministry of reconciliation which concerns the whole world. Concerning the first point—God reconciling us to Himself—we have been no better than the rest of the world. No, listen—read Eph. 2:1-3. It is wholly by God's mercy and grace we have been lifted to such glorious heights.

(Read verses 4-6.) And for what reason? (Read verse 7.) And it is to be during those ages to come that the whole world is to be reconciled to God. What exceeding riches of His grace is then to be manifested to us, we cannot fully realise, for in that time we will be associated with Christ as His joint heirs, when all the world is enjoying the benefits accruing through man's reconciliation to God.

The ministry, or word of reconciliation which God has given to the Gospel Age church, the "us" class, is an important and wonderful one. It is a ministry that will never cease nor alter until all who will, have been reconciled to God. During this age, under God's hand, it is effective in seeking out and assisting the "us" class to become members of the Body of Christ, and in the next age, in the heavenly realms with Christ, it will be an effective overseeing- ministry toward "all the world," shepherding them, step by step, over the highway of holiness until they are fully reconciled to God, and enjoying to the full the times of restitution.
(Isa. 35:8; Acts 3:21.)

Thus, truly, God was in (or by, or through) Christ, reconciling the whole world' to Himself and He has commissioned us to declare the message; but He has not as yet fully opened that way of reconciliation. To the Gospel Age church only (the "us" class) is it yet actual: for the world it is still prospective.

When Jesus was teaching His disciples, those who were to become the "us" class, He prayed to His Heavenly Father for them, but concerning the world He said, "I pray not for the world." (John 17:9.) These words do not deny that Jesus gave His life a ransom for all, for the Bible says that He did (1 Tim. 2:6.) ; nor do they conflict with the truth of our text, which declares, that through Christ all the world might be reconciled to God. No, both the Father and His Son knew that full and abundant Provision had been made for the world, to be manifested "in due time."

First of all, however, some companions for Christ, a little flock, were to be conformed to His image and become

His Bride—the Lamb's wife. They were offered the inestimable privilege of reigning with Him in glory after they have suffered some of the experiences their Master endured in the sacrifice that was necessary to reconcile all men to God. And the sufferings are brought about by preaching the word of reconciliation, in all its ramifications, to a world that is still at enmity with God. Nor can this world at enmity be reconciled to Him, until the "us" class has fulfilled its mission and proved faithful unto death, as did its Lord and Head; for not till then will the Christ be complete (Head and Body) and New Covenant be made with natural Israel, the blessings of which will extend to all the nations of the earth.

There is no thought that Christ's sacrifice was insufficient to effect full reconciliation for all at once. but it seems clear that God does not make it available to the world until the "little flock" has consummated its privileges—filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in a ministry of reconciliation, made possible by His shed blood.

Thus, the position and mission of the church (the "us" class) is not difficult to comprehend. As before stated, they were just sinners as others, but they accepted Christ as their Saviour, they became justified before God through the blood of Jesus—thus gaining life, whereas before they had none. (1 John 5:12.) But the Scriptures clearly indicate, without fear of contradiction, that this new found life is not to be retained for their own benefit now in this age, but is to be consecrated to God's service. Presenting our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, as Paul beseeched the brethren to do, is another way of saying that we begin the ministry of reconciliation which will never cease until God's plan is ended.

We are still in the flesh it is true, and we are very conscious of our earthen vessels too, but God no longer judges us by the flesh, nor are our brethren to do so. (Read 2 Cor. 5:15-17.) A wonderful being is this "new creature" that becomes an "ambassador for Christ" in a ministry of reconciliation—a ministry well

portrayed in its various aspects in the next chapter,-2 Cor. 6:3-10.

At a time when my thoughts were dwelling round these verses an old brother, in course of conversation with me on spiritual things, said—"I love that verse, brother, where it says, 'when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace to reveal His son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen'." (Gal. 1:15, 16.) He further said, "Now, there is nothing I could ask for more, than that God should reveal His Son in me." I, too, saw the beautiful thought and I pass it on to you.

We know from the Scriptures and experience, that God reveals His Son in His consecrated people in various ways, and sometimes not just the ways that we might expect. Jesus was a man acquainted with grief and sorrow, often persecuted for His loving deeds and words of truth, because those amongst whom He moved were nearly all at enmity with God and therefore could not appreciate real goodness. His faithful followers have had similar experiences, the Apostle Paul being a notable one, and if we can see how Paul viewed such matters we will see better how we should do so. Listen to Paul; read Phil. 3:8-14, especially note verse 10.

Paul sought to have the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. We need to have walked a little along the Christian way, and- to have been enlightened by the holy spirit concerning things not revealed to "babes in Christ" or natural men, before we can appreciate Paul's thought, but it is a very beautiful one. I have seen brethren in very humiliating experiences when they were probably conscious only of the disdain, scorn and disrepute in which others viewed them; I have beheld them and have seen God's Son revealed in them and I loved them.

Paul was made "as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things" by some in his day. (1 Cor. 4:13.) He and his companions had their feet made fast in prison stocks and received treatment such as is generally reserved for the worst type of criminal, when their only offence was preaching the Word of God. (Acts 16:24.) But to Christians God's Son was revealed in Paul through such experiences.

So, dear brethren, we need patience in the blessed ministry with which God has entrusted us—reconciling those at enmity with Him. We need wisdom too, don't we? And we shall have both if we ask for them. (James 1:4, 5.) A word in season, how good it is. It is to be "in season" for the person we endeavour to help. Men all act strangely at times. To illustrate:

A person who is ill often loses his or her appetite for food. The very sight or smell 'of good, wholesome food may become repulsive to them, nauseating. But when they are restored to health there is a thorough change — good food is relished again. Natural men are still "children of wrath," at enmity with God, and have no desire for the good, wholesome food of the truth. Men hate the light and turn from it; they don't want it. But if a change takes place they may begin to desire it, may even seek it. As ministers of reconciliation our labours are to be to the end of effecting such a change. Persons who repel the message at one time, may experience some change later and be able and ready to receive a measure of the truth for their comfort and help. We must, therefore, be instant in season, and out of season to ourselves, noting well how the listener is inclined with the view to effecting a thorough change as time goes on.

But what if all our labours seem to go for nought and it appears as if we have but "brought forth wind." Well, to nearly all the world, Christ's earthly ministry seemed to end that way. So did Paul's and many another saint's. But Jesus' seeming failure, as His life ended in ignominy, suffering and death, was a great victory for Himself and a progressive step in God's plan whereby men could be reconciled to Him. And the church's meagre success in turning men to the way of reconciliation with God, during this age, is not the failure that the world believes it to be. In the divine economy,, the suffering of the saints, like the suffering of their Lord and Head, will not be lost, but will be rewarded abundantly and will be seen to

work out to the praise of God and the blessing of men in the age to come.

It was doubtless through understanding these things that Paul admonished the brethren in 1 Cor. 15:58—
”Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” When the ministry of reconciliation God has bestowed upon the church in

Christ is complete, it will be seen to have turned, not a few, but many to righteousness, and they themselves will be no more dishonoured, but will shine in the kingdom of their Father, as the brightness of the firmament, for ever and ever. (Dan. 12:3.)

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street, Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street.—Sundays 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney.—75 Liverpool Street (few doors from George Street)—Sunday, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Women’s Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court, Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

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Volume XXXIII. No. 12 MELBOURNE, DECEMBER, 1950 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

A Christmas Meditation.

“Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. FOR unto you US born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. . . Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men.” (Luke 2:8-14.)

THE account of the birth of Jesus is always most appealing to us in its simplicity and grandeur. We have in these few verses from Luke’s Gospel an outline of the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth, when in the dispensation of the fulness of time God will gather together in Christ all things, both which are in heaven and earth, even in Him.

In this meditation, however, we are to consider the birthday of our Lord from a different standpoint to that expressed in Luke’s Gospel. It does not take any great intelligence to determine that Christmas Day is not the real anniversary of the birthday of Christ. While this matter is not really important in one sense, yet when viewed from the standpoint of our Lord giving His life for the life of the world when exactly 33, years old, it will be seen to be very important indeed. Six months prior to the Passover season at the time of our Lord’s sacrifice on Calvary, dates back to about October 1st. Early in October would therefore be the correct date of the birth of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. And was not this date most important in the history of Israel? It surely was. It was at this time of the year, six months from the Passover season, that God arranged the great Day of Atonement for Israel.

On the typical Day of Atonement certain animals were sacrificed. The first was a bullock, slain by the High Priest and its blood taken within the Most Holy of the Tabernacle was sprinkled on the mercy seat. That was a most important event in the history of Israel, because God arranged that that sacrifice (and the sacrifice of the goat that followed) should typically cleanse the nation for twelve months ahead, and it had to be carried out carefully, in detail, every year.

Keeping that picture in mind, we know from Luke 3:23 that Jesus, when He began to be about 30 years of age (at the time of Israel’s Atonement Day) , consecrated Himself to God, and presenting Himself to John the Baptist was immersed, symbolizing His How clearly Paul explains the matter to us in the tenth chapter of Hebrews—’Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt offerings and sacrifice for sin thou has had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) , to do thy will, O God. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.” (Heb. 10:5-7, 4, 3.)

In the continual offering of bullocks and goats year by year, the Israelites would see that these were not in any way a real sacrifice for sins, but pointed forward to the One who would come “once for all.” From our studies of

Israel’s Atonement Day we learn that the sacrifice of the animals pictured not only the sacrifice of Christ and His new, spiritual life begun, but also the sacrifice of the Body of Christ and its new, spiritual life begun.

To most of us growing up from childhood, the anniversary of our birthday may have been very important in our minds, but when we become true followers of Christ, the beginning of our new, spiritual life is the all-important event. We believe that the Lord would have us assess our lives as really beginning at the time of full consecration and the begetting of the holy spirit.

When the Lord was arranging for Israel to keep the Passover (Exod. 12), He said to them—”This shall be the beginning of months to you.” There behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. . . Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men.” (Luke 2:8-14.) complete submission to God, now to be sacrificed the antitypical bullock) for the salvation of world. We have it recorded in Matt. 3:16—”Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (as there was a new life beginning for Israel according to the flesh. What more shall we say in respect of Spiritual Israel who receive the new, spiritual life, while laying down their earthly lives in the steps of the Master? The Apostle Paul places the same importance on this matter in his letter to the Hebrews. He was writing to the Jewish Christians who had many trials and difficulties; they had left the teachings of the old Jewish arrangement and were persecuted most bitterly by their own people. Paul sought to encourage and help them to see that the same God of the Hebrews was not unmindful of their experiences when they were laying down their lives in the service of the true Messiah, of whom their ancient Scriptures had much to say. In Heb. 10:32 we read,—”Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” “After ye were illuminated!” That is the turning point in the life of Christians, just as it was the turning point in the life of Christ. The first thirty years of Christ’s life are hardly reported at all. He would not have us look back to His boyhood days. No, He would have us look to the time when He was consecrated to the service of God. That was indeed His real spiritual birthday, if we may use the term. So, the followers of Christ remember the former days—”after ye were illuminated ye endured a great fight of afflictions.”

It does us good to look back to the time when we gave ourselves to God unreservedly, completely.

The Apostle reminded the Hebrews how they, too, endured this fight of afflictions, “partly whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.” How Paul appreciated those who bravely joined him in defence of the Gospel, those who held up his hands, as it were, in his experiences! “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. Ye had compassion on me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” (Heb. 10:33-36.)

How different is the outlook of those who view things from the human standpoint! As an illustration, a newspaper report is quoted, not with the thought of criticism, but rather by way of comparison. One of Melbourne’s leading ministers of religion was quoted as lamenting the fact that three times as much beer was now sold in Melbourne than in some years past. But he said there was an encouraging outlook in that

there was three times as much ice cream sold. He concluded by saying: If we can convert those who drink beer to eating ice cream, he was hopeful that the kingdom of Christ was not so far away. What an idea of the requirements essential for bringing in Christ's Kingdom! Does not such an outlook give us a feeling of pity, that titled men with ideas of that kind should be looked up to as leaders in Christianity. We know the reason for the unscriptural expressions in such cases—there has been no illumination of God's holy spirit. With what humility and thankfulness, then, should we feel towards our Heavenly Father, that He has blessed us with the light of His heavenly truth, by the illuminating influence of His holy spirit.

We can be pleasing to our Heavenly Father only as we consider ourselves members of His heavenly family (when we have truly consecrated our all to Him), and not as human beings. At times, when we come in contact with the world, with the trials and weaknesses of all around us, including perhaps our own relatives, and feel somewhat perplexed in seeking to bear the troubles of others, some of the Lord's people may be inclined to say: Well, we are only human, and we feel deeply the sorrows and difficulties of our loved ones. Yes, it is quite right to feel for others and sympathise with them, but it is not right for those who are fully consecrated followers of Christ to feel that they are still human. In 1 Cor. 1:21, 22 we read, "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." Thus, we are members in the Anointed.

Again the Apostle declares—"As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Have we received the spirit of sonship? "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (Rom. 8:14-16; 2 Cor. 5:17.) The Apostle does not say "will be" or "shall be," but now, in the present time, those who are truly God's people are new creatures in Christ. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,"—not only on the other side, in the resurrection, but now, by His grace. (1 John 3:1.)

How important it is, then, that our thoughts and desires, our words and actions, be guided from our new standpoint of sons in God's spiritual family. When we meet a great crisis in our lives or the lives of others, how helpful it is to ask, How may I please my Heavenly Father in this matter? We should say, I am truly one of His children, and all that

I do, must be done not from the human standpoint, but from His standpoint. How much worry and disappointment would be saved by viewing everything with our new mind, the mind which was perfectly exhibited by Christ Himself. It makes us sad to hear any brethren complaining or murmuring with their lot. It really proves that at that time at least they are not living in the spirit, and hence are really "grieving the holy spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption,"

In Revelation 14 we have a picture of the 144,000 gathered with their Lord on Mount Zion, singing a new song. To be of these faithful overcomers it is essential that we learn this "new song" here, during our pilgrimage; and the only way to learn it well is by thinking, speaking and acting as members of God's heavenly family now.

It is recorded in the Psalms that the Heavenly Father puts a new song in the mouths of His own people, even praise to our God. It behooves us to ask ourselves, Have we got that new song in our mouths? If we have not, we must strive to attain it by viewing all things from God's standpoint, in harmony with our new birthday, our new life in Christ.

In one of his prophetic utterances the Psalmist declared--Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." (Psa. 45:10, 11.) Does this mean that we should forget all our

connections with relatives and friends? No, but rather that nothing of Adam's family or household must be allowed to come between our attachment to God's house of sons. If we view things from the natural standpoint, we are looking down to the earth. We must forget those things that are behind -- "forget also thine own people"—in the sense that God must come first in all our thoughts, and when that is so, His people do not neglect responsibilities, but do all things as unto the Lord.

We are approaching the close of another year. It is a good time to remind ourselves of opportunities and privileges for the year to come. It is a blessed thing to tune our hearts to God on awakening each morning, and sing a song of praise to Him, thankfulness for the night passed, seeking His help to walk in His ways for the one day ahead. If the days are too much for us to handle, let us split them up into moments. "Moment by moment," surely, is the way to view our pilgrimage, appreciating our wonderful standing in Christ since we were illuminated, and thus living on higher ground. Instead of making us proud, doesn't it humble us to think that the mighty God of heaven, He who dwells in the high and holy place, condescends to think of us, and is really our own Heavenly Father, and in His goodness has invited us into His heavenly family! Surely we want to sing His song more as the days pass.

When we meditate upon the season of Christmas as relating to the birth of the baby Jesus, let us remember that His greater birthday was the time of His spiritual begetting. God in His wisdom saw that it was necessary for the Saviour to come as a babe. He could have sent Him a mature man, but He did not. Those first thirty years were a time of waiting and preparation for the all-important time of His presentation of Himself to God in full consecration at Jordan on the anniversary of His birthday. So with us, the all-important time is when we also, by God's grace, present ourselves at the altar of sacrifice and receive the illumination of His holy spirit. As we look back over the years, should we not praise God all the more for the favours we have had, and rejoice in the privileges that may yet be granted to us, to sing this "new song" to His praise and glory, for the assistance of His people, the making our own calling and election sure, and maybe for the encouragement of still others who may yet have ears to hear and be drawn to the Lord in this acceptable time.

Show me Thy face—one transient gleam
Of loveliness divine,
And I shall never think or dream
Of other love than Thine ;
All other light will darken quite,
All lower glories wane,
The beautiful of earth will scarce
Seem beautiful again.
Show me Thy face—I shall forget
The weary days of yore;
The fretting thoughts of vain regret
Shall hurt my soul no more ;
All doubts and fears for future years
In quiet trust subside,
And naught but blest content and calm
Within my breast reside.
Show me Thy face—the heaviest cross
Will then seem light to bear ;
There will be gain in every loss
And peace with every care.
With such light feet the years will fleet,
Life seem as brief as blest ;
Till I have laid my burden down
And entered into rest.

Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper."

The booklet "Some of the Parables" is taking the place of January's issue of "Peoples Paper." This booklet is being posted out to all subscribers with this issue of the "Paper," and extra copies are available at 9d. each, or 6 for 4/- post paid.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne Christmas Convention is to be held (D.V.) from December 23rd to the 26th inclusive, with further meetings on the New Year weekend, at the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. A hearty invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Programmes and other information are obtainable from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue, Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

Sydney Meetings.

The friends in Sydney give notification of a new address for Sunday meetings (3 p.m., and 5.15 p.m.) at Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield. Intending visitors should join No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (on left side of station coming from Sydney), and ask to be set down at Schaffer's Upholstery.

"Daily Heavenly Manna."—

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Christmastide.

AS we draw on towards another Christmas season, it is surely good to call to mind the many blessings, both spiritual and temporal, that have been bestowed upon us again over the past year by our loving Father in Heaven. “Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights,” and while we do praise God for them all, no doubt we cannot be thankful enough for the greatest Gift of all time, the gift of God’s dear Son, who, over nineteen hundred years ago, came into the world in the likeness of men, and “gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” —this being the first portion of the great redemptive work on behalf of poor, fallen humanity. The words of the hymn seem so fully to express our thoughts :—

“O Lord of heaven and earth and sea,
To Thee all praise and glory be;
How shall we show our love to Thee,
Who givest all?

“Thou did’st not spare Thine only Son,
But gav’st Him for a world undone ;
And freely with that Blessed One,
Thou givest all.

“To Thee, from whom we all derive,
Our life, our gifts, our power to give;
O may we ever with Thee live,
Who givest all.”

Happy, then, are those whose hearts are thus in tune with praises and thanksgiving to God for His priceless Gift, even “in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.”

While at our Lord’s first advent “many were in expectation of Him,” how few really appreciated the angel’s message, “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord,” for, thirty years later, when “He came unto His own (the Jewish people) His own received Him not”—only a remnant received Him. How similar is the position to-day; how few there are of those in expectation of Him, even at the present time of general enlightenment, who are receiving their Lord, now in the days of the Son of Man. This fact bears out our Lord’s own words, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find the faith on the earth?” — indicating that comparatively few would possess the true faith.

The Lord’s people, however, instead of feeling discouraged with the general trend of conditions, amongst professed Christians and the world at large, should, surely, lift up their heads and rejoice as they discern the outworking of the various features of the plan in harmony with the written Word. “Unto you, therefore, which believe He is precious .

. . . the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner . . . Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” 1 Pet. 2:7, 9.

And how best may we show forth the praises of the Lord? Though He be not with us in the flesh, He is

present, by His spirit, in greater reality to His members now than at His first advent, and His brethren are with us—the last members of His Body, whom He recognises as part of Himself. (Mark 9:41, 1 Cor. 12:12.) These, it is our privilege and responsibility to assist along the way in every possible manner, bestowing our love and kindness upon them, laying down our lives as unto the Lord Himself, who thus set us this example (John 15:12). The following lines by an unknown writer, under the heading “Alabaster Boxes,” seem especially appropriate at this season of the year, calling to mind the beautiful incident recorded in Matt. 26:6-13, which surely comes down to us, “for a memorial of her.”

The words are as follow:—”Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them; the kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say them before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them when I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin, without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand. Post-mortem kindnesses do not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way.”

The Radio Witness.

There has been continued earnest and sincere appreciation of the broadcasting of the message of truth by the responses received over the past six months, since our last report on this work. It is evident that the Lord is blessing the message going out in this way to a goodly number of listeners in at least four of the Australian states, and it is considered a great privilege to be able to thus sound forth the truth, in the service of our Lord, in these last days of the age.

By the Lord’s providence, through His sacrificing people, all expenses have been met by the contributions voluntarily provided by those friends desiring to use their talents in this way. This is very encouraging, and the efforts in this feature of the work will be continued, according to the Lord’s will, while the opportunity for this service is available. The amount standing to the credit of the Radio Fund on 1st November last was £ 103, and a complete balance sheet covering the year’s work will appear in the “Peoples Paper” next June.

Would our dear friends continue in prayer for God’s guidance and blessing upon this and other features of the work, that all may be done to His glory and the blessing of all who may have ears to hear in the days to come. “He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together!”

Bibles Available.

Some very nice Oxford Reference Bibles are now in stock. They are well bound, in Brevier type (good size, dark) on India paper, with maps. Size 7 x 4 1/2 x 1 inches; weight just under 1 lb. Price 52/6, post paid.

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TRACTS AVAILABLE.

The article "Why Do the Nations War?—Is Christianity at Fault?" which appeared in November "Peoples Paper" is being printed in tract form. Friends desiring a supply of these tracts would assist if they would indicate shortly the number they could likely use to advantage in the year ahead. These tracts are supplied free from the General Tract Fund.

Other free tracts are available as follows :—

"Is Communism a Danger to Christianity?" "Refrain Thy Voice from Weeping." "The High Calling of God."

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Question Box.

Question :—The world is full of aches and pains, diseases, and naturally we look about us for relief. I desire to inquire respecting cures by hypnotism? and still other cures by so-called magnetic healers.. What shall we think of these, and would it be proper for the Lord's consecrated people to avail themselves of such means for attaining health?

Answer:—We feel suspicious of magnetic and mental healing. In our judgment they in many instances are allied with or related to hypnotism; yet it is often difficult to draw the line here, because we all know that there is such a thing as a legitimate mental influence which we all exercise upon one another, favourably or unfavourably. We know, for instance, that hope and faith, love and joy, are healing and helpful influences, and that doubt and despair, anger and malice, are injurious influences whether exercised by our own minds upon our own bodies, or upon others. In this proper sense of the word every child of God possessing the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, is a mental healer, and a heart healer, a wound healer; wherever he or she may be, the influence will be uplifting, comforting, strengthening to good impulses. If therefore the Lord's consecrated ones visit the sick, their presence should be a refreshment, comforting, cheering-and helpful, and so much the more if they carry in their hearts and communicate with their lips the exceeding great and precious promises of our Father's Word. With this much of mental healing we are most thoroughly in accord.

But Christian Science, Mind Healing and Magnetic Healing, running upon this same line, seem to carry it to an extreme in the case of Christian Science to the extreme of lying to oneself and believing the lie, and thus gradually becoming a liar, self-deceived and deceiving others in respect of all of life's affairs. We cannot believe that any course so opposed to that which the Scriptures mark out can be of God, nor can we believe that the cures it at times effects are either natural or of God; we can only suppose, therefore, that the Adversary favours this lying and deceiving process to the intent that he may beguile the mind through further lies and deceptions far from God and the truth.

Magnetic Healing is more in the order of hypnotic healing; that is to say, the magnetic healer gains a control over the mind of his subject which is somewhat akin to the spirit control of spiritualism over its mediums. We can have no sympathy with anything of this kind, for even if we were satisfied that the power of control was merely a human power and not a Satanic one (and we are not satisfied of this), we cannot feel that it is right for one human being to subject his mind, his will, to another, when the evidences prove that every such subjection decreases his will power and places the subject more and more in the position of a slave or machine, subject to the influence or control of others—breaking down his personality.

The Lord's people are admonished to make such a submission of their minds to the Lord, and no one else; and we are confident that the Lord will take no advantage of us under such conditions, to rob us of any good quality. On the whole, then, we urge all of the Lord's people to be on guard against mind healers, magnetic healers, etc., especially where, as in the case of Christian Science, the mind is to be given up to believe a lie, or in the case of hypnotism, it is to be given up or subjected entirely to another. Our minds are our greatest possession and are to be given only to the Lord and to each other as directed by the Word of the Lord; and if we cannot have health without violating these principles, we can afford to be without health for the few more days that remain under the present conditions, knowing that by and by, if faithful to the Lord, we shall have the perfect resurrection bodies promised.

Question :—Why did our Lord say to His disciples, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Luke 22:36, 38), and then afterward say to St. Peter: "Put up thy sword into its place; for all

they that take the sword shall perish with the sword-?—Matthew 26:51, 52.

Answer:—We should note the circumstances. Jesus knew that His hour was come in which He would be betrayed, made prisoner, and the next day be crucified. It was necessary to show that His capture was not made by force, but that He voluntarily permitted Himself to be taken and crucified. The Father might know, the angels might know, and His disciples might know that He had power to ask of the Father legions of angels for His defence and protection from the hands of His enemies; but others could not know this. It was desirable that it should be clearly manifested that Jesus and His disciples could have defended themselves, as St. Peter, indeed, started out to do when he drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus promptly healed the ear and instructed Peter to be non-resistant, and surrendered Himself, merely requesting that His disciples be not molested.

The circumstances demonstrated that our Lord surrendered Himself voluntarily, and therein was the lesson. Had there been no swords in the company of His disciples, it might have been claimed that no defence could have been made. The having of the swords made possible the exhibition of the courage of the disciples, and the willingness of Jesus to submit Himself.

When Jesus said that if necessary their garments should be sold to purchase a sword, the Apostles responded that they had in their company two swords; and Jesus answered, "It is enough." They were intended merely for a demonstration, and not for defence.

Nothing in this Scripture seems to give any warrant to warfare, nor to the implication of some that Jesus desired His followers to take the sword. True, not all who have taken to the sword have perished by the sword, and not all who have avoided the sword have preserved their lives, but it is a general principle which the Lord discusses. He who prepares himself for warfare and trouble will be pretty sure to get plenty of it, according to the general course of the fallen human nature. On the other hand, the Lord's disciples are enjoined to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."—Hebrews 12:14.

Question:—What is the understanding of Matt. 27:52, 53?

Answer.—That these verses do not teach that some of the saints were resurrected at the time of the earthquake, etc., at our Lord's crucifixion, is evident from other Scriptures, such as Acts 26 :23--"That Christ should suffer and

that he should be the first that should rise from the dead." Also Col. 1:18----The first-born from the dead, that in all

things He might have the pre-eminence." The one or two, who, like Lazarus, were brought back from death, were not resurrected to life, but merely brought back to this dying condition and in course of time again passed away, and were buried to await the resurrection.

This passage in Matthew seems quite out of accord with other Scriptures. The oldest M.S.S., the Sinaitic, omits the words "and the graves were opened,- in verse 52, also "and went," in verse 53. It seems likely that when the earthquake occurred at the time of our Lord's death that the rocks being rent some bodies were thrown up and came to view, and yet were not noticed until after the resurrection of Jesus. The day following our Lord's death being the Jewish Sabbath, when all would be quiet, and Jesus being raised early the next morning, would seem to support this view of the matter.

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Gathering at Geelong, Vic.

The majority of the Melbourne brethren joined the friends in Geelong for afternoon and evening meetings on Saturday, 11th November, and the occasion proved very helpful and refreshing.

Commencing at 2.30 p.m., a Bible Study on six questions provided interesting and profitable discussion until 4 p.m., when two addresses on “The Humility of Christ” and “God’s Sure Word” were much enjoyed. Following the tea interval, two more addresses on “All for Jesus” and “Refreshment” added further spiritual encouragement and help to all. Concluding at 8 p.m., with the Love Feast and prayer of thankfulness to God, the day’s gatherings were a means of much blessing.

Pilgrim Way Ended.

Some little time ago information was received respecting the passing of Sister McBaron of Bexley, New South Wales. Of advanced years, our Sister had been many years in the truth, and while unable to attend meetings for years past had maintained her faith and hope in the wonderful truths of God’s Word. From correspondence it was evident that she greatly appreciated the truth literature, and so, while being one of the shut-ins had joined in sweet fellowship through the printed page. We trust for our dear Sister that abundant entrance into the Kingdom which the Lord has in reservation for all who prove faithful unto death, by His grace.

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BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Aust.

Correspondence.

Frank and Ernest, E.4, Victoria, Dear Sirs—Last Sunday morning, at your radio session, you offered a free copy of the Dialogue “Restitution,” as well as a booklet “God and Reason.” I would be very grateful if you would send me one of each, please, as this subject interests me greatly, and I enjoy your weekly broadcasts. Thanking you, Yours faithfully.

To Frank and Ernest—I listened in to your sessions yesterday morning and was very interested. You mentioned a pamphlet that you would send to any listener writing for one. I should be very grateful to receive one. Wishing you God’s blessing on your session. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Could you please send me a copy of last Sunday’s broadcast from 3GL, also any other leaflets, etc., that you have. Some of my friends and I find the session very interesting, so we would welcome whatever reading matter you could send. Yours truly.

Dear Sirs—Your subject for discussion “God’s Witnesses” was very interesting. Could you please send me two copies of the same? I do look for your session. In fact, if I leave the house at the moment you are about to start, I am called—”Dad, Frank and Ernest are coming.” I drop whatever I am doing and settle down to my real enjoyment. Yes, I enjoy your session, for it is Scriptural, and, therefore, truth, so far as I have heard. Does the world, as at present, desire the truth? I may state we belong to no denomination. Yours truly.

To Frank and Ernest—I am a constant listener to your session each Sunday morning at 8.15, and as last Sunday’s Dialogue was on “God’s Witnesses” I thought you would send a copy of same and booklet to my two daughters. One has had “Jehovah’s Witnesses” calling to persuade her that they (and not the Jews) are His witnesses, and sometimes a prophet is not without honour, except in his own household, as no doubt you at times experience. Thanking you in anticipation; Yours sincerely.

Dear Sirs—Will you please forward me a copy of your service over Station 2KY this morning, also any other literature that you may have on this subject, as I am greatly interested in this subject. Yours in His service.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—I would like to tell you I very often listen on Sundays to hear you both and enjoy your discussions very much. I would very much like to receive your book called “Hope Beyond the Grave,” because that is where my hope lies. I would be a very lonely woman if it were not for God and my spiritual friends.

My dear mother passed on 26 years ago, and my dear husband (a clergyman) passed on a year ago; he used to enjoy listening to you. I am enclosing stamps for postage and may God’s blessing rest on your good work. Yours sincerely.

Dear Sirs—I have been listening to Frank and Ernest, on and off, for a number of years now and I think it is

very good; a pity there are not more of them. I only hear them over 2KY, so I guess it is the only Sydney station. Would you please forward me a copy of “Hope Beyond the Grave” and “Where are the Dead?” Do you need donations, or how is the session put on the air? Wishing you all success for the future, and thanking you; Yours sincerely.

(The Frank and Ernest broadcasts are wholly supported by voluntary contributions of friends desiring to extend the good news of God's Word, and wish to use their talents in this way.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Sirs—I am writing to you, after listening to your very interesting and enjoyable session on 2KY last Sunday, and will most certainly be a regular listener from now on. I am asking if you would kindly send me the booklet you spoke of please; if there is any money attached to it I would be only too pleased to send it to you. Thank you very much.

(The printed copies of the Dialogues are gladly supplied free to listeners from the Radio Fund.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Sirs—I have been a regular listener to your very interesting and most enjoyable Talks each Sunday morning and they have been very helpful, and am writing to ask if you would kindly send me last Sunday's notes and also the previous Sunday's. Would you also send me the booklet "God and Reason" and "The Ten Camels" please; 6/- enclosed. Your sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you please forward me a copy of "Hope Beyond the Grave" mentioned in this morning's broadcast, also a copy of next Sunday's Dialogue? I listen in every Sunday morning to your broadcast and pass on your books and Dialogues to my friends. I am enclosing a postal note for 2/- to help cover postage of same. Thanking you in anticipation; Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you, please post to me your Talk on the things which are shortly to come about, broadcast early this morning.

This is the first Talk I have been privileged to hear, but found it so interesting that I am looking forward to the next.

I feel sure too that your service will be blessed by God and will lead a few precious souls 'to salvation through His beloved Son. Thanking you in anticipation; Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Please find enclosed cheque for sum of £5 which I would like to be used in the radio work, a form of putting out the truth that interests me very much and so timely as "the day" appears so near.

I wonder if I might mention a thing that is brought to my mind every now and then by some incident. It is respecting the Australian native. There are quite a number of them in this State and as a rule they don't appear to be high class at all, yet they do seem to have a longing for something better and a sullen sense of injury on account of their treatment by the whites. I have often thought how helpful and uplifting it would be for them, as a class, if they could realise

that the Lord's Kingdom is surely near at hand and it is then they will be able to attain an honoured position amongst mankind.

I am not suggesting that you should make a special broadcast bringing it home to them that they are included in the promises, for you know yourselves what is advisable in that line, but if you ever do, I for one will be most pleased.

Praying the Lord's blessing and guidance on you both and with kindest Christian regards. I remain; yours in the best of bonds.

Dear Brother—Sister — sent me £ 1 to place where I thought best, and while I know she sends direct to

you, I think you had better have this as well. I am very pleased with the "P.P." and am sure its publication is a blessing to many, and the November issue should do good in interesting others.

The Radio Dialogues have recently brought one or two responses. While 6KY has not as wide a field of audience, yet it reaches the "common people" and they are generally the ones to appreciate the "good news."

Had you mentioned you were expecting some Bibles for little folk, I could have waited, and would have been glad to have one. However, what I got is quite satisfactory and as the little one read her verses in turn so nicely one Sunday morning, I just felt she deserved to have it right away, instead of waiting until Christmas, which had been my intention; so I gave it to her and it was lovely to see her press it to her breast and say "precious Bible."

I have just received a good letter from Sister — in which she says the doctor tells her that she is not likely to live more than two or three months. She expresses herself very happy in the hope of being so soon in the presence of our Lord in the heavenly home. Of course, doctors seem to be as often wrong as correct, but Sister's hope is that this one will be correct. It is very nice to see such confidence and reminds one of the hymn—"When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside." Sister has borne her affliction, since the stroke years ago, very patiently and with Christian grace and it was always good to converse with her on spiritual truths in which she so greatly rejoices.

I trust the meetings in Geelong last weekend have been a great blessing to all. . . The Class here has asked for an address for Sunday, 3rd December, and have thought to speak on the "Peace of God"—the peace left us by legacy of our Lord; peace amidst the world's commotion. With Christian regards to all. Yours in Christian bonds.



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The Ransom and Sin Atonement.

(Convention Address.)

“FOR the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp.” (Heb. 13:11.)

WE all recognise that the Bible teaches that sin entered the world by father Adam’s disobedience, and that until a ransom-price had been paid there could be no complete reconciliation between God and man. There must be a ransom as a basis for reconciliation. ‘We understand, therefore, the Scriptures to teach that our Lord Jesus, when He laid down His life, laid down the ransom-price. The word “ransom” signifies’ “corresponding price”; and because our Lord Jesus did not have a nature that was the same as Adam’s nature, it was necessary for Him to leave the glory that He had with the Father before the world was, to humble Himself and to take upon Him the form of the human nature, that He, by the grace of God, could taste death for every man. And so we read in the Scriptures, “A body hast Thou prepared Me.”

There was no human being that had such a body as would be sufficient sacrifice for the sins of mankind, because all were sinners. Had there been a perfect man he might have given his perfect life a ransom, but there was no perfect man; therefore, as represented in the Psalm, “no man could give a ransom for his brother.” Hence, it was necessary for God to find one who would have the ability, who would have the necessary thing to offer for man. The Lord shows us through the Law that His law calls for “a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”; that this was the basis of Justice on which God was operating in this matter. And so, because it was a man that had sinned, the death of an angel could not be his redemption price; it must be a like, or corresponding price. It was a human life that was lost, and it must be a human life given to constitute the redemption price. It was not sufficient that there should be bulls and goats slain during the Jewish dispensation, because these, the Apostle explains, were only figures and types of the “better sacrifices” which God intended in due time to present.

So the Apostle assures us that the man Christ Jesus came to our relief. He left the glory of the heavenly nature and took the human nature. for the very purpose of sacrificing it, in order that He might be our Redeemer, because Justice required a man’s death to redeem the man (Adam) who had sinned.

When our Lord died, “the Just for the unjust,” it was that He might bring us to God; not only that He might bring us, the Church, to God, but that He might bring to God all of humanity who might desire to come. But His death did not bring us to God; His death was merely the laying down of the price which was necessary to be found first.

To illustrate: Suppose you had an obligation to meet—five hundred pounds. And suppose that you owned a property worth five hundred pounds, which you could sell. The price, or value, of the property would be a price exactly corresponding with the debt which was owing. You sell this property in order that you may have its value as a ransom price. But when you sold the property you had not cancelled your obligation; you had merely sold the property and obtained the price, which later you could apply.

Such was the effect of our Lord’s death. When He “died, the Just for the unjust,” He laid down a “corresponding price.” Thus it is stated that “by one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin,” and thus the death sentence passed upon Adam’s race, because all were infected by the disease of sin, and therefore were all under the sentence of death. Our Lord. in order to redeem us, laid down our ransom-price. His own life.

That ransom-price was sufficient price for Adam, or for any other member of Adam’s race, or for all—just as He might subsequently amply it. No less than that would have paid for any one. If the Lord had purposed to redeem one

individual alone and leave all the remainder of us out, it would still have taken His life, and nothing short of it; because it was a man's life that was forfeited, and a man's life must be the penalty.

Because this condemnation came through the one man, Adam, therefore in meeting the penalty for one, it could be so applied as to take in the whole human family. So we see the philosophy of this great doctrine of the redemption, and how God had fixed the matter purposely so that He might be able to settle the debt to His own Justice by the one sacrifice of His Son.

Now that, simply told, is the story of the ransom—and all of it. If Jesus, when He ascended up on high had chosen to use that ransom-price, or ransom-value (which He then had in His hand) on behalf of all mankind, then indeed it would have been a sufficient price for all. But He did not do so. The story of how He does apply it is elsewhere told, and that is called the atonement for sin. The account of how our Lord applies His ransom merit is shown in the typical sacrifices of Israel's Atonement Day.

We are not to think of the Ransom and the Atonement being the same thing. We are to remember that the sin-offerings are not ransom sacrifices. We are to remember that the ransom sacrifice was not the sin-offering. They are two separate propositions. But one view of Christ's work is presented from this standpoint of the ransom-price-- that Christ's death was the ransom-price and was necessary. No matter how it would be applied, it must be given in offset for the one life that was forfeited and condemned by the Almighty's law. According to the Scriptures our Lord Jesus, in His sacrificial work, met various requirements. For instance: He was "born under the Law." What difference did that make? The Apostle explains that if Jesus had not been "born under the law" His sacrifice would not have applied for the Jews, because God had previously separated the Jewish nation from other peoples by the Law Covenant which He made with them.

That Jewish nation, under its Law Covenant, was on trial and failed to keep that Law Covenant after accepting its conditions, saying, "All these things will we do." Under their Law Covenant God offered them eternal life if they would keep His Law, but if they violated it the penalty would be eternal death. Thus they came a second time under the divine sentence—the first time with the rest of us under the Adamic condemnation, and the second time through failure to keep their Law. Hence, the Apostle says, that "the law which was ordained unto life they found to be unto death," for "by the deeds of the law could no flesh be justified in God's sight." Hence it was necessary for Christ to be born under the Law, to be a Jew, that He might redeem all the Jews under that Law Covenant arrangement.

God has all these very different features in His Plan; nevertheless, Christ is the central pivot from which every one of these variations of the divine programme radiates—the Jews to be redeemed specially, also the whole world of mankind aside from these, and besides, God's purpose in connection with the Church, the elect, the body of Christ. In order to keep ourselves from being confused, we must do with these pictures of our Lord's work just as we do with the symbolic pictures of the Church He gives us in the parables. The parables furnish a variety of pictures of the Church. The Church is likened to the laying stones of the temple; to the members of His body: to a flock of sheep; to soldiers under Christ, "the Captain of our salvation"; and again is likened to the Bride of Jesus the Bridegroom.

Now, if we mix these all up, and ask, How could the Bridegroom marry the members of His own body, or how could the Captain marry his own soldiers, or marry the stones of the temple, you see what confusion we would have. Each picture, therefore, must be recognized as more or less separate and distinct if we would understand the Scriptures clearly. In each picture there is a lesson, but we must not mix it up with other pictures. So, then, let us get distinctly in mind what the ransom is, and leave it where it is; do not take it and mix that thought with that of atonement or mediation. The ransom was that which our Lord gave, and which could not be given by anybody else, and which needed not to have any repetition. But it did not show the application of Jesus' merit. He merely "gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

How the blessing will begin and proceed is shown by the sin-offering. The sin-offering is the feature of our topic that we would like to especially emphasize, as represented in our text.

Sin Atonement By Sacrifice.

The Apostle in our text is discussing sin atonement. He points us to one particular picture illustrating his subject. In the typical service the Jews made various offerings and sacrifices—thank-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings, etc. The sin-offering picture is the only one of these we are now looking at and discussing. The sin offering for the nation was made annually, on the tenth day of the seventh month which is styled the Day of Atonement. The offerings or sacrifices for sins, through which the atonement or reconciliation with God was effected, were made on this day and lasted as valid for one year, at the end of which the whole procedure was repeated. The Apostle refers to this offering of bulls and goats year by year continually and tells us of the "better sacrifices" made by our Lord Jesus, which need no

repetition, because actually cancelling sin. We are to remember, however, that this one sacrifice of Himself, which forever perfects all who come unto God through Him, began with the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus in His own person, and has been continued by Him throughout this Gospel Age in the persons of His Church, His followers. These are invited to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God their reasonable service. As the High Priest accepts any of these sacrifices, the consecrated one is begotten of the holy spirit and henceforth counted as a member of the Body of I he Christ—a member of the Body of the High Priest, who is doing the sacrificing. In this sense of the word the “better sacrifices” of the High Priest, which began nineteen centuries ago when He offered up His flesh, continue in His followers as they offer up their flesh, which is acceptable in sacrifice, because of the High Priest, in His name, in His merit, as His sacrifice. In this sense of the word the whole work of the Day of Atonement is the day of sacrifice—though in another sense of the word, as shown by the type, it is divided into two parts—the sacrifice of the Head and the sacrifice of the Church, the members of His body.

The Typical Picture of Atonement.

In Leviticus 16th chapter we have the divinely arranged picture of the Day of Atonement and its sacrificial work.

The high priest took a bullock, which was for himself—which represented himself—and slew (sacrificed) it. The bullock represented our Lord as a man; as expressed in the Scriptures, “A body hast Thou prepared Me.” (Heb. 10:5.) Subsequently two goats were brought and tied to the door of the tabernacle. These were taken from, or represented the congregation, the people of Israel, and were typical of the household of faith, the Lord’s consecrated people—two classes of them, the “little flock” and the “great company.” The type shows clearly that these have not bodies especially prepared for sacrifice. This is shown in the statement that the goats were taken from the congregation of the children of Israel. The bullock representing our Lord Jesus was specially provided by God; the two goats representing the “little flock” and “great company” show how the Church is selected from among the children of men. Our Lord, by reason of His miraculous birth, was perfect, actually so—“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” We, His disciples, however, imperfect, are of the world, children of wrath, even as others. Taken from the world our imperfections are reckonedly covered by the merit of Christ’s sacrifice—by the first part of His sacrifice, atoned for ‘by the blood of the anti-typical bullock, the blood of Christ. The Apostle points out that our Lord’s sacrifice took place at the beginning of His ministry and was finished at its close; He could not be the sin sacrifice until His thirtieth year under the Law. And it is written that just as soon as He became thirty He made the sacrifice—“Now when Jesus began to be about thirty years of age He cometh to John at Jordan to be baptized of him.” We may be sure that He arrived in time to present Himself in sacrifice to God at the very earliest possible moment. There it was, the Apostle tells us, that He fulfilled the prophecy, “Lo, I come, as in the volume of the Book it is written of me, to do Thy will, O God. Thy law is written in My heart.” “There,” says the Apostle, “He taketh away the first that He may establish the second.” In other words, there He began to set aside the typical for the “better sacrifices.” The offering of Himself was instantaneous, but the presentation of His body to the trials and difficulties of life continued throughout the three and a half years of His ministry and finished at Calvary. He consecrated Himself in a moment, to give up all, even life itself, in the Father’s service. But the actual giving of time, influence, strength, vitality, lasted three and a half years. From the moment of His consecration at baptism He was reckonedly dead and, at the same moment, begotten of the holy spirit, He was alive as a new creature, an embryo spirit being, during the three and a half years, the flesh being consumed and the new nature growing strong in the Lord, developing in harmony with the divine will. At the cross the sufferings of the flesh, the consummation of the sacrifice, was complete, finished; and on the third day thereafter the new nature was raised to perfection by the Father’s power, a glorious spirit being, invisible to the dead world, but manifested to the disciples under various forms and under various circumstances, to prove to them that He was no longer dead, and the other fact, that He was no longer the man Jesus, but the glorified spirit Jesus. Thus the Apostle says, “He was put to death flesh, but quickened spirit.”

The Three Burnings—Sacrifices.

In the type the fat, etc., were put upon the brazen-altar in the Court and all the remainder was burned, except the blood, outside the Camp. The high priest took the blood, and his two hands full of incense and the fire from the altar and passed immediately into the Holy, into the light of the golden candlestick. On the altar, which stood between the candlestick and the shew-bread, he placed the fire and then crumbled the incense upon it. We read that the incense penetrated into the Most Holy. This was necessary. The significance of the statement is that the incense offered by the high priest was another picture, as seen by the Almighty. It was a sweet incense to God. It went before our Lord into the Most Holy and there rested upon the mercy-seat. We notice, then, the three burnings. The one in the Holy represented the divine view of the sacrifice of Christ during the three and a half years of His ministry. The burning of the fat on the brazen-altar in the Court represented our Lord’s sacrifice as seen by His disciples and faithful followers, the justified and consecrated ones. The burning of the carcass outside of the Camp represented our Lord’s sacrifice as viewed from the standpoint of men. To them it is an improper use of time and energy. To them His life had an evil odour, as they considered Him a companion of publicans and sinners. The three burnings, outside the Camp, inside the

Court, and in the first of the Holies, together represented our Lord's sacrifices from these widely different standpoints. When one ended, all ended—when our Lord was crucified. His sacrifice was finished then. He passed beyond the veil in the resurrection to follow. Yet our Lord's work was not finished at Calvary in another sense; it was merely begun.

He had finished the first part of His sacrifice—the sacrifice of His own person, the body prepared. But He had a larger work yet to do, namely, according to the Father's plan, the acceptance and sacrifice of a Church class—"the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." The Head of this Church had finished His sacrifice and became the Lord of glory, but the remainder had yet to pass through similar experiences to His—walking in His footsteps.

He Appeared For Us.

In the type when the high priest had finished the offering of the incense, he took the blood of the bullock and entered with it into the Most Holy, stooping under the second veil, which pictured our Lord's three days in the tomb. He arose the other side of the veil a spirit being and later ascended up on high, "there to appear in the presence of God for us." Looking at the type and tracing its fulfilment we find that this signified the sprinkling of the blood upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. When the Apostle says He appeared for us we find that this fulfilment was typified by the priest's presentation of the blood on behalf of himself and his house—the Church, which is His body; this would include "the little flock" and the "great company."

Next, look at the other part of the type or picture. After offering the blood of the bullock the high priest came out and laid his hands upon the goats, as already described, and accepted one of them as the Lord's goat for sacrifice and the other as a scape-goat for destruction. The casting lots indicated that the high priest had no choice as to which should be the sacrifice. Even so, all who make consecration to the Lord are eligible to sacrifice and the Lord is no respecter of persons, but willing to accept all who are faithful to their covenant obligations. Those two goats, represented or typified the consecrated Church of this Gospel Age who from the world have presented themselves to the Lord. The Lord's goat represents the members of the body of the High Priest; the scape-goat represents the less faithful of the Church, the "great company." In the type we read that the high priest laid his hands upon the Lord's goat and smote it, killed it, and took of its blood and did therewith as He had done with the bullock's, while its fat was similarly placed upon the brazen-altar and its flesh burned outside the Camp. We notice that in connection with the offering of the blood of the Lord's goat, its sprinkling upon the mercy-seat, there is no mention of incense being burnt. The incense was burnt preceding the sprinkling of the blood of the bullock. This shows that all the merit, all the perfection, is in the sacrifice of our Lord and Head. The Church, represented in the goat, has no perfection of her own. We are made "acceptable in the Beloved," and have no standing or recognition before God apart from Christ. The burning of the fat of the goat upon the brazen-altar, and its flesh etc., outside the Camp illustrates the Church having part in Christ's sufferings and filling up that which was left of His afflictions. This is true not only of the Apostles, but also of all who have since sacrificed their all in the interests of the Lord, the truth and the brethren.

In our text the Apostle identifies the Lord with the bullock and His faithful people with the goat. He reminds us that no other sacrifices than those of the sin-offering were ever burned outside of the Camp, and no other sacrifices ever had their blood sacrificed and sprinkled in the Most Holy to make atonement for sin. Then the Apostle says, "Let us go unto Him (Jesus) outside the camp, bearing the reproach with Him." These, then, are the "better sacrifices" which do take away sin, as explained by St. Paul. The effect of this great sacrificing work of the high priest during this one sacrificial Day of Atonement will never need repetition. It will thoroughly accomplish the divine purposes; it will effect the full reconciliation of the world. The merit, of course, is in the sacrifice of the bullock. The bullock represented our Lord Jesus, while the goat represented the 144,000 members of His body. The laying down of our lives in the Lord's service accounts nothing of real value—nothing that would of itself ever take away sin. The entire merit of our sacrifices is through the justification which first applied to this goat class through the merit of the bullock's sacrifice.

The type tells us that the high priest counted this blood of the goat as a part of his one sacrifice, the one sacrifice by which all will be blessed who ever attain to everlasting life. The high priest presented the blood of the goat for a very different purpose than that for which he had previously applied the blood of the bullock. The blood of the bullock was for the high priest and the members of his household. The blood of the goat was for all the remainder of the people of Israel. In the antitype the blood of Christ avails for His consecrated saints, the "little flock," the "royal priesthood" and for the "great company," while the sacrificial merit of the Church, the body of Christ, He applies on behalf of all the people, the world—as many of the world as desire to avail themselves of the glorious opportunities of reconciliation.

When the High Priest had finished the first sacrifice (the bullock) and the offering of His blood He came forth. He manifested Himself at Pentecost and symbolically laid His hands upon the Church in the Pentecostal blessing, by which sacrifice His followers were enabled to be conformed to the terms and conditions of His sacrifice. But after offering the blood of the goat the High Priest is represented as having finished His work. He puts off His sacrificial garments and puts on His garments of glory and beauty, manifesting the glorious qualities of Christ's character and the honourable

mission to which He had been anointed as the world's Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Mediator. Thus coming forth in type, the high priest represented our Lord's second advent and assumption of divine glory and power, at which time the Church will be with Him as members of His body, to co-operate in the dispensing of the blessings of the New Covenant to Israel and to all the families of the earth. As on the Day of Atonement the people of Israel put on sackcloth and ate no pleasant food, but fasted and waited for the coming out of the high priest in his garments of glory and beauty, so it has been throughout this Gospel Age. The whole world lieth in the wicked one, overwhelmed in sin and death and corruption. Of them St. Paul declares, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:22, 19)—waiting for the High Priest, Head and body, typified by the glorious garments of the Jewish high priest., Following the picture a little further we see that the high priest in his glorious garments went to the altar and lifted up his hands and gave his blessing to the people—the blessing of the New Covenant, the blessing of the forgiveness of sins, the blessing of pouring out of the holy spirit upon all flesh. If in the type a blessing is portrayed, how much greater will be the blessing in reality! As in the type the people arose, threw off their sackcloth and fasting and rejoiced in their forgiveness, so in the Millennial morning the world, coming to an appreciation of the great High Priest and the sacrifices of Atonement, will arise from sin and degradation and death and rejoice in 'divine favour and in the realisation of the many blessings of restitution set before them, as declared by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:20, 21.)

With His Own Blood.

In the context the Apostle says, "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Heb. 13:12.) The question may be asked, What people will Jesus sanctify with His own blood? The answer, in the broader sense of the word is, all people—all who ever will accept sanctification, cleansing, reconciliation through Him. We read that "He gave Himself a ransom for all." It matters not that He did not apply it at once for all, but merely for the Church. The intention of His sacrifice was for all. This does not alter the fact that thus far the merit of Jesus' sacrifice extends not beyond the -household of faith." In due time through the Church His merit will extend to every creature. Thus it is written, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy," and we obtain our mercy through Jesus' death, as He by divine grace, tasted death for every man.

Fellowship In His Sufferings.

That our Lord suffered, the Just for the unjust, the Scriptures clearly set forth—not merely the amount of pain which He suffered. He suffered death on account of sin. We suffer with Him; we are partakers of His sufferings. Our Lord's most severe sufferings were probably in Gethsemane, where; we read, that He was in a great agony and that "Of the people there were none with Him"; even the faithful, beloved eleven apostles were drowsy and could not watch with Him at that hour. But they could not comprehend His trouble—that the programme of the next few hours meant so much to Him. He knew that in His covenant made at Jordan He had given up His earthly rights and privileges. He knew that now His entire dependence as respects a future life rested upon a resurrection from the dead and He knew, too, that if He had not performed the divine will perfectly, completely, that He could not be granted the glorious resurrection change and the eternal glory on the spirit plane. Thus we read that He offered up strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save Him out of death and that He was heard in that thing which He feared. He feared death—not that He doubted the Heavenly Father's promise that if His sacrifice was faithfully performed He would be granted a glorious resurrection. He feared that unintentionally He might have made some error, might have failed to perform some portion of His consecration vow. He feared, therefore, lest there had not gone the full measure of the cloud of incense into the Most Holy to cover the mercy-seat and to indicate that He had been faithful to the last degree in His sacrificing. Then it was that the angel appeared to strengthen Him. What the strengthening was is not revealed, but most evidently it pertained to the things which He feared. Undoubtedly the angel, as the Father's representative, assured Him about His faithfulness; that His sacrificing had been acceptable in the Father's sight. At once a great calm came, in which the great storm of anguish, which had threatened but a moment before to wreck His mortal body, subsided. Thenceforth we behold Him the calmest of the calm—before the high priest, enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself in the presence of Pilate and the rabbis. Led to the cross He was the most self-possessed of all of whom we have any knowledge on the occasion. When His disciples forsook Him, it was He who interposed that they be not pursued, but let go their way. When Peter denied Him, it was He who calmly looked towards Peter, reminding him of the prophecy. On the way to Calvary it was He who spoke words of peace to the weeping women, saying, "Weep not for Me, but rather for yourselves." How different are the experiences of Christ's followers! We have Him not only as an Example and as a Teacher, but as our Protector and as our Advocate. We may indeed have strong consolation because He has assured us that He has not only appeared for us, but that He is able to succour us in every time of need. He is still Head of the Church, which is His body. He is still supervising the interests of all of His members; He is still saying to us, as He did to His disciples of old—"This is my blood—drink ye all of it."

Whoever fails to clearly see that the Church at the present time comprises the members of the body of Christ can never

understand how the Church is to share her Lord's sacrifice, as represented in His cup. Our Lord said to His disciples, "This is my blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins; drink ye all of it." The cup represents or symbolizes the Church's sharing with her Lord in His sufferings. This is the cup of shame, of sorrow, of indignity, of self-denial on behalf of others. The Master spoke of it as the cup which the Father had prepared for Him. He left some of it for us, that we might have the privilege of sharing in His sufferings and also of the glory that shall follow as soon as the last member of His mystical body shall have been glorified. When He passed the cup to His disciples at the Memorial Supper, His words, "Drink ye all of it," not only meant that all who would be His disciples must drink of that cup, but also meant that His followers must drink all of it, must leave none of it. In other words the sufferings of Christ belong exclusively to this Gospel Age, marked by His own suffering at its beginning and terminating with the revelation of His glory in the Kingdom. There will be none of the sufferings of Christ for the world to drink of during the Millennial Age, and there will be no opportunity for any of them to become joint-heirs with the Redeemer. The Master said that this cup was the blood of the New Testament—the new will, His will or Testament, by which He is bequeathing His earthly rights and earthly honours to the earthly seed of Abraham and to the world of mankind through them. It is His blood that was necessary for the sealing of the New Covenant blessings to Israel and the world. Whoever does not drink of this cup, whoever does not share in the sufferings of Christ—the same sufferings which He experienced, as members of His body—cannot share with Him His Millennial throne of glory, by means of which the New Covenant blessings will be established with the world.

Let us keep in mind this intimation that His followers must be sharers with Him in His sufferings, and let us also remember that we must participate in the same sufferings if we would share His Kingdom. Harken to the two disciples as they inquired of Him just before His death if they might sit, the one on the right hand and the other on the left in His Kingdom. Jesus replied "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say to Him, We are able." (Matt. 20:22.) When they asserted their willingness to die with Him He assured them that they would indeed drink of His cup and share His baptism of death and have a place in His Kingdom.

Let us hold fast to these precious promises. Let us "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure." Let us not forget that "we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."

Let us not forget that the whole purpose of God's dealings with us now, in permitting us to have a share in Christ's sufferings, is that we could be conformed to the character-likeness of His dear Son. We are to become copy-likenesses to Christ. May the good work go on in our hearts day by day, making us more mellow, humble, gentle and kind. Jesus said that unless we humble ourselves and become as little children we would not be able to enter the Kingdom. (See Matt. 18:1-4; Col. 3:12-14; 1 Pet. 1:22; / John 4:7-12; 1 John 3:13-24.)

(Should any of our readers find difficulty in following all the thoughts in the above Convention Address it is recommended that they study the statements in conjunction with the book "Tabernacle Shadows" which is supplied from this office in attractive binding at 4/6 per copy.—B.B. Institute.)

Convention News.

THE Annual Convention held by the Melbourne brethren over the Christmas period proved once again to be a most profitable and refreshing season of fellowship. We are thankful to the Lord for the realisation of His blessing throughout the gatherings extending over four days, and feel sure that the benefits received will long remain with all able to attend, as well as extend to other friends who hear or read about the assemblies.

It was a great pleasure for the Melbourne friends to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Canberra and various parts of -Victoria, and these visitors contributed largely to the success of the Convention in every way.

One each of the Convention days a Bible study was conducted, the selected passages of Scripture being—Psa. 40 :1-10; Luke 17:26-37 ; 2 Pet. 3 :11-14 and 2 Tim. 4 :1-8. The one hour and a half allotted for each study did not enable all the details to be brought out, yet the studies were most helpful and timely, especially those portions applicable to the days in which we are now living, when the harvest work of the Gospel Age is being completed by the message of “present truth.”

It is felt that the Bible studies at Convention are really an essential part of the programme, enabling each member to take an active part in the discussions and thus assist in the building up and encouragement of all. Where Bible studies are omitted from Conventions overseas there must surely be some measure of loss which all other sessions really cannot supply.

Two Scriptures were also listed for explanation at the Question Meeting, namely, Heb. 2:16 and Psa. 46:5 (latter part of verse). In the former verse it was seen that the margin rendering and other translations give the Apostle’s thought—“He taketh not hold of angels (to assist them for the heavenly calling) but of the seed of Abraham (spiritual Israelites) he taketh hold.” (See verses 17, 18; Gal:3:29.) Psalm 46:5 was seen to be a comforting assurance of God’s protection and care, and ultimate deliverance of “the city of God” (the Church, the Bride of Christ) “at the dawning of her morning” (Lesser’s translation). As one has said, “This is not the morning which is to dawn on the world at the brightness of her reign with her Lord as the sun of righteousness, but at the dawning of her morning, in which she is to be changed to the nature and likeness of her Lord. Her morning is to precede the Millennial morning.”

The Fellowship Meetings were also helpful sessions, being made up of praise and testimony to the Lord’s goodness, and “Hymns we love.” Messages of greeting to the Convention were received from Classes and individual brethren all over Australia, and were very much appreciated. As the Convention greeting to all our brethren, the passage in 2 Pet. 3:11-14 was chosen and is sent with warm Christian love to all dear Christians wherever situated.

On the evening of the last day of Convention all the friends farewelled each other in the Love Feast during the singing of “Blest be the tie that binds,” and “God be with you till we meet again.” The closing prayer of thankfulness to God with desire for His blessing upon all His people, concluded a very helpful Convention. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Notes on Convention.

Some notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and these are now available free in duplicated form. Friends desiring copies should apply to this office.

Easter Convention in Adelaide.

The usual Convention over the four days at Easter—Good Friday to Easter Monday, 23rd March to 26th March, inclusive—is being arranged by the Adelaide brethren, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. The assemblies are to be held in the Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and further information is obtainable from the Class secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

Passover Memorial, 195

According to the Jewish Calendar the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 19th April, after sundown. It will be appropriate, therefore, to keep the Lord's Supper on this date, in harmony with our Lord's request to "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Sydney Meetings.

The friends in Sydney give notification of a new address for Sunday meetings (3 p.m., and 5.15 p.m.) at Schaffer's Upholstery. 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield. Intending visitors should join No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (on left side of station coming from Sydney) , and ask to be set down at Schaffer's Upholstery.

"Daily Heavenly Manna."—

A new supply of these books with birthday recording pages is in stock. Strongly bound in cloth, nice appearance, price 4/6. In de luxe binding, thin paper, gold edges, price 9/-.

TRACTS AVAILABLE.

The article "Why Do the Nations War?—Is Christianity at Fault?" which appeared in November "Peoples Paper" is being printed in tract form. Friends desiring a supply of these tracts would assist if they would indicate shortly the number they could likely use to advantage in the year ahead. These tracts are supplied free from the General Tract Fund.

Other free tracts are available as follows:

"Is Communism a Danger to Christianity?"

"Refrain Thy Voice from Weeping."

"The High Calling of God."

"The Earth Removed."

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Explains the following :—Importance of This Prophecy—The Conditions and Three Questions which Called It Forth—Beware of False Christs—A Brief Historic Foreview of Nineteen Centuries—The Trouble in the Close of the Jewish Age and that Closing the Gospel Age, Blending in the Language of all the Evangelists—The Abomination of Desolation —Flee to the Mountain—Those with Child, etc.—Before Winter and the Sabbath—Lo, Here ! Lo There ! Believe them not—The Tribulation of Those Days—The Darkening of the Sun and Moon as Signs—The Falling of the Stars--Symbolic Fulfilments Also—The Sign of the Son of Man—What the Tribes of Earth Shall See—The Fig Tree—"This Generation." —Watch !—"As in the Days of Noah, They Knew Not"—Remember Lot's Wife—One Taken and Another Left—The Elect to be Gathered to the Truth—Satan's Household to be Broken Up—Provisions for Feeding the Household of Faith.

Single copies, 9d. each ; 6 copies for 4/-, post paid.

Tabernacle Shadows.

Copies of this very helpful book are now in stock in cloth binding, with gold title. The price is 6, post paid.

“I know how anxious thought can press,
I know the weight of carefulness ;
But now I know the sweet reward
Of casting all upon my Lord,
No longer bearing what He bears,
Because I know that Jesus cares.”

—F. R. Havergal.

Correspondence.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was very interested in your broadcast talk over 3GL this morning. Would you mind sending me a copy of this discussion? I would also much appreciate the booklet you mentioned, as from your description of it, it sounds like something I’ve been looking for for some time.

Please find enclosed a postal note for 5/-. I am a Christian and want to help, not hinder your work, so I trust the enclosed will more than cover the cost of the literature. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I was listening to your broadcast this morning and would very much like to have a copy of it, also the leaflet, as I am very interested in it. I do think you are doing a good work for our Lord and Master with your plain way of putting the Scriptures over the air, and sincerely pray the Lord will bless you both in your efforts to spread the good news of salvation. May you be long spared to carry on your work for Him. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Sirs—I have listened to your discourses on the Bible every Sunday morning for months, and I think they are very inspiring, Will you please send me the discourses for the past four or five Sundays, and any spare copies you may have in the future. Please let me know to whom I may make out a cheque for a small donation to the Radio Fund. I am, Sirs, Yours faithfully.

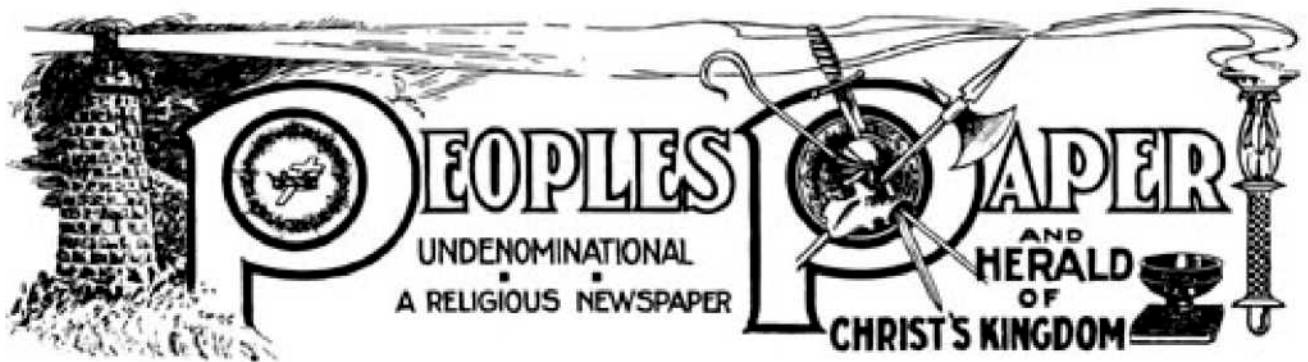
Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I would like you to know how much I have appreciated your Talks over 2KY; I have found them very helpful in understanding the Scriptures to which you have referred. I would especially value a copy of the following Talks, “The Rich Man and Lazarus” and “The Third Heavens” and if possible a copy of each succeeding Sunday’s broadcast to date; also the “Peoples Paper” containing writings on “Our God is One” —God is the Father and Jesus is the Son. The other two articles were also very helpful. This paper came at a time when those three subjects were the topic of studies at a church meeting, and I felt strengthened in my belief in the matter after studying your writings. I always believed that was the right way, but now I feel confirmed in my belief; I have passed the copy on to a friend.

Thank you also for sending the study on “Some of the Parables” and for all the papers which you have sent to me from time to time. Enclosed find 2 to help on the good work of helping others to a fuller understanding of God’s Word. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—I have much pleasure in sending you this 10/- to pay for the “P.P.” and its postage, and for the papers you enclose; the balance for anything that will help along. I have not yet had a chance to read your “Parables” which you sent with the December issue of “P.P.”; I shall do so as soon as I can.

You were asking about the reception from 2KY. It is splendid here; it is, in fact, the clearest station we have, and the announcer speaks so friendly both before and after the Dialogues . . . We know Whom we have believed and believe, also that He is able and will keep that which we have committed to Him against that day. What a great privilege is ours, and what an honour to serve Him even in the meanest capacity.

The Dialogues continue to give priceless knowledge and I hope you will continue on gathering people out of darkness into that “great light.” Yours sincerely with best wishes. NA,



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Can a True Christian Engage in Warfare?

(In response to requests that thoughts on this subject be made available, this article is presented as fully as space allows.)

OUR subject is surely of vital importance to all Christians, and one which is not easily understood by some who are sincerely seeking to walk in the footsteps of Christ. From a careful examination of the Scriptures, however, we believe that it is possible to arrive at a correct and satisfactory answer to this question; an answer that will be satisfying to both heart and mind of the truly consecrated follower of Christ.

In the words of John's Gospel, chapter 17, we have a memorable prayer of Christ's to His Father, poured forth a matter of hours only before His crucifixion. This prayer was especially on behalf of our Lord's followers, and in verse 16 we read—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

If we can grasp the implication of Jesus' words respecting Himself, "even as I am not of the world," we shall have a true guide respecting the meaning of the words regarding His followers—"they are not of the world." We think of our Lord's life on earth, the transferring of His life in heaven with the Father, to the earthly form of a human babe.

The account is given with sufficient detail in Luke 1 to be clearly understood by all thinking people. In verse 35 of this chapter we have the angel's message to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as follows:—"The holy spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." These are wonderful words, and help us to see the overruling of God respecting the transfer of our Lord's life in heaven, which He had with the Father before the world was, His pre-human existence, to come to the earth and be born as a human babe.

After the birth of Jesus" the manifestation to the shepherds in the fields by the heavenly host, and the shepherds' visit to Bethlehem and finding Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger, as recorded in Luke 2:6-18, we read in verse 19—"But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." It seemed so immense, so wonderful, outside all her comprehension that she should be chosen for this important mission of bringing forth the One to be called the Son of God. She kept all these things, pondering them over and wondering if they were really true. It seemed almost like a dream to her. So even the mother of Jesus seemed overwhelmed by the things connected with the birth of her child.

There is nothing recorded of Jesus between the time of his return from Egypt as a child and when he was twelve years of age, when we are told He took the trip to Jerusalem with His parents to attend certain ceremonies at the Temple. We find the boy had forgotten all about His earthly parents; they were on their return journey and then found that Jesus was not in the caravan party, and they went back to look for Him. So the story goes on in Luke 2, from verse 46. When told that His parents sought Him sorrowing, His response was, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Then verse 50 reads—"And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them." They seemed unable to understand this wonderful boy who could confer with the learned doctors of the law, not only asking questions but answering them as well. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" This was beyond the understanding of His parents again.

Then, after a period of about eighteen years, during which time Jesus' mind would be working upon the plan of God, as

found in the Old Testament Scriptures, He knew that at the age of thirty the time was due to present Himself fully and completely to God, and to start upon the last and most important part of His whole earthly life. In presenting Himself to John the Baptist for immersion, to symbolise His consecration to His Heavenly Father, we find that John was amazed to think that the One whom he knew to be the Messiah should come to him for baptism. John was not able to appreciate the fact that the immersion of

Jesus was not for the same purpose as John's baptism for the Jews, namely, for remission of sins. No, our Lord's immersion signified His baptism into death, that thus He may taste death for every man. He then received the begetting of the holy spirit, as pictured by a dove; this was the symbol indicating to John that He was really the One who should take away the sin of the world.

During our Lord's ministry, we have such words from His lips as recorded in John 8:42—"I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." And again—"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." (John 7:16.) These words reveal in no uncertain way that Jesus was the perfect One, sent by the Heavenly Father above.

Then, following our Lord's crucifixion, we have a record which is important; it was an acknowledgement of our Lord by the centurion, as the result of the manifestations from heaven which made a lasting impression upon that generation and all generations since. It is found in Matt. 27:54—"Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."

Another very marked manifestation was given on our Lord's behalf on the morning of His resurrection. This is recorded in Matt. 28, from verse 2—"And behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." Then followed the angel's words of cheer to the women who had come to the sepulchre to embalm the body of Jesus—"Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said."

Do not all these references to our Lord, from the time of the transference of His life from heaven to earth, right through to His death and resurrection to the Father's right hand, help us to understand the meaning of His words—"I am not of the world"? The word "world" is from the Greek word "kosmos" which means the orderly arrangement, or order of things, then existing in the world.

But how could our Lord say of His true disciples, "They are not of the world"? They are not perfect as was Jesus; they have earthly fathers, as well as earthly mothers. How can these belong not to the world?

A clear explanation is shown in the life of Saul of Tarsus, who afterwards became Paul, the Apostle of Christ.

In Acts, chapters 8 and 9, we find Saul engaged upon a terrible persecution of the followers of Christ, in which he thought he was doing God service. He was truly of this world at that time. But what happened? There has never been anything like it, either before or since. We have a most amazing record of the Lord appearing to Him as a light from heaven, Saul being stricken down, and the voice from heaven saying—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Saul's response was—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Following the instructions given, we find Saul a fully converted disciple of the Lord. And what a conversion this was! Here was Saul on a mission breathing out slaughter to the followers of Christ, but the Lord's message to Ananias was--He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." And didn't Paul respond (his name changed from Saul), and rejoice to be shown the things to be suffered for Christ's sake! He glorified in the fact that he was counted worthy to be invited into the ministry of His Lord.

By this wonderful conversion of Paul, his accepting Christ as his personal Saviour, he was justified by faith. Then we find Paul presenting his all to the Lord, his conversion is so complete; the changeover was absolute. God having accepted Paul's offering of himself in full consecration, we find him filled with the holy spirit, and he was raised to the plane of spirit-begetting.

From this standpoint, our Lord could say of His consecrated followers, in His prayer to the Father, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Our Lord spoke primarily of His own little band of disciples at that time, but included all who would become His throughout the Gospel Age, as His prayer indicated—"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20.) So we claim that the Scriptures are abundantly clear that on the basis of justification by faith and full consecration to God the Lord accepts His followers out of the world. They are a separated class unto Him for the heavenly calling, of whom our Lord said, "Few

there be that find it.”

The Apostle Paul, as an example of all true Christians, was raised to the plane of spirit-begetting following his full submission of his whole being to the Lord. In reviewing his own conversion and calling of God in Acts 26:19, he declared—”I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” No, that was the most momentous occasion in Paul’s life, and his the most wonderful conversion, and it is placed on record that we may see in it the turning point of Christians generally. There must be a definite conversion, a turning again; there can be no gradual emerging and hanging on to some of the worldly life while seeking to walk also in the Christian life. Paul’s conversion was complete and absolute. He repented with his whole being, and henceforth, throughout his whole life, his soul was poured out unto death in the cause of Christ.

All who, like Paul, have consecrated their lives to God during this Gospel Age have also this same spiritual life begun in them, and they are also raised to the plane of spirit-begetting. Do we see, then, the meaning of our Lord’s words in John’s Gospel, that those the Father had given Him out of the world are not of the world? Do we see, also, that those who are not of the world could not conscientiously engage in warfare in any shape or form, because warfare belongs absolutely to the plane of fallen humanity? It belongs to the plane of degradation on which all mankind are travelling except those, who, by the grace of God, are lifted out of this world, first to the plane of justification by faith, and then to the plane of spirit-begetting, because they lay their all on the altar of sacrifice, even as did Jesus. There can be no doubt about it, no compromising in any sense in respect of warfare: it is absolutely carried on on the plane of human degradation and sin. Those who have been lifted out of the world by the Lord’s grace can have no part in warfare at all. If they do, they are forsaking the real Christian way. Paul said that’ he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. That is something we also ought to ask ourselves. Have we at all been disobedient to the heavenly calling, the drawing of our Lord to the heavenly inheritance? We do not receive a heavenly Vision similar to Paul’s, but we do receive a heavenly enlightenment, and must not be disobedient to this great favour granted to us. If we engage in any of this world’s affairs, strife or chaos of any kind, we are repudiating our heavenly enlightenment, doing despite to the grace of God and returning to the world again, and would not be fit for the kingdom in any shape or form.

In the Old Testament there are records which appear to some minds to be contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. When Israel was passing over Jordan into Canaan, the Lord gave certain instructions which are found in Joshua 3. Verses 9 and 10 read—”And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.”

Some have been inclined to question the justice of God in giving to Israel the land of Canaan, already inhabited by others,—the justice of not only permitting but commanding them to destroy the inhabitants of that land, and to take possession of it as their own.

Knowing that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof,” He, therefore, had the right to give Canaan to the descendants of Abraham without giving a reason why to any creature. He had a right to give it when and how and to whom He pleased. He does, however, condescend to inform us that in blotting out these many little nations of Palestine, descendants of Noah’s grandson, Canaan, He did so not along arbitrary lines, but along lines of justice. These Canaanites were not ignorant savages, but quite civilized peoples who, after the manner of the Sodomites, had gone into great excesses of licentious idolatry. In Abraham’s time God foresaw where their course would lead them, but He delayed to bring the promised seed of Abraham into their land for a time, because, as we read in Gen. 15:16—”the iniquity of the Amorites was, not yet come to the full.”

These people were to be destroyed by the Israelites, for two reasons; first, to have permitted them to live and to become incorporated with the Israelites in the land, by intermarriage, etc., would have been injurious to the seed of Abraham which God intended to develop, and of which He intended to make types of spiritual Israel. Furthermore, in the type which the Lord was making on a large scale, these Canaanites or Amorites represented the weaknesses and imperfections of the fallen nature. They symbolized sin, and their destruction by the Israelites prefigured the destruction of sin, the blotting out of the blemishes of sin, and the gradual uplifting of God’s people in the antitype of Canaan—in the Millennial Kingdom.

The chief difficulty in most minds, to connection with this slaughtering of the inhabitants of Canaan, lies in the unscriptural thought, brought into Christian creeds during the dark ages, that the apparent death of an individual is really his entrance into more abundant life, either under pleasurable or tormenting conditions. Since these Canaanites were declared to be disapproved of God, the general thought respecting them is that while the Israelites killed them and took possession of their property, they, without further opportunity, were thrown at once under the control of devils and into an eternity of torture. There is nothing of this kind connected with the Bible narrative. It is all the addition of

human imagination, built upon numerous fantastic speculations of the dark ages. According to the Scriptures, death is really death, and these Canaanites, when slain by the sword of Israel, became unconscious, and will remain so until the Lord's time shall come for their awakening from the sleep of death. They shall come forth in the resurrection in the Millennial morning, to the earthly paradise, as our Lord's words indicate "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth."

Thus we see that God was using the Israelites as a typical people, through whom He was making types and shadows of coming blessings. He would give Canaan to Israel, and thus make another type of how the anti-typical Israel will enter and possess the anti-typical Canaan. He would make the slaughter of the people of the land to illustrate the destruction of the works of the flesh and the devil which His people are to accomplish in themselves by fighting the good fight of faith and overcoming the evil tendencies which have become intrenched in their own flesh.

There are some New Testament texts which also prove difficult to some people to understand. One is in John 2:15. This text has been used to show, mistakenly, that our Lord used force on humanity at the time of His first advent. But a correct rendering of this verse helps us to see that Jesus, in using the whip of cords, used it only on the animals. —"So he plaited a whip of rushes, and drove all—both sheep and bullocks—out of the Temple." We see the Lord was not violating the principles He laid down, that the use of force on humanity by the consecrated Christian is not required.

Another text which causes some difficulty is in Luke 22:36,—"Let him buy a sword." The occasion was right near the end of our Lord's ministry. The disciples said, Yes, there are two swords here, and the Lord said, It is enough. We find that when Peter later used the sword our Lord, rebuking him and healing the ear of the high priest's servant, said "Put up thy sword into its place; for he that takes the sword shall perish by the sword." This is a direct contradiction of the assumption by some that the Lord intended even His people to engage in defensive warfare. The sword then, at the time of our Lord's betrayal, was for the purpose of showing that He voluntarily permitted Himself to be taken. They had the weapons, and they would have used them had it been right to do so. However, in Matt. 26:53 the Lord assured them that He could have prayed to the Father, and He would send more than twelve legions of angels to defend Him, if His cause required it. This seemed to be the only defence our Lord would countenance to support the cause of His Heavenly Father, and we take it that this is the only defence He desires and requires His people to adopt throughout their Christian life, after they have been taken out of the world.

The closing days of John the Baptist also present a helpful lesson to us. John was a wonderful character, having prepared the way of the Lord, and then introduced the Bridegroom to Israel — to as many as could receive Him.

John had been cast into prison, and by a wicked scheme this holy prophet of God was beheaded. And yet Jesus did nothing about it, though He must have been acquainted with all the details beforehand. Our Lord apparently knew that John had performed his work, knew he had been faithful to his mission, and knew that he would receive a wonderful resurrection, not to the heavenly inheritance, but to the earthly inheritance of the Ancient Worthies, of whom the world was not worthy. Christ knew, then, that it was not required of John to live on. So sometimes God allows His servants to be taken, perhaps in a despicable way, when their work is completed.

Our Lord could have sent twelve legions of angels to prevent John's death; they were certainly at His disposal. Isn't that a lesson that God knows His own plan, knows the mission of each of His people, and not a hair of their heads shall perish without His knowledge, especially in regard to the spiritual ones? This is figurative language, to show that the minutest detail is known to God, and not one is going to be overlooked in any experience of life. Doesn't it give us confidence and trust in God, to know that He has everything under control! He has His heavenly messengers to act on His directions and authority in regard to all His people. Jesus did not go to war on behalf of His greatest earthly friend at that time, because it was not right to do so. John's mission was fulfilled, and the glorious resurrection with a future life on earth will compensate for anything that John might have desired.

The words of Paul in 2 Cor. 10:3-6 have proved another wonderful guide to many in regard to their Christian warfare. Paul is here speaking of those who had taken up the Christian way, those who had reached the plane of spirit-begetting, even though they may not have been very faithful followers up to the time of Paul's writing. They were carnal at times and really babes in Christ. The passage reads—"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not walk after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." This is the Christian's only warfare, and it will occupy and require every moment of his time, if he is a faithful soldier of the cross.

We know that God will provide means whereby this true warfare can be accomplished, so long as the Christian co-operates with the spirit of the Lord, which will so transform him during the period of his pilgrimage on earth, that he

will be conformed to the likeness of God's dear Son eventually. The "pulling down of strongholds" relates to those things in our minds and hearts which belong to this present evil world. They are to be eliminated during the earthly lives of Christians since they were called out of the world. What a work we see before us!

We are not to be concerned with the disobedience of the nations. We have not been called to associate in trying to put down the disobedience of the systems of this present evil world. God is going to revenge all disobedience, in His own good time and way,, but not until the obedience of the Church has been fulfilled. To complete the testing, proving, polishing and developing of the Church of Christ is God's present work—the perfection of our obedience. "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

We have been drawn and called out of this present evil world, receiving a spirit which will transform us unto the likeness of our Lord and Head, and our obedience will be completed. Nothing is going amiss because Christians do not participate in supporting this or that form of government; and it is only those who have really grasped what it means to be a true Christian, that are able to live in the world, and be not of the world.

In writing to the Philippians, Paul gave a personal testimony of his own life in the steps of Christ in chapter 2, verse 17.—"Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all." Paul was wholly used up, absorbed, poured out in the service to which he had committed his whole being. And, "I joy and rejoice with you all." That must be the disposition of all of us, to joy in this service—in this offering of ourselves—however small it be. Isn't it wonderful to think that God has accepted the little offerings of the individual members of the Church! With Paul, they have been offered upon the sacrifice and service of faith, and they must joy and rejoice with all other members of this same sacrificial company. They have all come into Christ out of the world.

This calls to mind another precious thought, as given in 1 Cora 6:20,—"Ye are bought with a price." Yes, even the precious blood of Christ. We do not belong to another, therefore, it would be absolutely false on our part to give our service to anything opposed to the spirit of Christ. If we are bought with a price, such a price, we cannot give ourselves to any form of warfare. The whole life must be devoted to Christ, fully and completely. We must not be disobedient to the vision that God has given us in respect of these things. In other words, we must "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14.)

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Justice, the Foundation of God's Throne.

THE decision of the Victorian Government to support fully the law of the land with respect to the crime of murder, and the carrying Out of this decision recently with the execution of one woman and two men convicted of the murder of an elderly man, has raised the question in some minds as to whether it is right to take the life of another person under any circumstance.

Those who object to the execution of any human being, even after full and fair trial and conviction on the clearest of evidence, are usually of the opinion that such a person at death is consigned to eternal torture; but when the plan of God for the salvation of the human race is really understood, a plan in which every human being who has not sinned against full light will have a full opportunity to gain everlasting life, in due time, then this subject takes on quite a different outlook.

The Apostle Paul in Acts 24:15 declared, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." The "unjust" in this text would include those who have even committed premeditated murder. If these are to receive lasting benefit from the resurrection in the age to come, they will be required to repent fully of the personal guilt which contributed to the terrible act of murder. The fact that some have been executed, after having been found guilty by courts as correct as present imperfections allow, may have a beneficial effect upon the characters of such in the resurrection day, possibly assisting them to the full and complete repentance which will be absolutely necessary before anyone could progress on to everlasting life in the Kingdom of Christ.

There are others, again, who may feel that as we are now living in the day of grace, since our Lord's sacrifice has been provided for the salvation of mankind, that leniency should be extended to those who commit even premeditated murder.

It should be realised, however, that the sacrifice of Christ does not provide pardon for wilful sin, either in this age, or in the age to come. In this connection, a Scripture, which is sometimes used to support the idea of pardon for sins without the necessity for repentance, is found to be omitted in the original manuscripts; hence, it is not a part of the inspired Bible. This passage is in Luke 23:34, being the words of Jesus when He was on the cross. It reads: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." We cannot think that Jesus would ask the Father to violate the principle of justice, the very foundation of His throne, inasmuch as Jesus had come to earth to pay the sacrifice for sin, so that the Father "might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:24,26.) Repentance and conversion are essential for any forgiveness which the Father may extend to any of the human family. (Acts 3:19, etc.) There fore, the disposition which in this life would commit premeditated murder, which is to a large degree, wilful, if not corrected and punished, may lead to wilful transgression in the resurrection day, when the punishment then would be second death, from which there will be no resurrection. (Acts 3:23.) It would seem, therefore, that no injustice is done to those who do commit premeditated murder should. they be executed in this life; rather, the punishment inflicted may help to impress the seriousness of the crime upon the individuals, and thus assist in their full repentance and conversion under the judgments of the age to come.

The laws which God gave to Israel, through Moses, very clearly uphold the principle of God's justice, while also providing mercy under appropriate circumstances, and are a good guide for us today, as well as pointing forward to the requirements for all mankind in the age to come. A short article is presented below, being written many years ago on the subject of Israel's cities of refuge, and should prove helpful on the matter before us. It is as follows:

"The cities of refuge were appointed in Israel for the protection against summary punishment of any one who might accidentally take human life, but not for any wilful murderer. There were six of these cities in central localities, to any one of which the man-slayer might flee and there find protection until his case could be legally tried. These cities did not shelter the wilful murderer; but the authorities, after a fair trial, delivered such up to the just penalty of their crime, which was death.—Deut. 19:11-13; Num. 35:30-34.

"If the killing proved to be accidental the man-slayer must still remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest then in office. This restraint upon his liberty was the penalty for his carelessness, and thus an additional protection to human life.

"This feature of the typical Mosaic law strongly foreshadowed the refuge which the sinner may find in Christ. He is our shield and hiding-place from the penalty of all sin, save that which is wilful. He is no shelter for obstinate, unrepentant sinners; ,but for every one bom in sin and shapen in iniquity --and thus sinners by birth, yet earnestly desirous of escaping from sin and its just consequences, and seeking refuge in Him by faith—there is protection. We are all under sentence of death; justice is the avenger and only those in Christ are shielded.

“But, mark you, the sinner must continue to abide in this city of refuge as long as the high priest liveth—that is, as long’ as Christ continues in the priestly office, which will be until He is able to present all the redeemed, who abide in Him, faultless before the throne of God, at the end of His Millennial reign as King and Priest. Then, being made actually perfect by the great Redeemer-Physician, they will be able to stand, not in the imputed or reckoned righteousness of another, but in their own glorious perfection, yet never forgetful of the great atoning sacrifice, and the patient work of restitution which made possible such a glorious consummation.

“Like the cities of refuge, Christ is easy of access to all who diligently seek Him, and who have no will in opposition to righteousness, nor to any of His measures of just and righteous, discipline.”

The Privilege of Prayer

Convention Address.

GOD speaks to us through Nature and His Word, through His providences and by the influence of His spirit, but we need also to pour out our hearts to Him in order to have spiritual life and energy. Our minds may be drawn towards Him, meditating upon His works and His blessings. This is not in the fullest sense communing with Him. In order to commune with God we must have something to say to Him about our love. Prayer is opening the heart to Him as to a friend, in order to enable us to receive His assistance. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but takes us up to Him.

When Jesus was on earth He taught His disciples to pray. He directed them to put their needs before God. The assurance was that their petitions should be heard, and that is an assurance also for us. Jesus Himself was often engaged in prayer. Our Saviour identified Himself with our needs and weaknesses in that He sought from His Father fresh supplies of strength, that He might overcome the many trials that beset Him. He is our example in all things, having taken upon Himself our infirmities, and being in all points tempted like as we are.

Jesus found prayer a necessity and privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father; and if the Son of God felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinners feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer. It is our privilege to come to Him in prayer and partake of this blessing. The wonder is that we pray so little. God is able and willing to hear the sincere prayers of His humble children. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray when prayer is the key to the storehouse of His power? Without it we are in danger of growing careless and straying from the right path. The Adversary strives to obstruct the way to the Mercy Seat.

There are certain conditions upon which God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him. In Isa. 44:3 we read, “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.” Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness may be sure they will be filled. The heart must be open to the spirit’s influence, or God’s blessing cannot be received. God, of course, is a loving Father, and knows our needs even before we ask Him, but He has to be sought after to do things for us. “Ask and it shall be given you.” “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

If we are walking in any known sin the Lord will not hear us, but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always acceptable. We may believe God will answer our petitions; but our own merits will never commend us to the favour of God, it is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us. But we have our part to do in the conditions of acceptance.

Another essential is faith—“Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. 11:6.) Jesus also said to his disciples, “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:24.) When we do not receive the very things we ask for at the time we ask, we are still to believe the Lord hears us. In our fallen, weak state we may sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing, and our Father gives us what would be eventually for our good, and the things we would desire if we could see all things as He does. The time of answering will surely come, and we will receive the blessing we need most. He will not withhold anything from them that walk uprightly and rely on His sure promises.

We can pray to God at all times. There is nothing to prevent us lifting up our hearts in prayer as we go about our daily duties. Although our surroundings may be tainted and corrupted, we need not be influenced by them. We can lift up our soul to God through prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere.

We need to have a clear view of Jesus and a clear understanding of the value of eternal things. We may keep so near to

God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him naturally, and we will place all our joys and wants and sorrows and griefs before Him. We cannot weary or overburden Him. Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, it shall be given unto you." To pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of His name at the beginning and the ending of a prayer; it is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and do His works. God does not mean that any of us should become hermits and retire from the world in order to devote ourselves to acts of worship. If prayer is not accompanied by works we will soon cease to pray, or our prayers will become a mere formality. If we would but think of God as often as we have evidence of His care for us, we would keep Him ever in our thoughts, and would delight to talk of Him and praise Him.

We talk of temporal things because we have an interest in them. We talk of our friends because we love them; our joys and sorrows are bound up with them. Yet, we have a much greater reason to love God than to love our earthly friends, and it should be the most natural thing to make Him first in all our thoughts, to talk of His goodness and tell of His power. God's wonderfully rich gifts are to remind us of Him and to bind us with love and gratitude to our Heavenly Father.

Our devotional exercises should not consist wholly of asking and receiving. Let us not be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive. We are constantly receiving God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us. Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise; it should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to help in His work however small our task. He is our best Friend and when we worship Him, he expects to be with us to bless and comfort, filling our hearts with love and joy. The Lord wants us to find comfort in worship, and pleasure in His work. He wants us to worship Him with precious thoughts of His care and love, that we may be encouraged in all the employments of daily life, and have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things. We must come to the cross of Christ; "Him crucified" should be the centre of our thoughts and conversation. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realise His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the One who was crucified for us.

In Psa. 31 we read how David asked God to help him, and praised Him for His great goodness—"In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in thy righteousness. Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily; be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. . . . O love the Lord, all ye his saints; for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

Sydney Meetings.

The friends in Sydney give notification of a new address for Sunday meetings (3 p.m., and 5.15 p.m.) at Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield. Intending visitors should join No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (on left side of station coming from Sydney), and ask to be set down at Schaffer's Upholstery.

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 19/- post paid.

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Pilgrim Way Ended.

Word has been received from our Brother Nicholson of Perth, W. Aust., respecting the passing of his sister, Sister Clipsham, of England. There is always a measure of sadness with the passing of those dear members who have gladly walked in the steps of the Master, but we rejoice also in the victory being gained by the faithful overcomers, by the Lord's grace. Sincere sympathy is extended to all members of the family circle, so many of whom, it is a joy to realise, are rejoicing in the truth, and thus able to praise the Lord for all His goodness. Our Brother Nicholson's message is as follows:

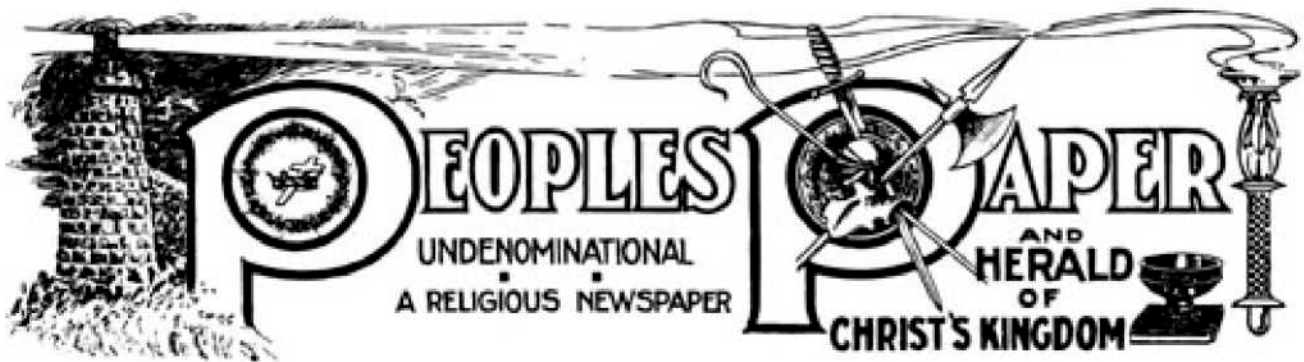
"I have just received a wire from London telling me that my good sister (Mrs. M. E. B. Clipsham) has reached the end of her earthly journey. As you know, she has always been so faithful and earnest in the service of present truth, and not only her loved ones of the earthly family will miss her kind sympathy and help in so many ways, but there are many others who will miss her, who are associated in present truth.

"I think it is 53 or 54 years since she came into the clearer knowledge of the Bible and the Divine purpose, not only to select the Church as the Bride of Christ, but also through Christ—Head and Body—to save all the willing and obedient of mankind during the next dispensation. •

"To me she has been a wonderful sister and I can thank God at every remembrance of her. Her two sons and daughter were so trained and instructed in the way of the Lord, that they in turn have been a blessing and comfort to her, and they and everyone else who knew her appreciated her gentle, kind and wise ways.

"It is very wonderful to think that she may be one of whom it is written, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth"—i.e., since we are living in the days of the Son of Man, the second presence of Christ, only recognised by those represented as the "five wise" virgins. So, as I Thes. 4:13-18 tells us, those who remain (on earth) after the sleeping saints have been raised—"the dead in Christ rise first"—have no need to sleep in death, when they finish the earthly way, but are to be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," from mortality to immortality, from earthly to heavenly surroundings—"caught away to be with the Lord in the heavens."

"So, indeed, we sorrow not as do others who have no hope, yet we still feel the breaking of such tender ties, while we thank the God of all comfort for the comfort wherewith He has comforted us, through the marvellous light of the Gospel of Grace that has shined so clearly in these last days of the Gospel Age."



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Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

Why We Observe the Lord's Supper Annually.

THE Lord's Supper, or what is known amongst the Lord's people as the Memorial of Christ's death, is one of the most sacred services left by our Lord for the encouragement and blessing of His true people.

When we meditate upon the occasion when our Lord instituted this Memorial of His death, we find that He explained it to the eleven faithful apostles little more than twelve hours previous to His death. Indeed, it was the same Jewish day "in which He was betrayed;" in which He was brought before the Jewish high priest and Sanhedrin, before Pilate and Herod, and Pilate again; the same day in which "He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself" to the full, on the cruel cross, that He left this sacred Memorial for His apostles, and for all who should believe on Him through their word, right down to our own day, now at the close of the Gospel Age.

In view of the sacredness of this institution, it is not surprising that the Adversary has made an assault upon the true presentation of this Memorial of Christ's death as originally given by our Lord, and especially confirmed by the Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the holy spirit. Thus, we find that after the apostles and their immediate successors fell asleep in death, and Roman Catholicism was becoming influential, the claim was made by this false system that while Christ's death secured a cancellation of past guilt, it could not offset personal transgressions after the believer had come into relationship with Christ.

On the basis of this error was built the doctrine of the Mass, which is considered a fresh sacrifice of Christ for the particular sins of the individual for whom the mass is offered, or sacrificed; the fresh sacrifice of Christ being made to appear reasonable by the claim that the officiating priest had the power to turn the bread and wine into the actual body and actual Mood of Christ; and then, by breaking the wafer, to break or sacrifice the Lord afresh for the sins of the individual for whom the Mass is performed. This teaching and practice was, and is, truly an abomination unto God, and was prophesied by Daniel as "the abomination which maketh desolate." (See Dan. 11:31; 12:11.) Our Lord's words in Matt. 24:15 also refer to this same "abomination of desolation," which would "stand in the holy place;" that is, would stand in the place of Christ's sacrifice which alone is efficacious for all sin.

The false doctrine of the Mass did make desolate, as its observance practically took the place of the annual celebrations of the Lord's Memorial Supper, for the Masses were said at frequent intervals, with a view to cleansing the people repeatedly from sin. As soon as the Reformers were granted additional light respecting the testimony of God's Word at the time of the Great Reformation, and saw the error of the Mass, they attempted to come back to the original simplicity • of the first institution, and disowned the Mass as being an improper celebration of the Lord's Memorial Supper.

However, not seeing the close relationship between the type of the Passover and the antitype of our Lord's death, and the Supper as a Memorial of the antitype, they did not grasp the thought of keeping the observance on its annual recurrence. Hence, we find that " amongst Protestants some celebrate monthly, others every three months, and some every four months,' while others again celebrate weekly. Reference will be made 'later in this article to the weekly observances, or the "breaking of bread," but just now the point of special note is, that from the numerous celebrations by the Roman Catholic church the daughter' systems of Christendom have taken their guide in keeping the Lord's Supper often dining each twelve months, just as other erroneous doctrines, such as hell-fire, trinity, etc., have also been incorporated -into the Protestant churches from the Mother church, the Papacy, the Mother of Harlots.

That our Lord's sacrifice of Himself was based on the Jewish Passover, our Lord being the antitype of the Passover lamb, is very evident from the Scriptures, especially the records given in the Gospels. The wording of Matt. 26 from verse 17 is convincing—"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the pass-over?" Then in verse 26 we read—"And as they were eating." Yes, as they were eating the Jewish Passover Supper our Lord followed with the Memorial of His death.

The record of the institution of the Jewish Passover is found in Exod. 12, and is well known to the Lord's people. Verses 1 to 17 present the details of this memorable event, when Israel was delivered from Egypt as the result of the slaying of the Passover lamb, this being a picture of the great deliverance of mankind from bondage to sin and death by the sacrifice of Christ, our Passover Lamb. To impress significance of this great deliverance from Egypt the Lord instructed the Israelites to keep the Passover annually, as shown in Exod. 12:24-27—"And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. . . And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses." So, down through the years of the Jewish Age, the Israelites were instructed to keep the Passover annually, on its correct date, even to the time when Jesus came into the world as the antitypical Passover Lamb.

How clearly John the Baptist discerned our Lord as the real "Lamb of God," as shown in the account given in John 1:29-37—"John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Yes, and our Lord would keep each of the yearly Jewish Passovers, after He began His ministry, with great contemplation we may be sure; first, at six months after His ministry began with His baptism in Jordan, then at 1 years, at 2 years, and finally at 3-1 years, when He became the real Passover Lamb. How significant are the words of Jesus at the time of the celebration of this last Passover of His earthly life, as given by Luke 22:14, 15—"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover (this last Jewish passover acknowledged by God) with you before I suffer." Yes, "With desire" our Lord would now enter upon the last ceremony of the Law dispensation, instituting the Memorial of His death to take the place of the annual Jewish ceremony, and fulfilling the type of the Passover lamb a matter of hours only from that very evening, with His sacrifice on the cross.

Leaving the details respecting the emblems of the bread and wine at present, attention is directed to the Lord's words in verse 19 (latter part) of Luke 22. After giving the emblems to His disciples, He said—"This do in remembrance of me." How clear are His words; that is, No longer keep the yearly Passover in remembrance of deliverance from Egypt, but "This do," keep this observance as a Memorial of My sacrifice. And what a wonderful help to the Lord's true people this Memorial has been, and how appropriate that it be observed on the anniversary of Christ's death—"This do in remembrance of me," —as a Memorial.

Now, what about the numerous celebrations throughout each year by various denominations? As previously stated, some hold the Lord's Supper monthly, others every three months, etc., to suit their own convenience, without any Scriptural support. But some church assemblies observe the Lord's Supper weekly, on the first day of the week, and claim that they have the support of Scripture for this in the references to the "breaking of bread." There are two passages in the Acts of the Apostles which refer to the "breakings of bread" which require examination, namely, Acts 2:42, 46, and Acts 20:7, 11. The verses in Acts 2 read, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship in breaking of bread, and in prayers." And verse 46—"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." It will be seen at once that there is no mention of "the cup" in this account, which is a clear indication that these "breakings of bread" were not observances of the Lord's Supper, as the symbol of the wine is always mentioned whenever the Memorial Supper is quoted in the Scriptures. In any event, our friends who contend for the weekly observance as being Scriptural have not been very alert, or they would see in verse 46 of this 2nd chapter of Acts, that the worship in the temple and breaking bread from house to house (or at home, margin) was "daily" and not weekly.

The passage in Acts 20:7 reads—"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." And verse 11, "When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed." While the first day of the week is mentioned here, it will be seen that no reference to "the cup" is made again, and in verse 11 we find that after midnight, when Paul had restored life to the young man, he again "broke bread" and ate, and talked till break of day. This at once proves that the disciples "broke bread" as they had fellowship together in talking over the truths of God's Word; in other words, they had a meal together, and partook of spiritual food at the same time.

An incident following our Lord's death and resurrection, but prior to His ascension to heaven agrees with the accounts

given in the Acts. Our Lord had appeared to two disciples on the way to Emmaus, and was invited to tarry with them at their journey's end, and then we read—"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished 'out of their sight.'" (Luke 24:30, 31.) Was this also another Memorial of the death of our Lord? Certainly not, yet it could be claimed as being the Lord's Supper with equal propriety as could the passages in the Acts of the Apostles. The two disciples at Emmaus returned to Jerusalem and found the other disciples equally as jubilant in relating that Jesus was risen from the dead, and their record was—"They told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread." (Luke 24:35.) From this account it is 'evident that this act of "breaking bread" by our Lord had been a regular custom of His with the 'disciples long before the institution of the Memorial 'of His death, inasmuch as this act revealed that this—stranger" was really their risen Lord.

How clear it is, then, that the "breakings of bread" by the disciples in the early part of the Gospel Age were not commemorations of the Lord's death, but, on the contrary were love-feasts, commemorative of His resurrection, and of the number of breakings of bread which they enjoyed with Him on several first-days during the forty days before His ascension. The remembrance of these breakings of bread, in which their eyes were opened and they knew Him, probably led them to meet on each first day of the week thereafter, and not improperly, led them to have together a social meal, a breaking of bread. As already mentioned, the cup is never referred to in connection with these "breakings of bread," while every time the Lord's Memorial Supper is mentioned it is as fully important as the bread.

Now, the emblems which our Lord used for His Memorial are most significant. The unleavened "bread pictured our Lord's sinless body, and so in giving the disciples this emblem, He could say—"Take, eat; this is my body," (Matt. 26:26)—this represents my body; eat, appropriate it for your justification. (See John 6:48-51.)

Likewise the wine, the fruit of the vine, pictured the blood of Christ, and was of equal importance as the bread in this institution of our Lord's Memorial. In Luke 22:17 we read—"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said,

Take this, and divide it among yourselves." In the Greek there are three meanings to this word "cup." First, a drinking vessel; secondly, the contents thereof; and thirdly, a lot or fate. It is very necessary that we apply the correct meaning to any passage of Scripture in which this Greek word is found; and there can be no doubt that the Lord referred only to the contents of the vessel, when He said—"Take this, and divide it among yourselves." It would, of course, have been impossible for His disciples to divide the vessel, the literal cup. Likewise in Matt. 26:27 it is recorded—"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it." How clear it is that our Lord referred only to the wine, the contents of the cup, by the words—"Drink ye all of it."

Our Lord, then, gave two symbols, and two symbols only for His Memorial; the vessel holding the bread, or the vessel holding the wine, cannot be rightly taken as extra symbols. In each symbol,—appropriation of the bread, representing our Lord's body, and appropriation of the wine, representing our Lord's blood,—we have a picture of justification by faith. Then, on the basis of that justification through faith in Christ's sacrifice, the opportunity and necessity to sacrifice with Christ is also shown in our Memorial observance by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 10:16, which reads—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (common participation) of the body of Christ?" This shows participation with Christ in His death as the secondary or deeper meaning of our Lord's Memorial, revealing that the consecrated followers of Christ are willing and do covenant to be broken with their Lord, and to have their lives poured out in sacrifice in the steps of their Master.

Then, in verse 17 of 1 Cor. 10, the Apostle adds—"For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." Here we see that the oneness of Christ and His true people is not pictured by the vessel which holds the bread, but by the many grains of corn which lose their own identity to become one loaf, which, when fully sacrificed, will ultimately provide life for the world at large. Just so, the oneness of the sacrifice of Christ and His Church is not shown by the vessel which holds the wine, but by the many grapes, which, by losing their individual identity, produce the wine. Thus commingling in sacrifice, this wine, when fully poured out, will also provide life-giving properties for all mankind in the age to come. Hence, we read—"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2.)

The Apostle Paul gives another wonderfully inspired record of our Lord's Memorial in 1 Cor. 11, from verse 23. After describing the remembrance in some detail, he declares in verse 26—"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." It would surely not be appropriate to "show the Lord's death" on the first day of the week, His resurrection day. No, indeed! Neither did the Apostle imply that the Memorial should be kept often, when he said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup." Rather, as often as the anniversary of Christ's death comes round, the Lord's people, by keeping His Memorial in spirit and truth, truly "show the Lord's death till he come,"—not only until our Lord's presence in this harvest or end of this Gospel Age, but until during the days of the

Son of Man one by one His faithful ones have been gathered to Him, beyond the “Veil,” there to participate to a still fuller degree, and, as our Lord declared, partake of it “anew in the Kingdom.”

In view of the solemnity and sacredness of the Lord’s Memorial Supper, we cannot wonder that Paul has left on record the great necessity for all who would participate in this celebration, to do so with clean hands and a pure heart. The words of the Apostle come down to us at the end of the age again—”For even Christ our Passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1 Cor. 5:7, 8.) Another anniversary of Christ’s death is at hand, another privilege to “show the Lord’s death” is with us. By the Lord’s grace, let all His dear people, cleansed daily by His blood and spirit, observe this coming Remembrance of Christ in solemn gratitude, yet in joyful anticipation of the complete Homegathering of all the “firstborns” who, having participated gladly in sacrifice with Christ, will participate triumphantly with Him in the glorious work of His Kingdom of blessing for all humanity.

Passover Memorial, 1951.

According to the Jewish Calendar the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 19th April, after sundown. It will be appropriate, therefore, to keep the Lord’s Supper on this date, in harmony with our Lord’s request to “Do this in remembrance of Me.”

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the end of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Services in remembrance of Christ our Passover will be held in the various States as stated below, to which believers in the ransom sacrifice of Christ will be welcome.

Melbourne.—Thursday, 19th April, at 8 p.m., at Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne. (For further information, write, or phone Hawthorn 6251.)

Adelaide.—Wednesday, 18th April, at 7.45 p.m., at the Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Thursday, 19th April, at 7 p.m. (sharp), at 87 “The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave

Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right side of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the Station.)

Perth.—Thursday, 19th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Women’s Service Guild Rooms, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court, Perth.

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The Last Passover of Christ.

LET us review the events of that tragic day when our Passover Lamb was slain. It was on a Thursday evening in the upper chamber that the thirteen gathered to celebrate their Passover, the last one for the Lord. The same evening Judas went out to clinch his evil bargain with the clergy of his day. The betrayer had left the little faithful company, and, as His last legacy, the Master gave them the most spiritual message of the Gospels, the 13th to 17th chapters of John. After He sang with His dear ones a hymn, and conversed with them, He knowing and they ignorant of the tragedy just before them, He led them to Gethsemane.

It was on that Thursday evening that Judas, with an expression of intimacy, fellowship and love, betrayed the Son of God into the hands of the crucifiers. That night the Light of the World was before the hostile forces of a benighted ecclesiasticism bound in unholy alliance with the secular powers. Secularism saw His innocence, but ecclesiasticism, blinded by envy and hatred, overcame the honorable scruples of the earthly rulers, and secured on a false and trumped up charge of treason, unjust conviction of the Son of Man. Forsaken and shunned by those who “had trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel” (Luke 24:21), the Messiah faithfully kept the sacrifice on the altar, through ridicule and abuse of clergy, soldiers and public servants, through the way of tears, and up the difficult path to Calvary and finished the offering of that body which God had prepared for Him.

Judas, who had not looked for such a dreadful outcome of his evil scheme, went and ended his iniquitous course by self-destruction. By nine o’clock Friday morning the Beloved was raised up, as the brazen or copper serpent (perfect humanity), as though made sin, even for those of the great worldly system of government, “which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified” (Rev. 11:8), and which continues to this day, being now called Christendom, where His feet members soon shall at last fill up completely the sufferings of Christ that are left behind.

Under the heat of a semi-tropic sun, the great Lover of mankind, stripped by unholy hands to open view, was the object of revilings by the Hebrew clergy and laity, a spectacle and a wondrous lesson of divine love for men and for angels. There hung the Saviour of humanity, forsaken by all save those who loved Him most—Peter, the strong, and John whom He loved, and the women who would, if they might, have died in His stead. And “sitting down about Him, the unbelievers watched Him there.”

And from noon, “the sixth hour” of that dreadful day, there was both a literal darkness and an obliteration of light and of love over all the land, over all in the condition termed “Sodom and Egypt,” for while they were covering themselves with the greatest weight of guilt ever known, filling up the chalice of their iniquity until it overran, they were in the darkness of night as to the real quality of their acts.

It was afternoon of Friday, Passover day, that the holy Sufferer said, “I thirst”—and they gave Him to drink, not cold, refreshing water, but that which while somewhat stupefying was calculated to enhance the agonies of thirst in the most brutal and cruel death known to wicked and degenerate men.

By this act the prince of this world sealed his death sentence, for “by death the mighty one was beginning to destroy him that bath the power of death, that is to say, the devil.” And by their death the feet members of Christ will set in motion the forces ‘which will utterly destroy them that destroy the earth — Great Babylon, the system of organized and established iniquity.

But pain of body was not sufficient for the fiery trial of Him who was to be the first to suffer that He might reign with God. He must be finally and fully made a sin offering, and experience to the full the wages of sin, that He might save to the uttermost. And as in the extremity of mortal pain and weakness the realization came upon Him that He was, as it were and as it seemed to Him, utterly cast off by His Father, with the final despairing cry, “My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?” in pain of spirit that was too much to bear, the great heart broke, and there came forth His last exclamation, “It is finished!” like unto the last loud cry of the Church in the flesh—“It is done.” (Rev. 16:17). The Wonderful One bowed His majestic head and gave up the life He had covenanted to lay down, until the third day there should come the springing forth of the first-fruits of the dead.

This is the central event of all history which we celebrate on the approaching Passover—the death of the Saviour of the world. We suggest that each participant read beforehand with reverence and prayer the Bible chapters on the

Passover—the first Passover in Exodus 11 to 13; the story of the death of the antitypical Lamb in Matt. 26 and 27, Mark 14 and 15, Luke 22 and 23, John 12 to 19, and such other passages as 1 Cor. 10:16-21, 11:20-34, etc., and the comments in “The New Creation,” Chapter 11, on “The Passover of the New Creation.”

The Indwelling of Humility.

(Phil. 2:3. Convention Address.)

LOWLINESS of mind, humility, is a mental quality which enables its possessor to look up with appreciation, not only to God, but also to earthly beings, realising their good qualities. The Apostle Paul said that this lowliness of mind should be in all of God's people, and this fact proves it to be a quality that demands careful cultivation.

Not all of the Lord's people are lowly-minded. Some of them think more highly of themselves than they ought; some of them may be proud of having the truth or of their ability to serve the truth. Any such pride is very objectionable in the sight of the Lord, and indicates that its possessor has a very small mind; for, with a proper estimate of matters, the best of us can see that we have nothing of which to be proud, nothing of which to boast. If we have received anything of the Lord we should boast of our receipts, instead of glorying in something as if we had attained it of ourselves.

So the Lord's people should spend earnest effort to stimulate and encourage humility. Some have this quality naturally, but the larger number have to contend against the reverse tendency; that is, self-esteem, self-exaltation, pride—a feeling that they are superior to others.

It is well that we consider the Apostle Paul's injunction. "In humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves." Those who have come into Christ should make progress, and therefore, should feel that they are better than they were previously. Those who have come into Christ know that they are not lower than all others. Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the Lord's people should rate themselves as inferior to other men. In his own case he felt that he was the chief of sinners, because he had been an open opposer of the truth. Jesus had said that whosoever should injure the least of one of His disciples would transgress seriously. We cannot say, therefore, that we are the chief of sinners, either from the standpoint of committing crime or from that of persecuting the church. We are not to bear false witness against ourselves.

In what way, then, are we to understand the Apostle's injunction? In this way: We are to realise that no two of the Lord's people are alike. If we have the right focus on the matter, we should think of our talents in a humble manner.

We should think, I have something of this quality or that talent or grace, therefore, I have much responsibility to the Lord. I wonder if I am using this talent as faithfully as I should; this talent which I think is greater than my neighbor's or my brother's. Though they may have less than I, they may be using all that they have with more purpose to succeed than I am using what I have. If this be so, then they are better than I am in this respect.

As we look around in the Lord's family, we are bound to see the weaknesses and frailties of its various members.

We are not to allow our thoughts to dwell too much upon their undesirable qualities, however, but are to remember all their good qualities, especially their loyalty of heart. With ourselves, personally, it is always a recommendation in any one that God has called and accepted him. Whenever we see one who has come into the truth, we say to ourselves, "Well, no matter what he may be according to the flesh, God saw in his heart something good, noble and true; and since God is dealing with him as a son, therefore, he is to be esteemed as a brother." Although we might not be able to esteem that man highly according to his natural qualities, yet we would do him good as we had the opportunity.

He might not be one whom we would select as a companion, yet God may esteem that brother more highly than He esteems us. Realising this, we would endeavour to keep very humble and to learn whatever helpful lessons we might be able to get from that brother. In all persons there are certain qualities that may be esteemed and appreciated. We do not know whether in the Lord's sight they may not be more noble, more self-sacrificing, more lowly in mind than ourselves, but our duty is plain. We are not able to read the heart, and hence we are to think kindly and generously of all those whom God has brought into His family. "Love beareth all things, and endureth all things." (1 Cor. 13:7.) "As we have opportunity, therefore, let us do good unto all men, especially unto the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10.)

The Apostles Peter and Paul also emphasized the necessity on the part of the Lord's people that they be clothed with humility. They tell us that this grace is indispensable to those who would abide in God's favor, for He resists the proud, while He continually shows favor to those who are of humble spirit. Thus, He encourages humility and discourages pride. (1 Pet. 5:5; James 4:6.) We can see a reason for this course. The Almighty sees that we have nothing whatever of which to be proud or to boast. Whatever we have has been of the Lord's providence, or favoring circumstances.

The Scriptures give some marked instances of the evil results of pride. Lucifer, one of the very highest of spirit beings, became proud and vain in his imagination, and by encouraging these evil qualities he lost his exalted position, having become Satan, the Adversary of God. If mother Eve had possessed the proper humility she would have said, when

tempted by the serpent, "I will not listen to this suggestion to disobey my Creator; He knows what is for my highest good, and I therefore submit myself to Him who knows all things." There is the proverb that says, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

In contrast we have a beautiful illustration of the opposite spirit, humility, in the case of the Logos. We are shown how He humbled Himself, and how God has highly exalted Him to the very position which Satan coveted. So, if we are fully obedient to the Lord, the results with us will be as with the Lord Jesus, a great blessing, a high exaltation. After presenting this argument the Apostle Peter says in I Pet. 5:6, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

Since we find that God resists the proud and that humility is one of the basic principles of a properly crystallized character, we should more and more seek to develop this grace and attain to the attitude in which God can give us the greatest blessing. To humble ourselves does not necessarily mean to think that we have no talent, no power, no ability. Such an attitude would be foolishness. But we should think soberly of ourselves; we should think of all our powers as coming from God. So, if we find that we have some blessings more than our neighbor, or our brother or sister, let us therefore be thankful, but let us not for a moment think that we have anything to make us proud. It is a gift; we must appreciate this gift, but we must not be puffed up over its possession; the fact that we have received the gift indicates that we lacked it and needed it.

The one who has naturally a proud heart, but who brings himself to the point of submission, manifests humility.

If on the other hand, one who by nature has too low an estimate of himself submits himself to God, the Father will show him the proper attitude of mind. The Apostle speaks of those who receive the holy spirit as having the "spirit of a sound mind." In proportion as we seek to become acquainted with God and to submit ourselves to His will, in that same proportion we become balanced in mind. He who receives the mind of Christ, the mind of God, the holy mind, is instructed more thoroughly by the Word. Thus we are getting the balance of a sound mind, the spirit of a sound mind. Our reasoning faculties become more developed as we grow in grace and knowledge of the truth. Thus we see men with the knowledge of the truth are looked upon by the world today as always appearing cool, calm and collected, no matter how trying the circumstances. They always seem to be able to take control and in no time all will end well for everyone concerned.

No one can come to the Father except through full consecration; we must admit that we need the Master and that without Him we can do nothing. So we take this position—I am nothing but a sinner; I know that I am imperfect, that I have nothing which I have not received; God provides everything; whatever I have is a gift from Him. Knowing all this I gratefully accept these things, and humble myself: under His mighty hand.

The worldly say, No, I will not submit myself; if I need any punishment, I will take what is coming' to me. This is the spirit of the worldly heart that has not yet learned its need and impotence. But the spirit of consecrated hearts is that of submission to the will of the Lord. They recognise that their only source of help is the Almighty God, through the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour. We might have a blessing in the times of restitution, but nobody can come to God now except through the Advocate. The terms of discipleship are that we lay down all earthly rights and interests. Everything must be submitted before the Father will accept us as disciples of Christ at all, before He will beget us of the holy spirit, before we can become a part of the anointed Body of Christ. If we are to make any progress, we must say from the heart, "Thy will, not mine, be done." We know that God's will is best, whether we understand that will or not. A person with a large self-esteem might, as a natural man, think his own will better, but when he comes to see the truth, he will say, "I have made mistakes before, but now I will do the Lord's will, regardless of what my judgment may be." Such a change would be evidence of real humility, no matter how proud spirited one might be by nature. The further he progressed in the light, and saw more clearly wherein he had made mistakes, his humility would increase. So, we are to submit ourselves, humble ourselves, have no will of our own, merely seek the Lord's will.

There is such a thing as a false submission which might deceive even the person himself. One might talk a great deal about the submission to the will of God, and yet be only nominally submitting, while he is really doing his own will. Therefore, we are to watch that we are carrying out the profession of submission, and that in our daily course of life we are asking, "Is this the course which the Lord wishes me to pursue? Is this the will of God?" The most submissive will receive the greatest blessing. God will test our submission and our humility.

We cannot suppose that our Lord Jesus, who was Perfect, did not know that He had perfect powers. But no matter what His own ideas were, He submitted Himself to the Father, and said, "Not my will, but thine be done."

A man who had no tastes or preferences would be a non-existent being. We may know what we would will for ourselves, and yet, knowing this, we are to say to ourselves, "You cannot have your own way about this, you are to

seek to know what is the Lord's will concerning you in this matter, and to carry it out, as far as in you lies."

Submission is a test of loyalty. Sometimes the Lord's hand is very heavy; it was so in the case of our Lord Jesus—heavy and pressed down. But when Jesus felt the Father's hand pressing down, He meekly bowed Himself beneath the weight in humble acquiescence to the will of the One whose purpose He had to carry out. But the hand did not crush Him, although it seemed to do so. Instead of being crushed, it was the hand of love, testing His obedience to the full. When His obedience was fully tested, the same hand lifted Him and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come. Thus it will be with us if we are faithful. God will exalt us in due time. But He cannot exalt any who are not humble.

Submission indicates faith. We would not submit ourselves unless we had absolute confidence in God. Not faith only, but loyalty also is necessary. Therefore, the Father tests us in these two qualities, for without these we would be quite unfit for the kingdom; and so the various tests of the present time are tests of faith and loyalty to God—of entire submission to His will. It is to those who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality that God has promised eternal life.

In our context the Apostle Paul urges that the church cultivate the mind of Christ. He says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The Apostles all had to pursue the course of humility and submission as the only proper path for the Master's footstep followers. Paul was endeavouring to impress that the mind of Christ was worthy of imitation and painstaking cultivation. As further evidence of the Master's great humility, the Apostle brings forcefully to their attention what Jesus was in His prehuman existence. As the Logos, He was in the form of God.

the spirit condition. Yet, He was not ambitious; He was not self-seeking. On the contrary He made Himself of no reputation, divested Himself of His former glory and honour, that He might do the will of the Father. His spirit was directly opposite to that of Satan's. The Logos thought not to usurp the Father's place, or to claim equality with Him, but manifested a very different disposition, an attitude of humility. Then, let this mind be in you, urges the Apostle—"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

Consider that God has called you with the same high calling, that you might attain to a place at the right hand of Christ, even as He attained to a place at the Father's right hand. Realising this, permit this mind of Christ to be in you. God is not seeking to force it upon us. Our Lord having taken this position of humility in order to be man's Redeemer, it was needful that He maintain that mind in order to work out the blessed fruitage of patience. Three and a half years were required for Jesus to complete His work, and it was not until after He reached the cross and could say, "It is finished," that He was set down with the Father in His throne. If we have become Jesus' disciples, if we have accepted the conditions of the high calling, if we have received this mind, then we are to let, or permit, this mind to work out in us the character likeness of our Saviour.

In Paul's letter to the Hebrews 12:1-3 he says, "Let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For con-skier him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719. pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 19/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Sydney Meetings.

The friends in Sydney give notification of a new address for Sunday meetings (3 p.m., and 5.15 p.m.) at Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield. Intending visitors should join No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (on left side of station coming from Sydney), and ask to be set down at Schaffer's Upholstery.

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—From time to time I wish to contribute towards the expenses of broadcasting. Listeners are indeed indebted to the Institute for the learned and Christian like presentation of God's Word each week.

Time and labour have been spent in this wonderful work, and as a result we are enlightened and cheered as we press on toward the Kingdom age. Thanking you for copies of "Peoples Paper" and broadcasts. Yours sincerely.

P.S.—Enclosed kindly accept

Dear Sirs—We have just listened to your instruction of "Though a Man Die," from the Bible, and wish to apply for a copy. The Bible teachings are so different to the religions, and we think you are doing a very good job, in fact the only job worth doing.

Would it be possible to have a copy of the "Sheep and the Goats" Talk also, as we want to get a friend to become interested and listen-in. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Almost invariably do I listen to your Sunday morning broadcasts. The discussion entitled "The Witch of Endor" has just gone off the air.

I find these discussions very interesting and enlightening, and more often than not they agree with opinions I hold myself. The reception here is, excellent.

I should like to 'avail myself of the opportunity you offer to obtain the three booklets - mentioned, including today's discussion, "Hope Beyond the Grave," and "Hell,

Death, Spiritism." There is someone I know interested in spiritism, attends seances, etc., and I'm sure those books would give her the right food for thought. Your work is a grand one, sowing and watering the seed for God to give the increase, will most certainly bear much fruit. God bless you both; very sincerely yours.

Dear Christian Friend—Will you please send me a copy of last Sunday's Dialogue together with the booklet you mentioned. It is a long time since I first listened to your broadcasts, and we have a lovely clear reception here. Praying God's continual blessing on all your labours for His Kingdom. Yours in Christian fellowship.

Frank and Ernest, E.4, Victoria, Dear Sirs—The subject of the "Witch of Endor" given last Sunday morning was soul stirring. Please send a copy to the following friends, and one to the above address. 1/- in stamps enclosed to help with the postage. God bless and prosper your good work.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would you please post me a copy of "Evolution and the Bible," and "Science and the Bible." Enclosed find 10/- towards your broadcasts, which I enjoy every Sunday morning from 2KY, and which are very distinct. I also enjoy reading your printed broadcasts which I receive regularly. Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

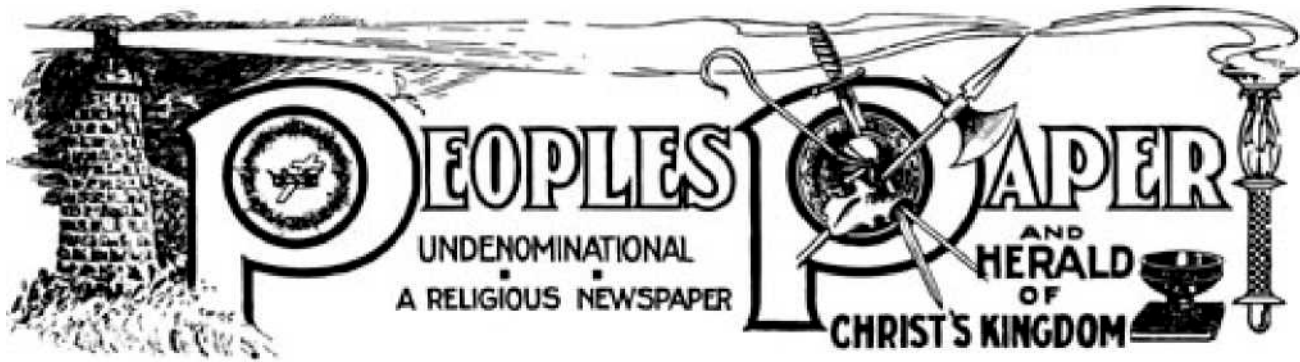
Another friend writes.—I don't know if you realise this, but you, Frank and Ernest, are real personal friends to us, and have our combined prayers and good wishes. Wishing you all God's richest blessing in your own lives, and also in your work in His service. We remain, your sincere friends.

Dear Sirs—Could you please forward me a copy of your two previous broadcasts—"Two Salvations" and "Devils and Demons." I would also like to know the tune to which "My Jesus I Love Thee" is sung at the commencement and conclusion of your programme. I have not been able to find the tune in any of the hymn books I have.

It is indeed a pleasure to be able to hear the Word of God discussed over the radio and I have found, your broadcasts very clear and helpful, and trust that the Lord will bless your efforts put forth in His name. Yours in Christ.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you please forward to above address a copy of this morning's Talk 'and also the booklet mentioned. Thanking you and looking forward to more interesting discussions by you. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Greetings in the precious-name of Jesus. I received a copy of "The Voice" and the title of the subject was "Refrain Thy Voice from Weeping and Thine Eyes from Tears," and was greatly blessed, by the message that was contained therein, as this agrees with, my own reasoning of God's wonderful Word. So I would be greatly obliged if you could send me about- six copies, so that I can pass them on to others who are not in agreement with this. Praying God's richest blessing upon your work. I remain, Yours faithfully.



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Paul's Command Concerning Ministers Should Women Teach in the Church?

"I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence."—1 Tim. 2:11, 12,

WHETHER or not we fully understand the divine purpose behind this inspired apostolic command limiting women's sphere of activity in the church, all Christians to whom the Word of God is law will abide by it. Furthermore, it serves well to put a consecrated follower of the Master on guard with respect to the teachings of any group which honours a Woman, or women, among their principal teachers or leaders.

That this command applies only to teaching in the church is certain, because concerning the general fellowship of Christians, Paul writes, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—Gal. 3:27, 28.

All who have been baptized into Christ by the "one spirit" of God, both male and female, are "anointed," or authorized by the spirit to be "ambassadors for Christ," and as such, to be ministers of reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5:18, 20.) There is no division of clergy and laity in the true church of Christ—not in the sense that such a division is recognised in the nominal church of to-day. Every Christian is a servant of God. All who are members of the body of The, Christ come under the divine authorization of Isaiah 61:1-3.

However, in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, and Ephesians chapter 4, the apostle makes it plain that there is a divine order in the church by which some are set apart for one kind of service and some for another. The Scriptures state that there are but twelve "apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:14.) This fact makes false the claims of apostolic succession by the Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches. It means that the edicts of their humanly constituted apostles are not binding upon Christians, and in many cases are not in harmony with the divine will.

There are also "pastors" and "elders" and "deacons" in the church. Not all can be pastors, not all can be elders, nor can all be deacons. The apostle reveals the special qualifications for these various servants in the church. But this does not mean that those who do not meet these qualifications are not a part of the church, or are being discriminated against in any way. It does mean that those who fail to recognise this divine order in the church, and who run counter to it, are not wholly obedient to the divine commands.

Paul's command forbidding the use of women teachers in the church is evidently intended to apply to those who preach or teach publicly at regular church gatherings. The same principle would apply to those who attempt to teach the Lord's people in a more general way by means of the printed page, as it is possible in these last days. All the "sisters" as well as the "brothers" should let their light shine for the blessing of others, but when coming together as a gathering of the church, let the "sisters" keep silent. Women should not be teachers of the church in any capacity. This is Paul's command! However, there were women servants as well as men. For instance, note in Romans 16:1 that Phebe is called a servant of the church and was undoubtedly the one entrusted to deliver the message to the Romans written for Paul by Tertius.—Rom. 16:22

And this arrangement follows the precedent established by God in all of His dealings with His typical people, Israel. For example, while the whole tribe of Levi was chosen as general servants of Israel in things pertaining to God, only males were selected for the priesthood.

During the period of the Judges God did raise up a woman “judge,” Deborah, whom He used in association with Barak, to bring deliverance to Israel from the oppressive hand of their enemies. She was well qualified for the purpose for which God used her, and was blessed by Him in the service she rendered, but she was not used to reveal, nor to prophesy concerning any part of God’s plan of salvation.

Jesus, as we know, counted among His dearest friends certain women who were devoted to Him and whom He loved, among them Martha and Mary, but He did not choose these to be His apostles. They were studious and devoted, especially Mary, who sat at the Master’s feet and learned of Him; but He chose male apostles, even though some of them were ignorant and unlearned.

Satan’s Use of Women.

Satan’s procedure has been quite different. Many of his most outstanding tools of deception have been women. The long list of these begins in the Garden of Eden, when he used Eve in connection with that greatest of all lies, “Ye shall not surely die.” (Gen. 3:4.) Many of the outstanding heathen deities are females, such as the Egyptian goddess, Isis; the Phenecian goddess, Ashtoreth; and the Ephesian and Roman goddess, Diana. The worship of the “Virgin Mary” by such a large percentage of those claiming the name of Christ is another example of Satan’s use of women to deceive the people.

The witches of the past--such as the one who deceived King Saul—and the spirit mediums of to-day, are other examples of Satan’s misuse of women to further his programme of deception and to turn the people’s minds away from the true God rather than toward Him. This does not mean that those who have been used by Satan have willingly played into his hands. In most cases they themselves have been deceived.

This is probably true of that noted woman teacher of the middle ages, Madam Guyon. She was honest and sincere perhaps, but a spirit medium and a practitioner of occultism, who never learned that the wages of sin is death, and who, on her deathbed, advised her pupils to continue praying to the Virgin Mary. Yet in spite of this, the writings of Madam Guyon still captivate the minds of many.

True, Satan has also used many male teachers to mislead the people, but the preference he so often displays for women agents of falsehood, and God’s consistent use of men as His special instructors of Israel and of the church, are good reasons why we should consider very seriously Paul’s command, “I suffer not a woman to teach” in the church.

Many of God’s arrangements for His people are for the purpose of impressing certain lessons which otherwise might to some extent be overlooked. Throughout the Scriptures God uses a woman to symbolize His church—the true church, which becomes the “bride” of Christ. Christ is the Head of His church, even as man was constituted head of woman. God’s arrangement, therefore, in which the teaching is done by men, serves to remind us all of the true Headship in the church. Thus, in every church service properly conducted by a male teacher, the Headship of Christ is honoured, and the hearts and minds of all the consecrated present are, by example, turned toward Christ in a much more definite way than would be the case if a woman was leading and teaching.

Let all, then, who would obey God’s commandments, as they reach us through the inspired writers of His Word, obey this one also. If, inadvertently, we find that we have been following the wrong method, let us make the correction. Or if we have been placing confidence in teachings which have reached us through the oral or written public ministry of a woman, let us realise that our confidence has been misplaced, and that there is grave danger that such teachings are in many of their main aspects contrary to the Word of God.

Paul writes that “All Scripture given by inspiration is profitable,” and that through the Scriptures the man of God is “thoroughly furnished” unto every good word and work. (2 Tim, 3:16. 17.) This rules out another form of unauthorized teaching in the church, namely, that based upon special visions which have been claimed by others besides the “apostles of the Lamb.” In some instances, outstanding women teachers have claimed to have had visions, and they probably have; but according to the Scriptures such could not have been given by God, nor authorized by Him. Such being the case, we may well doubt the value of “new light” or “great truths” which reach us in this manner.

Let us be true to God, by being true to His Word. May we endeavour more earnestly than ever to show ourselves approved unto God by “rightly dividing the word of truth.”-2 Tim. 2:15. (Reprinted from “The Everlasting Gospel.”)

Another matter closely associated with the above article, which is also worthy of attention by all who are seeking to please the Lord above all else, is the manner in which we co-operate with the chairmen and other members at our Bible studies. It would seem that it is possible to adopt the attitude of a teacher in the Church without any intention of so doing. Sometimes a sister of a study group may become so impressed with the importance of her thoughts on a particular subject, that she may seek to force them upon the gathering; such an attitude would be wrong also for a brother to adopt, but the point we make: is the fact that a sister may adopt a teaching attitude in the Church without realising it, and thus violate Paul's admonition on this subject. As a result, such a one could lose a place in the heavenly kingdom because of lack of humility and respect for the Lord's order in His Church on earth.

This does not mean, of course, that the sisters should refrain from taking part in the Bible studies. Quoting the Scriptures and seeking to harmonize various texts, and asking questions, etc., is not teaching in the Church. How helpful the gatherings of the Lord's people can be when each one co-operates in all humility, and observes that order which Paul commended in the Church at Colosse. (Col, 2:5.)

Even amongst the brethren in the Church the Apostle exhorts—"My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment." (James 3:1.) How important it is, then, that all should "study to show themselves approved unto God," and especially the brethren who may be "apt to teach" and have been selected as elders in the Church, so that error may not be communicated to others who are hungering and thirsting for truth. Even if some sister or sisters feel that they alone hold the truth on any subject, they are still to realise that they are not called on to teach in the Church, but should exercise faith in the Lord who is capable of supervising all sections of His Church, in accord with the instructions He has given us in His Word. The Apostle Peter added his advice to the sisters in the Church, in 1 Pet. 3, where he discourages the outward adorning, and states—"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price . . . Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (controller), whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well.

Notes on Convention.

Some Notes on the Adelaide Easter Convention have been prepared by a visiting friend, and copies are now ready. These are supplied free from this office to all applying for them. Also some copies of Notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention are on hand for disposal to friends desiring these.

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PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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Convention News.

THE Convention held at Adelaide during Easter was a precious season of spiritual refreshment and blessing from the Lord. True to His promise to bless even the “two or three gathered in His name,” we realised His overruling care and blessing, and our hearts go out in thankfulness and praise to the Giver of all good blessings.

It was a pleasure to have in our midst some brethren and sisters from Melbourne and Geelong Classes, also some from country parts of South Australia. It was good to see the earnest faith and zeal of the dear ones whose love for the Lord and His truth is manifested by the endeavours to serve His people.

Many good and helpful thoughts were derived from the Bible Studies which were from the following passages of Scriptures:—Psalm 37:1-11; Rev. 11:15-19 ; Heb. 9:11-15 and Acts 1:4-11. Also the addresses by various brethren contained messages that were helpful and encouraging for our new minds. The topics of the addresses were as follows:—”Angelic Beings in the Divine Plan”; “This is the Victory”; “The Christ Perfected by Suffering”; “Times of Revelation”; “Working Out Salvation”; “Why We Observe the Lord’s Supper Annually”; “Brief Thoughts on Phil. 2:12” and “Learning Obedience.” The various brethren, each in his own way, exhorted and encouraged us to continue the good fight of faith, not in our own strength, but in the strength and spirit of the Lord.

The Question Meeting and Discussion on 1 Cor. 10:13 were also interesting and helpful. The Fellowship Meetings, particularly the one dealing with our favourite hymns, were much appreciated; also the time devoted to the Praise and Testimony Meetings was well taken up and profitably spent.

It is surely good to meet in Convention with other brethren, and we trust the many good lessons and exhortations may remain with us, and that the Word of Christ may dwell in us each one more fully as the days go by. The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast, and singing “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love” and “God be with you till we meet again.” The message sent by the Convention to the brethren and Classes is found in Psalm 37:4-7.

Working Out Salvation.

(Phil, 2:12. Convention Address.)

IN this verse we have a very definite statement that we have something to do in making our salvation secure. This exhortation is not addressed to all and sundry, but to a special class, to saints, holy ones, consecrated Christians, who have given their lives in service to God. (Phil. 1 :1 .) It is not addressed to those dead in trespasses and sins. Those in this condition are commanded to repent, and then exercise faith in Jesus as a Saviour; and those who are sincere can believe that through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus they may receive justification, and have peace with God, through the knowledge of sins forgiven. (Rom. 5:1.) Such cannot work out their justification by works. No works or good deeds could free us from the condemnation which rested upon us, and still rests upon all mankind because of original transgression in the Garden of Eden.

This agrees with the Apostle Paul's statement to the Philippian jailer, "What must I do to be saved?" was the question; and the answer was, and still is the same—"Believe- on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved." (Acts,16:30.) Nothing was said to him at that stage about working out his salvation. Why? As already said, he realised that he was a sinner and needed forgiveness, hence, believing in the redemption in Christ brings a salvation—a rescue from Adamic condemnation which is received through faith without works. It is God's gift to repentant sinners, as the Scriptures declare—"By grace (favour) are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9.)

This is the first thing we must experience before we become Christians — we must be saved from the condemnation we inherited through Adam's disobedience, and this is received without works. It is a gift, as the Scriptures again declare,—"For if through the offence of one (Adam) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, bath abounded unto many . . . Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. 5:15, 18.)

We, as sinners, had nothing, no righteousness of our own with which we could commend ourselves to God. (Rom. 3:10.) We, as Gentiles, must receive through faith in Christ His imputed righteousness, and the Jewish believers must give up their efforts to be justified by the law of Moses. (Rom. 4:3-9.) "For by the deeds of the law shall no man be justified." (Gal. 2:16.)

Now, in our text, this same Apostle tells the members of the church at Philippi, and us also, "to work out your salvation." Is this a contradiction? Can we, after all, do something to secure our salvation? Well, the Apostle Paul says so! As already stated, we need to remember that these words in Phil. 2:12 are addressed to consecrated Christians—all such who have already repented and believed, and are justified by faith. These have used their justification, and in this standing, or favourable position before God, they have gone further and voluntarily entered into an agreement or covenant with God, a covenant of sacrifice. Paul also urged the believers at Rome to do this,—"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice." (Rom. 12:1.)

These are not content just to live good, moral lives and believe in Jesus Christ, but are eager to know the whole will of God concerning themselves, and how to work in harmony with the Lord's will and work which He is doing through this Gospel Age. A gradual transformation of the mind begins, and through various spiritual agencies, we learn by experience what the good and perfect will of God is. (Rom. 12:2.)

Such very soon discover that merely to believe on Christ is not sufficient to place them among God's elect, for the call is to follow in Jesus' steps. He said Himself, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt. 16:24, 25.) And again from Paul we read—"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," (Rom. 6:5.) Yes, those are the terms we need to fulfil, if we would experience that full and intimate fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Among many of the grand and delightful things we learn early through the Word of Truth is that a high or heavenly calling is extended to us. The Apostle Paul says, "I press down toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil:3:14.) The Apostle Peter refers to it as a call to be "partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4.) Called "to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. 1:3, 4.)

This is obtained by coming into Christ through full consecration, which is followed by a begetting of the spirit. The result is, an embryo new creature is produced, and as a member of the Body of Christ will be brought to birth. in the resurrection. It is God's workmanship; He owns each of His sons and daughters. The Apostle James says, "God of his own will begat us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1:18. See also

There seems to be no doubt that this is the salvation to which the Apostle Paul refers in our text, and he urges these consecrated ones to work out their salvation, not, justification. No, but strenuously work out, or labour earnestly to make sure of this great salvation, which is something further and beyond justification by faith; and indeed, justification is to be used for that purpose. Many are called to this, not all mankind, but few will be finally chosen to be joint-heirs with Christ. "Strait is the gate; narrow is the way."

Justification by faith saves from inherited condemnation without works--"believe and thou shalt be saved." But this does not make us new creatures, does not change our nature, but makes us ready for a change, and gives us an opportunity for this great salvation "which first began to be spoken by our Lord." (Heb. 2:3.)

The Apostle Paul urges us to do our share obtaining the prize of the high calling by obedience to the instructions of the Word, for it is by this that "God works in us to will and to do." The Apostle himself, after discussing his own righteousness and its worthlessness to obtain justification (which he at last found in Christ), and after taking the next step in consecration, says in Phil. 3:14—"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." He compares himself to a runner in a race. You have to train to be a good runner; you must apply effort and endurance. Another forceful illustration given is that of a soldier and his armour. (Eph. 6:11-18.) "Fight the good fight of faith." You have to be tough to be a soldier; you will have enemies. And still another figure from Paul—"I am a boxer who does not inflict blows on the air, but I hit hard and straight at my own body, and lead it off into slavery."

(1 Cor. 9:26, 27, Weymouth.) A boxer has to be prepared to take chastisements and blows. All this, of course, could not be applied to a believer who had received justification by faith only, which is a gift and pardon through grace, and which we experience before we enter into the narrow way, before we run for the high calling.

You know, John Bunyan illustrates this very well in his "Pilgrim's Progress." In his flight from the city of destruction to the Celestial City, Christian is greatly hampered by an oppressive burden upon his back. No one could take it off; various people gave advice how to become free from this guilt, but of no avail. He journeys on until he comes in sight of an open sepulchre and the burden rolled off and was never seen again, he was free from condemnation.

"Now we are free, there's no condemnation,
Jesus will soon perfect our salvation.
Once for all, O yes, we believe it,
Once for all, by faith we receive it ;
Lo, at His cross all burdens will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all."

The words "work out" in Phil 2:12 mean "to work fully—to accomplish," giving the thought of working strenuously. No half-heartedness will do, but a "fervency of spirit, serving the Lord," is required.

The 45th Psalm, verses 13-15, is another good illustration how we work out our salvation. "The king's daughter within the palace is all glorious." (R. Version.) This, of course, represents the Church of God. "Her clothing is in wrought with gold; she shall be led unto the King in broidered work" (i.e., needlework.) (R.V.) Here we have represented a bride prepared and adorned for a bridegroom in a spotless robe of righteousness, upon which she has patiently and with painstaking care worked fine needlework of embroidery. This corresponds to the graces of the spirit which she has copied from her pattern, the Lord Jesus. Patience and care are needed to produce fine needlework. This robe is also in wrought with gold, i.e., divine nature. Divine things are interwoven in this bridal dress.

The word "needlework" is the translation of two Hebrew words. The word "work" here means "activity," also "product." The word translated "needle" means "variegated," and does not refer so much to the instrument used as to the nature of the work. The Revised Version translates it "embroidery." You remember how the two curtains or vails in the Tabernacle, and the gate in the Court, were of fine, twined linen, interwoven by a clever needleworker in three colors, blue, purple and scarlet, in the form of cherubims. (Exod. 26:36.) The thought conveyed would seem to be that of the variegated appearance and color of the rich, gorgeous bridal dress of the King's daughter.

Yes, the glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, must work out her salvation. Not only must she keep her robe free from any spot, or stain of sin, or unfaithfulness, but she must with great patience and care embellish it with fine and exquisite embroidery. The work is long and arduous, and through much patience and suffering and weariness to the flesh, but at last with joy it will be completed, fully worked out; and we have the Apostle Paul's word for it, that, in his estimation, the sufferings and labours in connection with this work of salvation are quite insignificant in comparison with the eternal glory that shall be revealed in us. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to

be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (Rom. 8:18.)

There is variety, yet harmony, in the embroidery of this rich robe. The various threads interwoven are these:—”Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control.” (Gal. 5:22, 23.)

The Apostle Peter also urges us to work out the same pattern. He says,—”Giving all diligence (earnestness), add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance (self-control) , and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” (2 Pet. 1:5-7.) Verses 10 and 11 state—”If ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

This, you recognise to be character building. We are, as it were, in the school of Christ. There is something to do, lessons to learn and experiences to be gained by the endeavours to put into practice the knowledge granted to us.

The Apostle Peter says in 2 Pet. 1:3, the Lord, by His divine power, has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who has called us to glory and virtue. So you see, after all, it is really God that, worketh in you, for He supplies the means.

This brings home to us our individual responsibility to the truth we have received. This means working together with God. Others cannot work out our salvation for us, however helpful they may be to us. God has graciously made necessary provisions so that we might qualify for this great salvation, and run for the prize of the high calling. The Word of Truth is the power of God unto salvation. Error does not sanctify; the Truth is the means by which God works in us for our sanctification, which encourages us to walk in the steps of the Lord Jesus.

In Eph. 4:11, 12 it is written that God has given certain gifts to the Church, for its perfecting; namely, “Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” So you see, we did not begin this work in us, but God “worketh in you” by these means and many others. Jesus also said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” (John 15:16.)

It would never have occurred to us, uninvited, to endeavour to obtain the glory, honour, and immortality of the Lord Jesus Christ. God planned it all; He has begun a good work in us, and will complete it. (Phil. 1:6.) What we need is the faith that worketh by love. He furnishes the power by which we may accomplish this work of character building, not the perfecting of the flesh, the human nature. No, the flesh is dead—”For ye died, and your life (the new life) is hid with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:3.) The spirit is alive because of righteousness. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” (2 Cor. 5:17.)

New creatures need new things—new thoughts, special spiritual food, new environment, new fellowship, new hopes, new ambitions, new experiences, new spirit, new joys. Old things are put away—the old way of life, old ambitions, old disposition. We want to be spiritually minded; we don’t want to be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds. We want to fellowship with Him who said, “Behold, I make all things new.” Being now begotten of the spirit, we can be assured, by God’s grace and power, that we shall be born of the spirit and given an inheritance among all those who believe and work out their own salvation.

Memorial Observances.

MELBOURNE.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered on the night of 19th April, to keep the Memorial Supper in remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb. It was with solemn and full hearts that we approached this season of the year, as we have brought more particularly to our minds the gracious condescension of our Lord Jesus in suffering and dying as He did on our behalf, as expressed so well by the Apostle—"For, ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.)

Some studies on our Lord's last hours on earth, taken on the records of the four Gospels on previous Sundays, refreshed our minds on the important events that led to our Lord's crucifixion, and with our Memorial service of appropriate hymns, prayers, Scripture readings and an address on the Memorial in general, we were well provided with helpful thoughts. It was then with deepest gratitude to God and our dear Redeemer that we partook of the emblems which our Lord requested should be used to represent His body and His blood, first of all "in remembrance of Him," and also showing our own willingness to sacrifice with Him, to suffer with Him that we may also live with Him.

The Lord's dear people as a whole were remembered especially in prayer, and it was good to feel that all consecrated followers of the Master the world over would be observing our Lord's Memorial within a matter of hours of each other, and then would seek "to keep the feast" in spirit and truth in all the days ahead, by the Lord's grace and strength.

GEE LONG, VIC.

Once again it was the privilege of the brethren at Geelong to assemble together on the anniversary of our Lord's death, and remember Him in the way He enjoined upon His followers that night just prior to His crucifixion.

Our order of service was—Hymn 148 (B.S. Hymnal); Prayer; Scripture Readings, Exod. 12:1-14, 25-28, 40-42, Matt. 26:17-19, 26-29. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8; Address, and Hymn 2. Then followed the simplest form of service during which the emblems were partaken of, and a closing Hymn 438.

A detailed review of the two articles "Why We Observe the Lord's Supper Annually" and "The Last Passover of Christ," taken at our Class study on the two Sundays prior to the observance, proved helpful, and with the address, calling to mind the innumerable blessings which have become ours as a result of the Lord's sacrifice, were instrumental, by the Lord's grace, in bringing us to the table to keep the feast in all sincerity—our heart's love and appreciation poured out before Him.

BIRCHIP, VIC.

It was the great privilege for four of us to meet in the Lord's name to partake of our Lord's Memorial Supper, and with thankful hearts we praise Him for having a share in His sufferings and as done in His name.

The lesson was taken from Exod. 12:1-30; Luke 22:7-20 and Matt. 26:26-30; and we sang the hymns 166, 259 and 437 (B.S. Hymnal).

We could picture that scene in the upper room where our Lord met with His disciples on the night prior to His death, and so we keep this solemn feast in remembrance of Him.

ADELAIDE.

The Adelaide Class met to observe the Memorial of our Saviour's death in accordance with His request that we should "do this in remembrance" of Him. We met with feelings of mingled joy and sorrow; sorrow as we thought upon His great sufferings for us, and joy as we recalled His great triumph over sin and death. How full of faith and courage our Lord was, even to the end—the cruel cross and all the intense anguish of mind and body which came upon Him during the last hours of His earthly pilgrimage. Surely He was "bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

After the reading of Exod. 12; Isa. 53; Matt. 26th and 27th chapters, and the singing of appropriate hymns, a brother outlined the significance of the Memorial in type and antitype, and after earnest prayers for God's blessing upon our little company and also for all the Israel of God in every place known and unknown to us, we partook of the emblems, thanking God for the privilege accorded to us not only of believing on Jesus as our Saviour, but also that we are

permitted to share in His sufferings at the present time, that we may also share His glorious work of restoring the world in the age to come.

We do pray that we may all have a deeper appreciation of the great love of God and of Christ, also a deeper love for the fellow-members of His body, and a more earnest purpose to follow more closely in the Master's steps, feeding by faith upon His merit, strengthening ourselves in His strength and allowing His Word to dwell in us richly, so that we may be faithful daily to our covenant of sacrifice. We feel that God has blessed us again at this Memorial season, and we thank Him and strive to walk more fully in harmony with His holy will.

SYDNEY.

The Memorial celebration here justified our prayerful anticipation in every respect; a great blessing was conferred by our Heavenly Father upon our little assembly. Every dear face greeted us as of old, excepting one distant brother; altogether 19 of the Lord's people were present.

We began by singing hymn .122 (166 B.S.H.) , "In memory of the Saviour's love, we keep this simple feast." Following the address of welcome and prayer to our gracious Lord, in which we silently joined, another brother delivered a discourse on the Memorial. Reading from Exod. 12:1-14, in order to bring under our notice the typical Passover, he then showed in antitype that the "Little Flock" only are in danger of Second Death to-day, as to them only, as yet, is the blood of Christ applied. He reminded the assembly of the great significance of the emblems, and exhorted them to draw closer together in spirit, forgetting the ideals and ambitions of the world, being ever united under Christ, keeping in mind that we had left Babylon for good and all. Lastly, he exhorted them, ere they partook of the emblems, to search their inmost heart and cast out any leaven of envy, malice and prejudice so that they might worthily partake of the Memorial.

After a prayer over the bread, and breaking it, in line with the words of Matt. 26:26, there was a silent, solemn partaking of this emblem. Then, with prayer over the wine it was presented in the words of Matt. 26:27, and a space of solemn silence followed while the assembly absorbed the spirit of this emblem. The friends then sang the closing hymn 168 (231 B.S.H.), "Man of sorrows, what a Name," and departed, in accord with the record.—Matt. 26::30.

CANBERRA.

We gathered together around the Lord's table at Canberra on Thursday, 19th April. These occasions are very impressive to us, and, coming as they do every year, are milestones on our journey to the Heavenly Home. We recalled the suffering endured by our Lord as He fulfilled the Father's will, and note the singleness of purpose He displayed, being obedient even unto death. As we see these things in our Lord, we reflect on our own attitude — how heart-searching is this occasion! Our need of the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb of God is evident, and we are humbled because of our weaknesses, and are made to realise that "My grace is sufficient for thee."

With these thoughts before us we partook of the emblems this year, rejoicing in the privileges of being partners together in Christ, not only because of future honour with Him, but also because we want to see an end to the reign of sin and death, and we want also to do something to that end, in harmony with God's declared purpose, just as Jesus did—being faithful and obedient even unto death. We are very glad the prophetic evidence is that our journey is now almost at an end.

GLENBROOK, N:S.W.

Once again the sacred season of the Memorial has passed; we were privileged to partake of the solemn feast in Glenbrook with seven present. We were reminded of our dear Lord's words in Matt. 18:20, that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

In prayer we asked God's blessing to rest upon all the dear Israel of God, and we realised that we also were remembered in prayer by others of like precious faith. What a hope and joy it brings to our hearts to know that we are all thus drawn together by the invisible bands of God's great and mighty love, through the love of our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ . Truly we can re-echo from our hearts -- Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

NEWCASTLE, N S W .

We were very pleased to have another sister with us this year. It was, of course, a simple service. We had each read fully, and meditated on the circumstances leading up to the Memorial and our Lord's death. This made it very helpful, and seemed to bring home to us, more than ever, the depth of the love of our Lord Himself in willingly, and for love's sake, going through all the terrible suffering He endured, and makes us anxious to prove ourselves worthy of His love, and show our appreciation of it by our continual effort to carry out fully our covenant of sacrifice.

PERTH.

The friends here in Perth remembered our Lord's death and His Memorial at the appropriate date. In an upper room the speaker reminded us of Christ's great sacrifice on Calvary as man's Redeemer, who was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." His broken body and His shed blood, we saw, were symbolized by the unleavened bread and wine which were partaken of by the disciples on the fateful night of His betrayal.

By partaking of these emblems the brethren again realised the communion there was with Christ—to be broken with Him, and have their life (blood) poured out in sacrifice. We counted it a great privilege to commemorate this in symbol, realising what it represents in actual life, to be dead with Christ and suffer with Him outside the Camp.

Another little group met at Fremantle where the needs of two elderly sisters were met who could not attend the larger meeting.

TASMANIA.

On the evening of 19th April four sisters assembled at the home of one sister and partook of the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine, in remembrance of Christ our Passover (Lamb) who was slain for us. All expressed gratitude for so great a privilege.

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Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street-- Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney—Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

Perth.--The Women's Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court—Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 19/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.



Volume XXXIV. No. 6 MELBOURNE, JUNE, 1951 Price-Fourpence Halfpenny

Walking in the Light.

(1 John 1:5-7. Convention Address.)

IN John 1:5 we read—"God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." Also James, chapter 1 verse 17, speaks of God as the Father of Lights with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning God is always the same—holy, pure, benevolent, kind, just and true. "God is light and in Him is not darkness at all."

Light and darkness, like love and selfishness are antagonistic one to the other; they will not harmonize. "What communion hath light with darkness?" says the Apostle. (2 Cor. 6:14.)

Darkness is the symbol for ignorance, superstition, sin, sorrow, sickness and death, while light indicates intelligence, enlightenment of mind, knowledge, righteousness, truth, life, peace and joy.

When God created man in His own image and placed him in Eden, Adam had fulness of harmony with God. The light of God's favour shone brightly upon Him, and so long as he remained obedient he enjoyed the peace and blessing of full fellowship with his Creator. When sin entered, however, the light of God's favour was withdrawn; there was no longer the same peace and joy of heart; sorrow and pain and trouble associated with the sentence of death began to lay its heavy hand upon the heart that hitherto had known no anxious care.

For almost 6,000 years now the human family has been passing through a night-time of sorrow, pain, sickness and death. The Psalmist refers to this, saying (Psa. 30:5) , "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.- The Apostle Paul also has said, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." (Rom. 13:12.)

Paul's day the night-time of man's experience with evil was two-thirds in the past, and the day, ie., the thousand year day of Christ was, comparatively speaking near at hand.

As we look back over the centuries of past ages we find that there have been some faithful souls who have been able to trust God even amidst the surrounding darkness. Enoch was one of these, and it is said that "he pleased God," and "walked with God." Noah also was one who walked in the light that was due in his day. Because of his faith and obedience to God he was saved from the destruction that came upon the whole world of his day, and he was carried over the flood and permitted to live on in the age that followed.

Abraham was another of the faithful ones who walked in the light that was due in his day. To Abraham God made certain promises that through him and his seed would come a blessing to all the families of the earth. This was a much clearer statement of God's purpose for man than had ever been given before. Abraham was surely greatly favoured in having revealed to him the knowledge of God's purpose to bring in a blessing to mankind. Why was it that Abraham was so favoured in this way? Was it not because of his great faith in God, and his prompt obedience to the will of God. It surely was, and it teaches us that if we would have the favour and blessing of God upon us, we must have complete faith in Him, in His power, in His goodness, in His love.

We can get many good lessons from the consideration of the lives of the faithful ancients; how they trusted God and clung to the promises given to them. They endured many persecutions, and some suffered cruel deaths because of their loyalty to the light given to them. We think of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, and how faithfully these men walked in the light of their day, and looked forward to the coming time of blessing for all the families of the earth.

Coming down to Moses' day we find the time had come for- more light. God's purpose was to be still more fully made known. Moses himself was a grand example of faithful, humble obedience to the will of God. How faithfully he

walked in the light and served the interests of the people of God—the house of servants.

The law given to Israel revealed to mankind a knowledge of God, and while none of the imperfect race could gain life by keeping its requirements perfectly, yet those whose faith in the promises inclined them to walk in the light of that day received a blessing. We think of Joshua, Samuel and David, and the faithful prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and others—whose lives bore witness to the fact that they walked in the light of their day, and because of their faith and loyalty they will be rewarded by having a better resurrection than the remainder of men, and they will be used as teachers and helpers of mankind in the Millennial day. John the Baptist was the last of the prophets, and concerning him our Lord said that there had arisen none greater than he. (Matt. 11:11.) Also in John 5:35 our Lord referred to John the Baptist, saying that “He was a burning and a shining light, and ye (Jews) were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.” Yes, John the Baptist is surely a fine example of earnest zeal for the Lord and in witnessing to the light that was due in his day. How faithfully he walked in the light, and called upon others to do likewise. John’s mission and message were also important. In many respects his work was like that of Isaiah and of the other prophets. He called upon Israel to repent and reform their ways; but John was also able to announce the Kingdom of Heaven at hand, and the presence of the Lord in their midst. He said—“There standeth One among you whom ye know not; He it is, who, cometh after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am unworthy to unloose.” (John 1:26, 27). John was sent to bear witness to the Light; he was not himself that Light, but one who called upon Israel to prepare themselves to receive the Light. (John 1 :7, 8.) How faithfully and loyally and humbly John fulfilled his mission. He seemed quite content and happy to fill a little place so that His Lord might receive the honour due to Him. (See John 3:29-31.)

How brightly the light of God shone out from the life of Christ. “In him was life (perfect life) and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” (John 1:4, 5.) “He was the true Light which lighteth (in due time) every man that cometh into the world.” On another occasion our Lord said, “I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8 :12.)

How clear and bright has been the light that has shone out since the death and resurrection of Christ, our Lord and Head. It was the coming of the holy spirit at Pentecost that enabled the disciples to go forward in the Master’s steps. There they received the power from on high that would enable them to “be witnesses of Christ both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8.)

When our Lord first invited His disciples to accompany Him, He said to some of them who had been fishermen, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” For 31 years the disciples were constantly in the Lord’s presence;

they listened to His gracious words and beheld His wonderful life, and the foundation for their future usefulness was being quietly laid.

The coming of the holy spirit at Pentecost was indeed an occasion of great importance to the waiting disciples and to the whole church. They had been told to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high.

As they waited on the day of Pentecost “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind and it filled all the place where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon them and they were all filled with the holy spirit.” (Acts 2:2-4.) The cloven tongues like fire which rested upon the heads of the disciples, seems to fittingly represent the enlightenment of the spirit. There, at Pentecost, the offering of the Church, the body of Christ, took place: just as the offering of the Head had taken place some 31 years previously, at Jordan.

The pouring out of the holy spirit at Pentecost was the token not only of the acceptableness of Christ’s sacrifice to God, but also of God’s acceptance of the Church, His body. Those who have come into Christ all down the age have not needed special manifestations of tongues of light. Their baptism into Christ, however, has been accompanied by the blessing and enlightenment of the spirit. We have received a new will, a will that prompts us to do God’s will.

“God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power (courage) and of love, and of a sound mind.” (2 Tim. 1:7.) We have, indeed, realised the truth of the Apostle’s words. The effect of God’s spirit upon the hearts and minds of His consecrated people has surely been to give them courage and love and wisdom, in proportion to the degree that they live up to their consecration. Having taken up our cross to follow Christ in the narrow way, having commenced to walk in His steps, to walk in the light, we must continue in that direction. We must keep His great example ever before us and seek to be conformed to Him in all things. We must “walk in him and be built up in him.” (Col. 2:6, 7.) “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” (1 John 2:6.)

At our Lord’s first advent the light of truth shone out brightly upon the house of Israel, but only a few were found willing to walk in the light of that day. The majority preferred the darkness of error, or of their own selfish ways.

Blessed indeed are those whose eyes of understanding have been opened to see the beauty of the Heavenly Father's plan and who have been drawn to Christ in this acceptable day.

The truth revealed at the harvest time of the Jewish Age separated the "wheat" from the "chaff" of that nation. Only a few accepted the truth and walked in the light of that day. So we find it to-day. We are living in a harvest period again to-day. The wheat is being separated from the tares. The wise virgins are to be separated from the unwise. What is it that effects the separation? The foolish virgins at one time appeared to appreciate the message of present truth; they went forth with their lamps to meet the Bridegroom; they seemed to rejoice in the Lord's presence and to feast upon the beautiful truths spread before them. But after a time they find their lamps are not burning so brightly, they begin to get confused in their understanding of the present truth. They seem to be even uncertain as to whether or not we are living in "the days of the Son of Man." The trouble with the foolish virgins is, that they did not take enough oil (holy spirit) in their vessels.

Let us each one look to ourselves that we maintain the spirit of our consecration; let us seek for a larger filling of the Lord's spirit—the spirit of the truth, the spirit of holiness and of love. If we become neglectful and careless in our consecration, or in our attitude towards present truth we will find that the spirit of the world, the lukewarm compromising spirit, the Laodicean spirit will come in, and we will be unprepared to enter into the marriage feast. Let us search our hearts let us keep our lamps trimmed and burning. In order to keep the lamp burning brightly we must look well to the supply of oil. Let us earnestly pray the Lord to give us a larger measure of His holy spirit, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of consecration.

Walking in the light will mean obedience to the known will of God. What a grand example we have before us in the life of Christ. After His consecration at Jordan He retired to a place of quietness, away from the busy walks of life, so that He could wait upon God and get refreshment and enlightenment of soul, and wisdom to carry out the great purpose for which He had come into the world. After faithfully withstanding the temptations of the devil, we read in Luke 4:14 that "He returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee." Surely it was through prayer and waiting upon God that our Lord Jesus received the light and wisdom and power of God. There were times in the life of our Lord when He seemed to realise the necessity for special prayer for guidance and heavenly help. We have already referred to the special season of prayer and waiting before God at the commencement of our Lord's ministry; then in Luke 6:12 we read, "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Next day He chose the 12 disciples who afterwards were the Apostles. No doubt He earnestly sought the Father's guidance in His choice of the twelve.

There are many references in the Gospels showing that Jesus frequently sought the Father's help and guidance.

As the sun sank in the west, and the shades of night enfolded the earth, we find our Lord seeking the solitude of the mountain top, where, alone with God, He could unburden His heart and find, in sweet communion with the Father, that strength and refreshment of spirit which enabled Him to press on in the heavenly way, pouring out His soul unto death.

It seems appropriate, then, that we fully appreciate the privileges of prayer. "Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving," says Paul. "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation," were almost the last words of instruction given by our Lord to His disciples. We cannot maintain our spiritual life without prayer. We could not walk in the light of the Lord without prayer. "The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Another matter that will assist us to "walk in the light" is the cultivation of the spirit of joy in the Lord. There are many instructions in the Scriptures along this line. Israel was commanded by the Lord to rejoice in all the good things provided for them, and in all the Lord's arrangements for their welfare. (See Deut. 12:7; 26:11; also Deut. 28.) Certain blessings would come upon them for their obedience (verses 114), and then certain curses are enumerated which would come upon them if they disobeyed the voice of the Lord. (See verses 45-47.) God would punish them if they failed to serve Him "with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart."

Paul tells us to rejoice in the Lord always. (Phil. 4:4.) The Apostle did this himself; he gloried in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. Walking in the light will mean the steady cultivation of the graces of the Lord's spirit. The Apostle Peter urges us to give all diligence to add grace to faith, and grace to grace. (2 Pet. 1:5-11.) Paul exhorts us to "seek those things which are above," to "set our affections upon the things above, not on things on the earth." (2 Col. 3:1, 2.) He urges us to "walk in the spirit and fulfil not the desire of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16, 25.)

We need patience, too, in order to "walk in the light." We must not grow weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. To walk in the light will mean earnest endeavour to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." It will mean that we will humbly submit our hearts, our wills, to the will of God. We will strive to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men. We will seek to have our lives brought into line with the golden rule—we will endeavour to treat others as we would be treated.

Let us determine that we will each one strive more earnestly to “walk in the light of the Lord,” that we will “watch and pray” and seek for grace from on high to keep our hearts humble and gentle and pure and true and kind and loving, “forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things, which are before,” let us “press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:13, 14.)

“O House of Israel, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”

Notes-on Convention.

Some Notes on the Adelaide Easter Convention have been prepared by a visiting friend, and copies are now ready'. These are supplied free from this office to all applying for them. Also some copies of Notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention are on hand for disposal to friends desiring these.

“Peace Desired—War Continues.” --In this booklet of 24 pages the present world outlook is reviewed, and the only hope for peace set forth in the light of God’s Word. Price 5d. per copy ; 6 copies for 2/-, posted.

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PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

The General Work.

WITH the completion of another year's work WITH the Berean Bible Institute at the close of April, this brief report is presented with a deep feeling of gratitude and thankfulness to God for His blessing and guidance upon the efforts, which have been undertaken in co-operation with numerous brethren, in the service of the truth. It is surely a great privilege to have a part in the service of our Heavenly Father, and especially so now in the very closing days of the harvest of the Gospel Age for the gathering of the members of the Bride of Christ.

Our main contact with the brethren generally is provided by our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" which is dispatched to friends in various countries, and it is encouraging to receive expressions of appreciation of the truth message contained in this journal. At this time again sincere thanks is expressed to all brethren who have assisted with contributions to the pages of the "Paper".

The importance of the harvest truths has been kept prominent in the columns of the "Peoples Paper". It is really essential that all the Lord's true people be fully "sealed in their foreheads," as well as in their hearts, before the final overthrow of this present evil world (Rev. 7:1-3), and this is accomplished only by a full appreciation and acceptance of the harvest truths. The booklets "Our Lord's Great Prophecy" and "The Manner of Christ's Return" have been of great assistance in this respect, and a good supply of these is still available.

Some of the increased cost of publishing the "Peoples Paper" has been met over the past year by folding and stapling, etc., in our own office. However, a deficiency in meeting the full cost of production has again been provided by the General Tract Fund, but as considerable numbers of the "Paper" are supplied free to newly interested friends, the providing of this deficiency is a good investment in the service of the truth. It will be realised, of course, that extra subscriptions to the

"Peoples Paper" assist greatly, and sample copies are always available free for all who can place them to advantage.

Quantities of books and booklets have been sent out throughout Australia and overseas, and additions to our stocks are made known through the "Peoples Paper" from time to time. The free tracts and Kingdom Cards still have an important part in the witness to the truth, especially in places where the radio message cannot be heard. Also the Consolation Cards, which are sent to the bereaved, provide a service of comfort and encouragement which has been continued with some good results by a number of friends in various parts. Some public lectures have also been given, and it is often found that these are the means of creating the desire for more knowledge of God's Word and attendance at the regular Bible Classes. In all these branches of the Lord's service it is encouraging to have willing workers, and we pray for God's blessing upon all efforts in the harvest field. Others who have a talent for the work in any sphere should certainly use it to the full, as unto the Lord; enquiries are welcome at all times from those desiring to cooperate in any way in the service of the Lord.

The financial side of the work generally (apart from the radio) is shown by the balance sheet of the General Tract Fund herein presented. All the assistance received is comprised of voluntary contributions, and it is very evident that much love for the Lord and sacrifice for His cause is represented in the good help to the work in His name. It will be seen that the credit in the Reserve Fund has been transferred to the General Tract Fund, and with all expenses met, a credit of over £ 31 is in hand towards the work of another year.

Only by the co-operative efforts of the brethren, under the Lord's providence, has the work of the Institute been able to continue over the year past, and this has included co-operation in prayer. It is requested again that our dear friends everywhere join in prayer before the throne of grace, that God's will may be discerned and His guidance and blessing may continue upon all efforts on behalf of His cause. Stirring world events are looming up again at this time, yet all these things but impress the importance of our day, and that shortly "a night cometh wherein no man can work". May all who love the Lord and His truth give diligence to make their calling and election sure, and assist their fellow travellers in the same pilgrim way.—"Therefore, beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/'50	£296	5
„ Donations.....	38213	2
„Transferred from Reserve Fund	11119	8
	£52319	3

ByFree Tracts and Deficiency “Peoples	£93 ₂	2
Hall Rents, Advertising.....	252	0
General Expenses (Office. etc.).....	3113	6
Towards Personal and House Expenses	2710	0
Postage.....	429	7
Pilgrim Work, Sundries .. .	188	8
Free Books and Booklets .. .	718	3
Consolation Cards	30	0
Credit Balance 1/5/'51 .. .	315	1
	£52319	3

The Radio Work

The radio witness to the Gospel of the Kingdom has also continued successfully over the past year. This has been made possible by the united efforts of the brethren, in the Lord's providence, and above all by God's blessing upon the message as it reaches those people who are longing for the help and comfort which the truth alone can give. We are grateful to the Lord for His favours upon this particular branch of the work in His service.

The same radio stations have been used throughout the year. 3GL Geelong and 2KY Sydney, covering as they do our two largest Australian cities and other large towns, can reach about half the population of this continent. The response from these two stations has again been most encouraging, new listeners being heard from week by week and many well acquainted with the broadcasts showing increased appreciation of the truths of God's Word. There has not been the same response from 6KY Perth, but our brethren there have kept the message going in faith, and some friends who have been found by the broadcasts in that area are showing appreciation.

A work associated with the broadcasts, the distribution of the copies of each Dialogue presented over the air, has increased over the past twelve months; large quantities of these leaflets are despatched each month to listeners and readers of the “Peoples Paper” with good results. These are provided free from the Radio Fund, and other friends wishing to receive copies regularly should make their requests accordingly.

There can be no doubt that the advertising of the broadcasts is important. Friends who have a talent of time are able to do good work by distributing the radio cards. A successful method is to call on the homes of the people with the cards and offer a word of encouragement, asking the householders to be sure and listen to the undenominational broadcasts, the radio cards being supplied for this purpose. Advertising in newspapers is also recommended where possible, but this method is more costly. However, it costs nothing to remind friends and neighbours about the sessions over the air, and those active in this respect receive blessings accordingly. The main object of the broadcasts being, of course, to find the ones here and there who are desirous of entering into the Christian way, to walk in the steps of Christ. The majority of listeners we know will receive the full benefit of the truth in the next age, but what is heard now will be helpful to that end.

A review of the Radio Fund will reveal the good assistance received for this feature of the work, all voluntarily provided, by the Lord's providence, for the witness over the air. The sacrifices thus made no doubt manifest a burning zeal and love to serve the truth cause. The costs at one radio station have increased during the year, but with all expenses covered it will be seen that a credit of 1 112 is carried forward to commence another year's work of broadcasting. As with the general work, so with this avenue of service, the prayers of the brethren are requested for God's blessing and guidance to direct the results in harmony with His will. “And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

RADIO FUND.

	£11019 0	
	.. 433 1 8	
To Credit Balance 1/5/'50 ,,	£544 0 8	
Donations		
By Radio 3GL Geelong, 2KY Sydney .. ,,	.. £3464 0	
Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 6KY ,, Printing	320 0	
Quantities of Dialogues	330 0	
	.1118 3	
	. 712 6	
.. Freight, Postage, etc 15 0	
	.. 1120 11	
.. Travel and Sundries	£5440 8	
.. Bank Charges		
.. Credit Balance, 1/5/'51		

“Our Most Holy Faith.”—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of “The Dawn” in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 19/- post paid.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

The Seed of the Blessed of the Lord

Question:—Please explain Isaiah 65:23.

Answer:—Reading from verse 17 to get the connection, we see that this portion of Scripture is a prophetic description of the blessings that will come to Jerusalem (and also, eventually, to all the families of the earth) under the Messianic Kingdom. It tells of the time when the “new heavens” (Christ and His glorified Church; see 2 Pet. 3:13) will take control, and the “new earth,” a new order of society on earth, will come into existence based on justice and righteousness.

It will be the time when sin and sorrow, weeping and crying will be done away; and peace and joy and gladness will come to Jerusalem and to all people. The setting is earthly and pertains to the “times of restitution”—The Millennial Age. It tells of the activities of these blessed and happy people, building houses, planting vineyards and eating the fruits of their labours.

Leeser translates verse 23—“They shall nor toil in vain, nor bring forth unto an early death, for the seed of the blessed of the Lord are they, and their offspring with them.” What a great change there will be when the new heavens under Christ and His Church is operating. Parents, whose little children were taken from them during the reign of evil and death, will have them restored again (probably in answer to prayer) ; they “will come again from the land of the enemy.” (See Jer. 31:16, 17.) The labour and toil bestowed upon their children will not be in vain. Those brought to life in the Kingdom Age will not go into an early death; no, by faith and obedience they may walk up the blessed highway of holiness (see Isa. 35:8-10) and gain everlasting life in the restored earth.

“The Christ” Head and Body are the blessed of Jehovah, in a very special sense. Christ will be the “Everlasting Father” to the restored of Israel and mankind generally. He is the Second Adam, the Lifegiver to the world in the new age. (Isa. 9:6; 1 Cor. 15:45, 47.)

Then Israel, the chosen nation of the Lord, will also have “offspring.” Ezekiel 16:61 shows how such nations as Sodom and Samaria will be given to Israel “for daughters.” Israel, under the guidance and protection of “The Christ” will be used and guided by the Ancient Worthies, and under the arrangement of the New Covenant will extend to other nations the relationship which parents do toward their children, guiding, helping, nourishing, sustaining and helping them to maturity of character. (See also Isa. 60:4, 5.)

What a glorious provision God has made for the blessing of all the families of the earth, and what an honoured place in the “new earth” is assigned to Israel when, in due time, her blindness will be taken away, and she will be used as a channel of blessing to all the nations of the earth. (Isa . 60:10-22.)

(The above short article is now available in leaflet form, and will be supplied free to all who can use them to advantage. When applying for copies, please state how many are required.)

Be Patient, Brethren.

We sometimes wonder why our Lord doth place us
Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure:
That nothing we call work can find an entrance
There's only room to suffer, to endure.
Well, God loves patience!

Souls that dwell in stillness,
Doing the little things or restful quite,
May just as perfectly fulfil this mission;
Be just as useful in the Father's sight
As they who grapple with some great evil,
Clearing a path that every eye may see,
Our Saviour cares for cheerful acquiescence
As much as for a busy ministry.

And yet He does love service—where it is given
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed:
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty.
Be sure to such He gives but little heed.
Christ never asks of us such heavy labour
As leaves no time for resting at His feet:
The waiting attitude of expectation

He oft-times counts a service most complete.
He sometimes wants our ear—our rapt attention
That He some sweetest secret may impart,
'Tis always in the time of deepest stillness

That heart finds deepest fellowship with heart.
Then seek to please Him, whatsoe'er He bids thee—
Whether to do, to suffer, to lie still;
'Twill matter little by what path He led us
If in it we sought to do His will.

—Selected.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney—Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

Perth.—The Women's Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court—Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I do want to thank you for the literature you sent in response to one's 'phone call the other day. It is much appreciated.

A person is a new listener to your session, and although it is not possible to listen regularly your accuracy to the Scripture does incite a person's interest. Am enclosing a donation for you. May God continue to bless your radio ministry. Yours sincerely in Christ.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I listen with very great interest to your broadcasts from 3GL Geelong every Sunday morning, and would like to thank you for the "Peoples Paper" which arrives regularly every month.

Would you be kind enough to send me a copy of the Dialogues, if possible dating from 1st April. I would also be very grateful if you could send me the following—"Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and Evil are Permitted," "Christ's Second Presence." "Chosen People," "The Manner of Christ's Return." "Where are the Dead?" and two copies of "Hope Beyond the Grave." I am enclosing a postal note for 2/6 and hope to be able to send another donation in the near future. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have just listened to your broadcast from 3GL. I always listen to this interesting session if I can. I am particularly interested in the mention of the interpretation of the word "ransom" as used in the Bible.

Would you be good enough to send me a copy of this morning's address? And if you have a spare copy of the booklet you mentioned I would appreciate it. Yours faithfully.

To Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—For the continuance of your work of broadcasting we are very grateful, especially when so much wrong teaching is being heard in our city.

May it be possible for you to carry on with the good news of the Gospel, in the hope that many will hear and be blessed. Yours faithfully.

P.S. Kindly accept postal notes.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I listened with great interest to your session this morning and would love a copy of same please, as I'd like to read it again and pass round to my friends here. So few people take the trouble to listen to these interesting sessions. Of course, many are so busy on the dairy farms, as around here. Wishing you every success in your interesting session and thanking you in anticipation of copy of address. Yours very sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was greatly interested in your Talk from 3GL last Sunday, and I would very much like a copy of it, also the booklet "God and Reason." Would you please send one of each, also to as well as one to me, also any other papers you have to spare. Thanking you.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I listen with interest to your session on a Sunday morning at 10 o'clock, and would like you to send me the booklet that you offered this morning, where the good Lord is going to make all things new.

I understand all will have a chance in the thousand years reign; I would like any booklets you have on this matter.)(OUTS sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you please forward to the above address the booklets mentioned in your talk this morning—"God and Reason" and "Restitution."

May I say in closing that you explain so clearly the meaning of the Scriptures that it has settled my mind a great deal on many subjects. So I look forward eagerly every Sunday to your talks. Thanking you.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I Must say how much I enjoy your discussions on the Scriptures: it is indeed most helpful and enlightening. It is' very strengthening to Christians to meditate upon the Word of God. Paul says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," and it is by hearing God's Word and having it explained that many Christians are built up in the faith. It is ever new, and ever supplies food for the soul; we need to feast upon it.

Would you kindly forward me a copy of your discussion on the crucifixion of Christ and His resurrection, also your latest discussion. Thanking you with a Christian heart and trusting the Lord will richly bless your great work for Him.

Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Enclosed please find postal note 3/- which kindly use to meet any expense relative to forwarding copies of talks heard through station 2KY on recent Sunday mornings.

These talks and their method of presentation are of interest to me when I am able to listen to them. I feel sure that many will be moved to a closer scrutiny of their religious beliefs, and a strong desire to discover for themselves what is taught in the Bible. Wishing successful results from these regular discussions. Sincerely yours.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I am writing for the Sunday Dialogue please. I am extremely interested in the Berean Bible study and I have a neighbour who has been studying for 4- years, so we have quite a few chats concerning questions.

I should be very grateful if you would continue sending me all the free literature including the Sunday Morning Dialogues please also any booklets including the following—"The High Calling of God," "Why do the Nations War?", "A Blessed Hope for Suffering Humanity," "The Manner of Christ's Return." Thanking you.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I don't know how long you have been speaking over the radio but I happened to hear the end of a talk a few weeks ago and I was very pleased. Wherever the Word of God is spoken I like to listen-in. I am a nurse and have a rest home at the above address. I would very much like you to send me along any of the back talks you have given; am willing to pay or to give a contribution towards expenses.

I have not very much time to listen-in, as it is at breakfast time, and as I have no early help I miss a good deal of talks. Thanking you in anticipation. I remain, Yours respectfully.

Dear Sirs—I heard your religious programme last week on "The Sinners Second Chance" and would very much like to survey your text construction from closer quarters. Would you please send the same on, as I would appreciate it immensely. Thanking you for your programme; I am, Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest—Please send free booklet "God's Plan." After hearing your talk on the radio I thought I would like to read your booklet; in these troubled times we are all wanting more and more to get a dear understanding on God's Book, the Bible. Thanking you, Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I listen with great interest to your Sunday morning discussions on the Bible and this morning I take special interest in your. subject "Sinners in Heaven" over 2KY. I have in the past heard the strange teaching of a dead earth etc., for 1000 years, set forth by some, and which I consider to be quite unscriptural and contrary to every commonsense view. So; I- write to ask for your book "The Plan of God" to read more your own fully teaching on this subject. Sincerely yours.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—Would you kindly forward to me the subject you were speaking about on Sunday last, also the booklet you mentioned. I also would like to tell you that your debates over the air every morning Sunday at 8.15 over 2KY are just great. It is the best and fairest argument I have ever heard; we never miss very best it. All the of good luck to you both. Yours faithfully.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m.
Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.
Perth, MY , 227 t , 4.45 p.m.



Volume XXXIV. No. 7 MELBOURNE, JULY, 1951.

Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

The Three Great Covenants.

A CLEAR understanding of this subject is important to every Christian. The Covenants determine our relationship to God, as well as the nature and extent of the blessing which our Heavenly Father intends to bestow upon His children.

There are three great Covenants brought to our attention in the Scriptures — the Abrahamic, the Law and the New, the fulfilment or completion of which will witness the recovery from sin and death of all the willing and obedient of the human family, as well as the exaltation of the faithful few of the present age to joint-heirship with Christ in His kingdom.

In Scriptural language (Isa. 54:5), God is represented as being the “Husband” of these Covenants, and He is said to be the “Father,” while each Covenant is said to be the “Mother” of the particular class that is developed under it (Gal. 4:26-28).

The first, or Abrahamic Covenant was made with Abraham. It was a promise that his “seed should bless all the families of the earth” (Gen. 12:3). There were no conditions attached to this Covenant; it was sealed or ratified by God Himself with an oath (Heb. 6:13-18). There being no conditions and only one party concerned, there was therefore no necessity for a mediator (Gal. 3:20).

The second, or Law Covenant was made by God with the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai. It was a Covenant of life or death, blessings or cursings, conditional upon their keeping intact all the precepts of the law of God (Deut. 28:115). The mediator of the Law Covenant was Moses, who sealed or ratified it with the blood of bulls and goats (Heb. 9:19-21).

The third, or New Covenant will also be made with the nation of Israel (Jer. 31:31; 32:40). who will first participate in its blessings, and gradually the whole world of mankind will be included in it (Heb. 8:8-12). Christ is the Mediator of this Covenant, having sealed it with His own blood (Heb. 9:15).

The Apostle Paul throws much light upon this subject in his letter to the Galatians. Evidently those to whom he was writing had become more or less confused regarding the relative importance of, as well as their own relationship to, these Covenants. In chapter 4:22-26 he points out that the first two Covenants, the Abrahamic and Law, were typified by the first two wives of Abraham — Sarah and Hagar — that Abraham himself represented God. Although in this connection he had no occasion to refer to the third Covenant, we may safely assume that the apostle saw in it the third wife of Abraham, viz., Keturah, as a type of the New Covenant.

The apostle in this same chapter points Out that Sarah’s son, Isaac, was typical of the Church of the present age, and Hagar’s son, Ishmael, typical of the nation of Israel. He says, “Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman; which things are allegorical, the women are the two Covenants. Hagar represents Sinai—that is the Law, and her son Ishmael answereth to the Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But (the new) Jerusalem above is (of) the freewoman, for she is our mother, so we brethren, as Isaac was. are the children of promise (Abrahamic Covenant), we are not the children of the bondwoman (Law Covenant), but of the free.” Thus in type the Law Covenant is represented as being the mother of Israel, and the Abrahamic Covenant, or promise, the mother of the Church.

The Abrahamic Covenant or promise is termed by the apostle the “Gospel” (Gal. 3:8), and he points out that those who were seeking to leave the freedom of the Gospel to seek salvation by the works of the Law were identifying themselves, with Ismael in preference to Isaac.

In other words, in their blindness they were sacrificing their relationship as heirs of God to ‘become bondservants, for as Sarah (the free woman) is superior to Hagar (the slave), so also ‘is the Abrahamic Covenant superior to the Law Sovereignty. In Hebrews 3:2-6 the apostle speaks of Israel as a “house of servants” under Moses, -and the Church as a “house of sons” under Christ.

Although the Abrahamic Covenant was confined in Abraham’s day, yet it did not become operative or bear seed till the beginning of the Gospel Age (Gal. 3:16). “That seed (promised in the Covenant) was Christ.” The barrenness of this Covenant for a time was also shown in the type of Sarah, who, though promised a seed, yet remained childless till after Hagar’s son was born.

The apostle tells us that Christ was the seed of promise; He was the one that God had in view when He said, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gal. 3:8).

The whole world lay under condemnation to death, and before any permanent blessing could come to the race, the death sentence must first be “removed, and God’s justice satisfied by a ransom. Adam; the one who sinned, forfeited a perfect life, and therefore the one who would redeem and bless the race must also have a perfect life, to give in exchange in order to satisfy the claims of justice against the first man.

None such was found but the Lord Himself (Rev. 5:5). “In Him was life,” unforfeited by “sin. He gave Himself a ransom for all, and thereby proved Himself to be the true seed of promise and heir of the Abrahamic Covenant. But we are assured (Gal. 3:29) that this seed is composed of many members. In other words, Christ the seed, embraces not only our Lord Jesus but the various members of His body.

Our Lord became the seed at His consecration, when He offered Himself in sacrifice to God on behalf of the race. We must follow in His steps’, ‘but, unlike our Lord, we, as part of the condemned race, have no life to offer; and before we can have any standing in God’s sight or offering that will be acceptable to Him, we must first be justified. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1).

But justification alone does not bring us into ‘Christ, or make us members of the seed; it merely gives us a standing before God, free from condemnation. It brings us to the same standing as our Lord before His consecration, only that ours is a, reckoned perfection, whereas our Lord’s was actual. Then by following in His steps, and presenting ourselves a living sacrifice, as He did, we are begotten of the holy spirit, and reckoned no longer as human but as spiritual. We are now new creatures in Christ Jesus, members of the promised seed (Gal. 3:29). As the blessing of the race cannot come till the last member of this seed is added, we see that God’s purpose in this age is not the conversion or uplifting of the world, but to prepare a class—the, great “seed” -through which the blessings will come in the next age (Eph. 1:10; Rev. 22:17).

The Law Till Seed Should Come.

Throughout the Jewish Age, God’s promise to Abraham was more or less lost sight of, and it seemed as though Israel after the flesh was the true seed and heir of Abraham. But when Christ, the true seed, came, Israel was set aside, and the Law Covenant ended. The law was given till the seed should come, of whom the promise was made (Gal. 3:19; 2 Cor. 3:11; Col. 2:14).

The prophet Isaiah, speaking prophetically of the ending of the law, says: “Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away” (Isa. 50:1). Typically, this would represent Abraham addressing Ishmael, and saying, “Why did I send your mother away? Had I any occasion to divorce her? Or, did I require to sell her to one of my creditors?” These queries imply negative answers. Then comes the explanation, “For your iniquities is your mother put away.” Abraham found no fault with Hagar, but because of her son’s iniquity, in persecuting Isaac (Gal. 4:29), both mother and son were cast out (Gal. 4:30).

In the antitype, God found no fault with the law; it was perfect; nevertheless, because of the iniquities of the nation of Israel, in rejecting and persecuting the anti-typical Isaac, the Lord Jesus Christ, God cast off the nation, and made an end of their covenant.

The New Covenant In Type And Antitype.

Following the argument of the apostle in Gal. 4, showing Sarah and Hagar as representatives of the two Covenants, we may take the third wife of Abraham, Keturah, by whom he had many sons, as typically representing the New Covenant, under which all nations are to receive a blessing. It is interesting to note that in the type, Isaac inherited all of Abraham's possessions, conforming to the apostle's statement that the antitypical Isaac class are the heirs of God.

Abraham, however, gave gifts to all the sons of his other wives, representing in type the blessing of Israel and the world of mankind during the Millennium (Gen. 25:1-6). While Moses was mediator of the Law Covenant, we read that Christ is the Mediator of a better Covenant—the New Covenant (Heb. 8; 6, 7), and with Him will be associated the Church as members of His body.

A mediator is one who acts as a “go-between,” a middleman (medius—the middle), whose duty it is to bring both parties together, and to see that the terms of an agreement are faithfully carried out.

The work of the mediator under the New Covenant is represented in a threefold aspect—Prophet, Priest, and King. As prophet, he will enlighten the whole world, opening the blind eyes (Isa. 35:3-10); as priest he will, apply the merits of the sacrifice accomplished at Calvary on their behalf; and as king, he will rule in righteousness, compelling all to submit to the laws and regulations of His Kingdom, or suffer the penalty—death (Acts 3:23).

The Church of the present time requires no mediator to bring them into harmony with God; having accepted Jesus Christ as their Redeemer, they are justified by faith, but we still require the advocacy of the merits of the blood in order to cleanse us of our daily short-comings. “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

The Church does not participate in the benefit of the New Covenant, because the New Covenant will not be fully sealed nor come into operation till the last member of the Church is glorified. The apostle says: “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” Had we been under the New Covenant, he could not have said this.

Are we justified by any Covenant? No; we are justified by our faith in Christ. If Abraham and others of his day were justified by their faith apart from the New Covenant, so can we be; on the other hand, if we cannot be justified apart from the New Covenant, it follows that no one else could, which conclusion would be contrary to the records of Scripture. Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed; (if we come under the New Covenant? No.) if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead (Rom. 4:3, 23, 24).

Was not Christ acting as our mediator when He died on our behalf? No. A mediator must be a mediator of some Covenant. Now, we are children of the promise which the apostle assures us had no mediator, because it was an unconditional agreement (Gal. 3:20).

By Christ's death and resurrection He established His right and fitness to be the Mediator. He has now the right to mediate by virtue of His sacrifice, but will not begin that work till after the sealing is completed, and the merits of the blood applied on behalf of the world. This, is in harmony with 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. “There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for, all, to be testified in due time”; also Hebrews 9:15;

Ransom and mediation are two different things. The ransom was the price paid to/ justice to redeem the race from death. Mediation is the work of restitution by which the world will be, gradually brought to perfection and harmony, with God during the Millennium.

It has been thought that 2 Cor. 3:6 teaches that we are under the New Covenant; but it does not say we are blessed by the New Covenant, but “that God has made us able ministers of the New' Covenant. The minister of a covenant is not the one who participates in its blessings, but the one who dispenses them. Moses was the minister of the Law Covenant by sealing and dispensing its blessings to the nation of Israel. The Christ—Head and Body—are the ministers of the New Covenant, sealing it, and dispensing its blessing of life and protection to the world in the coming age.

The chief point of 2 Cor. 3:6-16 is the contrast between the glory revealed through. Moses in the type, in the inauguration of the Law Covenant, and the more excellent glory that belongs—to the Church as ministers of the New Covenant, In short, it is a contrast between the passing glory, attached to the mediator of the Law' Covenant, and the permanent and far-exceeding glory associated with the mediator of the. New Covenant. As in the type the face of Moses shone (his glory” was revealed) when he came down from the mount of God a second time, so it is at the ,second presence of the Lord, when He comes down from, the mount of God the second time, that the members of the

Church will shine forth the, sun in a “glory that excelleth” that of Moses the type. But as yet this glory is ours only hey,, faith, so the apostle adds, “seeing then that we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech and faint not.” (2 Cor. 3:12; , 4: 1.)-

Taking Away The First, Establishing ‘The? Second.

In Heb. 10:9 does the apostle teach that when the Law Covenant ended, the New Covenant took its place? No. The apostle is not discussing the Covenants in this connection. He is dealing with the typical and anti-typical sacrifices.

This is -very evident from the rest of the chapter. His, main point is to prove to the Jewish people that ; their institution of sacrifices was not a permanent arrangement, but that, according to their own I prophets, it would pass away and give place, to .. the better sacrifices. Having first shown that the • blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, (verse 4), he quotes the 40th Psalm (a prophecy, pointing to our Lord’s sacrifice of Himself). and says this is why, “When He cometh into the world, He saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” “Then said He, lo, I come to do Thy will, O God (by sacrificing Himself). He taketh away the first (or typical sacrifices) that He might establish the second (and permanent sacrifice) .. . for by one offering (in two parts—Head and Body) hath He perfected for ever’ them that are sanctified” (v. 14).

Heb. 10:16, which is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:33, 34, refers to the days of Israel’s dis favour, during which time Israel as a nation was trodden down, and the dominion of the world given over to the Gentile kingdom. After those days of disfavour, God will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, and eventually with the whole world, under which His spirit will be poured out upon all flesh, and all shall know Him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.

The apostle’s argument is to show how convincing Jeremiah’s prophecy is. It says, “their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” His deduction is this, if their sins are at any time to be remembered no more, it amid not be under the typical sacrifices, for there was a remembrance of sins made every year, therefore the prophecy argues the introduction, at some time, of a new and permanent basis of satisfaction for sins. which the apostle shows was the sacrifice of Christ.

Some have thought from Matt. 26:28 and Luke 22:20 that the New Covenant ‘Was sealed and became operative when our Lord died. Had not the Church been arranged for in God’s plan. the New Covenant would have, undoubtedly, been ratified when Christ died, and immediately have been put into operation on behalf of the dying world; but, according to God’s purpose, as revealed in the Scriptures, He has arranged that the Church, the members of Christ’s body, should also participate in His death, as well as share in His resurrection. Our Lord indicated this when He said, “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?” (Matt. 20:22). The apostle says the Church are joint heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that they suffer with Him, that they may be also glorified together; and he goes on to state further in the same epistle (Romans) that each individual member of the body must be a living sacrifice. When the sacrifice is presented, the High Priest lays his hand on it, and thus it is written of the Church, “We are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” (Rom. 8:36.)

The Levitical sacrifices mentioned in Heb. 9 were ordained by God for the purification of earthly things, but the spiritual things (all things pertaining to the kingdom) are to be purified with better sacrifices than these (v. 23). We have already seen that the seed of Abraham is Christ and the Church (Gal. 3:16, 29) therefore, it will not be till the seed is complete (the sacrificing over) that the blessings will come to Israel and all the families of the earth under the New Covenant.

A Message from Sydney.

The following message has been received from the secretary of the Sydney Class:—"We have had a wedding in our Ecclesia, on 4th June last. Sister Sheppard was married to Brother McGrath, and now they are united in a bond of spiritual companionship to walk together the rest of the way here on earth. The legal ceremony was performed at the Registrar's office. Then we travelled to my home where a short service was held, about ten of the friends attending. First there was a brief address mentioning how much higher, spiritually, such a ceremony was than those in the world, and how much more, spiritually, was expected of the contracting partners. The symbol also of Christ and the Church was referred to and the polishing process that necessarily the partners must undergo, but that the reward would be high and the brilliance of these diamonds great in the end. Then a Brother asked a blessing upon the bridal pair, and we closed with hymn 230 (310 B.S. Hymnal) , the bridal hymn."

Notices,

It is expected that a Baptism Service will be held in Melbourne later this year, and any friends wishing to symbolise their consecration to God are invited to communicate with this office. Possibly a date could be arranged to suit any country friends desiring to avail themselves of this opportunity.

In view of the further expected increase in postage rates arrangements may be made to post out two months' copies of "Peoples Paper" under the one cover. Should this be adopted our readers will understand that one issue would be later in arriving and the next would be early.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 N. ,, 4.45 p.m.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

Why go to Church?

A LEAFLET was distributed in Melbourne recently with the above heading. There is no indication from which church denomination it came, but probably it represents the sentiments of most church systems, and clearly shows the lack of spiritual outlook amongst church leaders to-day, and fulfils the words of the prophet Amos respecting "a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."

The leaflet reads as follows:—"Our Church gave us Democracy, Trade Unions, Public Schools, Education,

Hospitals, the best in art, music, literature, and has always tried to lift the progress of the human ever upwards. It was the policy of the world, until Christ came, to leave the poor, the sick and the slaves well alone; if she is not doing other things as forcibly to-day, or the things we think she ought to be doing, it is because we are not in the Church to help her do so.

"We all agree that man is a higher creature than an animal, and if war and other injustices are ever to be done away with it will be by the spirit of Christ working through the Church. However sincere our friends may be who believe that man can make a set of rules to usher in a golden age with shorter hours, more money, all the luxuries, etc. (these are all right, quite right, and we should all do our bit in sharing in the responsibility to make it so), it is not everything."

The last paragraph of the leaflet reads:—"Certainly we of this age are as industrious as bees; life is lived to-day at a fast pace, with our aeroplanes, cars, etc. Caught in the ferris-wheel of life and the social swirl of events, we love it, every minute of it, but surely we can spend one hour of our time per week in the quietness and tranquility of the Church atmosphere and think of deeper things, so helping to keep alive the Church and all it stands for. As we all know, deep down, she is the greatest institution of all time for the peace and happiness of we humans. So come along next Sunday, mate; you will be very welcome."

The above reveals a sad but very true picture of the hopes and ambitions of leaders and members in the church systems to-day. The appeal in the leaflet for people to spend "one hour per week in the quietness and tranquility of the Church atmosphere, so helping to keep alive the Church and all it stands for," is pathetic indeed. The implication is, that by so doing a person is a Christian and is quite all right, which is most deceptive. Again, the claim that "if war and other injustices are ever to be done away with it will be by the spirit of Christ working through the Church," is equally deceptive and erroneous. The fact that the leaflet is so devoid of spirituality confirms the Scriptures and experience that the spirit of Christ has been withdrawn from the church systems for some considerable time. War and other world troubles are certainly to be done away by the Lord (Psa. 46:9, 10; Micah 4:1-4, etc.), but this will not be accomplished until the present world-order, including the church systems, goes down in ruins, to make way for the Kingdom of Christ. The Apostle Peter declares of "the day of the Lord," that "the heavens (ecclesiastical systems) shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also (earthly order of society), and the works that are therein shall be burned up." However, Peter ends with a very hopeful and encouraging outlook for the Lord's true people, when he continues—"Nevertheless we, according to God's promise, look for new heavens (Christ and His Church in glory) and a new earth (new earthly order of society), wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3:10, 13.)

No wonder that the Lord is calling to His people during this harvest time of the Gospel Age—"Come out of .her (Babylon — Mother and daughter systems) my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Rev. 18:2-5.) We may be sure also, that all the Lord's people giving heed to His call to come out of Babylon, through His Word and spirit, would be expected to stay out, and not compromise in any way with the rejected church systems. Rather, they will feast upon the precious truths of God's Word with others of the Lord's people, or alone, if in isolation, and thus have their Lord's blessing and approval, and be true guides to others who may also be hungering for the truths of His Word.

Working Out Our Salvation.

(Phil. 2:12, 13. Convention Address.)

PAUL is here addressing the church, not the I world. The world is not now on trial for salvation. This exhortation is applicable only to those whose sins have been forgiven, and who through Christ have been brought into special relationship with God. This class alone is able to appreciate the import of the Apostle's words.

In the chapter from which our text is taken, the Apostle Paul pays a beautiful tribute to the church at Philippi. He refers in tender and loving terms to their obedience always to his instruction and counsel, not only when he was present with them, but likewise in his absence. He urges them to continued faithfulness and earnestness in this good way. He desires that they make still further progress in the Master's likeness, working out in themselves through humility and obedience the character - development necessary, with fear and trembling, doing their part in the attainment of the salvation to which they had been called in Christ.

While addressed to the church at Philippi, the Apostle's words come down to us to-day no less forcibly. How wonderfully, the Lord blessed the Apostle's writings, and used them for the benefit of the entire church from Paul's day right down to the present time. They apply to all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. He reminds us as he did the Philippian church that we are to "work out our salvation."

The question arises: Does this exhortation to work out our own salvation conflict with Paul's other statement, that our salvation "is not of works, lest any man should boast" ? We reply, No. Our salvation from death is entirely by faith. As fallen human creatures we have no opportunity of doing any works that would justify us before God. Until we have been accepted into God's family, no works that we could do would be acceptable. God, who is perfect, is not pleased to receive anything imperfect, either works or anything else. But when we have received the forgiveness of our sins—not by works, but by faith—and have become sons of God, through consecration and spirit-begetting, then comes the time when we can do acceptable works, for we are then members of the Lord's family, and the holy spirit within us, through this begetting, now has an opportunity to show itself, to do some works. In other words, as imperfect human beings, we cannot work out our salvation, but as new creatures we can do this. (Phil. 4:13.)

Being justified by the blood of Christ, and being called with the heavenly calling, we can do our share in this great work of our own preparation for our future station and glory. We do this by giving heed to the instructions of our Lord—by allowing His Word to dwell in us richly, and following the example which He has set us. We can never attain perfection in the flesh, but from the beginning of our consecrated life, our heart, our intention, must be wholly loyal—God would not accept a half-hearted consecration and day by day this heart intention must become more and more fixed in the way of righteousness. We are to continue the work of bringing our very thoughts, as well as our words and doings, into subjection, and enlisting our talents in the service of the Lord.

It is encouraging for us to know that this warfare is not one which we must wage alone. It is God who has led us thus far, and provided for all our needs in Christ; it is He who has implanted in our hearts the desire to do His good pleasure, and He will continue to lead and help us, and work in us by His Word of truth, if we continue to give heed to His counsel. The Gospel message is the "power of God unto salvation" unto everyone who accepts it, and no greater stimulus can be found than the "exceeding great and precious promises" given to us, that by these we might become "partakes of the divine nature."

Our salvation is a salvation from death to life, from sin to righteousness. Moreover, it is a transformation from human nature to divine. The first step to our salvation was the work accomplished by our Lord Jesus at Calvary. "He died for our sins." But the death of Christ was not sufficient to give us justification before God. No, a dead Saviour would avail us nothing. In order to help us out of our fallen state, Christ must rise again from the dead, as the Apostle Paul states it—"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Cor. 15:17, 18.) So, we see that the resurrection of Christ was a matter of vital importance. Christ must arise from the dead and ascend to the Father, there to present the merit of His sacrifice, before God could recognise us and justify us by faith. So, Christ has appeared in the presence of God for us (the church), thus opening the way for our justification by faith, and also our consecration—His righteousness making our sacrifice acceptable to the Father.

It is only a certain class which God is dealing with now. He is not dealing with the whole world at present, but only those who wish to turn away from all sin and to gain a character of holiness like unto Christ are now being received of God and trained and disciplined and fitted for the great work of the future—the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It is this special class, the “little flock” that God is seeking in this age, and the invitation has gone out, “If any man will come after Me let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me.” Yes, the class now being drawn to Christ will be made up of those who are willing to suffer something for Christ’s sake, for the Truth’s sake. These are the ones of whom the Apostle speaks in Rom. 8:4, saying, —”That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.” Christ demonstrated His perfection by keeping the law, and now, because we have accepted Him as our Saviour and are seeking to walk in His steps, the righteousness of the law is counted as fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

When our Saviour’s merit was imputed to us, all our past was forgiven, our blemishes covered, the Father accepted the offering, and our High Priest sacrificed us as justified human beings. At that moment we were begotten of the Father by His holy spirit, “to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.” We became embryo New Creatures, who were then to grow and develop day by day until, in due time, we would be born as spirit beings on the divine plane, if faithful unto death.

The working out of our salvation is no small matter; only by the Lord’s grace to help us could we continue the work to its completion. It calls for patient, steady, earnest effort day by day --a gradual bending heavenward of that which naturally tends towards things of earth. We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We must “put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of our minds; and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Eph. 4:22-24.)

The Apostle’s exhortation comes to each one individually,—”Beloved, work out your own salvation.” Our salvation to the heavenly calling it not completed yet. The new life is begun in us, and this new life is to grow, to develop, in all the graces of patience, self-control, godliness, brotherly-love, etc. So our Lord warns us, “Take heed that no man take thy crown.” (See Heb. 3:1 -4 ; Rev. 3:1, 2, Diaglott.)

We must work out our salvation. This is something which each new creature in Christ must do for himself or herself by the Lord’s assisting grace. One cannot work out the salvation of another. The expression “work out” has a peculiar force and meaning. It suggests something that will cost us an effort—something that requires time, patience and perseverance. Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that His children are to be merely passive in His hand; but the Apostle Peter, as well as Paul, does not so express it. (See 1 Pet. 1:13-16.) Peter exhorts us not to fashion ourselves according to the former manner of our lives, in our ignorance of God and His truth, but rather we are to strive to be holy in our manner of living. (Revised Version.) There is a work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles on their behalf, are greatly deceived and have need to give earnest heed to the Apostle’s injunction to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

In writing to the Romans (chapter 13:11, 12), Paul says, “that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” Even though we have been awakened from the sleep of sin, there seems to be a danger that we may become somewhat drowsy concerning the wonderful salvation set before us. We must not allow ourselves to become “slothful in our diligence” but maintain our fervency of spirit in our service of the Lord. (See Rom. 12:11, Revised Version.)

The Heavenly Father has predetermined that His New Creation shall all be copy-likenesses of Christ. The faithful overcomers must all be proved and found loyal to God and the principles of His Word. The Lord our God proveth us to see whether we love Him with all our hearts. When we made our covenant with the Lord by sacrifice, we promised that we would live henceforth not for self, nor for the things of this world; but that we would live for Christ. His will would be our chief concern; self would be denied and we would take up our cross daily and humbly follow in the steps of our Lord who left us the-example. So it is well that we examine ourselves from time to time, to see to what extent we are carrying out our vows of consecration. Our Lord said, “Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.” (Luke 21:34.) How we need to take heed to ourselves—to examine ourselves, to criticise and correct ourselves; and to watch and pray continually so that we may walk more closely in harmony with the Lord’s requirements. The proper judging or examining of ourselves will assist us in the working out of our salvation.

In Heb. 3:14 the Apostle tells us that “we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.” How important is this matter of faith. We Will need to be strong in faith in order to be successful in working out our salvation, for without faith it is impossible to please God. And then the Apostle Peter tells us that we will need to give all diligence to add to our faith (by which we are justified) virtue, i.e., real goodness of character; this can only come after we have made full consecration of ourselves to God; then knowledge, which apart from consecration might puff up the mind, but received into a humble heart will nourish and sustain; then moderation,

control, the spirit of a sound mind is necessary to make proper use of the knowledge attained; and patience, or the cheerful endurance of hardship, that we may be properly exercised by our experiences, and further developed in piety, godliness, sterling character, justness, a clear perception and determination to carry out that which is right, pleasing to God. Brotherly-love must also grow; a love that loves God, must love also him that is begotten of God. "He that saith he loves God and hateth his brother is a liar." (1 John 4:20.) But while it is easy to love the brethren in Christ, to love them that love us, there is a further step into the likeness of Christ, for "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." We must love all men; yes, even our enemies. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray (that is, not formally, but with desire for their good) , for them which despitefully use you ,and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:44, 45.)

We notice that the Apostle Peter's exhortation—"Give diligence to make your calling and election sure," is similar in meaning to that of Paul's, who says—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." The thought in both these texts is that there is a work for each follower of Christ to do in the matter of attaining the prize set before us. God is faithful who has given us the exceeding great and precious promises. He has made every necessary provision for us, and will sustain us all along the way, and indeed, without His help we could do nothing, but the Lord will expect us to show our appreciation of His goodness by our earnest desire to co-operate with Him in respect of the high calling to which He has called us in Christ.

Why does the Apostle say we should work out our salvation with "fear and trembling"? Does the Lord wish His children literally to tremble with fear before Him? We believe the Apostle's thought is that we should exercise great care in respect of everything pertaining to our heavenly calling. It is the most important thing in the world to us, and we should realise how great a privilege is ours, as well as our responsibility, to make the best possible use of the many favours and blessings so freely bestowed upon us.

As we consider Christ's example, also that of Paul's, what an encouragement their lives are to us along the line of earnestness of purpose in doing the will of God. Our Lord said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." (John 3:34.) How earnestly He set Himself to know and do the Father's will. Also Paul said, "For me to live is Christ." (Phil. 1:21.) He had no other aim in life but to do his Master's will. So we want to have more of the proper reverence toward God—the holy fear to do anything displeasing to Him—the earnest desire to have His approval and blessing.

The reason why we should work out our salvation with fear and trembling (with great carefulness) is, that it is God who is working in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The thought that God, the Almighty Creator of all things, has chosen us, invited us, and given us of His spirit to enable us to run the heavenly race, should inspire us to zeal and diligence in the Christian way. God is working in us, to cause us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The question is: How are we reacting to the influences of His spirit which are at work in us and around us? Are we so fully appreciating the great love of God toward us (manifested in His Word, and also in the life and sacrificial death of our Saviour) , that we are being constrained daily to yield our hearts and minds and all our powers in loving, willing obedience to His will? Are we earnestly watching to keep our hearts—our motives as well as our thoughts—pure and in harmony with whatsoever things are just and honourable and good and true? Is the love of God more and more being shed abroad in our hearts, and is it our one aim to be changed into the likeness of the character of Christ? Can we say with the poet

"My highest place is lying low
At my Redeemer's feet;
No real joy in life I know,
But in His service sweet."

If so, then we may well be glad that we are learning some good lessons in the school of Christ, and we can be assured that He who has begun the good work in us will also complete it, if we continue to follow on in obedience and trust. So may the good work go on in us. Let us resolve that as each day comes around we will strive to learn the lessons God is seeking to teach us; the lesson of patient - submission to His will; the lesson of kindness and consideration for those around us and with whom our lives are linked; the lesson of trust and willing co-operation with God and with each other as members of the family of God. So then the working out of our salvation will be a labour of love. God, through His Word and spirit will work in us while we work out by His grace. (1 Cor. 15:58.)



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Health Promoted by Righteousness. -- The Power of Thought.

“Be in health even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2.)

IN this day of general awakening and independent thinking many are coming to realise the wonderful power of mind over the body. They fancy that this is something new, and some even appropriate as a name for their theories the “new thought”. Other names are Christian Science, mental healing, hypnotism, mind cure, etc. Peculiarly enough, all these writers find the best expression of their sentiments in the language of the Scriptures, although they ignore the Scriptural teachings as a whole and very evidently do not understand them. For instance, favourite among their quotations are these: “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,” (Prov. 23:7) ; “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds,” (Rom. 12:2) ; “Changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord,” (2 Cor. 3:18) ; “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,” (Gal. 6:7). But notwithstanding tributes to the teachings of the Bible, so far as we can discern, few of these “mind-cure” teachers are really “believers” in the Scriptural sense of the word. Very generally, while referring to Jesus in a respectful manner, they give evidence that they do not accept Him as the only teacher—the sent of God. Rather, they seem to class Him with Plato, Socrates, Confucius and others of the good and great, and to accept His teachings as on a parity with theirs.

On A False Foundation.

We do not claim that these various theories are wholly bad. Satan now realises that it is impossible to shut out the light of the oncoming day. Hence, his transformation, by which he becomes a ‘eiders teacher, ate along what might be termed good lines in many respects. He would be, a teacher of gentleness, quietness of spirit, good thoughts, pure thoughts. In this capacity he is now flooding the world with spurious teachings, and making a special point of mental healing. Indeed, we cannot doubt that he even stands prepared to assist these theories, which he is now promulgating, by granting blessings of health and relief from disease to those whom he would more particularly associate with himself and his theories. This power is manifest to some extent in the healings done in the name of Mormonism, in the name of Christian Science, in the name of Spiritism, in the name of occultism, in the name of Mind Cure, etc.

The Scriptures everywhere recognise Satan not only as a malevolent being, opposed to God and to righteousness, but they declare that he does possess certain powers for evil. In olden times these were known as occult powers, and the Apostles wrote about those who were afflicted of the devil. Our Lord said of one poor woman whom He healed , “whom Satan bath bound, lo, these eighteen years.” (Luke 13:1 6.)

God declares in His Word His ability to completely control sin, and that, ultimately, He will do this—that Satan shall be bound during the thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, during which time the world will be blessed and uplifted from sin and death and the malevolent influences that are now upon mankind. They declare that even in the present time God will permit the wrath of man and evil intentions of Satan only as far as He can use these ultimately for good, and that the remainder He will restrain. In other words, God at the present time is gathering out of the world the ‘Little Flock”, the Bride of Christ, whom He designates His -jewels”; and He uses Satan and evil men and the wicked conditions of the present time to try, to prove, to test, to polish these saints whom He is preparing for the Heavenly Kingdom—for joint-heirship with His Son in the work of the Millennial Age—the work of uplifting humanity, so many as will return to God and righteousness.

We might say, then, that the adverse influences of the present time constitute... grindstone upon which these jewels are polished, and that Satan, through his various agencies, is used of the Lord in turning the grindstone. Note the experiences of Job, and how God in his case gave Satan permission to try, to prove, to test that noble man—to polish

him. Note that the Apostle similarly refers to his own experiences, saying that a certain adverse' condition of the flesh was used of Satan to buffet him, but that the Lord as-cured him, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9.) Therefore, says the Apostle, I will glory in my infirmities, since I shall have correspondingly more of the grace of God wherewith to resist them and be profited 'by them. For, he declares, the light afflictions of this present time are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look away from the things seen to the things that are unseen.-2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

"In All Deceitfulness Of Unrighteousness."

In these words the Apostle points out that Satan ,will be granted by the Lord special power in the end of this age, and that as a result there will be especially severe testings upon the people of God. We are to closely discriminate between Divine permission and Divine authorization. We are to remember that "God tempteth no man" (James 1:13), and that it is a totally different matter that He permits Satan to tempt. Thus, the Lord would separate the wheat class from the tare class, and not only so, but divide the wheat class. into two 'portions, two classes, a "Little Flock- of "more' than conquerors," and a "Great Company", loyal at heart, but not sufficiently zealous' to be counted worthy of a place as members of the Bride of Christ.

So much for the reasons why God permits Satan now to masquerade as the champion of pure thoughts and righteous living and to deceive and lead, astray all those who, having the Word of God in their hands, have loved the error rather than the light, or, as the Apostle puts it, they receive not the truth in the love of it; therefore, there comes now to them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that they may all be condemned that it may be manifested that they were not worthy of the glorious things which God has in reservation for those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, who love the truth and hate falsehood. (See 2 Thes, 2:8-12.)

Selfishness and Falsehood Rewarded.

We are not uncharitable but truthful when we sly that in the case of many of these false teachings the reward of health is sought from selfish motives purely; nor are we too severe when we say that health is frequently secured as a reward for systematic, falsification. The very teaching is that the facts are to be denied, and that the denial, the untruth, is to be insisted upon until it becomes a very part of one's being. Those who take this evil mind-cure are taught to lie to themselves as well as to others, and to say, "I have no pain, I have no aches, I am well, thoroughly well." This systematic lying is rewarded, no doubt, by the father of lies, who, if he had the power to inflict with all manner of diseases in olden times, doubtless has considerable of the same power to-day, and if he has power to inflict, would also have power to release from his affliction.

But, do you say, how could Satan be interested in such a propaganda? We reply: (1) That all who follow this prescription and learn to lie thoroughly to themselves thereby vitiate their own minds and consciences, so that thereafter they cannot reason correctly, because they have lost the foundation of truth. Their minds are in confusion, at least upon every religious subject. (2) By this so-called new light, new thought, new mind, science, etc., the Adversary directs and draws away from the true light, the true science. the Word of God. He kept it hidden for centuries, called the "dark ages"; then subsequently, as the Reformation light broke in, he endeavoured to turn it aside and to twist it and to misrepresent it; so now, when the true light is shining forth, showing that the Word of God is grand and beautiful and harmonious, and that our difficulties in the past were mistranslations and misinterpretations of the Word, Satan draws attention away from it entirely to what his unwitting votaries style the power of the new thought, the new mind. (3) Those whom Satan is using in this direction, as we have already seen, quote Scriptures freely wherever they can pervert them to an apparent support of their theories, but they do not really believe the Scriptures, neither do they really believe in Christ. Does this seem a hard saying?

We answer that by their works they deny Him, for although they use the name of Christ—as, for instance, Christian Scientists they really deny the foundation of His teachings. They deny, for instance, that man was ever perfect, in the image of God; they deny that he ever fell from perfection into sin; they deny that a death penalty was upon him; they declare that there is no such thing as sin and death, that belief in these are merely mental delusions that should be put away. And if they deny sin and death, of necessity, logically, they must also deny a redemption from sin and from death; and if they deny the redemptive work of Christ they as surely deny that He is the Redeemer.

"Look Unto Me And Be Ye Saved."

We are opposed to Satan and all his healing falsehoods and all the various delusive arguments by which he is now seeking to put darkness for light, and to make the true light of God's Word appear to be darkness.

While, therefore, others are selfishly looking to mind-cures, hypnotism, Christian Science, Spiritism, Occultism and

other “isms” for the cure of their maladies, let us hearken to the voice from heaven, saying, “Look unto Me and be saved”. (Isa. 45:22.) Let us be content to have what the Lord has promised us in His Word and to desire no more. Spiritual Israel enjoys God’s favour during this Gospel Age, but is not promised health, wealth and prosperity of an earthly kind.

Indeed, the spiritual Israelite is exhorted to have such an appreciation of the spiritual blessings offered him as would prompt him to gladly surrender all of the earthly blessings that he may have the heavenly—even to the extent of laying down wealth, strength, life itself in the service of the Lord and on behalf of the brethren. -We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,” says the Apostle. (1 John 3:16.) And the laying down of life frequently means the laying down of health and strength—it means self-denial in the interests of others. It is the reverse of seeking first physical health and personal advantage. Its rule is: Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness and all earthly blessings shall be added unto you according to the heavenly Father’s wisdom of what would be for your highest welfare.

The true. Christians, the Elect, are urged to set their affections on things above and not on the things of the earth, for they are reckoned as dead to the world and as having become alive as new creatures in Christ and, therefore, as enjoying with Him superior joys.

“Be In Health—Even As Thy Soul Prospereth.”

The Scriptures acknowledge sin, sorrow, pain, suffering, death, and they teach us to sympathize with those who are thus afflicted. They show us how all these are the works of the flesh and of the devil, that Satan was a murderer from the beginning, that it was all through his lie that our first parents were led into disobedience. They show that Satan’s course since has been to lead men downward through falsehood, through the perversion of their minds with all manner of untruth and impurity. They show God’s condemnation of sin and His declaration of sympathy, and the manifestation of that sympathy and love in the providing of Christ as man’s Redeemer. They show that ultimately the Redeemer is to be the King of the world and to take His great power and bind Satan, and destroy all unrighteousness, and lift up the poor fallen race during the Millennial Age, called in the Scriptures the “times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20, 21.) They tell us that this will be accomplished at the second coming of Christ, and that in the interim, between the time of the sacrifice of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom in power and great glory, a special work is in progress: namely, the selection of a Little Flock of footstep followers who, hearing of the grace of God, are so moved thereby to love righteousness and hate iniquity that they accept the Master’s invitation to walk in His footsteps of self-denial.

“A More Excellent Way.”

We have been surprised that Christian people of considerable development and experience have been attracted by the literature and theories of mind-cure, etc., when we have heard them comment upon the good, helpful advice given in some of these writings. We have been astonished that they did not seem to know how much better, advice is given in the Word of God, in comparison with which all such writings are foolish.

In illustration: These various “new-thought” instructors give out as a piece of news, as something thoroughly original with themselves, the declaration that fear is the basis of much of the pain and sorrow and disease of mind and- body which prevail. There is truth in this beyond a doubt, a truth not only recognised and taught long ago by physicians of every school, namely, that to fear a disease is to induce the disease: but the same lesson in much its best form is taught in the Scriptures. For centuries the Word of God has been telling such as have the ear to hear that while “the fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”, the “fear of. man bringeth a snare”. Does it not again declare that “fear bath torment”—restraint or trouble? Does it not exhort God’s people, saying,. “Pear not their fear, neither be afraid, but sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and let Him be your fear, and Him be your dread”? In other words, fear and dread nothing except what would be displeasing to God and therefore wrong and injurious toward yourself and others.

On the other side of the question, do not the Scriptures hold out hope and courage in a way that no other writings in the world ever did?. Do they not say, “Be of good courage, and He- shall strengthen thine heart”? Do they not apply this mental medicine to all of life’s* affairs and interests, as, for instance, assuring us that the Father knoweth what things ye have need of, and that He is more willing to give the holy spirit to them that ask Him than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children? Do they not assure us that “as our days, so shall our strngth be”, Do they not tell us that “no good thing” will be withheld from them that walk uprightly”? Is it not written, “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms ‘? “Thy help cometh from the Lord”; also, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”; “Take no anxious thought for the morrow”; “Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you”: “It is God that girdeth me with strength”; “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee”.

Their Rock Is Not Our Rock.

What' a rock foundation is thus presented in the Word of God for those who have the proper faith and .can claim these promises. How trifling in comparison are the words of the worldly-wise of our day, who are attempting to give the world the "new thought" — attempting to take away their fear, and instead to give them hope and courage. We might say, without fear of contradiction, that the only strength their position contains is gained from the occasional misapplication of Scripture. The peace, the joy, the rejoicing, the blessing, the comfort, the refreshment, the rest of heart set forth in the foregoing expressions of ,; sympathy and love and assurances of help, given in God's Word, are all and only for the Lord's beloved ones. These "new thoughts" are antagonistic to the Bible, and anti-Christian, in that they teach unregenerate men and women to ignore the sin which separates them from God, and to claim to be God's children and to appropriate thoughts of peace and of Divine favour. The Bible, on the contrary, denounces such doctrines as "doctrines of devils", because they ignore Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and aside from whom none can come unto the Father nor under Divine blessing, nor properly have peace with God.

Cleansed, Transformed, Renewed.

These philosophies of men seem to parallel the truth only on a false basis. This is further evidence that they are not merely of human origin, but that the father of lies has had to do with their arrangement and propaganda. They give out as a brand new thought that all disease is the result of filth, mental, physical, or both, and the proper course for man is to put away sinful thoughts, impure affections, from his mind, and to fill it instead with good things, that his body similarly should be cleansed by an abundant use of water, inwardly and externally; that the system should not be clogged by gluttony, else the blood will become impure and sickness result; that the air we breathe should be pure and plentiful, and that physical exercise is necessary to promote health. To all this we agree; it is all good, it is all useful, and we wish that all mankind—the world and Christians—might appreciate it and obey its suggestions. But it would be a mistake to suppose that these things are new to a Christian who is informed respecting the teaching of the. Word of God. Is he not therein taught by the Apostle. "Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit (mind)"? Is he not urged to be abstemious and instructed—"Let your moderation be made known unto all men"?

"The Perfect Law Of Liberty."

It is not a new thought that love should be the guiding, the controlling impulse among men everywhere, but the Bible first of all presented this teaching — love for God and the brethren, love for kindred, love for our neighbours, yea, even love for our enemies. It is the Bible that pre-eminently teaches that perfect love filling our hearts will cast out fear and selfishness, and that, relieved of these—which are the representatives of darkness—our whole bodies may be full of light and be refreshed and reinvigorated and strengthened, and that thus we may be blessed, not only in the life to come, but also in the life that now is. But we hold, with the Scriptures, that while a kind of love may be possible to the world, the real, genuine love which is of God can come only through the begetting of the holy spirit, and that all other loves are merely fragments or imitations of this true love. This love alone will stand the careful inspection and criticism which the Apostle gives us in 1 Cor. 13.

In proportion as we do by faith grasp the promises, and in proportion as we daily strive to live so as to maintain our relationship with the Father and with the Son, and with their precious promises, in that same proportion our faces will show all these—joy, peace, patience, love. These will gradually become more and more written in the lineaments of our faces, visible to all. And more and more will our health and strength prevail, spiritual and physical. And it is proper in this connection to remember the instruction of the Apostle, that we should not think about the evil and undesirable things, but think about the pure and good and noble things. Undoubtedly a poisonous effect upon the system is engendered by thinking about sinful or injurious things of any kind; undoubtedly also the body and mind are both strengthened by thinking about things noble and good and pure. The Apostle's words are, "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute; think on these things". And let us remember that the new commandment of the Master was that we should love one another; and the Apostle declares that "Love is the fulfilling of the law", and again the Master says that we should love even our enemies.

As daily and hourly we seek to cultivate this spirit of love, and to allow it to dominate in our words and thoughts and deeds. in the same proportion will be the measure of our blessing, because in this we will be "doers of the Word and not hearers only". We are not, however, to place too high an estimate upon the present life, and health and earthly blessing and joys; rather we are to be content with such things as we have, and to realise the Divine supervision of our affairs and to allow all of life's experiences to bring us more and more of the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and which should continually rule in our hearts. But while not seeking to save the present life, but rejoicing in the privilege of laying it down prudently in the Lord's service as opportunity offers, we will, nevertheless, find that the rest and peace of mind which come through believing and through following the Lord will be a favourable influence as respects our physical health, peace, joy, blessing. We who believe enter into rest now, and yet, as the

Apostle declared, "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." (Heb. 4:9.) We will attain that in our change in the First Resurrection—"we will be satisfied when we awake in His likeness.—(Psa. 17 :1 5.)

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." This is not to be understood as meaning that whatever a man thinks is true. That is a false definition; the correct thought respecting this statement is that what a man may seem to be outwardly is not necessarily a correct view of his real character; his heart, his will, his intention, is the real man as God sees him.

If, therefore, our hearts condemn us not we have peace with God; but if our hearts condemn us we know that God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things, and we should not have peace, but should repent of wrong-doing and come again into harmony with God, where we may enjoy true peace.

The Apostle illustrated this, saying, "If any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain." (James 1:26.) So surely as his heart is changed, so surely as he is begotten of the holy spirit, so surely as the spirit of love dwelling in his heart more and more abounds richly, it will affect not only his actions but also his looks and his words. He will seek to bridle his tongue, to bridle all of his passions, to be emptied of his former ambitions and desires, and to be filled with the noblest, the purest, and the best, which come from the fountain of grace and truth in the Divine revelation.

The Power Of The Will.

The majority of mankind, fearful and discouraged, fail to make the, best possible use of their talents and opportunities. The Scriptures instruct those who have entered the school of Christ that the will is the first matter that is to be settled—that a double-minded man, who has never a settled purpose in respect to his life, is unstable in all his ways. They urge positiveness—a full consecration of heart, mind, body, talents, everything to the Lord: and to those who take this position of a full consecration the Scriptures give valuable assurances, which should strengthen every fibre of the human body; as the Apostle expresses it, "Gird up the loins of your mind and hope to the end." And again he says, "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might"; "I can do all things through Christ. who strengthened me"; "According to thy faith be it unto thee". Oh, what marvellous power has come to weak and fainting hearts through the fixing of the will—the conversion of the will to do and to be in harmony with the Lord at any cost; and the appropriating then of these promises, exceeding great and precious, which belong to no others than this class! How many have found that thus the Lord's strength was made perfect in their weakness after they had taken the proper step of consecration — after they had exercised the faith which He called for, and which is necessary for our development! No wonder these can rejoice in the Lord; no wonder the Apostle says that they are able to rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation is working out the lessons of patience, experience and hope, and fitting them for the glorious things to come.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

“The Stranger goes to Church.”

SOME weeks ago a reporter of the Melbourne newspaper “The Sun” attended one of our Bible Studies in Melbourne and followed the study in John 15 with interest. Obtaining further information on our gatherings and the work carried on from this Institute, his report appeared in the “Sun” on 9th July. As over 407,004 of this paper were printed, no doubt quite a witness has been given in this way. With one or two minor corrections the report is as follows:—

A small band of Bible students who take their name from a Greek community mentioned in the, New Testament meet each Sunday in a hall at 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

They call themselves Bereans, from the 17th chapter of Acts: “They (the Bereans) received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily.”

They claim to be undenominational and to have no creed but the Bible. They say that human creeds are a hindrance and that many denominations have not progressed, still living around the leaders of the past. It was through dissatisfaction with the established denominations, which, they thought, did not encourage Bible study, that the movement began in the United States and Britain in the latter half of the last century. In Britain it is now known as the Associated Bible Students.

The Berean cause came to Australia 50 years ago, and the first Berean Bible Institute in Melbourne began in 1918, and is now in Ermington Place, Kew. Leaders say that the work is voluntary and that it makes no appeals. Main “mission” work is through publications, lectures and “Frank and Ernest” broadcasts in three States.

Several hundred followers are attached to ecclesias at Richmond, Geelong (Vic.), interstate capitals and other centres; and others are in isolated parts of country districts, as well as in New Zealand and throughout the world. A small group at Birchip (V.) shared in the Lord’s Supper there recently.

Weekly meetings (they are at 3 and 6 p.m., in Richmond) are conducted informally around a table. After a few hymns, and a prayer led by one of the group, students are invited by the chairman to contribute “thoughts” and questions on the chosen Bible passage and to quote other texts in support.

Bereans do not smoke, drink, attend football, races or entertainments. This abstinence, they say, is not a directive but in the spirit of “May I sacrifice?” Adherents are baptised by total immersion in rivers, the sea or in any body of water that might be handy. Baptisms are often conducted during four-day. Christmas Conventions in Melbourne.

Bereans observe the Lord’s Supper annually, believing that Christ intended it as a remembrance of His sacrifice, to replace the old, yearly Jewish Passover. This year’s observance was on 19th April.

No membership records are kept, but all who sincerely have faith in Christ’s sacrifice and seek to walk in His steps by faith and full consecration to God are recognised as fellow Christians.

Our Pilgrimage.

A scorching wind, a withering blast,
A desert stern and bare,
A journey long, with scarce a song;
But still my Lord is there.
A sky of blue—no clouds in sight
A pleasant garden fair
With birds and flowers, and happy -hours;
My Lord is also there.
Then teach us Lord in want, in pain,
In happiness, in rest
To trust in Thee whate’er our lot
And teach us Lord to murmur not,
For what Thou doest is best.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8,15 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 pan.

The Age of Man.

ONE of our brethren has recently sent a cutting from the Geelong (Vic.) “Advertiser” of July 7th, part of which reads as follows:—

“Discovery of three skeletons by two American anthropologists recently has given rise to new concepts of man’s early evolution. The human bones, dug up in Northern Iran by a University of Pennsylvania professor and a young Harvard University graduate student, are said to be 75,000 years old and probably art the oldest human remains ever found.”

The Biblical answer to the wild guesses of evolutionists is very clear and satisfactory to all who adopt the right attitude and desire to learn the truth on this and all other important subjects , found in God’s Word. The following short article is presented from the standpoint of the Scriptures:—

In the first place, the Bible plainly declares that man was a special, direct creation of God—not a creature that came into being haphazardly, or through “slow, infinitesimal steps of perpetual progress”, or by “survival of the fittest”. The account of man in Genesis is perfectly clear that “God created man in His own image, clear, in the image of “God created He him; male and female created He them”. (Gen. 1:27.) He was formed of the elements of the earth, after which he was infused with the breath of life. by divine power, “and man became a living soul.’ —Gen. 2:7.

Evolutionists, on the contrary, frankly scoff at these Biblical statements, or explain them away as being “an allegory”, which is but another way of saying that the Genesis account is a “fairy tale”. They would do away with the whole story of Adam and Eve if they could, for it doesn’t fit in with their evolutionary scheme. But if we discard this Genesis narrative, we also must dispense with much of the Bible—both the Old Testament and the New—for it is referred to by more than one inspired writer, right on down to the last section, the Book of Revelation. Jesus Himself is called “the second- Adam”, who will yet do for the race what the first. Adam failed to do by reason of *disobedience. In the New Testament Adam is positively called “the first man” (1 Cor. 15:45), and it reiterates that “Adam was first formed, then Eve.”-1 Tim. 2:13.

Again, the Bible is at variance with evolution: because it plainly shows that man fell from perfection to degradation, sin and death; but according to Darwin there has been no such thing as the “fall of man”. On the contrary, say the evolutionists, man has been steadily rising, as have all other animal and vegetable forms of life, from .the .very begining of creation of the first living cell, millions or billions of, years- ago. It should be clear to anyone that “evolution of man” and the “fall of man” are two diametrically opposite ideas that cannot be harmonized. If we accept the theory of human evolution, then we must discard the Genesis story of the downfall of man in Eden.

This means that we also must discard many other portions of the Word of God. The New Testament refers again and again to that original transgression, and declares that “in Adam all die” (1 Cor. 15:22) ; that “Adam was not deceived, but the -woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Tim. 2:14) ; and that “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin”. (Rom. 5:12.) It is evident that if we reject all those essential portions of the Old and New Testament because they do not coincide with Darwinism, then we undermine all confidence in the inspired Word of God in favour of “vain philosophy” and “science falsely so-called”. This is why a few ardent evolutionists would destroy the Bible if they could. But the Bible is true, and will endure for ever, while Darwinism will be forgotten.

Again, a problem which Darwinists have never been able to explain away is this: If man has been on earth for hundreds

of thousands of years, or even for twenty thousand years, multiplying as usual during all that time, why is the planet to-day so sparsely populated? At the present rate of increase it would not have taken long to amass a population of two billion—even after making allowance for destructive wars, famines and pestilences. Why, then, do we not have far more than two billion people now on earth, if humanity has ‘been multiplying here for as long as Darwinists claim?

The average rate of increase of various nations and races during a given period of time is not so very difficult to compute. Some peoples, of course, have had more hardships than others, which has limited their increase; but it should be possible to strike a fair average and thereby approximate what the increase of the entire human family should be during sixty centuries. Dr. Williams in his “Evolution Disproved” mentions the example of the Jewish people. Perhaps no race has experienced greater hardships throughout the centuries than they have suffered. Hence their known rate of increase, under such unfavourable circumstances, should furnish a conservative clue as to what the average rate of increase of the world at large should have been during the nearly 6,000 years since the actual dawn of human history.

If Jacob had lived 60 instead of about 38 centuries ago,, could he within that time have propagated a race which would now number 2,000,000,000 souls—almost equivalent to the world’s present population? If so, then why could not Adam have done precisely the same thing? If, starting with one human pair, it would be possible, in 60 centuries, to produce a generation of about two billion people—such as exists on this earth to-day--that would dispose of the necessity of insisting upon an extreme age for the human race, at least on that score. Let us now see what Israel’s average rate of increase has been since Jacob’s day.

Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, was the father of the Jewish nation; his twelve sons were the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob was born about 1900 B.C., or a little over 38 centuries ago. The Jewish Yearbook of a few years ago estimates the present number of Jews throughout the world to be about 17,000,000. It is a simple problem in mathematical progression to determine at what rate the house of Jacob has increased to produce this number.

The figure 2, doubled successively for only 24 times (i.e., 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc.) yields a product of about 17,000,000. Evidently, therefore, the Israelites have doubled their population about 24 times during the 38 centuries since Jacob’s day. This would be one doubling every 160 years, approximately. If Israel, throughout its centuries of repeated servitudes, dispersions and pogroms, could double its population every century and a half, it would seem that all other people should have been able to do the same. Certainly the entire world must have been able to double its population at least’ once every two centuries, if Israel could do it every 160 years.

If Adam and Eve were created nearly 6,000 years ago, as the Bible states, and the world’s population has doubled once every two centuries (which is even slower than the persecuted Jews have multiplied), then, there have been about 31 doublings since Adam’s day. And if we take the figure 2 and double it for 31 times it yields the number, 2,147,483,648, which, in fact, is approximately the present population of the world.

Now if man has been multiplying on this earth even for 50,000 years or longer, then why does not the world have a greater population than about two billion to-day? If Adam and Eve had been Jews, and had doubled the population as rapidly as the house of Jacob is known to have multiplied during the past 38 centuries, there now undoubtedly would

be more people on earth than we have. But figuring even more conservatively than the Jewish rate of increase, we thus find that we still are able to account for the present world population by starting with only one pair just 6,000 years ago. The Bible thus stands corroborated by plain statistics and common sense, while the wild guesses of the evolutionists have neither science nor reason to support them.

If the age of man is only about 6,000 years, and started with but one pair in Eden, as the Bible says, then it is evident that the total number of persons who have lived and died within that time could not have been much in excess of 20 or 25 billions. It is easily possible for that number of people to be supported on this earth simultaneously under the perfect conditions of Christ’s Kingdom. The Bible is not unreasonable, therefore, when it declares that all that are in their graves shall come forth, and that “whosoever will” of both the living and the dead shall be restored to the condition of perfect manhood from which Adam fell, and will be privileged to live forever upon this earth which also then will have been perfected.

The earth will never become over-populated, because the Creator will cause the propagation of the race to cease, eventually. Jesus implied this, when He said that in the resurrection they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. Adam and Eve were commissioned to “multiply and fill the earth”, but not to overfill it. That commission now has been almost fully complied with.

Evolution has sought to turn the resurrection into an absurdity, but science and reason are now making evolution the greatest absurdity of all; and God’s Word is being steadily corroborated.

The Oldest Book

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE.

(W. G. Thompson.)

I am the oldest book in existence, having outlived the storms of thirty centuries. Men have endeavoured to banish me from the face of the earth; they have hidden, torn and burnt me, and have done to death tens of thousands of my faithful witnesses. No other book has been more bitterly hated; no other book has been so dearly cherished; no other book has been so misrepresented and misunderstood; but to-day, while so many of my foes slumber in death, I still live on.

It is not for me to speak of the conflicting creeds laid to my charge, but on behalf of the one true purpose of my revered Author I appeal to reason. Look at the stately trees of the forest; the living green of the meadows bespangled by a thousand lovely, flowers; the singing birds that delight themselves amid the beauties of nature; the blue dome of heaven, illuminated by the sun, moon, and stars that space out a universe too immense for man to fathom; and know that the Creator of these things has a wise and loving purpose equally great and beautiful on behalf of man. —Isa. 55:6, 13.

There is revealed within my covers a plan so broad and a design so deep as to be beyond the power of human, origin. My story centres around the Redeemer, who by the grace of God tasted death for every man. Based upon this atoning sacrifice all the dead will be raised, and the whole earth made glorious with life and happiness everywhere, without a trace of sorrow, pain or death —Isa 11:9; 60:13; Rev. 21:1-7.

My message has blessed every follower of Jesus. It has inspired them with hope; encouraged them to zeal, comforted them in sorrow, and strengthened them in faith, till they have laid down their all in death, awaiting their grand reward. Like the crystal springs from the mountainside which flow on and on to refresh the luxuriant verdure on the plains below, so in the glad day now at hand the waters of truth will

Impart their life-giving blessing to the willing and obedient of mankind, who will forever, with one sweet accord, praise, love and adore my beloved Author.—Rev. 5:8, 13.

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Volume XXXIV. No. 9 MELBOURNE, SEPTEMBER, 1951 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

The End of the World.

THE end of the world prophesied in the Bible is that which we see taking place in the earth to-day, that which in the final phases of its passing will likely be accomplished by the amazing scientific discoveries of the atomic bomb and other weapons of destruction. Due to a traditional misconception of this subject, however, the Biblical end of the world is generally understood to mean the destruction of the literal planet on which we live. Because of this, few care to give the subject the serious consideration it deserves—most people being inclined to dismiss the matter from their minds with the wish, expressed or implied, “I hope it doesn’t come in my day.” This wish is often father to the thought that no matter what the signs of the times may indicate, the end of the world is yet thousands of years in the future.

The World Of The Bible.

The term world, as used in the Bible, seldom refers to the planet earth. In the New Testament the term is, in the main, a translation either of the Greek word kosmos, meaning order or arrangement; or of the Greek word aion, meaning a period of time, an age.

The Greek word kosmos translated world in our English Bible doesn’t always refer to exactly the same thing.

In John 3:16 we read, “For God so loved the world (kosmos), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” In 1 John 2:15 we read, “Love not the world (kosmos), neither the things that are in the world.” Surely God would wish us to love that which He loves; so it is manifest that the “kosmos” of John 3:16 is not the “kosmos” of 1 John 2:15. It seems plain that the former applies to the people of the earth, while the latter has reference to the sinful, selfish arrangements and associations of the people.

Jesus, in John’s Gospel, chapters 14 and 15, has a great deal to say about the world or kosmos which Christians are not, to love. He tells us, for example, that Satan is its prince. He explains that Christians must be expected to be hated by this kosmos, or world, even as the Master Himself was hated by it. He also explains that He has called His disciples out of this evil kosmos, and that they were to remain separate from its entanglements.

Certainly no one in reading these wonderful chapters has ever supposed that Jesus was discussing the literal planet earth. Why, then, should we suppose that when the prophecies describe the ending of this same kosmos, or world, they mean the destruction of the literal earth?

When the disciples asked Jesus the question, “What shall be the sign of thy coming (parousia, meaning presence) and the end of the world?” they used the Greek word meaning age. In answering this question Jesus presented a number of signs which would denote the ending of the age, and the beginning of a new age; but the circumstances of both ages are centered upon the literal planet earth, and the transfer from the old to the new age in no way implies its destruction, either by fire or otherwise.

Symbolic Fire.

Just as the Bible uses the term earth and world symbolically, so also does it use the words fire, fiery, burning, etc. Note, for example, St. Peter’s words, “Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” (1 Pet. 4:12.) We have never heard of any Christian becoming confused with this symbolic statement, thinking that it refers to literal fire. It is clearly description the trying experiences through which all Christians must pass, and by which the dross of characters is burned away.

But the righteous themselves are not destroyed by the fiery trials, as evidenced by the words of the prophet, when he says, “who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh ;righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despieth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.” (Isa. 33:14, 15.) Here, as in Peter’s symbol, the fire and the burnings are symbolic and the trials through which the righteous successfully pass are in no sense of the word to be understood as literal.

Another enlightening Biblical use of the term “fire” is that of Isa. 47:14. The text is part of a prophecy of destructive trouble that was to come upon Babylon. The trouble is likened to fire that shall consume; but that it is not literal, is revealed in the fact that part of the trouble—the symbolic fire—will be the lack of fire by which to keep warm. In short, there will be so much symbolic fire that there will be, at times, a lack of literal fire. We quote the passage: “Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to Warm at, not fire to sit before it.”

With the clearly established fact in mind that ‘the various terms used in the Bible which are thought to teach the literal destruction of the earth are often used symbolically, let us examine the 3rd chapter of the 2nd epistle of Peter, which is a prophecy pertaining chiefly to events now taking place in the earth. The prophecy describes this transition period as “the last days.”

In reading the chapter through one of the first ‘Mills of interest to note is that in giving as an illustration to explain events in the end of the age, the apostle tells us that a world came to an end . _at the time of the flood, “For this they willingly ate ignorant of, that by the word of God the Heavens were of old, and the earth standing out Of the water and in the’water: *hereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.”

It was not the literal earth that perished at the time of the flood, for, when the waters had subsided, the ark landed on Mt. Ararat, and there it wits>, tight back on the same planet. But a world, Or kosmos, ended, according to Peter. The ‘arrangement of things among men, their methods of, government, and civilization of that period, ended a new world was started of which Noah and his family were the nucleus.

Peter further explains that just as the symbolic heavens and earth that were before the flood, making up the kosmos of that period, came to an end, even so shall the -heavens and the earth, which are now,” come to an end. But as the literal heavens and literal earth did not perish at the time of the flood, we are not to suppose that this prophecy has reference to the destruction of the literal heavens and earth at the second coming of Christ. Indeed, such a conclusion would seem absurd, especially when we consider that the heavens as well as the earth are included in the picture of destruction, which, if interpreted literally, would involve the destruction of the whole universe.

Significance Of Heavens And Earth.

In using the terms earth and heaven to describe the kosmos or arrangement of things that are destroyed in the end of the age, the apostle is merely illustrating the earthly and spiritual phases of this “present evil world.” (Gal. 1:4.)

And this symbolism is a very fitting one. God uses sheep to illustrate His people, because certain characteristics of sheep are similar to traits of character possessed by those who faithfully serve Him. Likewise the relationship existing between the literal earth and the heavenly bodies, aptly illustrates certain fundamental characteristics of the present kosmos, or world.

Atmospheric conditions, the tides, seasons, days, nights, heat and cold, etc., here on the earth, are in direct relationship with the movements of the sun, moon and stars. So earth’s society, the present kosmos, or world, has its earth and heavens, with a similar relationship existing between the two. In other prophecies the symbolic heavens are described more in detail, and are shown to contain sun, moon, stars and clouds, etc. As the conditions develop which destroy the kosmos, the sun is said to become darkened, and the stars to withdraw their shining. See Joel 2:1-10; Luke 21:25, 26; Matt. 24:29.

Elements To Melt.

The Apostle Peter, instead of mentioning in detail the sun, moon, stars, sea and waves, that combine to form the present symbolic heavens and earth, speaks of all of these as the “elements” thereof. These are to melt with fervent heat. The one word much used to-day which seems best to describe what the Bible speaks of as the present kosmos is civilization. What men call civilization is made up of many elements—national, economic, financial and religious. The religious or professed spiritual elements of this present kosmos are clearly a part of that which is represented by the heavens, made up of the

symbolic sun, moon and stars. Already, as can be clearly seen, and as Jesus stated would be the case, “the powers of heaven” are being “shaken.” —Luke 21:26.

The Greek word for elements here used by the Apostle Peter is the same as employed by St. Paul, when, in Gal. 4:3, 9, he refers to the weak and beggarly “elements” of this “world.” Paul was referring to the elements of society as it then existed, such as Judaism, heathenism, etc. And it is the elements of society to-day that Peter refers to and which he declares are to “melt with fervent heat.” Viewed from this standpoint, who cannot see that the elements of this world, or kosmos, are already melting; that is, disintegrating, losing their cohesion?

The Earth Abideth Forever.

We know that the prophecies pertaining to the end of the world do not refer to a literal destruction of the earth, because the Scriptures tell us plainly that the literal earth “abideth forever.” (Eccl. 1:4.) God tells us furthermore, that His object in creating the earth was that it might be a home for man—“thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it. He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited.”—Isa. 45:18; Psalms 115:16.

In Psalm 78:69 we read that the Lord has established the earth forever. Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, assures us that the earth is to be the inheritance of the meek—a poor sort of inheritance if it is to be literally destroyed at the end of the age. From these few sample statements of the Bible we can see that it is plainly the purpose of the Creator that the planet earth is to continue everlastingly, but not under the ruler-ship of Satan, who is the prince of this present evil kosmos, or arrangement, under which the inhabitants of the earth are at present living.

After the Apostle Peter describes so graphically the passing away of the present kosmos — the “heavens and the earth which are now” (2 Pet. 3:7)—he then adds, “nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:13.) Yes, as the apostle states, God has promised new heavens and a new earth. This promise is recorded in Isa. 65:17-25. We suggest a careful reading of this entire promise, for in it will be found outlined a complete reorganization of human society—new world conditions indeed.

The prophet says, for example, that “there shall be no more thence an infant of days.” What a change that will be!

It means the destruction of the causes of disease and death, which is exactly what we find the Apostle Paul to teach in 1 Cor, 15:25, 26, where, in telling us about Christ’s reign of righteousness upon the earth, he says that this reign will continue until every enemy of God and of righteousness is destroyed, the last enemy to be destroyed being death.

The destruction of Adamic death in the new world will be complete. All those who have died in the past because of Adam’s sin will be brought forth from the tomb. Jesus said concerning this, -Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.”—John 5:28, 29‘

The arrangements in vogue in the present kosmos by which houses and property are handed down from one generation to another because no one continues to live to enjoy them, will be no more when the new heavens and new earth are established. Concerning this the prophet says-. “They shall build houses, and inhabit them-; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat,” as they do in the present order of things.

Originally man was given dominion over the lower animals and apparently they were all his friends and friendly to each other. This dominion was lost with the fall of man, but will be restored “in the times of restitution.” For this reason we are assured by the prophet concerning conditions in the new heavens and the new earth, that then “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent’s meat.” On this point see also Isa. 11:6-9 and chapter 35.

While these wonderful prophecies of peace even among the lower animals during the Messianic Kingdom period — symbolized by the new heavens and new earth—will be literally true, yet it will also be true that all the warring, lion like and serpent-like elements of this present evil world which have wrought so much human suffering, will be no more. Indeed, as the prophet so definitely assures us, nothing “shall hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain (kingdom), saith the Lord.”—Isa. 65:25; 11:9.

The same symbolic new heavens and new earth are also referred to in Revelation 21:1-4. Here it is said that under this new arrangement there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the “former things are passed away.” Perhaps the Lord knew how difficult it would be for us to grasp the reality of a promise like this, so he caused John to add a divine confirmation, saying, “these words are true and faithful.”—Rev. 21:5.

New Spiritual Ruler.

The new spiritual ruler of God's new world will be Jesus and His Church. Satan is the spiritual ruler of this present evil world, as pointed out by Jesus in John 14:30. St. Paul refers to him as "the prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2.) Associated with Satan are "angels, principalities and powers," visible and invisible: (Eph. 1:21; 6:11, 12, Rom. 8:38.) Satan is a powerful spirit being invisible to human eyes, and he exercises a great deal of his influence in the earth through human instrumentalities usually that of false religious systems. From this standpoint he is, in reality, the supreme head of the present "heavens and earth."

Early in the beginning of the new world arrangements Satan is to be bound. (Rev. 20:1-3.) Christ and the Church will then become the new spiritual rulers of the world. Their power will be exercised through earthly representatives, the ancient prophets and other worthy ones of the past, designated by the prophet as "princes in all the earth." (Psalm 45:16.) Jesus also refers to these and explains that in the Kingdom, people from all parts of the earth will recognise them as their proper leaders and instructors.—Luke 13:28, 29; Matt. 8:11.

Briefly, then, it will be through an arrangement of this kind that the governorship of the earth will again be in the hands of the Lord. Concerning it the prophet declares, "For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness. The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: He is greatly exalted."—Psalm 47:7-9.

The Apostle Peter in his Prophecy, describes "the new heavens and new earth" saying that therein dwelleth righteousness. This means that the laws of God's new world will be pure and just and will promote love in the place of selfishness. The enforcement of the laws of the new Kingdom will be by divine power so that their operation and application will be effective and complete. One of the prophetic indications of the manner in which they will be enforced is that the nation or nations failing to comply therewith will be deprived of rain—in other words, rain sanctions will then be divinely applied against the disobedient. —Zech. 14:1 7.

The New World.

When, through the prophetic pages of the Bible, we are able to take a view of God's new world, we do not feel so badly that the present world is coming to an end. It hasn't been a good world, anyway, and the new one will be

so much better that the former will not be remembered, nor come into mind. (Isa. 65:17.) When God's new world is established and functioning for the blessing of the people, no longer will the question be raised as to whether or not God has forgotten suffering humanity.

God, according to Zephaniah 3:9, will turn to the people a pure language. As a result, they will earn of His love and of the wondrous provisions He has made for them through Christ. They will realise that as long ago as the first advent of Jesus He gave His Son to be the Redeemer of all mankind and thus laid the foundation for the blessings which will be theirs to enjoy, through the Messianic Kingdom arrangements. This gift of God's dear Son is to be the wonderful token of the Father's mindfulness of man, as the apostle shows in Hebrews 2:5, 9.

The blessings of life purchased for mankind by the death of Jesus are yet to become so far-reaching that even those who have gone down into the tomb, are to be rescued and given an opportunity to enjoy them in God's new world order. Concerning this we read, "The ransomed of the Lord (all mankind) shall return (from death), and come to Zion (the new spiritual rulers of the earth) with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isa. 35:10.

When we realise that the fulfilment of all these wonderful promises of God's Word pertaining to the new order of things which He is about to establish, depends upon the inauguration of Christ's Kingdom upon the earth, may we not more fervently than ever pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" ?—Matt. 6:10.

Notices,

It is expected that a Baptism Service will be held in Melbourne later this year, and any friends wishing to symbolise their consecration to God are invited to communicate with this office. Possibly a date could be arranged to suit any country friends desiring to avail themselves of this opportunity.

As suggested in July "Peoples Paper" it has now been decided to post two issues of the "Peoples Paper" under the one cover: our friends will thus receive August number with this one, and the next mailing will include October and November issues together.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 16/ 12 / 6, plus freight

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A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

Defied Death and Lost.

THE following news item from New York appeared in the Melbourne “Herald” on 18th July, under the above heading:

“At New Hope, Alabama, members of a small religious sect released a rattlesnake during a church service. It bit Mrs. Ruthie Craig on the arm as she picked it up. In agony, she refused to see a doctor because she thought it would show lack of faith. Members of the congregation prayed for her. She died after four hours.”

The above reveals a very sad example of distorted views on a portion of the Scriptures which is spurious, namely, Mark 16:9-20, verse 18 being especially applicable in this case. The following short article on this passage in Mark should be helpful:

These verses are admitted by all scholars to be an interpolation. They are not found in any of the early Greek MSS., and are certainly not genuine. It is not true that all believers in the Lord Jesus may drink poisonous things, and be in contact with poisonous serpents, contagious diseases, etc., with impunity; nor have all possessed the power of healing diseases and casting out devils. It will be noticed that the passage is omitted by the Revised Version, and by all modern versions of the Scriptures. Hence, to receive it or to quote it as Scripture, would be adding to the Word of God, and adding to the general confusion on an important subject.

The thought that the Lord’s people may be specially favoured of Him in respect of physical health and other creature comforts (more than the world) is a delusion and a snare, and contrary to all proper expectations of the true followers of Christ. The Lord and the apostles were the exemplars of the Church, and instead of expecting to be freed from the general difficulties which assail the groaning creation, their consecration was to a share in these afflictions, that they might be touched with the feeling of human infirmities. Our Lord repudiated as a temptation of the Adversary the suggestion to use divine power for the relief of His hunger during the forty days’ fasting in the wilderness. (Matt. 4:3. 4.) When weary He rested by the well .of Samaria, while His disciples went to purchase food, whereas He might have called for and used divine power for the restoration of His strength had that been proper. (John 4:6.) In these instances food was the proper medicine for the pangs of hunger, and rest was the proper medicine for the weariness of the body, and our Lord used these remedies. We are not informed that He had any chronic ailments, but we doubt not that He would have been free to use any roots or herbs or other remedies as freely as He used the food and the rest. He who declined to ask the heavenly power for angelic protection (Matt. 26:53) and who declined to call upon the same power to satisfy His hunger, and to relieve His fatigue, was nevertheless perfectly at liberty to call upon these powers in the interest of His followers (not spirit-begotten at that time), as, for instance, in the feeding of the multitudes, and in the stilling of the tempest and in the providing of the taxes. —Matt. 14 :15-21 ; Mark 4:36-41 ; Matt. 17:24-27.

Similarly, we find that the apostles used no special privileges and blessings which were theirs for the relief of temporal ailments and necessities. True, we have no account of the sickness of any of the twelve except Paul, whose weak eyes (Acts 9:8, 18; Gal. 4:15; 6-11—R.V.) the Lord was not pleased to relieve, even upon solicitation, assuring the Apostle that this, which became a messenger of Satan in buffeting him, trying’ his patience, his humility, etc., would be more than offset by the Lord’s “grace sufficient.” (2 Cor. 12:7-9.) The Apostle’s faith and trust in the Lord have been a source of comfort to all in the narrow way from that time to the present, and yet he did not, like some of these, go to the Lord with requests for temporal good things, money, houses, lands, food, raiment, etc. We have his own word for it that he sometimes lacked, and that in such cases he laboured, working with his hands at the ordinary trade of sail or tent making. Some far less holy than he, and far less in touch with the Lord, would not only have disdained so humble an occupation, but, spurning employment would have sought to do what they term “living by faith,” that is, living without work, a matter which this same Apostle reproves very decidedly, saying, “If a man will not work neither should he eat,” etc. (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thes. 3:10.)

The Lord’s people, rightly instructed through the Word of God, and appreciating its spirit, must value their spiritual interests far beyond any temporal welfare, and should surely desire such, and only such, experiences in the, flesh as:,would be most profitable to the new natures develop. went: and preparation for, the Kingdom., The New Testament deals more with the experiences of the Apostle chosen of the Lord to take the plate of Judas than with all the others put together, and begins with the time of his accepts= of Christ on the way to Damascus. Looking through his varied experiences we perceive that in exercising the gift of miracles, then with the Church. he used it in many cases upon those coming into the Truth. But so far as the record shows, never once was this healing power used in bas own relief, nor in the relief of any of those who are set before us as saints, the fully consecrated. Nor was this because the saints of that time were free from disease. On the contrary, we know that Timothy had what we would now designate chronic dyspepsia, or indigestion, and Epsphroditus was not hindered from being sick. yea, “nigh unto death,” not because of sin, but, as the Apostle explains, “because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death,” hazarding his We, (Phil. 2:25-30.) We know not what special foods or medicines the Lord was pleased to bless in the latter case; but in respect of the former one the Apostle neither

prayed nor sent a handkerchief or napkin to cure the ailment, but wrote Timothy, saying, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." (1 Tim. 5:23.) The wine was recommended, not as a beverage, nor as an intoxicant, but purely as a medicine. The point specially to be noticed is, that divine power, so far as we are informed, was neither invoked nor exercised on behalf of either of these two consecrated brethren. They bore their infirmities and afflictions and got blessings out of them, using meanwhile the most suitable foods and remedies of which they had knowledge. And this we believe to be a proper illustration of the course which should be pursued by all of the consecrated, all New Creatures; they should not ask for physical healing, luxuries of life, etc. At very most, our Lord's sample petition warrants such in asking for what the Lord Himself may see best for them in the way of daily food; and even while praying for the daily rood they are to put forth the labours of their hands, and to expect that the Lord's blessing will be upon the same according to His wisdom as to what would be to their highest profit in character-development through experiences, etc. If He shall see fit to grant them only the barest necessities of food and raiment, it will be to them a test of love and patience and faith in Him. If He shall supply them with an abundance, it will be to them a test of the same faith and love and devotion, in an opposite direction—as demonstrating what proportion of these good gifts they are willing to sacrifice in the interests of His cause, in the service of His brethren. Likewise, if divine wisdom sees best to give robust health and vigour, tyre test of faithfulness will be as to whether or not love and devotion will sacrifice and thoroughly use this vigour on behalf of the Lord's cause, or whether or not it will be absorbed in selfish pursuits; or, on the other hand, if the Lord in His providence grants but a limited amount of vitality and vigour, the test of faith and devotion will be from the opposite standpoint, to prove the love and obedience, submission and patience, and the zeal with which small opportunities will be sought and persistently used.

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My Sacrifice.

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,
Accept this gift to-day. for Jesus' sake.
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;

But here I bring, within my trembling hand,
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small;
And Thou alone, O Lord. taint understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

Hidden therein Thy searching gaze canst see
Struggles of passions, visions of delight,
All that I have or am, or fain would be
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite.

It hath been with with teats, and dimmed with sighs,
Clenched in my grasp till beauty bath it none.
Now, from Thy footstool, Where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth—"May Thy will be done!"

Take it, O father, ere my courage fail;
And merge it so in Thine own will that I
May never have a wish to take it back:
When heart and courage fail, to Thee I'd fly.

So change, so purify, so like Thine own Make
Thou my will, so graced with love Divine,
I may not know or feel it as mine own,
But recognise my will as one 'with Thine. --Selected.

“What’s New in the World of To-morrow,”

UNDER the above title a radio commentator, Mr. C. G. Scrimgeour, has been presenting some interesting broadcasts in Melbourne on the development of science. The following was presented over the air recently, and will no doubt prove of interest to our brethren and readers generally, as indicating in a most wonderful manner the fulfilment of bible prophecy in this present “time of the end.” The broadcast was as follows:—

“It has been my policy to confine, as far as possible, my reports in this session to peacetime developments of science. However, it would be foolish not to recognise the fact that over the past few years a great many of the best brains in the world, as well as the finest equipment in a thousand laboratories, have been devoted almost entirely to war purposes.

“During periods of preparation for war, practically all scientific work is carried on in secrecy, and the only reports issued are those which are certain not to convey information to other countries. However, from time to time we read of the most startling developments where the gods of war reign supreme.

“My information on this occasion comes from the Science Editor of ‘Time,’ Jonathan Norton Leonard, who writes in a recent issue about guided missiles, or perhaps more familiarly known to us as rockets.

“From behind the walls of secrecy, Mr. Leonard has given some very interesting information on something which may affect each and everyone of us, for, however much we may dislike the idea of war, on the present basis of the organisation of human society, there is always the possibility that one quiet day in our lives may be shattered by a screaming roar which will echo on far mountains, and that unholy sound will most possibly be the last we shall ever hear. It is now possible, by the developments of aerial technique, to send slender dart-like objects up into the sky at one part of the world, to control them while they are in flight by using fantastic electronic brains, and guide them down on to another part of the earth’s surface. Once they meet their target, the grossest misuse of atomic energy will enable one section of mankind to destroy millions of people, and the destruction will come equally to the guilty and to the innocent.

The old people who have no other desire than to live out the remainder of their lives in peace will die, and the very, young, innocent of everything save the simple cries of new born babies will be cut off in a searing flash with no possibility of a mistake. “This type of warfare is no longer a problem, only for those who are responsible for the direction of military affairs. Nor is it a matter which can be rightly left in the hands of diplomats. It concerns people, not sections of people, and not races of people, but of the people of the earth, and if the danger is to be averted, the only course is that all the people take action and express their will, for such is the basis of democracy.

“Possibly it is a dangerous thing for any public speaker to utter words of warning in an age when the word ‘peace’ is a dangerous word. I know that, but I think that unless someone speaks in a realistic manner about what is happening, then it is idle to speak at all. The dreams of a new world disappear, and all the cultural inheritance of a thousand years will become atomised dust unless multitudes of voices are raised in protest. No excuse should be regarded as a valid reason for making a desire for peace a subversive instrument.

“The Christian must ask: ‘Is the ideal of peace on earth and goodwill towards men now to be discarded forever?’

The scientist must ask: ‘Is the ultimate end of all our endeavour to be destruction?’ And all the people of the earth must answer those questions.

“Here, briefly, are some of the descriptions of new weapons of war. First, there is the surface to air missile, designed to bring down aircraft. It is a gracefully tapered object 10 feet, to 15 feet, long and 1 foot in diameter. It is launched from a kind of gunmount. On its tail are four fixed fins arranged at right angles to each other. These keep the missiles stable in flight, like the feathers of an arrow. The control surfaces are four small triangular movable fins, one-third of the way back from the weapon’s nose.

“With instruments inside the mechanical section of the weapon, it can be steered by remote control exactly like an aeroplane in flight. By the use of television equipment they can actually be timed to seek out their objective, and follow it automatically without danger of missing the target. They cannot be shot down, and they cannot be dodged. They travel so fast that an aircraft trying to avoid them would be like a caterpillar trying to avoid a wasp.

“Another type of the same weapon is called the air to ground missile. This is carried under the belly of a gigantic bomber. It is powered by a rocket motor, which can cause it to travel at the rate of two thousand miles per hour.

When fired from the mother aircraft, it will shoot out ahead and vanish with blinding speed. Its accuracy is said to be

pinpoint, and during the whole period of its flight it can be controlled from the aircraft. In its nose it will carry the deadly atomic bomb. From hundreds of miles away it can be launched against a city with almost certain total destruction of its target.

“The third type of guided missile is that which is known as surface to surface. Again these bombs, travelling at a speed of over two thousand miles per hour, can be fired from a point five hundred miles away from their target, and steered to it by radio control guidance. The target need not be visible at all. Its position will be known on a map, and then the missile will follow a radio beam or be steered automatically towards a selected point by a pattern of radio waves marked out in space.

“When it reaches that point, it will curve downward. If by chance the target position has not been known accurately, this bomb will search it out with television or radar eyes, reporting its findings to a screen at a faraway point. The operator watching the screen can then steer it accurately over the remainder of its journey.

“Another version of the same type of weapon is guided by what is known as automatic astronavigation. It flies by night, and is equipped with telescopes to pick up the light from certain stars. Photo-sensitive tubes note the position of the stars, and this information, processed by a complicated electronic brain, tells the missile of the course it is to follow over the surface of the earth, making the necessary corrections until it reaches its target of death.

“These are not dreams from the imaginative brains of fiction writers. All of these weapons have been tested at various proving grounds in America. The military authorities know exactly what they can do, and they are working every day to extend their range of flight, their accuracy of control, and their perfection of destructive power.

“They have taken into account the possibility of the enemy interfering with the flight of such a weapon by jamming it with radio frequencies, and they look like sooth-sayers peering into the future, building fantastic machines of destruction, but unable to predict, unable to think even, of anything but bewilderment of a world gone mad.

“The cost of all this experimentation is so fantastically high that the peacetime budget of some countries is now higher than the wartime budget allocated for military purposes. The programme of armament has already drained the world almost dry of highly qualified scientists. It is even thought that the American Government may have to shut down the television industry to free all technicians for guided missile work.

“There are some men among those engaged on projects of this kind who love their roaring destructive birds of war. They admire their grace, and they praise the flash, quick cleverness of their electronic brains. But, says the Science Editor of ‘Time,’ in their more reflective moments they are likely to quote an aphorism which they attribute to

Einstein. This is the quotation: “If World War Three is fought with atom armed missiles. then World War Four will be fought with clubs.”

“Again let me say I do not apologise for interrupting the normal tenor of my broadcasts, for I believe that under the guise of scientific development, war becomes such a horrible thing, and the failure of men to find a peaceful settlement of their problems so disastrous, that each and every one of us must accept our share of the responsibility for the future.”

We can fully appreciate the concern of Mr. Scrimgeour for the future of mankind under present conditions, but would seek to encourage all serious thinkers to accept the Lord’s gracious provision of salvation for mankind, which will prove to be “the desire of all nations.” The article in this issue “The End of the World” is especially recommended to all, in this connection.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney—Schaffer’s Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer’s Upholstery.

Perth.--The Women's Service Guild, Lesser Hall, Cecil Buildings, Sherwood Court—Sundays, 3.30 p.m: and 6.15 p.m.

Abiding.

“With Me thou shalt be in safeguard.”-1 Sam. 22:23.

Only in safeguard, gracious Lord,
When I with Thee abide,
Only preserved from harm and ill
When keeping at Thy side:

Then help me to abide with Thee
And never from Thee stray,
Abide with me, I humbly ask,
Both this and every day.

—A.G.F.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294. H. ., 8.15 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 1 ., 4.45 p.m.



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The Offerings for Sin.

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death bath NO more dominion over Him. FOR in that He died, He died unto (for) sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 6:9-11.

It is evident that not all people who love the Lord and understand a good measure of His plan of salvation are able to grasp the deep significance of the doctrine of the Sin Offering. The main difficulty seems to be that the teaching that the Lord's true people are accepted 'of God as the secondary offering for sin, as they sacrifice in the steps of Christ, is taken as repudiating the value of Christ's sacrifice. So strongly is this idea held by some that they have withdrawn from the fellowship of brethren with whom they agree on most other teachings of the Bible. Others go so far as to conclude that it is blasphemy to claim that the true Church is a sacrifice for sin. In the article below it is hoped that the Scriptural presentation will be appreciated by our readers, namely, that the value of Christ's sacrifice, being applied to the Church class and household of faith only, during this Gospel Age, and not any merit of the Church itself, constitutes these members of Christ's body, "holy, acceptable to God, a living sacrifice." (Rom. 12:1.) Once this thought is grasped from the Scriptures, and personal objections are put aside, it will be seen that Christ's sacrifice is not at all lowered but rather exalted by this understanding of the sin-offerings, in that His merit is the means whereby God accepts the Church as holy, and thus a fitting sacrifice for sin, inasmuch as it is God's good pleasure to so arrange His plan, as shall be seen hereunder.

THE subject of the offerings for sin is one by which we are reminded at once of the terrible consequences as a result of "sin entering the world, and death by sin," and while our purpose is not to dwell particularly on the introduction of sin into the world and examine the dire results therefrom, but rather to emphasise the wonderful provision to take away sin from off the face of the whole earth, yet it is fitting to note the extensiveness of this evil, for by so doing, we realise more fully the effectiveness of the remedy God has provided, as expressed by the little poem:

“To wipe away of sin each trace,
To make of earth a perfect place,
With glory everywhere.”

While, then, our text in the 6th of Romans explains in few words the offerings for sin, in the previous chapters of this same Epistle we find that St. Paul covers the whole subject of the introduction of sin, and how God, without violating one of His great attributes, can effect a lasting remedy that will not only bring blessing to the human race, but also great glory and honour to His holy name throughout all eternity.

In the first chapter of this Epistle, Paul shows how quickly the entrance of sin into the world brought man down to the condition of the brute beasts — “When they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened; for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and deity; so that they are without excuse.” By one man, sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. Yes. “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.” All were not put on trial similarly to Adam, yet “when they knew God they glorified Him not as God”; “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”

All The World Guilty Before God.

Paul then passes on to Israel and reviews their standing before God under the Law Covenant, yet, while stressing the great advantages that they had over the other nations of the world, in being God's chosen people and receiving His laws through Moses, the typical mediator, when he comes to the question of their salvation from Sin and death and hope of eternal life, he asks:— "What then? Are we better than they?--are we better than the Gentile nations whom God allowed to go their own ways? "No, in no wise: for we have proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; as it is written, 'There is none righteous, no, not one.'"

The Apostle, in proving the point "that all the world stands guilty before God," teaches the same lesson as that revealed in the vision shown 40 St. John as related in Revelation, chapter 5. 'St. John beheld a sealed book in the hand of Him that sat on the throne, and the question was asked by the angel, "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?" And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth 'was able to open the book, and to look thereon and John wept much because of this. The following scene also agrees so fully with Paul's statement—"And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."

Jesus The Ransom.

Here we have revealed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," agreeing with Paul's words in Romans 3, where he declares that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the 'remission of sins that are past, through the forgiveness of God; To declare, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the 'justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Here, then, is God's wondrous means of providing salvation for a world of sinners lost and ruined by the fall—the giving of His only begotten Son to be the ransom or corresponding 'price for all mankind condemned in Adam. This platter is expounded fully in Romans, chapters 4 and 5, then when we come to the 6th chapter we find, not only the foundation, first principles of our faith and hope brought out, but also the deeper, spiritual truths that pertain to the outworking of this wonderful plan of salvation.

The Ransom, Not The Sin-Offering.

It is one thing to appreciate very fully God's great gift of our Lord Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world, but it is quite another to understand, to grasp and rejoice in God's method of taking away the world's sins by means of that satisfactory price provided by His dear Son.

It is respecting the application or use of the ransom price to which our subject particularly applies, and it helps greatly if we keep in mind the fact that the Sin-offerings signify how God, in His wisdom and good pleasure, has seen fit to make application of the blood of Christ so that each and every member of the human race may, in due time, receive all the benefits intended, though in God's plan, the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world.

God's Plan Accomplished—In Due Time.

How often we have it brought out in the Plan of the Ages that God has a due time for everything, so this term, "in due time," explains many difficulties, not only when we are first coming to a knowledge and appreciation of the truth, but also in regard to the deep things of God, of which the Sin-offerings is one.

The statement of John the Baptist as he introduced his disciples to the Lord is very familiar—"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," and at first thought one might say, "Yes, Jesus took away the sins of the world when He proved faithful unto death at Calvary"; but not so. It is one thing to provide a price that can release the world from its sins, but quite another to so apply that valuable thing to Justice that the condemnation is lifted. Yet how true John's words were—"The Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,"—that will take away their sins, in due time.

We have the same thought in John's Gospel respecting our Lord—"That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Again we must say, not so at the present time; the Lord has not lightened every man; yet the statement is true. "The true light that lighteth every man" — that will lighten, in due time, every man that cometh into the world.

Again, we have the statement of Paul's in 1 Tim. 2:6—"The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom 'for all, to be

‘testified in due time.’ Does not Paul imply here that Jesus paid to Justice a ransom or corresponding price on behalf of all mankind at His first advent? No, we do not think that is his thought. He had just previously stated, “God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”—in due time. Just so his thought respecting our Lord’s sacrifice seems to be—Christ Jesus gave Himself to be a ransom for all, in due time; and which would also be testified or revealed to all in due time.

Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth.

It may be asked, how do we know that this is the true understanding of the matter? It is from the Scriptures as a whole that we find both typical and antitypical sin-offerings agreeing with this thought, though they are often not clearly understood by the brethren. There is a tendency with some, when they come to appreciate the great sacrifice of Christ at Calvary, to conclude that all sacrificing for sin was finished there; that by some means the corresponding price was paid to Justice on behalf of all mankind, and that it is really dishonouring His precious blood to think of further offerings for sin during this Gospel Age.

However, on this, as on all other matters of faith, the Scriptures alone must be our guide, and it is as we go to both Old and New Testaments that we find the subject of the Sin-offerings clearly expounded, which, when rightly understood, brings additional honour and glory to Christ and the great plan of redemption of which He is the centre.

It is necessary to add that there is no thought of ransom price in any other offerings for sin, than that of Christ, our Head. As stated previously, our subject has to do with the application of the valuable thing, -the ransom price, so that eventually, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Type And Antitype.

Let us examine some of the helpful types of the Old Testament, which we may be sure have their fulfilment in the antitypes or realities, commencing with Christ. At the Passover in Egypt, this was a means whereby the children of Israel were delivered out of that land, and the shedding of the blood of a lamb was the central picture of the whole matter. At the appointed time a lamb without blemish was slain by each household of Israel, and its blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the houses was a means of protection for all the Israelites who were commanded not to go out at the door of their houses until the morning. (Exod. 12:21, 22.) It is well known that the lamb in Egypt pictured our Lord Jesus--the Lamb of God—and that type had special reference to the ransom, or corresponding price. The covering or protection of the blood over Israel pictured the covering of the blood of Christ over the household of faith of this Gospel Age, and Israel’s firstborn represented “the church of the firstborns” within the household of faith of this Gospel Age. This shows the application of the blood of the Lamb of God since His great sacrifice has been on behalf of the household of faith only, which includes the antitypical firstborns; justice is satisfied for the comparatively few of mankind only, during the Gospel Age.

What a wonderful thing this is, that God should determine to choose out some from the human race and give them the privilege and bene fits of being covered with the blood of Christ fir in advance of the multitudes of mankind, and for a ‘very special purpose, over and above anything we could have thought or asked. So, we see in this important type, the truth of the mystery hid from ages and dispensations, but now, during this Gospel Age, made manifest to the saints.

It is, however, from the further types of Israel’s day of atonement that we find the better sacrifices; for sin so completely, so beautifully and so clearly pictured, and it is to these that the great Apostle Paul makes- special reference when expounding)* realities, particularly in his Epistle to the Hebrews. How fitting that the Lord should give the Hebrew Christians ,these precious truths first of all, that it they, may realise how fully their law arrangements, were shadows of good things to come, and as we, also come into Christ, it is our privilege to be fully informed of these matters, if we are ready to receive that which the Lord has in store for us.

Increasing Light.

Have we ever felt, dear friends, in looking back over past years, how little we had understood God and His plan prior to receiving the truth, in, a general way. No doubt we have; but have we also realised how little we have understood and appreciated God and His plan, even after receiving the truth in a general way? If so, we- are in a happy condition, because our hearts, and minds so filled with the greatness and goodness, of God, will be ready to receive more and more of His spiritual truths for our upbuilding as the under-priests in our special order or profession, of which our Lord is the great High Priest. When we have gotten rid of the errors, of the dark ages and come to love the Lord and His, truth with pure hearts, we are only beginning- to know and appreciate something of the goodness of _our Heavenly Father. On the night in which He instituted the Memorial of His death, our clear Lord said, “This is life eternal, that they might-, know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ-whom Thou bast sent.” What a thought--”to know, Thee, the only true God.” Yes, and to-, obey Him; this is Life eternal. And as we come to^ know God and His wonderful plan, we find’, over and over again, “still

there's more to foil-, low." This is particularly so in the subject of the offerings for sin, in which some of the, grandest and deepest truths of the plan of God, are to be found. How the noble Apostle laboured to, expound these things for us, and let us endeavour to trace his thoughts, as he brings out the realities from the types of Israel's Atonement Day..

Typical Atonement Day.

The thought in the word "Atonement" is in itself a beautiful one. It signifies reconciliation; and so we find on that 24-hour day, set apart once a year, Israel was typically reconciled to God. And why be typically reconciled every year; why did not this reconciliation last? Because those offerings for sin were typical only, just as was the day—"In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Heb. 10:3, 4.) No, indeed. But why does the Apostle so clearly and definitely say, "the blood of bulls and of goats"? Because in the type both animals must be slain to complete the sin-offerings, and this pictures the important antitype.

Typical Sin-Offering—Bullock.

In the 16th chapter of Leviticus, we have Israel's day of atonement offerings for sin so fully explained. Aaron, the high priest, was instructed to be clothed in the holy linen garments, which in themselves are very significant, and the first of the sin-offerings is a young bullock—"which is for himself, to make atonement for himself and for his house." It will be remembered that in the type there were the high, priest, the, under-priests, and additionally the Levites from whom the priests were selected; so this bullock of the sin-offering was sacrificed on behalf of these only; himself—the members of the priesthood; and his house—the tribe of Levi.

The account in Levi 16:11714 reads—"And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring, it within the vail; And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: and he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and, sprinkle it, with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and- before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times." Here, we have a most wonderful picture of what was completed in-reality, forty days after the death of our Lord, not-, within the precincts of an earthly tabernacle, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."--Heb. 9:24.

Antitypical Sin-Offering Jesus.

Undoubtedly, the bullock in this typical sin offering-pictured our Lord' Jesus as presented Himself a. perfect, living sacrifice to God, at Jordan. There, He was killed, in the sense that His humanity was placed on the altar—dead to His own will—fully submitted to God's will. As the high priest passed under the vail dividing, the Holy from the Most Holy, we have represented the actual death of our Lord at Calvary. The incense being sprinkled on the coals of fire before the mercy seat would picture the acceptableness of Christ's sacrifice before the heavenly propitiatory, and then follows the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat, not for Israel as a whole; no, but for himself; and his house.

Had the high priest ceased with that sin offering, Israel outside in the Camp would never have had their sins typically removed,

Price Paid For Church Only.

So we see in the great antitype that Christ, on His ascension to God, appeared not for the world ;n general, but for us—the members of His body, and household of faith generally. Does this mean that the world's sins are not yet cancelled on the heavenly propitiatory? Yes, it surely does. How often the Apostles point out—"the whole world lieth in wickedness." But in speaking of the "us" class, says—"Ye are bought with the precious blood, of Christ"; "Who gave Himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." (1 John 5:19; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Gal. 1:4.)

What a wonderful privilege it is to know God's will in this matter, as again expressed by the Apostle—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself A peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:13, 14.) Let us note the particular point, that it is for this peculiar or specially called out people that Christ has thus far done so much. It may surprise some to know how many times this thought is brought out in the Scriptures but all can look up the references for themselves; two, more. texts will, suffice here—"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yefi in your sins: Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. " (1 Cor. 15:17, 18.) Why does the Apostle mention those only who are "fallen asleep in Christ?" Because the world of mankind, having had no application of the

blood of Christ, were not in his mind at that time. Lastly, ‘we refer to our Lord’s own words in the memorable prayer on the last night of His earthly sojourn—”I pray not for the world, but for them that Thou hast given Me.”

But, what about the world in general; did not “God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”? Yes, indeed, and let us look again at the typical picture, which we know was arranged by the Lord, even to the smallest detail, that it might correctly prefigure all that was to take place in ‘the antitypical or’better sacrifices of this Gospel Age.

Secondary Sin-Offering In Type—The Lord’s Goat.

In Lev. 16, following the offering of the bullock by the high priest “for himself and his house,” we read—”Then shall he (the high priest) kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat.” The particular point to note about this secondary sin-offering is, that it was offered “for the people”—on behalf of Israel generally, as a sin-offering for them—this goat being one of two especially provided by the congregation of the Children of Israel. With this type completed, the people of Israel generally, in addition to the priesthood and house of Levi, had their sins typically removed for the twelve months ahead, and the question is, how is this fulfilled in the antitype?

As we have seen that the typical priesthood and house of Levi typified the royal priesthood and --household of faith of this Gospel Age, so Israel, out in the Camp outside the Tabernacle and Court altogether -- would picture the world of mankind. As Israel’s sin-offering was an animal separate from, yet following the one offered for the priests and house of Levi, does it follow in antitype that there is a secondary sin-offering following that of Jesus, whom we have seen .has appeared in heaven for the antitypical priests and household of faith only? Yes, we believe this is very definitely taught in god’s Word, our verses in the 6th chapter of Romans being one of the references on this matter.

Secondary Sin-Offering In Antitype-The Church.

The bullock in the type pictured our Lord and as everything done with the bullock’s blood was done also with the goat’s, it is very clear that the class being called out during this antitypical Atonement Day, and “planted in the likeness of Jesus’ death,” constitutes (because “accepted in the beloved” and being members of Christ) the second part of the better sacrifices which in due time shall take away the sins of the world, or rather shall release from Adamic condemnation all who desire to be reconciled to God. Those who are unappreciative of .the gracious means whereby they may be delivered from sin and death must die the second death.

And *hat does’ it mean to be planted together in the likeness of death” — the death of Christ. It surely means that as our Lord’s, death was a sacrificial one, this must also be so, in the case of those members who follow His steps— the antitypical goat class which follows the antitypical ,bullock.

Head And Body Dead For Sin.

In Isa. 53, we have the words—”Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” and this is undoubtedly the Apostle’s thought in Rom. 6:10, respecting our Lord—”In that He died, He died unto sin once,” or rather “for sin” as a sin- offering. Then, in the following verse, we have the members of Christ shown as the secondary antitypical sin- offering—”Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is very clear that the Apostle had this deeper thought in mind here. As our Lord had no sin to put away, he could not have meant that Christ died unto sin in this sense. No, it was as an offering for sin that Jesus died; so, if His followers are likewise to be reckoned dead, it must also be for sin, with them; they having previously had their sins covered with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, so that they could appear holy, and be acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ.

Does this imply that there must be a secondary antitypical sprinkling of the heavenly mercy seat, or propitiatory, to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world? Yes, it surely does, but it will again be the valuable ransom price of Christ, that is at present in His members, that will clear the guilty world of mankind before the seat of Justice. Before that time every member of the Church of the firstborns, which includes the Bride ,and the Great Company, must have finished their course, the blood then being available for the sins of all natural people, and will be applied on their -behalf. This secondary antitypical sprinkling cannot take place, then, until the close of this Gospel Age, and this point helps us greatly to determine where we are on the stream of time.

The Garments In Type And Antitype.

Turning again to Lev. 16, we find that after the two animals for the sin-offerings are killed and their blood, sprinkled in the Most Holy, also the scapegoat dealt with, it says in verse 23-- "And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation and shall put off the linen garments, Which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments"; that is, his usual garments of glory and beauty. And what does this mean? Has 'this picture been fulfilled as yet?

In the type Aaron pictures our Lord, the High 'Priest of the new order of priests, the Royal priesthood, and the linen garments were worn by the typical high priest during the sacrificing and sprinkling of the blood of the animals offered for sins, and until the scapegoat is dealt with. This represents our Lord in His sacrificial robes during the whole of this Gospel Age and until the Great Company has finished its course; and, as in the type, it was only after all the offerings were completed that the garments of glory and beauty were worn by the high priest, (the linen garments and those of glory and beauty could not be worn at the same time) so, it is fitting that Christ, in the antitype, could not be wearing the garments of the sacrificing High Priest and also those of glory and beauty that He will put on when His reign begins. We know that God's plan is working out in harmony with His Word, and we may be sure that this type at the close of Israel's Atonement Day was just as true as the typical sin-offerings themselves.

Therefore, dear friends, if we believe, and there seems not the least reason to doubt but everything to confirm, that there are some members of Christ still being sacrificed on earth, it must follow that our Lord is still clothed in the linen garments, as the sacrificing High Priest. This is implied very fully by the Apostle's reference to our Memorial—"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come."

Reign Follows Completion Of Church's Sacrifice.

The garments of glory and beauty will be put on at a later time—when all the sacrificing is over—and will be worn not only by our Lord, the great High Priest, but also by the members of His Body, and then His millennial reign will begin, but not before. There are no Scriptures that we know of to imply that our Lord is reigning in the heavens while He is sacrificing on earth; He must still be wearing the linen garments in anti-type, on the other side of the vail, while one of His members is being sacrificed on earth. All the lines of chronology must not be permitted to interfere with the spiritual truths pertaining to the hidden mystery—the taking out of the members of the Body of Christ who are counted in with our Lord and have part in the sin-offerings on behalf of the world of mankind.

Much more could be said respecting how the type of Israel's Atonement Day has been, and is being, fulfilled during this present Gospel Age, and another thought may be added here. It is generally understood that the incense offered with the blood of the bullock, in type, pictured the acceptableness of Christ our Head—His perfect offering on the heavenly propitiatory. But with the goat's blood no incense was used—the perfume would still remain in the Most Holy from the incense of the bullock's offering. So, in anti-type the Lord's people have no acceptableness in themselves as offerings for sin, on behalf of the world of mankind, but, covered by the acceptableness of Christ they are privileged "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church"; that is, that God has predetermined that there should be this Body of Christ, to participate, first of all, in the sufferings of the Anointed, and later in the glory that is to follow. It will be seen, then, from this standpoint, how much depth there is in the many Scriptures pertaining to our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, being made conformable unto His death, and just how this really must be apart from, and in advance of, the world's release from sin altogether.

How favoured are all those drawn of God during this acceptable time, accepting His call to son-ship, having the privilege of being offered as the members of Christ, being broken with Him, drinking His blood, if so be, that proving faithful they may also be associated with Him in His throne, putting on the garments of glory and beauty and dispensing the blessings to all humanity during the Millennial reign in the age to come. "So Christ was once offered (the Head at Jordan and the members at Pentecost, to be consummated at the close of this Age) to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin (without a sin-offering) unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.)

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died for sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed for sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In Thy due time, our Heavenly Father, shall be known
Thy gracious plan, which now is hid Except unto Thy saints alone.
O glorious day, when Thine All-wisdom, justice, power and love,
The whole creation shall approve!

En His due time, O blessed Jesus, Thou shalt see
The travail of Thy soul, and shalt Be satisfied eternally:
Thine agony on Calvary—the price that Thou didst give,
Shall cause the dead again to live!

In God's due time, O pilgrim on the "narrow way,"
Thy painful journey ended, darkest
Night shall turn to brightest day;
Thine every trial. then, thine every tear, shall prove a gem
To beautify thy diadem!

In His due time, O weary, groaning, sin-cursed Earth,
The Lord will wipe away thy tears,
And bring the promised "second birth":
And there shall be no pain, nor any death in that blest day
When sin and sorrow flee away!

In His due time angelic choirs shall sing again
In grander strain that heavenly message,
"Peace on earth, goodwill toward men!"
And every knee shall bow, and every loving heart confess
The Christ let comes to reign and bless!

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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Harvest, Winter, Sabbath.

THE harvest work of which our Lord speaks so fully in Matt. 24 is the culmination of the selection of His “Little Flock” of consecrated followers, which began at His first advent in the calling of His band of disciples.. All down the Gospel Age numbers have been added to this “people for God’s name,” and in the time of harvest “the dead in Christ” are raised, and the remaining members on earth are gathered into the heavenly garner, in preparation for the reign of peace which is to follow.

It is important that the harvest work be clearly understood, and the Lord has given ample instruction for all who will prove their value as true “wheat” and be gathered into the garner within a certain period of time. As in the case of the Jewish harvest those who were in the religious systems of the day and failed to respond to the Lord’s message were burned up as “chaff” (Matt. 3:12), so in the close of the Gospel harvest, those in the religious systems who do not respond to the harvest message must go through “great tribulation,” a fiery time of trouble with which this age will end, and be revealed as “tares.”—Matt. 13:30; 24:21.

It is to this wheat class—“My people”—that the Lord has been calling through His Word and by His spirit for many years now, to flee from the present systems of Christendom, which have become worldly institutions and have been cast off from favour.—Rev. 3:14-22; 18:1-5. This “flight” from Babylon (mother and daughter systems) must be undertaken before the “four winds” are let loose (Rev. 7:1-3) by all worthy of the name “My people,”—“that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

Flight is to be made not from one denomination to another, but the instruction is “flee into the mountain,” i.e., the kingdom of the Lord (Matt. 24:16), and being translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, He has provided the harvest feast for all such—“For whosoever the carcase (the food, meat in due season) is, there will the eagles be gathered together”—Matt. 24:28. And so it is, God’s people are found gathered together in twos or threes or larger numbers, rejoicing in the truths provided only for this class by their Lord who has returned unseen by human eyes, to conduct this harvest work before the great time of trouble and later the bringing of peace to the earth. (Rev. 14:14-16.)

The importance of making flight from the systems of Babylon during the harvest of the Gospel Age is impressed again by the Lord in His exhortation—“But pray yet that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day” (Matt. 24:20.) These terms “winter” and “sabbath day” are not to be taken literally, but rather our Lord was referring to periods of time which would be very unfavourable, yea, impossible for flight from the systems He has cast off.

The “winter” would refer to the great time of trouble, when the “four winds” of Rev. 7 are let loose, bringing about a great tempest amongst the restless masses of mankind — “the sea and waves roaring” (Luke 21:25) — resulting in “the heaven” (ecclesiastical systems) passing away with a great noise . . . the earth also (present order of society) and the works that are therein being burned up.” (2 Pet. 3:10.) No wonder the Lord exhorts His people to flee to Him, to His kingdom before the “winter.” During a literal harvest time there is plenty of food obtainable as the grain is gathered into the barn, but how different it is when winter sets in. So in the harvest of this Gospel Age there is abundant provision of spiritual food for the sustenance of all the Lord’s people who are courageous and answer His call to leave the lukewarm Laodicean systems of to-day, but with the coming of the winter period the opportunity of feasting on the harvest truths will be past. “The harvest is past, the summer (time of favourable opportunity) is ended, and we are not saved (as members of the Church)” is recorded by the prophet Jeremiah 8:20, as representing the Great Company, who, though unworthy to be the Bride of Christ, receive a lower spiritual inheritance following the washing of their robes through great tribulation. (See Rev. 7:9-17.)

The term “sabbath day” would not refer to a twenty-four-hour, seventh day of the week, but rather to a period of time, typified by the Jewish sabbath day. This period is generally understood by Bible students as referring to the seventh millennium during which Israel and mankind as a whole will be blessed with lasting rest and peace, which the term “sabbath” signifies. How fitting, then, that our Lord should say—“Pray ye that your flight be . . . neither on the sabbath day,” implying that when this period is ushered in, flight from the Babylonian systems would be out of the question, inasmuch as Babylon will have been thrown down during the “winter” time, which precedes the “sabbath day.”—“Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” (Rev. 18:21.)

If this be the correct understanding of our Lord’s words (our readers are exhorted to prove all things for themselves from the Scriptures) it will be seen that the harvest, winter and sabbath day refer to three distinct periods of time.

The harvest is for the complete gathering of the Gospel Church during the “days of the Son of Man,” corresponding to “the days of Noah” prior to the Flood. There would seem no doubt that we are at present very near the close of this period, and how important, therefore, that any of the Lord’s people still in Babylon, in any of its forms, should act quickly and flee

from all such associations, ere the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) cut off all opportunity of being gathered into the Gospel garner, as “The plowman overtakes the reaper.” (Amos 9:13.)

The winter time is for the purpose of ridding the world of everything out of accord with the Lord and His righteousness—the man-made systems, ecclesiastical, financial, political and social—the removing of those things that may be shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” (Heb. 12:27:)

The sabbath day, following the severe winter time, is the period during which the elect Church shall be “priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6), bringing peace and happiness—the desire of all nations—to the chastened world of mankind, for their uplift and progress to perfect human life on the restored earth. Of this time the Apostle Peter says—“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens (Christ and His Church) and a new earth (new social order) wherein dwelleth righteousness.”-2 Pet. 3:13.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

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friends making sacrifices to attend should feel well repaid. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue, Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

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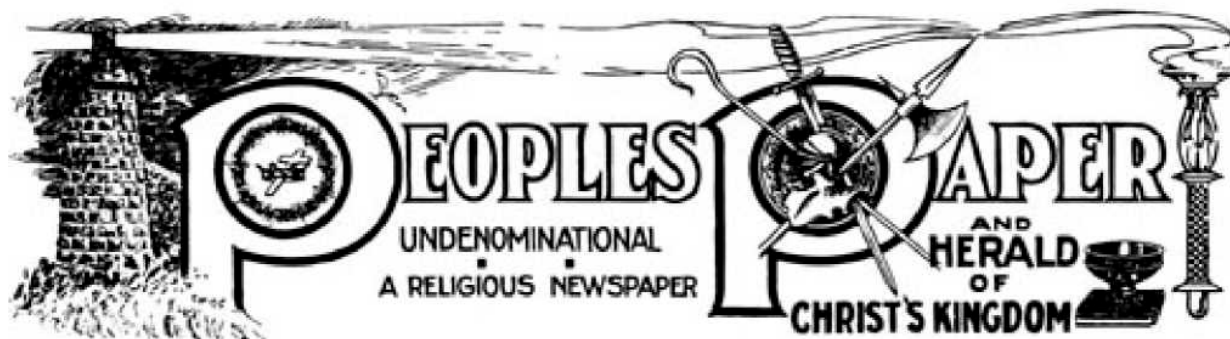
When I really am contented
That my wish be set aside,
When I cease from selfish longing,
When I triumph over pride,
When I'm really willing
To be nothing, as they sing,
But a broken, empty vessel
In the service of the King ;
That is victory.

When I calmly take unkindness,
And as meekly bear a sneer,
When I'm willing to relinquish
All that earth is holding dear,
When the falseness of some dear one
Fails to waken in my heart
Any bitter, hard resentment,
Or to wing an angry dart ;
That is victory.

When I cease to long for earth's love,
Am content to be unknown,
When I smile when friends neglect me,
Happy in His love alone,
When I lose myself in Jesus,
And surroundings cease to be
With their little jars and discords
Able to discourage me;
That is victory.

Lord, I cannot hope to triumph
Over every form of sin,
And to live but for Thy glory
While my own will reigns within,
So, I bring my will to Thee, Lord,
Rule Thou me in all Thy ways,
And the glory shall be Thine, Lord,
And the honour and the praise;
This is victory.

(Author unknown.)



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Waiting for Christ's Return.

"Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his SON from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." (1 Thes. 1:9, 10.)

TO earnest students of God's Word it is very evident that our Lord continually pointed to His second advent,

His return from heaven, as being the time when they should enter into the Kingdom with Him and receive the promised blessings. At no time did the Master imply that His faithful followers, then living, would receive their reward immediately at death. On the contrary, there was to be an undefined period of time between our Lord's first and second advents, as He stated—"It is expedient for you that I go away," and again, "I go to prepare a place for you, . . . and will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

It is very noticeable that our Lord did not indicate the length of time that would elapse prior to His return from heaven; to have done so would have likely interfered with the progress of His followers. It was much better to leave the intervening time an open matter, and exhort them to faithfulness until He should return, or they finish their earthly course. By this means the interest in, the longing for, the expectation of their Lord's return was kept ever bright and clear in the hearts and minds of the Lord's people. We remember the Lord's answer to His disciples, when, on His last appearance after His death and just prior to His ascension, they asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" He said—"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." In other words, the Lord desired His followers to have their hopes centred on the assurance of His return, rather than on the time when this would take place.

How faithfully the Apostles impressed this same lesson of expectancy respecting the return of the Lord—that only those who were found worthy "at His appearing" should enter into the heavenly Kingdom and be associated with Christ in His glory and also in the privileges of assisting mankind generally throughout the Millennial Age. In addition to the words of our text, St. Paul in writing to Titus, as also in his other epistles, gave this inspiring theme to encourage and exhort the brethren—"looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

What a comfort and consolation it has been to the dear saints throughout the Gospel Age when, often

enduring the most severe persecutions, they could feel assured—"The Lord shall descend from heaven," and bring about such a mighty deliverance that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed in us."

While, then, the Lord's people have had every cause to be confident respecting the return of their Master and that all their hopes would be abundantly fulfilled at that time, many, no doubt, during the Gospel Age, like the Apostle Paul, have desired "not to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." In other words, they would rather not "sleep" in the death condition, but would prefer, if it were God's will, that the return of Christ might have been in their day--during their lifetime. That such a desire or longing to be with Christ was in harmony with Paul's life of sacrifice is shown by the correct translation of Phil. 1:23—"I have an earnest desire for the returning and being with Christ, since it is very much to be preferred." (See Diaglott footnote.) While Paul knew that the time was not then due for the return of Christ, yet the fact that he recorded his desire for that, had it been possible, is the point of our lesson.

It has been good for the Lord's people all down the Gospel Age to earnestly desire the return of their Master, and by being in such an attitude of heart, they would be the better prepared also to wait for Him. That is, to wait as becometh saints, to wait confidently, to wait cheerfully, to wait while zealous in His service, to wait patiently for Him.

This thought of how we are to wait for His Son from heaven is brought out in Rom. 8:23-25--We also, which have the firstfruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for sonship, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Surely this has been so with the saints over the Gospel Age as a whole respecting the return of Christ; they have with patience waited for it, as expressed again by Paul in 2 Thes. 3:5—"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." (See also 1 Pet.. 1-8.)

How true it is that the Lord's return is the crowning point of the Christian's life; it is the fulfilment of all his hopes, the consummation of all his desires, and the worthiness or otherwise of all the members called unto the fellowship of God's Son, to enter into the joys of their Lord, will depend upon how each one has waited for their Lord from heaven. Yes, the waiting period is all important; that is, the period of time following full consecration to God. We remember the Lord's words in the parable of Luke 19:13, when in giving the illustration of the ten pounds being committed to His servants, He said "Occupy till I come."

What depth of meaning is in these words—"Occupy till I come"—and which seems so well explained by Paul's words in 1 Cor. 4--"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." And the longing expectancy for the return of their Master, on the part of the Lord's people, has had the most invigorating and inspiring influence to faithful use of the "pounds" committed to their charge.

When we consider that, in committing the pounds to each servant, the Lord was evidently picturing that great gift of justification, which all His people alike receive, we may conclude that it is the use made of this justification by faith, that will determine whether or not one is truly "waiting for his Lord from heaven." Some may feel that they are justified and have peace with God, but this is not followed by consecration with all, and so the "pounds" are not used in the manner intended by the Master when He said, "Occupy till I come."

The full use of justification is of course only made when one presents his justified self to God a living sacrifice, which Paul says, is "holy, acceptable unto God and a reasonable service." Just how reasonable this is we do not at first realise and probably never can sufficiently approximate the privilege to be

permitted to offer our little all along with that full offering of our Master's, that we may, by God's grace, having suffered with Him, also reign with Him in the Kingdom to come.

How true it is, that "Occupying till He come" has a double significance—first, the faithful use of the "pounds," which in turn will focus the desire, the intention, upon the second part, i.e., "till He come." In other words, while faithfully using the "pounds" the child of God, in healthy condition, is in harmony with his Lord in the spirit very fully, from that time onward, and what could be more natural than a sincere desire for the return of his Master, that he may be with Him and see Him as He is, in the glory promised to the overcomers. While, then, joyfully content to use the gift of justification to enable the presenting of our bodies a living sacrifice, the great end is ever uppermost in our hearts; truly "till He come" no child of God can be satisfied—content now, satisfied then, is the correct viewpoint of all the Lord's people.

How different is the outlook of those who have never made use of the "pounds"—their justification—having never consecrated their lives fully to God. These surely could not have the full interest in the return of Christ — having never sacrificed with Him, they could have no intense longing for His return that they may also live with Him. While, perhaps, interested to some extent in Christ's return, and maybe speaking of it in word, that is very different from waiting for Christ as though one's very existence depends upon that; and truly that is really so, as respects the child of God. Except the Lord return, the very existence of the Lord's people would be lost, for it is only, "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Here we have the two thoughts—not only is it, "When Christ shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory," but also, "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." How can it be otherwise then, with those whose very life is in Christ, that they long for His return above everything else, while, meantime, endeavouring to work out their salvation by keeping their sacrifice on the altar.

Our theme is brought out again so well in Psa. 130:5, 6—"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." The lesson to be taken from these words of the Psalmist's is probably well known. In those early days the watchmen were out throughout the night of darkness, watching for the morning. We can well imagine how earnestly they would desire daybreak after the weary hours of night. The Psalmist would know very truly the position of these watchers for the morning, and for him to express his own "waiting for the Lord" as being more desirable, conveys very well his love and devotion to the Lord, and his assurance that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," and also be ready to receive at His hands the blessing promised to all who enter the Kingdom.

The Psalmist of course could not have the same hopes respecting the Kingdom as the Lord's people since Christ's first advent, but he no doubt represented the beloved class, who, during this Gospel Age, are so highly favoured in knowing of the wonderful outworking of God's Plan, both as respects the spiritual and earthly phases of the Kingdom. Surely it was just as true of the Psalmist then, as it is of the David class all down the Gospel Age, that only by the return of the Lord—God's great Agent for accomplishing every feature of His Plan—can the hope of salvation be realised. How necessary, then, that God's natural people of past times, as well as His spiritual people of this Gospel Age, should wait patiently for Him who is to bring salvation to all mankind. So the Psalmist concludes in this Psalm— "Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption." Psa. 130:7.

Having in mind the importance of God's people waiting on the Lord for the time of His return from heaven, concerning which Peter said: "He shall send Jesus Christ . . . whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things," it is surely appropriate to consider our position to-day in view of the fact that we, as earnest students of God's Word, feel assured by all the signs our Lord gave that we are living in the days of His presence— the days of the Son of Man. Seeing this is so, are we to still "wait

for His Son from heaven,” when His return is an accomplished fact? Yes, indeed, we are waiting not only for the period of preparation for the Kingdom, however cheering and inspiring this is, but above all for the time when we each one shall see Him as He is, when as members of the Bride we are joined unto our Head, to be associated with Him in all the joys of the heavenly Kingdom from which the blessings for all mankind shall flow throughout the Millennial Age.

We are waiting, then, not in the sense so many are waiting when they speak of the return of Christ, for the general idea is that our Lord will appear suddenly, sitting on a cloud and immediately all who are His will be caught away bodily and taken to heaven. This thought is the result of taking some Scriptures literally, which, so used, do violence to the Bible as a whole. How important it is that the Scriptures be harmonised as a whole, and especially is this so respecting the vital subject of our Lord’s return. Having in mind our Lord’s exhortation to watch, it would be impossible for one to watch intelligently if he did not know the manner of his Lord’s return.

From our Master’s own words, as well as from the Apostles, we learn that His return was to be “as a thief in the night”; that is, that it would be unknown to all except those definitely informed. This surely indicates that He is not to appear as a human being, so that it could be said, He is here or there—that He could be pointed out on earth. No, our Lord warned against this very thing and declared that His presence would be manifest as a great shining forth, pictured by the sun—from the east even unto the west. Again His reference to the “days of Noah” and the comparison He made of the general conditions amongst men surely would be meaningless, except they refer to a period of time when the Lord was actually present “in the days of the Son of Man,” just as Noah was present, before the Flood—“in the days of Noah.”

Some misunderstand our Lord’s words as He ascended from His disciples—“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age”—to imply that, as He has ever been present with His people in an unseen form, the period of His parousia at the close of the Gospel Age is no different from that. Truly, our Lord has been present by His spirit with all His people throughout the Gospel Age, as pictured in Revelation, “walking amidst the candlesticks”; that is, amidst the churches; but let it be noted that “the days of the Son of Man” have no reference at all to the whole of the Gospel Age, but distinctly apply to a period of time at the end of this second dispensation—“this present evil world”—just as the “days of Noah” refer to a period of time when Noah was there in person at the close of the first dispensation, just prior to the Flood.

So, during the days of the harvest of the age our Lord has taken charge of the events connected with the harvest work in no uncertain way. This does not imply that He has yet taken charge of all earth’s events, for Satan is still “the god of this world” just as much during the harvest as throughout the age; he is permitted to continue his sway only for a further limited period during which Christ is preparing to take over the whole management of earth’s affairs. We sometimes see a notice in business premises—“Under new management”—and we know that a complete change in ownership has taken place. That will be the case when our Lord has completed the harvest work of gathering in all His spiritual people. Then, but not till then, will He take over the rulership of earth, having taken unto Himself His great power to reign.

We find this is definitely so when we consider the word “reign” in connection with earth’s new management. That our Lord has been reigning in the hearts of His people ever since He was on earth is surely true, but this is a very different thought from that implying a taking over of humanity for their blessing — the dispensing of those things to be made available on account of His sacrifice. While it may not be improper for the Lord’s people to think of Christ as their King, yet it is significant that this title is not used in the Scriptures to denote our relationship to Him. Rather, He is our great High Priest and we His under-priesthood, and He is chief amongst us as a class of brethren. How wonderful is the statement in Heb. 2:10, 11, respecting God’s purpose “to bring many sons unto glory, for both He that sanctifieth (Christ) and they who are sanctified (the Lord’s people) are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed

to call them brethren.” What a relationship is this! Truly it could not be more wonderful.

So, we find in the Scriptures that our Lord’s Kingship has particular reference to Christ upon His throne during the Millennial Age, when His work as the High Priest after the order of Aaron, the sacrificing priest, is finished. Christ’s title as King also corresponds with that of High Priest after the order of Melchisedec—the reigning and blessing Priest, the King of Salem. From this we learn that the reign of Christ is to be over the world, not over His brethren, the members of His body; these are not reigned over now, for they are being selected and prepared to be His associates in the Kingdom which will have all mankind as its subjects in the grand age to come.

This also agrees with the thought previously mentioned—”As the bright-shining comes out of the east and shines even unto the west, so shall also the presence of the Son of Man be.” But as yet the bright-shining has not illuminated the world, though the presence of our Lord has greatly affected mankind in general, indirectly: as we perceive the “day of His preparation” continuing — making ready for His kingly reign when the right time comes.

So, we realise, that while Christ proved Himself worthy of all the titles mentioned in the Scriptures when He proved faithful and was raised from the dead to the Father’s right hand at His first advent, yet a number of these offices are for the exclusive purpose of administering the Kingdom on earth, during the Millennial Age. He will not only take on His kingly reigning office, but He will be Mediator of the New Covenant and these offices are to be shared with His Body. Isaiah also gives us a list of titles which apply to the same time—”He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

To apply the above titles to the present time would be out of place. For the same reason we believe Isaiah’s further statement in chapter 52:7 would not be applicable to-day. The Apostle in Rom. 10:15 applies the main part of this verse to the Gospel Age—”How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” Yes, indeed, how beautiful, what a privilege to run with the Lord’s message during this Gospel Age, including the harvest; and will it not also be “How beautiful are the feet of them that bringeth good tidings, that published) peace” when the Kingdom is established? Surely it will, and this statement in Isa. 52:7 seems to refer to that very time, when the ancient prophets, as princes in all the earth, will proclaim the message of good tidings; they will indeed publish peace, and declare unto Zion, natural Israel, “Thy God reigneth” and eventually to whosoever will then own the Lord as their God. The following verses in Isa 52 are in agreement. Verse 10 reads—”The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

What a prospect awaits the whole world of mankind, and surely we can rejoice on this account, but what a greater prospect awaits the Lord’s people of the present time, those “waiting for His Son from heaven,” who, together with the same class all down the Gospel Age have given heed to the words of our Lord’s parable in Luke 12—”Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them.”

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The Resurrection Change.

THE manner in which the members in Christ are changed from the earthly to the heavenly condition is of much importance to those who desire to be fully informed respecting all that the Lord has been pleased to reveal to His children by His Word and spirit.

While many seem to see clearly that the Lord's people all down the Gospel Age, on finishing the earthly way in death, have fallen asleep to await the time when "the dead in Christ shall rise first," some have difficulty in understanding how the last members—those "who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord"—are dealt with in fulfilment of the Apostle's words; "we shall not all sleep."

It should be clearly noted that the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15:51, 52 does not imply that any of the "we" class—the Lord's people—shall not die. He had previously stated in this same chapter, verses 6 and 18, that some of the saints had already "fallen asleep" in death. But now, in regard to those of the same class who would be living on the earth "at the last trump," he would show them "a mystery." The procedure of their change to "the image of the heavenly," at the consummation of the human sacrifice, would be different in that they would not need to sleep in the unclothed condition, because at this time—the presence of Christ—the dead in Christ would have been raised already, so there would be no necessity for these last members to sleep, on their proving faithful unto death.

In thinking of the new creature, the new life, being transferred from the earthen vessel to the spiritual house (God giving to every seed its own body), that we may be like Christ, "for we shall see Him as He is," it may appear to some that the conscious existence would be unbroken, when the Apostle says it will come about "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." This, however, is not the Apostle's thought. The new creature could have no conscious existence apart from a body, and as the death of the earthly body is real and true in the case of all the saints right down the Gospel Age, so the unconsciousness before the union with the spirit body is just as real and true in every case, but the mystery is, that now in "the days of the Son of Man"—the presence of Christ—the union of the new creature, the new life, with the spirit body will come so quickly following the release from the earthen vessel that there will be no sleeping period, no remaining in the unconscious state, the transition period being so short. Hence he uses the words, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: (during the time of Christ's presence, the harvest time). Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13.)

Early Morning Devotion.

There is no time like the early morning hour for feeding on the flesh of Christ by communion with Him and pondering His words. Once lose that, and the charm is broken by the intrusion of many things, though it may be they are all useful and necessary. You cannot re-make the broken reflections of a lake swept by wind. How different is that day from all others, the early prime of which is surrendered to fellowship with Christ! Nor is it possible to live to-day on the gathered spoils of yesterday. Each man needs all that a new day can yield him of God's grace and comfort. It must be daily bread.

All true prayer has a transfiguring influence. It brings us into the immediate presence of God. The holy of holies in the ancient temple, where the Shekinah was, was no holier than where you bow every time you pray. You are looking up into the face of Christ, Himself. John was not nearer to Him, lying on his breast, than you are in your praying. One

cannot thus look up into the face of Christ and not have some measure of transfiguration wrought in him.

Then prayer is the reaching up of the soul toward God. It lifts the life for the time into the highest, holiest frame. A prayerful spirit is full of aspirations for God. Its longings are pressing up Godward. It is the transfiguring of the spirit which purifies these dull earthly lives of ours, and changes them, little by little, into the Divine image.

Rise earlier to be more alone with Christ in the morning. Let neither the pressure of business, nor the tendencies of the flesh, nor the drowsiness of spirit, keep thee from thy morning interview and converse with the King of kings.— Selected.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 16/12/6,, plus freight

Learning Obedience.

(Hebrews 5:8.)

(Convention Address.)

NATURALLY speaking, as man has found himself constituted since Adam's fall, obedience has been the first and greatest lesson necessary to be taught and learned. In infancy it begins and in infancy it is resisted. Children are born disobedient under present conditions, and a wise parent seeks to train a child early to be obedient. If a child is not trained by its own parents to become obedient to them, there is nowhere else it can as properly receive the training, and the result must surely be an unhappy one. Everywhere in the Scriptures where the subject is mentioned, it is taken for granted that the parents are wise enough to train their children in the rudimentary lessons of obedience. If it were not so, God would not have so carefully exhorted children to honour their parents, it being as Eph. 6:2 expresses it—"the first commandment with promise."

Even when children are growing to years of discretion and may be haply feeling after God and reading His Word, they will find that Word counselling them still to be 'obedient to parents. (See Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20.)

It is interesting and helpful to note that the word rendered "obedience" in our text (as also in many other places in the Bible) means "to hearken submissively." (Young's Concordance.) This seems to be a good general meaning of the word, the dictionary giving it—"submissive to authority." Children trained to obey parents must hearken submissively, for they may not discern the wisdom of their parents' command; likewise the servant his master. It is not the prerogative of the servant to question his master's command, it is his duty to obey even if the command is not according to his own taste or desire—he must hearken submissively.

Now, going beyond the realm of the human family as between themselves, we look at this matter of obedience as God requires it of man. We see that it started right back in the beginning. When God created man perfect He required but one thing of him—obedience—and rightly so. He expected man to "hearken submissively" to Him and not •to question His wisdom, His ability and readiness to supply every good thing in its time. But what happened? (Read Rom. 5:19.) Because one man failed to "hearken submissively" man lost the riches of God's bountiful goodness toward him. But because another perfect man was found who did fulfil God's injunctions, "hearkening submissively" unto them even unto death, there is the great hope that man will yet again enjoy his former, happy estate. This constitutes the gospel (the glad tidings) which for centuries has been preached unto men.

We enquire now as to how and why Jesus learned anything by obedience, and what bearing such has upon us as His followers. Though He was God's Son He was required to hearken submissively to His Father's voice, and obedience thereto incurred much suffering. Why? Was not Jesus perfect and ought not a perfect man rendering obedience to God find joy and not sorrow? Yes., but the results of Jesus' experiences were to extend beyond Himself and far down into the future of God's great plan for the salvation and blessing of men. Jesus was ordained of God to become a great high priest, and thus He became the source of eternal salvation unto all who would obey Him. (Heb. 5:9, 10.) Study of the Scriptures reveals that not only was He to become such to all the world, but that He was to act prior to that time as a high priest especially on behalf of believers in the Gospel Age — the called-out Church, those whom He calls His brethren. (Heb. 2; 1 1 - 1 3 ; 3:1.)

From the study of the old Law arrangements, which were examples or shadows of the true (Heb. 8:5; 10:1), we learn that to fulfil his office acceptably a priest must be one who could deal with his people understandingly—never condoning wilful sin, but ever performing services that enabled compassion to be shown toward the ignorant and those continually out of the way through the natural blemishes of inborn

sin. (See Heb. 5:1, 2, with margin in v. 2.)

Now the priests taken from amongst the people in the Jewish law arrangement (the shadow of the true) were able to deal understandingly with those whom they served, because as fallen men they experienced the difficulties of their people. But it was not so with Jesus. True, He had witnessed the results of sin and was quick to concur in His Father's plan to come to earth to save men from its scourge. But to do so fully and effectively He must have experience of what it meant. Thus in His earthly ministry He went about healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, etc., and came fully in touch with the infirmities and necessities of fallen humanity. It was, however, during the sacrifice of His own humanity in providing the great redemption price, at which time our Lord felt He may have come short, that His prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears ascended to His Father, and He was heard in that He feared.

We are able to discern also the priestly work of Jesus on behalf of His church. Not only did He face all the results accruing to man because of Adam's sin or disobedience, and overcome them, but He also endured special temptations such as none but the spirit begotten children of God are called upon to face. Immediately Jesus had been begotten by the holy spirit of God and was changed completely to spiritual desires and hopes the great Adversary came with his subtle temptations, seeking to entice Him to surrender His hold upon the same by satisfying an immediate fleshly need. (See Matt. 4:2-4.) Failing in that he sought to encourage Jesus to perform reckless acts to prove that He had God's favour. (Matt. 4:5-7.) Failing again, he extended to Jesus' mind all the glories of the kingdoms of the world, and endeavoured to frustrate God's own plan and wean Jesus from His part therein, by enticing Him not to choose the way of present suffering, but to "rule before the time." (Matt. 4:8-10.) In these experiences of our Lord's we see embodied every temptation that has befallen the Lord's people in "hearkening submissively" to the will of God. In this great battle they could never come off victorious except for the help received at the hand of their great High Priest who has endured it all and extends the needed help when sought. (Heb. 4:14-16; 6:19, 20.)

As the church passes through all her experiences, the individual members are learning what their Master and High Priest has learnt, and thus they are being fitted to become under priests in the great Melchisedec priesthood that is to judge and bless not only all the obedient of mankind but angels also. (1 Cor. 6:2:3.)

Jesus learned obedience experimentally and practically; He was fully disposed to obey God, but the Father tested Him by what He allowed to come upon Him as a result of that obedience. Though He were a son and had never crossed His Father's will, yet He was required to learn more about obedience through suffering; namely, that God requires obedience always, irrespective of circumstances and conditions. And we (the church) are sons of God too, and God is dealing with us as sons. The wonder of it! (See 1 John 3:1, 2.)

Then there is another element in our schooling, learning obedience, or "hearkening submissively" to God's voice which was not necessary for Jesus to learn; namely, the chastening element. (See Heb. 12:5-9.) Jesus did always those things which pleased His Father in heaven, but we do not, and often there is need of chastening, a suffering experience that tends to correct our error and help us to do better next time. (Heb. 12:11.) And in all this God is preparing us, sanctifying us, setting us apart for His work, present and future, if we hearken submissively to Him.

Through our present experiences, then, God is qualifying us for a great, future work. We often hear the quotation—experience is the best teacher. We cannot do anything confidently and well unless we have knowledge. To illustrate:

I might fiddle with electric gadgets in an elementary way and effect some temporary repairs, but to do a bigger job I would be helpless. I could listen to the electrician explain the manipulation of his wires and

gadgets but my understanding would be hazy, due to my lack of training and knowledge along that line, and I certainly could not help or instruct another for that reason. But suppose I go to the Mallee district of Victoria and I meet a person who wants to know about wheat growing in that area; which is the best soil over an average of years, what variety of wheats are best for a particular soil or season, what machinery is best for ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc., I could assist him because I know about it through knowledge gained during long experience along that line.

Is it not thus that God is preparing us for His work—by experience. Our life now is a learning time rather than a teaching time, but we find that much of our learning is gained by experience in our efforts to teach. We think we have a good knowledge of God's plan and we meet a person who desires to know of it. We tell him something and he questions concerning a Scripture and places an interpretation upon it that we had not heard before; he may be able to quote other Scriptures that appear to support his viewpoint, and lo, we are somewhat lost. We had never seen it from that angle before. Perhaps our friend goes away thinking he knows more than we do after all, and we wonder ourselves if it is so. We go home, we think and study and receive help and we find satisfactory proof of the right interpretation of that particular Scripture. We may never see our friend again (he may not want to see us, anyway). We learn much through experiences like that.

It is the same in Class meetings. We might be considered to have had experience in the truth and one is called to take the chair at a meeting. We review the study at home, we consult every known help we can lay our hands upon and we come, we believe, reasonably well prepared. And what happens? Someone presents a thought on a verse that we had never seen that way before. If it is right and to be accepted, it knocks much of our previous preparation flat and we have to start thinking. We find ourselves in a spot of bother because it is not the place for much thinking; other brethren are pouring in their thoughts and you must try to keep up with them all. Perhaps some are agitated because of the new thought presented. The study may not end too happily because of apparent division of thought amongst the brethren on the matter. But those who truly wait upon the Lord will be rewarded with the right understanding of the verse eventually, even if it is some time later. When you do finally get straight on the point you have had quite an experience, and it impresses the truth of the verse upon you in a way that you will never forget. You are not likely to get tripped up there again; it will be another verse somewhere else next time. But what experience it all is. We think: what a capable chairman we may become some day, if only we live long enough.

So all of us are having our lessons, and when we have gained sufficient knowledge here below and have matriculated (as it were) through obedience to that knowledge, then we are ready for our change and the home above for our glorious work of the future—the privilege of imparting the blessings of life to all the willing and obedient of mankind. The glorious prospect before us should urge us on to learn obedience every day in the little things that serve to prepare us for the inheritance of the saints in light.

We would like to quote some apt words of a poem—

“What Have We Done To-day?”

We shall do so much in the years to come,
But what have we done to-day?
We shall give our gold in a princely sum,
But what did we give to-day?

We shall lift the heart and dry the tear,
We shall plant a hope in the place of fear,
We shall speak the words of love and cheer,
But what did we speak to-day?

We shall be so kind in the afterwhile,
But what have we been to-day?
We shall bring each lonely life a smile,
But what have we brought to-day?

We shall give to truth a grander birth
And to steadfast faith a deeper worth,
We shall feed the hungry souls of earth,
But whom have we fed to-day?

We shall reap such joys in the bye and bye,
But what have we sown to-day?
We shall build us mansions in the sky,
But what have we built to-day?

‘Tis sweet in the idle dreams to bask,
But here and now do we do our task?
Yes, this is the thing our soul must ask,
“What have we done to-day?”

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HELPFUL CONVERSATION.

Keep clear of personalities in conversation. Talk of things, objects, thoughts. The smallest minds occupy themselves with persons. Do not needlessly report ill of others. As far as possible, dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant process of depreciating, assigning motives, and cutting up character goes forward. They are not pleasant places. One who is healthy does not wish to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in man, God knows. But it is not the mission of every man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure as possible, and fragrant with gentleness and charity.—John Hall.

Question Box.

Question.—Is it right that our consecration should affect others so that to some extent their interests and wishes may be neglected or sacrificed?

Answer.—The question reminds one of the beautiful incident found in 2 Samuel 24:18-25. David came to Araunah to purchase his threshing floor and some oxen to sacrifice to the Lord. Araunah requested the King to help himself to anything he wished for such a purpose. “And the King said unto Araunah, Nay, but I will surely buy it of thee at a price, neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.” We have the privilege of offering to the Lord all that we have and all that we are, but we must not offer the substance of others. We could not expect the Lord to accept anything we did in His service, if it were done in time which really belonged to others.. If we were to take of other people’s goods, it would be a theft. If we were to offer either goods or time thus taken to the Lord, it certainly could not be acceptable to Him. Duties must have first attention. How could we expect the Lord to accept any service rendered to His cause in time which should have been occupied toward the home, to wife, to husband, children, or to employer. Our sacrifices should not involve others in them. We must bring a clean sacrifice. Matt. 5:23-24.

On the other hand, there may be those who would presume on us by making claims for attention which are much more than is right or just. We need to seek for the wisdom from above, and try to reach a generously right conclusion as to our responsibilities towards our dependents, or homes, or wives, husbands, children, or parents, or towards our employers. Then seek also a correct understanding of our obligations to the Lord, and what His will is for us, then endeavour to carry out all that our full consecration to God implies; keeping each separate interest in its proper place, not in a stiff, hard spirit, but in a kind, generous spirit, so that all our sacrifice may be at our own expense, at our own inconvenience. Everyone’s circumstances are somewhat different, each is a steward to the Lord, to make the best of such circumstances. Sometimes we may be able to help one another, and offer suggestions, if such would be acceptable, but we must not judge one another. Our sacrifices then must not infringe upon the rights of others. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.



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Come, Let Us Adore Him.

ONE of the most helpful records given in the Scripture in connection with the birth of our Lord is that concerning the wise men of the East, who came seeking the new-born Jesus, the King of the Jews, with presents of myrrh, frankincense and gold, and we should be able to gather from this incident some valuable suggestions respecting our obligations to the great Messiah, and the propriety of renewing these and increasing them now as we approach the opening of another year.

The wise men—according to tradition, three in number—arrived in Jerusalem and began making inquiries respecting the newly-born Jewish King. The news soon spread, and the holy city was in commotion because, according to the prophets, Messiah, promised for centuries, was due to appear about that time; and we read again, “All men were in expectation of Him.” This expectancy naturally would be heightened by the coming of the wise men or magi from a far country—supposedly Persia—to show homage to Messiah. Furthermore, there were Jews scattered abroad throughout that country who still more or less kept alive the thought of Israel’s hope for the great Messiah so long promised of God, prophesied of as the bringer of blessings not only to Israel but through them to all the families of the earth.

God chose as messengers of His good tidings not only wise men but reverential men, men of faith; and His choice of these messengers from the East to arouse the people of Judea and Jerusalem and to be heralds of the great King was not an exception to the rule. Although heathen men, in the sense of not being of the nation with which God had thus far dealt and to whom He had thus far confined His gracious promises, they were, nevertheless, good men, reverential men, who delighted to know of the coming blessing of peace on earth and good will amongst men through whatever channel or nationality the Lord should be pleased to find His representative and messenger.

In one respect many of Christendom could learn numerous important lessons from these wise Gentiles. No false patriotism stood in their way to hinder their appreciation of any manifestation of divine favour to the children of men. And when they found the Saviour they were nothing daunted by the fact that His home surroundings were of the humbler sort. They worshipped Him in three senses of the word :— (1) They fell before Him, prostrated themselves, thus physically expressing their reverence. (2) They worshipped Him in their hearts and with the tongue gave expression to their rejoicing and confidence. (3) They opened their treasure-box and presented to Him three gifts appropriate to royalty; the myrrh representing submission, frankincense representing praise, gold representing obedience.

The reverent spirit of these noble heathen men who had so little light, so little knowledge respecting the great Messiah and His work, will bring to our cheeks the blush of shame as we reflect that, favoured with still brighter light to guide us to the Lamb of God, having seen His star in a still better and truer sense, having been guided to Him by the prophecies, having found Him not only a babe, but one that in prospect would bear our sorrows and carry our griefs and make His soul an offering for sin, that we by His stripes might be healed, what manner of oblation should we pour at the feet of Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood? With what deep reverence have we bowed the knee, prostrated ourselves, given outward evidence through our bodies of full submission to our great King, of whom we not only know but of whose gracious provisions for us and for the world of mankind we have heard, not uncertainly, but with the voice of Him who speaketh from heaven? Have we offered our myrrh? Have we shown a willingness for service even to the extent of bitterness, a joy to honour the King to the extent of suffering with Him? Have we worshipped Him in heart, not with an outward form of godliness without the power—in other words, have we offered Him the frankincense of heart, adoration, appreciation and gratitude?

Have we laid at His feet our earthly substance —our gold? Have we realised that all that we have and all that we are constitute offerings far too small to be worthy of acceptance by the great King Emmanuel? Is this our present attitude? And will it be our attitude through coming days even until the end of the present pilgrimage?

The Apostle's words, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, your reasonable service," apply not only to the primary consecration of our hearts to the Lord, but are, as the Scriptures express it, a covenant of sacrifice, an agreement to die daily to self and to be alive daily more and more in the Lord's service to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His. If this has not been our attitude in the past, shall it not be our future course? Shall we not in any event continue to grow in knowledge, to grow in love, in service, in worship and in the privilege of having our little all at the feet of Him who is our gracious heavenly King, whose kingdom is so soon to be established, and who has invited us to sit with Him in His throne, to share His glory, to be participants as spiritual Israel in the great work of pouring out blessings upon the world of mankind, every kindred, people, nation and tongue?

When we give our hearts it includes all that we have and are in the highest and noblest and fullest sense that which was illustrated by the three gifts of the wise men is all represented in the brief statement, "My son, give me thine heart." Whoever gives his heart to the Lord fully and unreservedly, gives his body, gives his worship and reverence and praise, and gives his earthly treasure, time, talents, influence, money—all—to be used in joyful service for the glory of the King.

To those who have never taken this step a prompt acceptance is urged upon them, irrespective of the gracious hope we have of a transcendent reward of glory, honour and immortality. As the Apostle declares, it is our reasonable service. Reasonable people ought to be glad of the knowledge that God is willing to accept our service, and of the opportunity to present themselves under the covering of the merit of the dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness.

To those who have already accepted the Lord's favour, who have already presented their bodies living sacrifices, who have already given the Lord their hearts, we urge a remembrance of the fact that the sacrifice once put upon the altar must remain there, and that the longer it remains the more joyful should be the service, the more appreciated every opportunity for sacrifice, the more thankful should be the heart and the more rich should be the experience in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts and preparing us more and more through the graces of the spirit for the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that so love Him and so reverence His Son. "What shall I render unto Thee What praise sufficient could there be For all Thy benefits toward me,

O Thou Most Holy?
“I’ll drink Salvation’s cup to-day
Which Thou hast poured.
Be Thou my stay !
Assist me as Thy saint to pay
My vows to Thee.

“Remembering Thy Heavenly call,
I’ll strive to be sincere to all.
O pray for grace lest I should fall
From Thine own way.

“In thought, in word, in all my ways
Thy holy standard I would raise,
Nor please nor honour self, but praise
My Worthy King.

“To-day in matters small or great,
I’ll serve with faithfulness and wait
For further joys. Oh, blessed state,
Thus serving Thee!

“I’ll strive to ‘choose things that excel’;
All anxious cares I’ll seek to quell,
And all discouragements repel,
And be content.

“I’ll neither murmur nor repine!
I’ll trust my heart to care Divine
To make of it a sacred shrine
Where Thou canst dwell.”

—V.N.S.

Baptism Service.

OF all the assemblies of the Lord's people those at which fellow Christians symbolize their consecration to God are truly amongst the most stimulating and encouraging experiences in which it is the privilege of Christ's followers to participate.

Our Lord Jesus no doubt knew that His own example of water immersion in the River Jordan, picturing His death baptism—the pouring out of His perfect humanity in death on behalf of all mankind — would have a most beneficial effect upon all His true followers as they likewise are “planted together in the likeness of His death,” throughout the whole of their pilgrimage on earth.

One of these blessed occasions was experienced in Melbourne on November 10th when four dear friends gladly symbolized their consecration to God by water immersion, and we were sorry that another dear member in the country was hindered by family sickness from taking the same symbol at this service.

It is very evident that Christian baptism is not generally understood, being often confused with the baptism which John the Baptist used to symbolize repentance and remission of sins for Israel in preparing as many as were in the right heart condition to receive the Messiah at His first advent. The words of John the Baptist, when Jesus came to him for the symbol of water immersion (Matt. 3:13, 14), show clearly the great difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism which our Lord was then introducing and of which He was the first to partake. John was amazed that the sinless, perfect Lord should come to him for baptism, inasmuch as his baptism pictured remission of sins, but Jesus wished to take the water immersion for quite a different purpose, to picture His death baptism which He had just previously undertaken by complete surrender of His perfect human life to God, as a sacrifice on behalf of the dying human race.

Likewise, the true followers of Christ take the water baptism to picture their death baptism, the full surrender of their humanity to God, reckoned perfect through the merit of Christ. The Apostle Paul so beautifully presents this matter in Romans 6, where he declares—“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.” Paul here refers not to the symbol of water baptism, but to the reality itself, death baptism, which is entered into by a covenant of sacrifice by each consecrated follower of the Master. Having presented their bodies a living sacrifice, such a covenant to be consummated in actual death, all who have entered into this privilege and are seeking faithfully to fulfil their vows daily may take courage in the Apostle's assurance—“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” (Rom. 6:5.) Blessed assurance indeed!

We rejoice with and pray for our dear brethren who have thus recently demonstrated outwardly the desires of their inmost hearts, the sentiments of each no doubt being represented in the words of the Psalmist—“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (sacrificial dying) of his saints.” (Psa. 116:12-15.)

Gathering at Geelong, Vic.

It was a great pleasure for the majority of the Melbourne friends to journey to Geelong, 45 miles from Melbourne, on Saturday, 24th November, and join the brethren in that city in gatherings which were very edifying and refreshing.

Commencing at 2.30 in the afternoon with a Bible study on selected questions and continuing with addresses and general fellowship up till 8 p.m., the occasion proved how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

A question of particular interest was that of explaining from the Scriptures the difference between the terms "Mediator" and "Advocate" as these are used to define the work of Christ on behalf of mankind following His sacrifice at Calvary. The meaning of these words in the Greek was shown to be most important; mediator meaning a go-between or middle man, to reconcile two opposing parties; while advocate means one called alongside, to help. It was seen that the term mediator is never used to describe the particular work of Christ on behalf of the saints, but refers to the "go-between" for mankind in general as they will be dealt with in the Millennial Age, when the New Covenant begins to operate. (See Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24.) The term advocate, however, was shown to apply to our Lord during the whole of the Gospel Age, as He stands alongside His people as they approach God and delight to serve Him all their lives. Thus God recognises and accepts the perfection of Christ to make up for the imperfections of His followers, as John declares—"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1.) Again we read—"He is a merciful and faithful high priest . . . touched with a feeling of our infirmities." (Heb. 2:16-18; 4:15, 16.) Then, in John 16:26, 27, we have the words of Jesus—"I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you (inasmuch as you are not opposed to God) ; for the Father himself loveth you." From this standpoint it was realised how precious is the relationship between God and Christ and His true people who delight to do His will; there is no opposition to require a mediator, but there is the necessity of the advocate to supply the deficiency of merit required until these dear members shall be perfected in the first resurrection. God is bringing many sons unto glory, and "both he that sanctifieth (Christ) and they who are sanctified, are all of one (one mind, one spirit) ; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11.)

Addresses on "The Sphere of Prayer," "That by These Things" and "How Our Bible Reached Us," provided many helpful and encouraging thoughts for our instruction and edification in the everyday Christian life. The gatherings concluded with a Love Feast and appropriate hymns, and prayer for God's blessing and keeping of all His dear people in every place.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

“Thou Crownest the Year with Thy Goodness.

It is fitting that the Lord's people should continually keep in mind the mercies and blessings they enjoy, otherwise the pressure of the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches would so crowd in upon our minds and hearts as to cover from our observation and ultimately choke up completely the springs of divine grace, which, kept open, minister continually to our joy and refreshment in the holy spirit.

To this end it is appropriate that we have a daily review of the blessings we enjoy—that every evening we call to mind the privileges enjoyed, the providences which have guided our way, and the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which have come to us; some of them in common with the world in general and others of a special kind known to and appreciated by those only who know the Shepherd and are known of Him.

It is appropriate, too, that we take weekly reviews, looking at the same mercies and blessings from a still broader standpoint of observations, reminding us of the rest into which we have entered through faith in the precious blood, and also of the rest that remains for the people of God, whereof God has given us assurance in that on the first day of the week He raised up Jesus from the dead.—Heb. 4:3, 9.

But it is with special appropriateness that at the close of the still larger cycle of a year we should take a still broader and more comprehensive view of our experiences, looking circumspectly at the way we have travelled and considering well which have been steps which have hindered progress, and which have been proper steps in the footprints of Jesus, bringing us nearer to the goal—the “mark” which we must surely attain if we would be accounted worthy of a share in the promised Kingdom. ,

Such an advanced Christian looks back through the year and recalls life's storms as well as its sunshine, its sorrows as well as its joys, its tears as well as its smiles, and sorrows not as others who have no hope. His troubles have been divested of their fearful features, and minimised by the spirit of a sound mind, and the instruction of God's Word, which assures all such that the trials, difficulties and adversities of life, rightly accepted as lessons, are blessings in disguise—which will work out “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” in the life to come.—2 Cor. 4:16, 17.

He will perceive, too, that his joys have been of a purer and a more solid kind than any he ever knew before he was begotten of the holy spirit. They have not had commingled with them the bitterness of envy, malice and hatred, but have been unalloyed; because they have not been rejoicing in iniquity, but rejoicing in the truth. Moreover, they have been much more numerous than ever before; because he not only is able to joy in the Lord, joy in His Word, joy in the holy spirit, joy in the fellowship with brethren of like precious faith, but by the grace of God he has been enabled additionally to joy in tribulation also—not because he loved tribulation, but because he loved the patience, the experience, the character, which God assures us are a fruitage which all tribulations must yield us under His providence, if we are rightly exercised thereby—James 1:3, 4; Rom. 5:3.

Of whom are all these things true? Not of everyone, surely, for we know many who have no such experience—the world that lieth in darkness knows not God. Nor are these experiences true of all people of intelligence—nominally Christians. Comparatively few of those who profess the name of Christ enjoy these precious experiences, or will be able to look back upon the year with satisfaction of this kind, realising that God has crowned the year with His goodness. This is so, because they have not taken the necessary step of full consecration to the Lord, to bring them under His protecting care and under the enlightening influence of His Word through His spirit; or, having taken the step of consecration, they

have not been performing their vows, but seeking to serve both God and Mammon, without pleasing either, and without receiving satisfactory blessings from either.

The class which can and does look back through the year from the standpoint that we have described—the class which looking back can see that God's goodness has crowned every feature of life throughout the year, is the "little flock," the true Church, whose names are written in heaven—the body of Christ, the Bride class. They are the true Zion, which shall shortly be set up, filled with divine glory, the joy of the whole earth, and the divine channel of blessing to all the families of mankind; "For out of Zion shall go the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." These are of the elect Church, of which Christ is the Head, and are the faithful "feet" members who, now fulfilling their vows of sacrifice, are companions in the sufferings of Christ, as by and by they shall be His companions also in the glory that shall be revealed. (Rom. 8:17, 18.) They are God's choice, or His "elect," for, as the Apostle informs us, God has predestinated that this class whom He is selecting shall all be copies of His Son. (Rom. 8:29.) They shall dwell in His house — they will be members of the great Temple which the Lord God is building of spiritual stones, in and through which He will bless the world with a knowledge of Himself and His grace.—1 Pet. 2:48.

Is it any wonder that these can rejoice in spirit saying, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits"? "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the loving kindness of our God." Surely, then, it is that these, in looking back, can see in the year that is past that that which has blessed and rejoiced them in every sense of the word has been of divine goodness, and that thus God has crowned the whole year with His favour toward them through Christ Jesus, and they thus appreciate it to the full.

Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper."

The booklet "What is the Christian's' Sabbath?" is taking the place of January's issue of "Peoples Paper," and is being posted out with this issue of the "Paper." In past times some of our friends have failed to realise that for some years a booklet has been used for January issue, and they write saying their January copy has not reached them, so it is hoped the matter will be clear now. Also will our friends please note that the next mailing of our journal will be February and March, 1952, issues together.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

Arrangements are now well in hand for the Annual Convention in Melbourne to be held (D.V.) on December 23rd, 25th, 26th and 27th, with additional gatherings on the 29th and 30th. These assemblies will be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street Richmond, to which all are invited. Programmes are now available from the secretary, Mr. J. 13. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue, Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

A Recipe for Harmony.

When the spirit of discord or dissention, or the desire to busybody afflicts us with its soul-destroying presence, let us make a mixture after the following formula and partake of it freely:

Patience . . . ‘ 4 parts
Consideration..... 2 parts
Universal Love 4 parts
Silence 12 parts

Take a tablespoonful in a glass of milk of human kindness every time you feel that dissatisfied feeling coming on. More if necessary. Even excessive use can produce no injurious effects. On the contrary, large doses are exceedingly exhilarating and beneficial.

(Extract from a Tract by P.R.)

God’s Messengers.

“He shall give His angels (messengers) a charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways.”—Psalm 91 :11.

EVIDENTLY the person referred to in our text as giving a charge, or message, is Jehovah, the Heavenly Father.

The Prophet David is prophesying in respect of some person, then future. That person was primarily, we believe, the Lord Jesus Christ, and secondarily, all those whom He has accepted as members of His Body throughout this Gospel Age — the Messiah class, Head and members. The words imply a special care of God over this class. All through the Scriptures they are referred to as those whom God specially loves and specially cares for. Our Lord Jesus is the Only- Begotten, the well-beloved Son, and all those who are His members are peculiarly loved. Jesus said to some of His faithful disciples, “The Father Himself loveth you.”

The charge given to the angels we would understand to have a very broad application. The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and to serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel Age. Yes, all of these, because believers in Christ, because at heart faithful, because fully consecrated to the Lord and begotten of His spirit, are the special and happy objects of His grace, ministered to and served by the invisible messengers. Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, “their angels do always behold (have access to) the face of My Father.” The Master’s words seem to imply that one or more of these angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the Very Elect.

Our Lord uses a different figure of speech from that of the Apostle, as though He would assure us that these messengers would not be delayed in caring for our interests. They would not be hindered by more important Heavenly business. but would at once have direct access to the Divine presence and attention, so that our interests would have all needed consideration. Our Lord would have us realise that we are of the House of Sons, under Himself the chief Son, hence no time is lost in bringing our interests to the Father. Our interests have first place, our angels have always access to the Father. Before we speak, He knows our minds. Before we realise our own necessities, He has made provision for them. A wonderful watch-care has been arranged. It is hard for us to understand how the Almighty God can give such

particular care and attention to our needs. Instead of being puffed up that God has manifested such loving consideration towards us, it should make us feel how little we are, how unworthy of such blessings.

Although the Father makes such use of Heavenly messengers, this by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord's earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one of another. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers are required generally to act through human instrumentalities. Of this we have illustrations in the Harvest work, supervised by our present Lord and His Heavenly hosts, yet in the main carried on by members of His Body in the flesh.

The Apostle Paul has stated that the Lord makes His ministers, or servants, a flaming fire, and intimates to us that any and every agency and power that Divine providence uses is a part of that care over His people. (Heb. 1:7.) In other words, every agency used of God—whether it be fire or electricity or man, or whatever—would be a messenger of God. And whatever would not be to His praise and work out what He chooses, He is able to restrain—as He tells us (Psalm 76:10.)

Overcomers Developed by Trial.

These angels are to “keep thee in all thy ways”—not only in all the affairs of the Church, both individually and collectively, but also in all times; they were kept during the Dark Ages as well as at other times. But this care will not keep us from temptation. None can be of this elect Church unless they have trials. In order to have the overcoming qualities of heart they must have the tests. But the Lord's promised grace is to be with them for their assistance—not to overcome for them, but to sustain them. His grace is sufficient for us. He does not make up for a poor will; but He does make up for imperfect bodies. If the will is poor, He does not want such in His elect Church. He wants His people to be strong in will—nothing doubting—overcomers.

The next verse of the Psalm from which our text is taken proceeds to say that these messengers which have a charge over the affairs of the Church, Head and Body, will keep the feet from stumbling. In a general way we might apply the term “feet” to some members of the Body all down, in all times of the Age; as we might say, for instance, one member is a hand, and one a foot, etc. The Church, resting on these “feet” members all the way down, throughout the Gospel Age, will be guided aright; they will not be allowed to stumble; for, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway.” Thus they would be enabled to surmount the difficulties in their path.

So all down through the Gospel Age the messengers of the Lord have helped His people over all of their trials. But this reference to the “feet” seems especially applicable to the last members of the Body of Christ. “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” (Rom. 10:15.)

Christ's Presence a Stumbling Stone.

The text seems to imply that the feet members at this time would be in a position of special trial. This calls to our remembrance that the Lord foretold this, saying, “He shall be . . . for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel” (Isa. 8:14.) This stone was stumbled over in the end of the Jewish Age (1 Peter 2:8). The Scriptures set forth that Jesus is the Way, but the Lord is a Stumbling-Stone in the pathway of many. These passages do not refer to the world. It was not the Gentile nations that stumbled over Jesus at His First Advent, but it was some of the Israelites who were there stumbled. And the text implies the stumbling of some Spiritual Israelites because of the coming of the Lord in a way totally different from what they had imagined. So we believe that there are very many good Christian people to-day who are stumbling over Christ's presence. They thought so and so; they imagined so and so. And all is so different from what they had imagined or expected that it is just as it was in the end of

the Jewish Age, when the rabbis stumbled.

The question is, why should not the angels have charge over all good people, so that they would not stumble? Is not this the promise? We answer that the promise is made to all who are of the elect class. But in order to remain members of this Body, they must all stand the trial. It will be a test. Are they willing to have the assistance of the angels— messengers? Are they willing to surmount these difficulties and to remain in the way?

One class will be in a condition to receive the trials in the proper manner; another class will be so self-confident, so overcharged with the cares of this life, and so lacking in spiritual development, that they will not be ready to avail themselves of the services of the angels. This is because God uses as His messengers some whom they will not be ready to receive.

Parallelism Between Jewish and Gospel Ages.

In the Jewish Age the Lord used some whom the scribes, the doctors of the Law and the chief priests could not accept at all. If He wanted to use agents, or channels, or messengers, to teach the people, why did He not choose the learned scribes or the pompous Pharisees of that day? Why did the Lord use as His messengers men who had been fishermen, tax-gatherers — persons whom the learned would think entirely unfit as instructors, or teachers? We recall that in the end of the Jewish Age it was written of two of them (and perhaps of them all) that the people perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men (Acts 4:13). How could it be that God would pass by some of the most learned of that day? “Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so,

Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight” (Matt. 11:25, 26).

So to-day the Lord is using agencies, messengers, that are not acceptable to many whom they approach. And while these are making up their minds to believe, slow in this because overcharged with the cares of this life, the elect company will be made up. Then the others will say, “Lord, Lord, open unto us.” But the Lord will declare that He cannot recognise them as members of His Body, the Elect. They will not have shown the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love necessary to give them a place in this Body. So it will be only the Body members who will be lifted up by the messengers and carried safely through the trials and difficulties which will be permitted to test the love, loyalty and obedience to the will of God, of all who have made with Him a Covenant of Sacrifice—even unto death.

The Best Order.

A man of high character but ordinary education was addressing a roomful of school children, and he said to them: “All of you know the verb which says ‘I am, thou art, he is,’ and all of you know that verbs in English, French, German, Italian, and Latin run in that way. But do you know that it is a very bad way for a verb to run? Do you know that the old Hebrew people arranged their verbs the other way round—‘He is, thou art, I am’?”

Then he added: “That is the way to look at life. Say to yourself, looking up to God, ‘He is.’ Then look at your neighbour, and say, ‘Thou art.’ Last of all think of yourself and say, ‘I am. One who heard this story was so struck by it that he sought out a Hebrew scholar and asked him if it were true that the Hebrew verbs were conjugated in that way.

“Yes,” said the Scholar. “But why do you ask?” And when told what the man had said to the children, he exclaimed: “Well, I have been studying Hebrew for forty years, and it never once occurred to me that Hebrew verbs have that wonderful and beautiful significance.”

That is the way to think and to live. First God, then your neighbour, then yourself.

Spurious Passages of the New Testament.

IN the address given at Geelong recently on the subject “How Our Bible Reached Us,” it was pointed out that numerous portions of the Scriptures are really additions to the Word of God, and should be deleted. It has been thought well to present the following at this time for the benefit of all our readers.

On Authority of Prof. C. Tischendorf’s Notes on the Readings of the Two Oldest Greek MSS—The Sinaitic and the Vatican 1209.

The following words, found in our Common Version, are not found in the oldest MSS. and are evidently no part of the Divine Word. Let each Berean go through his Bible and mark out these words; then read the passages affected and note the improvement. This list comprises all the important interpolations discovered to date.

The compiler has condensed this list time and again until what remains represents about all there is of value to us in the Tischendorf work. From the compiler’s point of view there exist very good reasons why everything in this list should be crossed out of our Bibles. Thus: when the interpolations are eliminated from Mark 14:30, 68, 72, the account agrees exactly with that given by the other evangelists. Or take Luke 23:34 ; history shows that the Jews as a race have been obliged to expiate their crime. Or take John 4:9 ; it does not agree at all with Luke 9:52, which shows that even the Lord Himself did have such dealings. Omitted from this list are the dozens of interpolations made by early copyists with the aim of making all the narratives uniform, and the hundreds of non-essential words, the addition of which did not (in the opinion of the compiler) affect the purity of the message.

Matt. 5:22 without a cause
Matt. 6:13 For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.
Matt. 6:25 or what ye shall drink*
Matt. 16:2 When it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather; for the sky is red.
Matt. 16:3 This entire verse.
Matt. 17:21 and fasting
Matt. 18:12 into the mountains*
Matt. 20:7 and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive
Matt. 22:13 and take him away
Matt. 23:35 son of Barachias*
Matt. 24:10 and shall hate one another*
Matt. 24:31 sound of a*
Matt. 24:41 women shall be Matt. 25:6 cometh
Matt. 27:52 And the graves were opened*
Matt. 27:53 and went*
Matt. 28:19 therefore

Mark 4:37 so that it was now full*
Mark 6:51 beyond measure, and wondered
Mark 7:8 For as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things as ye do
Mark 7:14 unto me every one of you*
Mark 9:24 with tears
Mark 9:29 and fasting
Mark 9:44 This entire verse.
Mark 9:45 into the fire that never shall be quenched
Mark 9:46 This entire verse.
Mark 9:47 fire
Mark 9:49 and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt
Mark 10:24 for them that trust in riches
Mark 10:30 houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions*
Mark 14:30 twice*
Mark 14:68 and the cock crew
Mark 14:72 the second time* twice*
Mark 16:9-20 All these verses.

Luke 2:40 in spirit
Luke 8:45 and sayest thou, Who touched me?
Luke 16:16 and every man presseth into it*
Luke 17:12 which stood afar off*
Luke 17:35 women
Luke 18:11 with himself*
Luke 22:43 This entire verse.
Luke 22:44 This entire verse.
Luke 22:68 me, nor let me go
Luke 23:5 teaching*
Luke 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father forgive them ; they know not what they do
Luke 24:42 and of an honeycomb

John 1:25 asked him, and*
John 3:13 which is in heaven
John 4:9 for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans
John 5:3 waiting for the moving of the water
John 5:4 This entire verse.
John 5:25 and now is*
John 8:1-11 All these verses.
John 8:59 going through the midst of them, and so passed by
John 16:16 because I go to the Father
John 19:23 and also his coat*
John 21:25 This entire verse.

Acts 6:3 Holy Ghost and (should read—spirit of) *
Acts 6:8 faith (should read—grace) *’
Acts 8:37 This entire verse.
Acts 9:31 churches (should read—church) were (should read—was)
Acts 15:32 and confirmed them*
Acts 18:5 pressed in the spirit (should read—earnestly occupied with the Word)
Acts 18:21 I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem ; but

Rom. 3:22 and upon all
Rom 6:12 it in
Rom. 7:6 that being dead (should read—being dead to that)
Rom. 8:26 for us
Rom. 11:6 But if it be of works, then it is no more grace : otherwise work is no more work
Rom. 14:6 and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it

1 Cor. 2:1 testimony (should read—mystery) *
1 Cor. 6:20 and in your spirit, which are God’s
1 Cor. 7:5 fasting and
1 Cor. 10:28 for the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof
1 Cor. 15:24 cometh

2 Cor. 4:14 by (should read—with)

Gal. 3:1 that we should not obey the truth
Gal. 3:17 in Christ
Gal. 5:19 adultery
Gal. 5:21 murders

Eph 5:9 Spirit (should read—light)
Eph. 5:30 of his flesh, and of his bones

2 Thes 2:9 Even him

1 Tim. 3:16 God (should read—who) *
1 Tim. 4:12 in spirit*
1 Tim. 6:5 from such withdraw thyself*

2 Tim. 3:3 without natural affection*

Heb. 12:18 mount that might be touched and that burned with fire (should read—fire that might be touched and burned) *

Heb. 12:20 or thrust through with a dart*

James 5:16 Confess your faults (should read—Therefore confess your sins) *

1 Pet. 2:5 spiritual (before the word “sacrifices”) *

1 Pet 3:8 courteous (should read—humble)

2 Pet. 1:1 God and our (should read—our Lord and) *

1 John 3:16 of God

1 John 5:7 in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are one

1 John 5:8 And there are three that bear witness in. earth

1 John 5:13 and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God

Rev. 1:17 unto me, Fear not*

Rev. 2:22 their (should read—her) *

Rev. 5:3 neither under the earth*

Rev. 5:9 us (omitted by Alexandrian MS., one of the three oldest MSS. known)

Rev. 5:10 us (should read—them) * we (should read—they) *

Rev 5:13 and under the earth*

Rev. 6:2 to conquer (should read—he conquered) *

Rev. 9:4 neither any green thing*

Rev. 9:13 the four horns of*

Rev. 10:6 and the sea, and the things which are therein*

Rev. 11:17 and art to come*

Rev. 12:12 inhabitants of* of (before the words “the sea”) *

Rev. 14:5 before the throne of God*

Rev. 14:12 here are they*

Rev. 16:5 and shalt be (should read—the holy) *

Rev. 16:7 another out of*

Rev. 16:11 and their sores* of their deeds*

Rev. 16:17 from the throne*

Rev. 18:22 of whatsoever craft he be* and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee*

Rev. 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished*

Rev. 21:24 of them which are saved* and honour*

Rev. 21:26 and honour*

Rev. 22:3 more*

*Omitted by Sinaitic MS. Those not thus marked are omitted by both the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. The Epistles to Timothy, the latter part of Hebrews, and all of Revelation, are missing from the Vatican MS. No. 1209 having been lost during the fifteen or more centuries since it was written. The Sinaitic MS. is perfect and complete and is the oldest known copy of the Scriptures, having been written (it is believed) in the year 331 A.D.

Love is sweet

“Love is sweet in any guise,
But its best is sacrifice;
He who, giving, does not crave
Likest is to Him who gave

Life itself the loved to save.
Love that self-forgetful gives,
Sows surprise of ripened sheaves
Late or soon its own receives.”

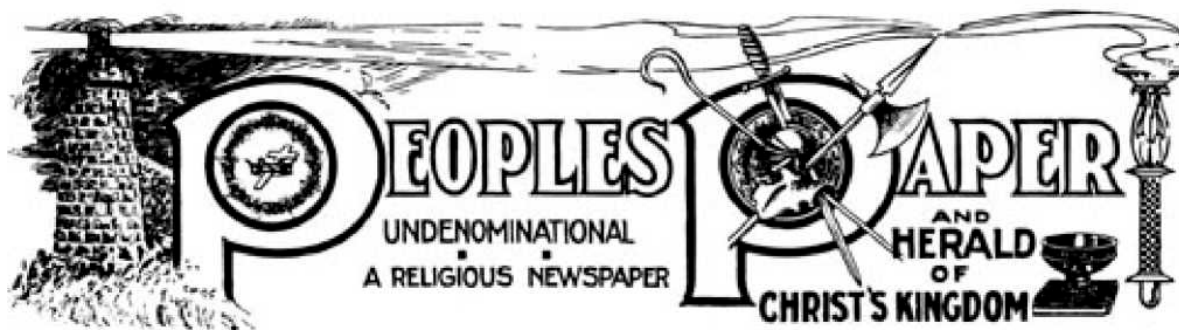
—Whittier.

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Volume XXXV. No. 2 MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY, 1952 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

Refrain Thy Voice from Weeping

THE Lord through the prophet Jeremiah sends a message of consolation for the heart of every bereaved parent misting in Him. We read, “A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy Fact fro:..., weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.”—Jeremiah 31:15-17.

Five items in our text are worthy of attention.

First. Sorrow for the dead, which is universal, as the Apostle declares, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.-

Second. The nature of the comfort described —the hope of a resurrection, the hope of the recovery of the dead— ”They shall come again,” they shall be restored to life.

Third that in death our dear ones are in “the land of the enemy,” in harmony with the Apostle”. declaration, -The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”-1 Cor.15:26,

Fourth. That the labours of the parents in endeavouring to properly rear their children are rot lost, “Thy work shall be rewarded.”

Fifth. Last but not least in importance in this text is the. declaration that this is the Word of the Lord, which cannot be broken—the Word which is sure of fulfilment, however different it may be from the word of man on this subject.

Tears Not Weakness—’’Jesus Wept.”

Sorrow for the dead is not a sign of weakness, but rather the reverse—a sign of love and sympathy, of something more than selfishness. If any demonstration of this thought were necessary it is furnished us in the statement of the shortest verse in the Bible—”Jesus wept.” Our Lord’s tears were shed on a funeral occasion, too; Lazarus, his friend, the brother of Martha and Mary, was dead. Our Lord entered fully into the spirit of the occasion, with a deeper appreciation of the awful meaning of the word, death, than could possibly be entertained by those about Him. He appreciated more than any of the fallen, dying race the great blessing and privilege of living, and what a terrible affliction was death—destruction, annihilation.

On the other hand, however, He understood more clearly than any of His hearers the gracious plan of God for the rescue of the race from annihilation. He realised that for this purpose He had come into the world, that He might give His life as the ransom price for Adam, and thus incidentally for every member of the Adamic race involved in death through the first transgression in Eden. The Master realised from the standpoint of faith in the Father's plan, and His confident intention to carry out His own part in that plan and to lay down His life as our redemption price, that thus resurrection blessings would come to every member of the race.

Not Dead Eternally, But Sleeping.

Let us note carefully the nature of the consolation which our Lord tendered to the sorrowing ones about Him on this occasion. Let us be assured that "He who spake as never man spake" gave the soundest and best comfort. The consolation which He gave was that Lazarus is not dead for all time. He neither spake of him nor thought of him as being dead in the sense, of annihilation, because He had full confidence in the divine plan of redemption and in the resurrection blessings resulting. Hence the interim of death He spoke of as sleep, quiet, restful, waiting sleep.

What a wonderful figure is this, so frequently used throughout the Scriptures by all those who trusted in the divine plan of a resurrection morning. In the Old Testament Scriptures we read frequently of sleep. Abraham slept with his fathers, so did Isaac, so did Jacob, so did all the Prophets, so did all Israel.

In the New Testament it is the same. Not only did our Lord speak of Lazarus sleeping, but the Apostles frequently used this same figure of sleep to represent their hope in a resurrection—that the dear ones who went down into death are not annihilated, but, as our text declares, "Will come again from the land of the enemy"—will awaken in the resurrection morning.

Thus too, of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, it is written that though stoned to death, he "fell asleep," sweetly, restfully, trusting in Jesus and the great power which He ultimately would exercise to call forth from the power of death all redeemed by the precious blood. This, too, we remember, was the comfort the Apostle set before the early church, saying, "Comfort one another with these words"—"They that sleep in Jesus shall God bring from the dead by Him. — (1. Thes. 4:14-18.) Referring to the matter on one occasion the Apostle remarked, "We shall not all sleep, but we must all be changed." He referred to those who would be living at the second coming of Christ, whose resurrection "change" will not be preceded by a period of unconsciousness in death.

Let us go back to Jesus and the sorrowing sisters at Bethany, and hearken to the words of comfort extended to the bereaved on that occasion. We cannot improve upon the great Teacher and the lessons which He presented. Let us hearken to His conversation with Martha. He says: "Thy brother shall live again." He does not say thy brother is living now. He did not say, as some erroneously teach to-day, thy brother is more alive in death than he was before he died. No, No! The Lord would not thus mock the common sense and reason of His hearer, nor could He thus violate the truth and declare the dead not dead.

Hearken! The Lord admits that a calamity has befallen the household. He says not a word about His friend Lazarus having gone to heaven—not an intimation of the sort. On the contrary, He has tears of sympathy, and holds out as the strongest and only truthful solution of the sorrow, the hope of a resurrection—"Thy brother shall live again." "I am the resurrection and the life!" The hope of all the dead centres in Me. My death will effect the cancellation of the original Adamic condemnation, and I shall have the right then in harmony with the Father's plan to call forth all the dead from the great prison house of death, from the tomb. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth."—John 5:28.

The Resurrection Morning.

At the close of His conversation with Martha, explaining that her hope must centre in a resurrection of the dead and that He was the centre of that resurrection hope, our Lord asked for the tomb, intent upon giving an illustration of the power which by and by in the resurrection morning will be exercised toward the whole world of mankind. Standing at the door of the tomb our Lord cried in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth," and the dead came forth—he had been dead, he was quickened by our Lord's power and authority.

This, like other miracles performed by our dear Redeemer at His first advent, we are particularly told, was a foremanifestation of His coming glory and power, an advance exhibit of what He will do at His second advent, only that the work at the second advent will be universal, higher, deeper, broader every way. "All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped"; all that are in their graves shall come forth, not merely to relapse again into blindness and death, but a permanent recovery—not only recovery from the loss of natural sight and hearing, but the eyes and ears of their understanding will be opened also; not merely aroused from a sleep of death to a few years more under present conditions, but aroused to the intent that by obedience of the divine arrangement of the Millennial Age all the awakened ones may attain to all the glorious perfections, mental, moral and physical, lost by Adam's disobedience.

"Times of Restitution Shall Come."

Glorious hope of a glorious time. What wonder that He speaks of those years of the Millennial Age as "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:20, 21.

Lazarus died again, Jairus' daughter died again, the son of the widow of Nain died again. Their awakening from the tomb was merely a temporary matter, merely an illustration of the Lord's power, as it is written. "These things did Jesus and manifested forth His glory." These were merely foregleams of the coming power and glory and blessed work of the gracious Prophet, Priest and King whom God has appointed not only to redeem the world, but to grant to all, in due time, the opportunities secured by that redemptive sacrifice.

We cannot go into more details, but we here endeavour to show amongst other things that the great blessing which will ultimately be for the world of mankind, as well as for the church, centres in the coming of our Lord and Master, our Redeemer and King, and that the great blessings centring in Him are not merely temporary, but designed of God to be everlasting and eternal to those who accept divine favours in the right spirit, reverently, thankfully, obediently.

Death "The Land Of The Enemy."

Why should death be called "The land of the enemy"? Why should it be written, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"? All because, disguise the facts as we may, death is an enemy. The suggestion that it is a friend comes not from the Word of God, but from heathen philosophies. The suggestion that it is unreal comes not from the Scriptures, but from heathendom. The suggestion that the dead are more alive than they were before they died is totally out of harmony with the Scriptural declaration. "The dead know not anything—their sons come to honour and they know it not, and to dishonour and they perceive it not of them," because "there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave whither thou goest." (Job 14:21; Eccl. 9:10.) The suggestion that we deceive ourselves and imagine without reason that the moment of death is the moment of greater life is of the adversary, who contradicted the Lord's statement in Eden to our first parents, "Ye shall surely die" for your sin, declaring in opposition, "Ye shall not surely die."—Gen. 3:24.

The adversary has kept up this false teaching for 6,000 years, and at last not only heathendom is deceived by his misrepresentation of facts, but very, very many of Christendom likewise trust to the word of Satan, “Ye shall not surely die,” and believe that the dead are not dead, and reject the testimony of God’s Word that “the wages of sin is death,” that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die,” that “death has passed upon all men because all are sinners,” and that the hope of the Church as well as the hope for the world lies in the fact that Christ died for our sins and redeemed us from the death sentence, and in the Father’s due time is to effect a resurrection of the dead.

The Key of Death’s Prison.

Let us comfort our hearts with the true comfort, the substantial comfort of the Word of God —there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth. The thousands of millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death shall be released, because the Great Redeemer has the “key,” the power, the authority, to bid the prisoners^ come forth, even as the Scriptures declare.

What a glorious resurrection morning that will be! What a glorious reunion! We understand the Scriptural teaching to be that the awakening processes will continue throughout a considerable portion of the Millennial Age, the thousand-year day of resurrection and restitution. First will come the resurrection of the Church, the “Bride,” the “Lamb’s Wife,” the “Body of Christ.” These, as the Scriptures declare, will constitute the first resurrection—not only first in order of time, but first in the sense of chief. In that company will be none except the saints, as it is written, “Blessed and holy is he that bath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death bath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6.) Nevertheless that will be but a little flock, as the Scriptures declare, including “not many wise, not many great, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom.”-1 Cor. 1:26, 27: Jas. 2:5.

Not long after the First Resurrection, the glorification of the Church, will come the resurrection of the ancient worthies—the overcomers of olden times prior to the Gospel Age. The assurance is that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy prophets—yes, all who were approved to God by their faith and their efforts to obedience — will come forth from the tomb to human conditions, glorious, grand, earthly illustrations of the heavenly Creator, to constitute the earthly representatives of the Kingdom, the instructors of mankind.

The instruction of the world will forthwith proceed. We are assured that “the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep”—to such an extent that “They shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.” We cannot stop to describe that glorious time and the grand opportunities it will give to every creature to know the Lord, to obey Him, to attain to resurrection in its full significance—a raising up to mental, moral and physical perfection.

The Last First, The First Last.

After the Kingdom of God shall have been fully established in the earth, and Satan shall have been bound, after the darkness shall have rolled away and the true light shall have lightened every creature, the time will come for the awakening of all the families of the earth—not all at once, but gradually, “they shall come again from the land of the enemy.” The Scriptures do not go into details on this subject; they leave much to faith, but give us a firm foundation for that faith, nevertheless, in the positive promise of the Lord’s Word.

To our understanding those who have fallen asleep last, will be among the first to be called back from the

land of the enemy, to be awakened, and thus the work of awakening the sleeping ones will progress backward, as we might express it; the living ones will prepare for their brothers and sisters and parents, and they in turn for their brothers and sisters and parents, and so on all the way back, until finally father Adam and mother Eve shall come forth to see the world filled with their progeny, in accord with the Lord's original commission that they multiply and fill the earth.

They will behold with astonishment the showers of blessing that have come upon the race from the Heavenly Father and through the Heavenly Saviour; they will see what havoc was wrought by their disobedience, but that God in His wisdom and power was both able and willing to overrule the matter and to bring order out of confusion and resurrection out of death. They and all will realise something of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Love of God. The grand plan of salvation shall loom up before them; they will see how Abel, their son, who suffered for righteousness, was a type and picture of the great Son of God who suffered for righteousness and for our deliverance, and they will see how His blood speaks peace for all for whom it is shed, speaks forgiveness and renewed harmony with God.

The Tragedy Of Sin And Death.

They will learn, too, of the terrible degradation which came upon their race subsequently to their death; they will read with appalled hearts and bated breath of the terrible famines and pestilences which came upon the race as a part of the original sentence or death curse; they will learn about the mental aberrations which afflicted the world, so that men thought they were doing God service in persecuting one another because of religious differences of opinion, and how others, more or less consumed with selfishness, land hunger, etc., warred and fought and devised engines of destruction against each other, and killed one another by the thousands in battle. They will wonder at the patience of God in so long permitting the evil.

Then truly they will see what God has wrought: First, His justice, which provided the great redemption price and would not otherwise clear the guilty. Second, His love, manifested in the same connection in the giving of His Son. Third, they will come to understand how that during this Gospel Age God has been selecting His Church to be the Bride of Christ and joint-heir with Him in the Kingdom. Fourth, they will perceive that when this election was complete and the members of the glorified company had all been tried and polished and tested and glorified, then the blessing of the world through the glorified Christ, Head and Body, came upon all mankind in the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:20, 21.

O, how they and all of their posterity would naturally be prompted to say, glory, honour, dominion, majesty, power and might be unto Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever.

O, how glad they will be to see the glorious outcome which the power of God will thus have wrought! How glad they will be that the divine plan is that ultimately all imperfection shall be eradicated and that all of the race that will, may live eternally under divine favour and blessing, while those otherwise minded will be destroyed from among the people in the Second Death. They will surely cry, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God almighty. Who shall not come and worship before Thee; Thy righteous acts are made manifest ?—Rev. 15:3.

“Thy Work Shall Be Rewarded.”

Finally, consider the Lord's word to us all as a race, and particularly His word to parents, “Thy work shall be rewarded.” What a blessing and comfort, what a consolation and encouragement are in these words to those parents who, seeking to train up their children in the way they should go, are sadly wounded and discouraged when the arrow of death smites down upon the dear ones they had so loved and cherished.

They are disposed at first to say, Ah, my love, my counsel, my motherly care, my fatherly provision, were wasted. But not so, saith the Lord, thy works shall be rewarded.

How Rewarded?

You shall see the fruit of your labour in the future; we shall know as we are known, by and by. Our dear ones will be with us, and to whatever extent time and effort will have been expended upon them to mould and fashion them along the lines of righteousness and truth, uprightness and godliness, these surely have not been spent in vain. The child shall come forth that much more advanced in its mental and moral development; to that much more easy attainment of the grand heights which the Lord will then open up before it.

On the other hand, the parent who has been careless of his children, neglectful of his privileges and obligations as a parent, will undoubtedly have his negligence rewarded in the future as he shall see what he might have done for his children but did not.

And more than this. By a divine law of reaction, every parent who is faithful in the discharge of his parental duties shall have his work rewarded in himself, and likewise every parent neglectful of his duties shall have his work rewarded in himself. For who does not realise that there is no greater privilege or opportunity for self-development than comes to the parent in his endeavour to train up his children in the way they should go, in the reverence and admonition of the Lord.

Character Building Is Included.

Undoubtedly it is true, too, that every effort to do good unto others, especially to your own children, has its compensating blessings upon your own hearts. May this blessing deepen as the years go on.

In conclusion we say to you, not only for today, but for the future days, "Comfort one another with these words" of our Lord to the effect that your little ones shall come again from the land of the enemy, and that their return shall even be much more blessed, under much more favourable conditions than at present. Then, the great King reigning, all evil will be in subjection, all evil doers will be under restraint, all the influences of righteousness will be let loose, and the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep. Blessed prospects are these before us, and to Him who loved us and bought us, and to the Heavenly Father who designed the great plan, we give everlasting thanks and praises, and show this by our daily lives!

Convention News.

IT is usually a good indication of spiritual growth on the part of the Lord's people when they feel that the Lord's blessings of the present time are truly increasing as they progress along the Christian way. In other words, while people generally so often look back upon and refer to "the good old days" as being the most happy and pleasurable of their lives, the reverse is the experience of all true Christians.

This principle was well demonstrated throughout the Convention gatherings in Melbourne over the recent Christmas season, when for six days (four days being the Convention proper) the brethren gladly assembled in the Lord's name with a goodly number of visiting friends from four Australian states. 'Well did the Psalmist declare—"Praise is comely for the upright," and we do give all praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His rich favours bestowed by His spirit and through His people during this most profitable season of refreshing.

The attendance at these gatherings was very good, and the Bible studies, addresses and fellowship meetings provided a full programme of "heavenly manna" for each day. The passages for the Bible studies were taken from Heb. 10:32-39, 1 Cor. 15:48-58 and Rev. 3:14-22, and very helpful discussions were enjoyed on each of these important Scriptures. A Question Meeting on selected verses of Scripture also provided very profitable study.

The addresses by the visiting and local brethren were most encouraging, each subject having its particular message for the upbuilding of all who seek to apply the Scriptural injunctions to their own lives. The subjects of these Convention addresses were—"Divine Invitation"; "Key Scriptures"; "The Bible Message for Christmas 1951"; "Looking Unto Jesus These Last Days" "Ye Are God's Workmanship"; "Martha and Mary"; "Moses"; "A Human Creature's Greatest Choice"; Approving Things That Are Excellent"; "Freedom of Religion"; "The Power Of The Spirit"; "The Test Of Discipleship" and "Living By Every Word Of God." It is expected that some of these addresses will appear in these columns in the months ahead for the benefit of the majority of our readers who could not attend the Convention in person.

The Fellowship Meetings provided the opportunity for praise and testimony to the Lord's goodness and favour, and the expressions of a more personal nature at these sessions helped to reveal the intimate relationship existing between the Lord and each of His true people, as they progress along the pilgrim way. The fact that the brethren have so very similar experiences, with the needed grace and blessings added from the Lord, is most encouraging when any "light afflictions" are encountered. It certainly gives strength and comfort to know that the Lord's loving care and protection are ever available for each one of His dear people, and the receiving of God's grace to help in every time of need depends upon the opening of our heart to Him, our earnest desire to receive from His hands.

The friends appreciated very much the numerous messages of Christian love and greetings from brethren over a wide area, indicating their sincere interest in the gatherings and prayers for our blessing. The warm Christian love and greetings from the assembly, together with the passage of Scripture—Rev. 3:20-22—is sent as a Convention message to all our dear brethren in every place. At the closing session of the Convention the hymns 'Blest Be The Tie' and "God Be With You," and the usual Love Feast, with concluding prayer of thankfulness to God, provided a fitting conclusion to the very profitable season of dwelling together in heavenly places in Christ.

(A supply of Notes on the above Convention will be available shortly. Prepared by one of our visiting brethren these may be obtained free)

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) on the four days, Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 11th to 14th, in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, Weymouth Street, Adelaide. A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to join the members in Adelaide for these gatherings in the Lord's name.

Martha and Mary.

(Convention Address.) —Luke 10 :38-42.

“Mary sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving.”

NOT many people receive the Lord into their houses; some have not enough room and they don't like any restrictions with regard to their comfort. Others fear for their time; they rather like to pay Him a visit in a church, and may even greet Him occasionally when they meet Him on their way, but somewhat carelessly, so that He must not ask them, “Where do you come from? Where are you going?”

Martha had received the Lord into her house, but without knowing what she actually did. She knew all right that she was not dealing with a common guest and did everything to honour Him, but had no idea about the real character of her guest, nor of the position which belonged to Him in the house.

If somebody is enjoying hospitality, it is a matter of good custom and gentleness that he keeps away from anything which is connected with the closer circle of family life, but where Jesus is received into a house He desires to know everything that is happening, even the thoughts and motions of the heart. There is no possibility to hide anything from Him, and one cannot think of reserving one room of the house for one's own. Jesus wants to have entrance anywhere at any time, day and night, so that means one has to deliver to Him the key of the house. Perhaps you do realise this and therefore it is not so easy for you to receive such a delicate guest into your place.

But that is not all. While a common guest is carefully thinking of not making trouble and not disturbing the order of the house, we must expect of Jesus that He will soon tell us His displeasure here and there, and that He will ask for many possible changes until perhaps the whole house is revolutionized.

It did not come into Martha's mind that a house into which Jesus is received is thus becoming His property, and that He can direct and rule everybody as an absolute master. There is nothing more to offer to such a guest; on the contrary one has become His guest, or even better, His servant and should be pleased in giving Him all kind of honour and attention. We should, then, expect the orders of our divine guest like a slave in the Orient waits for any hand sign of his master.

What is said here of the service with which Martha was seeking to honour her Lord is applicable to all service, to all work in the Lord's vineyard, if it is done in the spirit of Martha. It is difficult for the sinner, as well as the disciple, to see that he cannot give anything to God which has not first been given to him—that he may not dare to offer anything which he has not received from God. It is hard for the sinner to understand that all endeavours to rend the strings of sin and to approach his God are presumption on his part. He does not understand that he begins to honour God only when he confesses all his deep corruption, his helplessness and inability to please God, and should expect all further things from God's grace and mercy.

The disciple has trouble to sit at Jesus' feet and to listen to Him in simplicity and humility—to receive instead of giving. One tends to see everywhere some works to do, some defections to abolish, some

necessities of help. O, let no one think to honour God or to further His cause by plunging himself into excitement! Perhaps you may say that the love of Christ Jesus constraineth you; but what sort of love? Can the love to your God and Saviour be anything else than the love of a weak child who expects everything from his father? Or is it the love to save souls which does not give you rest? But you are unable to save just a single one, and you know that Jesus loves the souls much more than you do; that He has kept nothing from them and that He is still doing everything to-day that can be done for their salvation.

To be sure, the Lord needs human tools for this task, but His most mighty tools are those who have the heart of a priest, and learn from Him to take the burdens of their soul and lay them down before Him. If the prayer of your love is not sufficient; if you feel the necessity—and you should feel it—to speak to others of their Saviour and give your strength and life for them, then never forget that the Lord gives only to such as Mary the privilege, of being His witnesses. You first have to sit still at His feet, so that He may cultivate and teach you; if you hurry into His vineyard before He has called and prepared you, you may be sure to cause damage.

Or will you say that the zeal of the Lord's house had eaten you up? Has the zeal already eaten up your pride and arrogance, your selfishness and vanity, your laziness 'and cowardice, your excitement and impatience? We first have to overcome ourselves and then to receive strength to wait until the Master may call us. He will surely- not keep us waiting too long, and if it may please Him to spend thirty years in your preparation, you may be sure afterwards to be able to do more in three years than could otherwise be done in the longest course of life.

Let no one wish to bring forth fruit before the time! It would surely be only unripe fruit, to the dishonour of the Master one is thinking to serve. Before anyone speaks of love and zeal let him ask himself whether Jesus has already taken possession of his heart. Where Jesus establishes His dwelling, everything will become silent and quiet before Him, to let Him speak and work, with the result that a more peaceful and solemn, sabbath quietness will be felt.

It seems that what constrained the Apostle Paul, as he said in 2 Cor. 5:14, was in the first place not the love to Jesus, but the love wherewith Jesus loved him; and where Jesus has once filled the heart with His love, He will then also direct and arrange the work which is springing out of such a love. As a matter of fact, one never gets into excitement for God and His cause; that would be too foolish. His cause is in good hands and its triumph is guaranteed, as you well know. One gets into excitement only where self is concerned; where, under the pretence of God's work someone is doing his own work and seeking his own honour. Sit down at Jesus' feet, and suffer to be judged and to be appeased; sit down, or even better, cast yourself down into the dust!

The nations, the Gentiles are standing up and getting into excitement, as told in Psalm 2:1. Children of God, bow down and adore! Do you fear to fall by this way into a dreamy, contemplative sort of Christianity? Do not worry! Of course, if you wish to make a noise in this world you need not consider, just choose Martha's part. But know, it is the worse one! As much filled as a Martha's life may seem to be, in reality it is a lost life.

If you are longing for a really fruitful life, then choose Mary's part; it is the good one! Nowhere else than at Jesus' feet is it possible to escape the law of vanity, of fruitlessness and of death, under which all human endeavours are suffering. In Jesus' presence alone one awakes to a real new life: in Him is the source of life and the motive power of all fruitful work. Begin with laying down at Jesus' feet all your Martha-zeal, your readiness to serve, your willingness to sacrifice and your generosity. Bring all this to Him as a sacrifice and thus confess your inability to produce of yourself anything usable or worthy of life. Bow down under the Scripture which says: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth

alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:24.

And, secondly, listen to the Master’s words and put yourself under their discipline—suffer to be taught and instructed. If you will do that in sincerity and by giving all your life, you will not be afraid of losing any time; one never stays too long at Jesus’ feet. His spirit will come upon all who are listening to His voice, and it is a working spirit. As soon as Jesus has told you what you need to know for the time being, He will send you forth to tell others, to use for others what you have received; sometimes, of course, only after He has tested you in trials and sufferings, but never without giving you a sufficient supply of grace and strength.

While the Lord sends us out at the right time, He also leads us back into quietness again, so that our store never runs out, and we never have to depend on our own strength. Furthermore, the Lord will teach you the secret to remain in spirit in the Mary-position, even in the midst of all business. You only have to watch that you do not get caught by the work, but keep your most hidden thoughts in the light of His countenance, and put your speaking and silence under the discipline of His spirit. With all your deeds you must watch His footsteps and never run ahead of Him; in that way it will be seen that the Lord Jesus lives in you, and where He is living, there He is also working. Then, you can say with Paul,—”So I labour, yet not I, but the favour of God with me.” 1 Cor. 15:10. Who thus can speak may be sure of a richly blessed career; in such a life each moment will be fruitful and the Lord’s words will be fulfilled—”He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water.” John 7:38.

How did Samuel mature to his great prophetic profession which God gave to him? Surely in no other way than by arranging his whole life after that prayer which Eli had taught him in that memorable night,—”Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth!” 1 Sam. 3:9, 10, 19.

Obviously, the two sisters of Lazarus had more than one mark of character in common, and we may well assume that both were sincere disciples of the Lord Jesus. It is remarkable, however, to note that later, in John 12.2, it is not said that “Martha was cumbered about much serving,” but simply, “Martha served.” But if we keep in mind the entirely different, maybe passing circumstances with regard to Jesus in which the 10th chapter of Luke shows us the two characters, we can find therein two different spiritual lessons.

These spiritual lessons, not the actual characters of the two persons, we wish to keep in mind as we proceed to talk about Martha and Mary. So understanding, we find in the actions of Mary the principles of the evangelical spirit, as the Apostle expresses it in Roman 4:5,—”To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

When one has put everything down at Jesus’ feet, there is no more to be given to Him, and one is happy to receive all from Him. In other words, one is living by faith. The soul is not proposing what should be done for Jesus, but like the Psalmist the soul can say, “I have set the Lord always before me.” Like David, the soul is desiring one thing only, namely, “To behold the beauty of the Lord”; like John the Baptist, the soul is happy “Because of the Bridegroom’s voice.” The soul is grateful for each moment at Jesus’ feet, alone with Him, following Him with the eyes, considering His words and listening to the voice of His spirit.

Martha must work; it is her happiness to work and to be busy. Of course, she is working for Jesus, she is getting tired for Him, she is giving all to Him, her strength and her time. But while occupied with her work, she is forgetting the Master’s warning in Luke 10:20—”In this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” In all the work Martha is doing for the Lord she is forgetting Him; she is getting away from the source of life, and if she does not stop in time, will be in danger of reaching eternity with a life behind her in which she has spoken untiringly of Him and has sacrificed all for His sake; and yet, now she is saved only so as by fire, naked, without her

works following her.

All Martha-service is work wherewith one is thinking to please God, but which is really pleasing oneself. Instead of really giving and sacrificing, as one would like to believe, such are seeking self and becoming self-righteous. They are doing works with a hireling spirit, jealous and murmuring because Mary is doing nothing. Mary will work just the same. in due time; don't worry. Martha. But first she has to learn the important lesson at Jesus' feet that she is a useless servant: one who is not indispensable to her Lord. She will work as well, but she is too humble to put herself into the foreground. If the Lord will once honour her by a task, she will do it the more readily and joyfully, praising Him for the grace that she may do such a thing.

Martha's inner happiness is connected with work; it is rising and falling with the changing success to which all human work is subject. At first she is full of joy and zeal, but soon it will faint. It is somewhat like excitement and fever, so that relaxation must come some time; and when hindrances arise she gets troubled and loses her courage.

However, Mary gets her strength and satisfaction from Him who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Therefore her inner being remains unmoved and unsaddened, not depending on the fact whether her work seems to be successful or not. She knows that any work which is done in the love of Jesus is never in vain, therefore she is steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, as we are told in 1 Cor. 15:58. There may be many difficulties, like mountains, on her way, but she knows that faith can move mountains, and this helps her to keep quiet in her work; she remains quiet in view of the tasks, the mere thought of which puts Martha into excitement. The difficulties may only serve to impress on her mind the necessity for complete dependence upon the Lord, to mature and strengthen her inner being, and at the same time to keep her humble. Mary never feels any trace of strength in herself and is always rejoicing in the fact that her strength is in God, and she may count on this power of God for each task to which she may be called. In this strength she is running without getting tired; well, she may get tired, but she never breaks down. She is waiting for the Lord who will renew her strength. He will renew her youth and freshness of life, so that she may mount up with wings as eagles. Even in her work she is living only by faith, only thinking to be found faithful in the least which may be given unto her.

And now, dear Sisters, who may run a household, and who know from experience how much pain and grief may be caused by all the little troubles of daily life; who may have walked many years under sorrows and needs, under the pressure and the burden of a household; who may have lost several times your quietness of soul and your inner balance, because the work has simply grown above your head; you may not have been ready in time to please your husband and family; O, try to understand better than Martha what it means to receive Jesus into your house. Dismiss yourself as mistress and put the reins forever into His hands for the general management of your household, as well as the particular arrangements, and expect only His directions and orders. If there is to be trouble, the Lord will be there. Remain Mary: the Lord will take all responsibility. He knows how to loosen all knots; He will put everything right and on the right foot, without worrying yourself. And now, once more—Choose the good part, which shall not be taken away from you.

Passover Memorial Services.

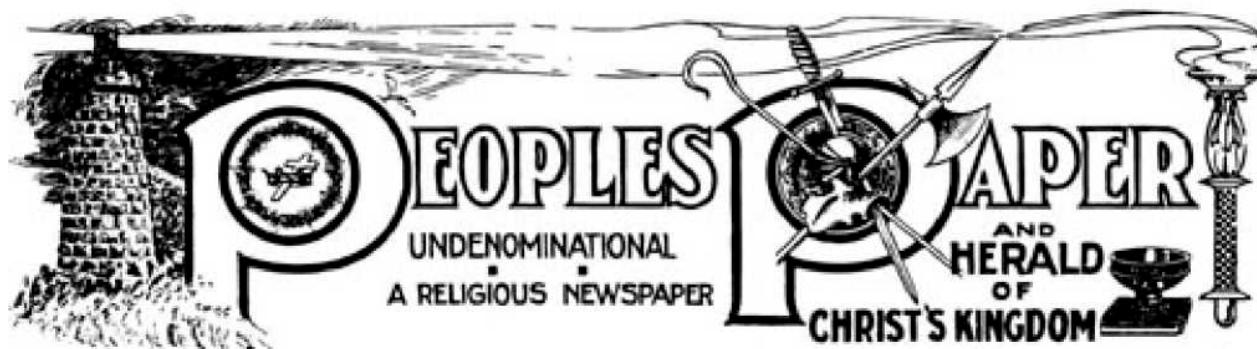
The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 8th April. After sundown on this date will be the appropriate time to observe this Memorial in remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the middle of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Melbourne.—Tuesday 8th April at 8 p.m.. at 271 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Near Glenferrie Station ; few doors south of Burwood Road.)

Adelaide.—Tuesday, 8th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 8th April, at 7 p.m.. at 233 Liverpool Road, South Strathfield. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.



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The Power of the Spirit

(Luke 24:49; 2 Tim. 1:7.) (Convention Address.)

HERE we have the Lord's promise of power. Power is the ability to perform an action; it is a force, or energy, which, when exerted can cause a great change in many directions and in many spheres of life upon which it is focused.

This power or energy proceeds from one grand centre, and may influence certain objects and circumstances. It is invisible, silent, but potential. It may be present but is detected only by visible signs, actions or sounds, and was so fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4. "There came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind . . . There appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire. . . They were filled with the holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues." We also read—"The powers of the heavens (Christendom) shall be shaken," (Matt. 24:29), for God shall send among them an energy of delusion, and a consuming destruction.

The Christian's conflict is "against the powers of darkness ... spiritual wickedness in the heaven-lies." (Eph. 6:12.)

In view of this invisible and formidable evil power, it is needless to say we would be completely overcome by the powers and rulers of this dark world if we attempted to match these in our own, human strength. (1 John 5:19.) Ever since the fall of man there exists a deadly conflict between light and darkness, truth and error; each power has its representatives and agencies, and the energy of this conflict encircles the globe.

It should be evident that great preparations are necessary in order to overthrow all those powers which are detrimental to the best interests of the human family, and the Creator's plan will eventually, and effectively, give to all angels and men a great exhibition of the power of truth and righteousness in contrast with the powers of sin, corruption, deceit and death, mankind also gaining valuable experiences thereby: This world and its circumstances are also serving as a testing ground for those now being called to the heavenly kingdom.

We are all probably aware, through knowledge and experience, that as consecrated Christians we have the favour and privilege extended to us from the Lord to co-operate with Him in this work, as the Scriptures say—"We are labourers together with God." (1 Cor. 3:9.) God also hath made us "able ministers of the New Covenant," (2 Cor. 3:6), in preparation for the age to come. But already in this life each individual

Christian is a channel, or agency through whom God conveys His power to produce visible results to beholders. To the righteously disposed the effect is a drawing influence toward righteousness, truth and love.

There is an example of this in the experiences of godly Naomi and Ruth.—”And Ruth said (unto Naomi), Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.” (Ruth 1.16, 17.)

However, the mighty working of the spirit within the Christian is a rebuke to the evilly disposed, and the worst is revealed in them, drawing out hatred, opposition, even bitter words,— “Thou hast a devil and art mad.” And the Apostle Paul could testify from experience—”For we are unto God a sweet savour (fragrance) of Christ, to them that are saved, and to them that are perishing. To the one we are savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life; and for these things who is qualified.” (2 Cor. 2:15, 16.) Who is qualified? Who is competent? Only those who have yielded their lives to God, and He in turn has empowered them with His holy spirit. Our Lord is an example. After His consecration and temptation in the wilderness, we read,—”And Jesus returned in the power of the spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.” (Luke 4:14.)

During His earthly ministry of 3 years the Lord was gradually preparing His chosen Apostles for the time when they would be a power in the world during His absence. They were finally brought to the time and place mentioned in our text,—”Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Then, and only then, would they be fully equipped to carry the Gospel message to all nations; only then would they be a force to match the fury, cunning and deception of the powers of darkness, headed by our wily foe, Satan.

Perhaps there is a lesson for us here too,—”Tarry ye.” Great things are sometimes accomplished by waiting, and great disaster and disappointments are sometimes experienced through not waiting. There is an instance of this in the life of King Saul, King of Israel. He was instructed by Samuel, the prophet, to wait at Gilgal until Samuel arrived there to offer burnt offering and peace offerings. “Seven days shalt thou tarry until I come to thee and show thee what thou shalt do.” (1 Sam. 10:8-13.) The seventh day Saul became impatient, an army of Philistines was threatening Israel.

The people were deserting him; he could wait no longer for Samuel to arrive, but rashly offered the burnt offering and peace offerings himself. This was barely completed when Samuel arrives and reproves him.—”Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandments of the Lord which he commanded thee. Now thy kingdom shall not continue.” Disobedience is weakness and leads to disaster.

On the other hand we have the example of patient waiting in the life of Joseph. In Gen. 37:5-11 he tells of a dream. He and his eleven brothers were binding sheaves in the field and the sheaves stood upright; eleven sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. He waited many years to see the fulfilment of his dream. He passed through experiences which seemed the very reverse of his dream. His brothers hated him and sold him as a slave; he was taken to Egypt and suffered unjustly in the house of Potiphar, being cast into prison and was apparently forgotten by all except the Lord. But he waited in patience and was greatly rewarded. He rose to prominence in Egypt and became rich and strong in character, a power for righteousness and a pillar of strength to his brethren.

Moses too tried to make an impression upon his brethren in Egypt while still in Pharaoh’s house. On one occasion he defended his kinsman and slew an Egyptian. Next day he tried to make peace between two contending Hebrews. “Wilt thou kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday,” was the retort from one of

them. (Exod. 2:11-21.) Moses feared and fled from Egypt and became a shepherd in the land of Midian for 40 years. These experiences prepared him for the great work of delivering the Hebrews. Having become distrustful of his own ability, it is said he became the meekest man in all the earth, and yet was a great power for righteousness, a leader and law-giver under the control of the Lord. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." (Lam. 3:25, 26.)

Don't you think that experiences come to us sometimes and we wish we had waited upon the Lord? When we go further along the Christian way, and when perhaps our enthusiasm is not running quite so high, we look back, we take an afterview. Perhaps we have grown older and wiser, more matured through the success and failures in the straight and narrow way. We remember some things with pleasure and comfort, not only concerning ourselves. We are glad for the sacrifice, effort and energy given in the struggle which has resulted in some development of the Christian graces, and we recall with pleasure the time and inconveniences involved in order to impart some of the Divine consolation to others also.

Other things we recall, the thought lingers on how much happier, better and more spiritual our life might have been had we avoided, as in some instances we might easily have done, certain complications, conflicts and issues which further back seemed mightily important and of great consequence. Perhaps we thought our particular point was so very essential that we must override all opposition, and we went at it, and into it, hot and strong, to impress the truth and right of our opinion. Perhaps now after years, as we take an afterview, it wasn't very necessary, not of very great consequence these empty victories, for life has many empty victories. However, we are grateful that these are much less now that we have become New Creatures in Christ. But the thing that lingers in our minds is the regret that these should have occurred, and there is the chagrin that there might have been a better approach to, instead of sacrificing a possible friend. No, perhaps we are not sorry that we stood out firmly in defence of a conviction—yes; we must be true to convictions,—but sorry that we imagined it was necessary to go to such lengths in pursuit of the end in view, which were so barren of real spiritual gain.

For these fruitless contests seem hardly to have convinced the opponents, and as experience and time mellows the character we grudge the time and energy we put into it. We wish we had waited, for every one to his own Master stands or falls, and the Lord is able to quietly and effectively reveal necessary truths in His own time and way to others, proving to us also, at the same time, the ineffectiveness of the hammerings of our own might.

Time and experience gradually convince us that it is not the energy of the flesh and its reasonings which gain the victories, but the power of the spirit; not more self-effort but more life and light is what we need ourselves. Then, as the prophet Isaiah says, "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever; and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (Isa. 32:17, 18.) A very soothing promise, isn't it? It's an unction of the spirit.

There are some experiences in, which we are involved, when in later times we wished we had tarried before we acted—waited before we spoke, waited before we made that decision—"Wait, my soul, upon the Lord." "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," and without fail, you shall be invested with power from on high. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." (Isa. 40:31.)

To receive power from the source of supply, you know there must be good, connections. Have you examined the connections—faith, hope and love—lately? Are they loose? Has anyone tampered with them? for there is one ever ready to sabotage them. Satan, subtle with thousands of years of experience in his work, is more than a match for us, but "greater is he that is for us, than all that be against us." Have we thought about God's greatness? How vast, how effective, how penetrating and how searching. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art

there; if I make my bed in hell (sheol), behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. . . Even the night shall be light about me; yea, the darkness hideth not from thee.” (Psa. 139:7-12.) “O the depth of the wisdom. and knowledge of God.” Does our faith believe this fact? Do we lean upon His might? Or do we trust in the arm of flesh? It will fail you, for Satan is more than a match for any of us, and all of us.

You cannot fight Satan, but you can resist him unto death. This has been demonstrated by experience. There is a vision given in Revelation (Rev. 11) which prophetically forecasts this Christian experience. Described in symbolic language, the beast waged war against God’s witnesses and overcame them; they lay dead in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. They were killed—silenced, inactive—their enemies rejoiced, but after 3- days the spirit of God entered into them; and they became active. One lesson of this vision is that special intervention of divine power was necessary on their behalf. Since that time Bibles by the millions have come into possession of the people, and Christians can possess, .read and study God’s Word without fear of being put to death. It is not we who gained the victory but God. Greater is He that is for us, than all that be against us.

The reception of power depends upon good connections. In machinery, the train with the locomotive; the mechanism with the engine; the electrical machine with the power house. In the body, the arm with the socket; the brain with the heart. In the Christian’s life, the followers of Christ with the spirit of Jesus, as He illustrated it,—”As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.” (John 15:4.) If we wish to receive the constant flow of the power of the spirit we must remember this depends upon our obedience, as Jesus said—”If ye keep my commandments.”

There are some illustrations in the Scriptures on this point. We read of King Saul frequently,— “The spirit of the Lord came upon him,” but later we read the pathetic sentence,—”The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul.” (1 Sam. 16:14.) Between these two phrases occurs a story of disobedience. There is a similar reference to Samson in Judges 14-16. “The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.” Then an act of disobedience, and unaware of his weakness and desolation we read—”He wist not that the Lord was departed from him.” Do you think the same is true to-day? Perhaps we have known some who were mightily used of the Lord. But now; something has happened, they wist not that the Lord has departed from them.

There is another lesson written for our learning in Matt. 17:14-20. The disciples were given power over all manner of disease, even to casting out devils. A father brought his son, a lunatic, to be cured by them, but they could not cast out the evil spirit. They enquired of Jesus why they were powerless in this instance; His reply was--Because of your unbelief.” Unbelief interrupted the flow of power; how often has this been the cause of the lack of power. Loose connections with God was the cause. Let us see to it that we do not get out of touch with the source of power —”Quench not the spirit.”

‘If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” the Lord continues, “ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder’ place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you.” Yes, mountains of difficulties can be overcome by the power of faith, even the laws of nature have been halted and rendered powerless by faith, in some instances. You will recall in the Old Testament where the three Hebrews were cast into the fiery furnace and not even the smell of fire was upon their garments. Faith connected with God quenched the volume of fire. (Dan. 3:26, 27.) The faith of Daniel stopped the mouths of lions. (Dan. 6:20-22.) Let us look well to our faith, if we would have power with God.

We will not have such physical deliverances out of danger -as was sometimes granted to the ancient prophets, but then, we are blessed with greater knowledge than the ancients. We now see the reason why the righteous are afflicted, tempted and persecuted. These faithful examples of the past are recorded that

we might learn from them for our encouragement, spiritual stimulation and strengthening of cheerful endurance, so that the “new creature,” begotten in us through the truth, may be perfected.

The power of the spirit is also exhibited in that never dying quality—love. “Love never faileth.” It is a principle wrought in us by a knowledge and intimate acquaintance of the One who first loved us. Our Lord said, “To know God is life eternal.” Knowledge is essential; not a mere theory about God, what He does or what He will do, or of His times and seasons, nor is it skill in interpreting the Word.: Knowledge is like wood piled up in a fireplace; it needs a spark of living fire. The knowledge which the Apostle Paul had acquired was kindled into a burning flame, consuming him, and all things which he once valued, upon the altar of sacrifice. It was that experimental knowledge, the excellency of that knowledge of Jesus Christ, for whom Paul says, “I have suffered the loss of all things,”—living in the power of this knowledge he counted all other things of no value.

The power of earthly wisdom, human might, riches of this world, is vanity, but if we glory in that knowledge and understanding of our great God and Father which is acquired by personal acquaintance and fellowship with Him, and by observing the exhibition of His loving kindness, judgment and righteousness especially toward those who are His own, then we will experience no disappointment. The effectual workings of His power upon vessels of mercy produce evidence of His skill and care. His power, the power of His spirit, breaks the power of the flesh over the individual; no other power has the same effect, nor produces the same results. Those dead in trespasses and sin are quickened to life. Grace and peace is multiplied unto them through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, and His divine power gives them all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him. (2 Pet. 1:2, 3.)

The Apostle Paul in Gal. 5:19-25 contrasts the operation of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit. In verse 22 he says, “The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (self control).” This is really an analysis of love. Love is revolutionary; it changes us. It levels all class distinctions; it is intensely practical; it looks for something to do; it studies how to say the most helpful thing; it wants to learn the will of its Lover. Bible study is love reading its Lover’s letters.

We note in verse 22 of Gal. 5 the first three qualities—love, joy, peace—are emotions within. The remaining six — longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (faithfulness), meekness, self control — are outward toward others; they become, when active, evidence to others of the spirit of God within. The climax is reached in the last, temperance or self control. What a mighty power this is, as we are reminded in another place, “He that ruleth his own spirit, is greater than he that taketh a city.”

Our Lord, whether in pleasant and peaceful environments, among friends, in the presence of the cunning, deceit and reviling of His enemies, or the certainty of a cruel and shameful death, never lost His self control—self mastery. Self praise cannot exist in such a character. Why? Because He depended upon a higher power to bring forth His righteousness as the light, and His justice as the noonday. “The works that I do,” said Jesus, “are not mine but of Him that sent me.” Yes, Jesus’ life was a perfect demonstration of the power of the spirit.

The fruit of the spirit is the result of the power of God dwelling in our earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of ourselves. But if the fruit is not produced in the life, or its outline is seen but dimly, then probably the obstruction is self will—selfishness the will of the flesh. As verse 17 says—“For the flesh desires against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” We know this is true, and desires of the flesh and the desires of the spirit are continually in conflict, and this is manifest often, as stated in verse 26, in vainglorious strife, provoking or challenging each other, envying one another. If we have envy to

combat, let us turn it to good account and envy those qualities of love we see in Jesus until we possess them ourselves. If we must strive, let us strive to lay hold upon the incorruptible crown. If we must correct, discipline and contend, let it be chiefly against the old man, the old disposition in us.

Ambition, holy ambition, certainly is good; sanctified zeal is essential in running successfully our racecourse. There is abundant scope for the exercise of our energy in this, and in so doing, we shall be living in the spirit and walking in the spirit, and this will influence our brethren and provoke to, love and good works.

The Jews, the Apostle Paul says, were very zealous of the Law, but not according to knowledge; they had not learned from experience and observation how the best results are obtained. To them there was only one way of observing the Law, hence they missed the spirit of it, and of course the consequences followed to their great disadvantage. This is a point we have to watch too; that is, becoming over zealous for the outward form, appearance and ceremonies, which soon merges into strife and disputes, with loss of spirituality an absence of that quietness and confidence which imparts spiritual strength. "But I am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye are also full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another," and this, through the power of the holy spirit.

While place we seek, or place we shun.
The soul finds happiness in none,
But with our God to lead the way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

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Bible Studies

REFERENCE to the method of conducting Bible studies has been made in these columns in past times, but as the co-operation given by all members of a Bible Class has much to do with the benefits and blessings received by each member, it is felt that further suggestions will not be out of place.

It is still very noticeable that the tendency of chairmen generally is to speak too much when conducting a Bible Class. This may result from various causes, one of which is, that the members of a class may not be sufficiently alert in giving their thoughts, thus leaving too much time for the chairman who feels that he must speak to prevent a lull in the meeting. Another reason may be that the chairman becomes so absorbed in a subject at times that he leaves little opportunity for members to take part. This is noticeable at some Conventions when there is much in a study to be brought out in a limited time, but this tendency should be overcome by class leaders, thus preventing a habit of giving short addresses, so to speak, after each remark by a class member. It is certainly necessary that the chairman direct or lead the thoughts of the class along the lines of the particular subject, and not just allow the thoughts to drift about aimlessly; but over-leading or speaking could indicate some selfishness on the part of the class leader as though his thoughts were all-important and must be presented at all costs. In the case of new classes, of course, the leader will be required to say more, but with established gatherings of the Lord's people the procedure should be quite different.

In introducing a study the leader should seek to be brief and to the point in giving a review of the previous lesson, and should then seek to draw out the thoughts from the members in the gathering. The members have their responsibility in being prepared to take part, which means that the lesson should be well studied at home; this is a most important point for profitable Bible study in class. Lengthy expressions are not required; the most helpful remarks are usually short and directly on the subject, with Scriptural support.

Class members can assist greatly by keeping the subject under discussion; this is really essential to make a Bible study the blessing it should be to all, and makes the task of the leader so much easier. Above all the Lord's spirit should be in-yoked so that the guidance and blessing from above may be fully realised by all, the one desire being to be built up by the truths of God's Word to His praise.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) on the four days, Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 11th to 14th, in the Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide. A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to join the members in Adelaide for these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further information is obtainable from the Secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide.

Passover Memorial 1952

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 8th April. After sundown on this date will be the appropriate time to observe this Memorial in remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the middle of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services

Melbourne.—Tuesday 8th April at 8 p.m., at 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Near Glenferrie Station; few. doors south of Burwood Road.)

Adelaide.— Tuesday, 8th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Stow Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at 233 Liverpool Road, South Strathfield. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

Perth.—Tuesday, 8th April at 7.45 p.m. For location of Service, apply to Secretary, Mr. W. L. Price, "Illawarra.- Karragullen, W.A.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way--mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Sydney—Schaffer's Upholstery, 229 Liverpool Road, Strathfield—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. Take No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming.. from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

My bark is wafted to the strand
By Breath Divine;
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine.

The Test of Discipleship

(Convention Address.)

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” (2 COR. 5:17.)

WE may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion, but this does not mean that we are not converted. Christ said to Nicodemus, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit.” Like the invisible wind, the effects of which are plainly seen and felt, is the spirit of God upon the human heart. The power which no human eye can see begets a new life in us and we become new creatures. While the work of the spirit is silent and unseen, its effects are manifest. If the heart has been renewed by the spirit of God, the life will bear witness to that fact. While we must not trust at all to ourselves or our good works, our lives will show whether the grace of God is dwelling within us; a change will be seen in our character, habits, and pursuits. The contrast will be clear and decided between what they have been and what they are.

The character is shown not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of habitual words and acts. The love of influence and the desire for the praise of others may produce a well ordered life. Selfrespect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart, too, may perform generous actions. By what means, then, shall it be decided whose side we are on? We may ask the questions, Who has our heart? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ's, our thoughts are with Him and our best thoughts are of Him. We love to follow in His footsteps, do His will and please Him in all things.

Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will, bring forth the fruit of the spirit, which we find recorded in Gal. 5:22, 23. Paul says, “But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,” and he continues in the following verses, “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.” We will follow in the Lord's steps by faith, reflect His character, and purify ourselves even as He is pure. The proud and haughty become meek and lowly in heart; the vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside. Christians will seek no the “outward adorning,” but that which comes of a meek and quiet spirit.

When we come to Christ and become partakers of His grace, love springs up in the heart. Every burden is light, for the yoke that Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed covered in darkness, becomes bright with beams from the Lord of heaven.

Love is of God, and love to God was the controlling power in our Saviour's life; it was His delight to do the will of God, and the beauty of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. The unconsecrated heart has not this love and therefore cannot pass it on. It is only to be found in the heart where Jesus reigns. (See 1 John 4:7-21.) Love controls our character and this in turn helps us to govern our passions, subdue enmity and enriches our affections. This love kept within us sweetens our lives, and those about us can see that we are indeed followers of Christ.

There are two things against which Christians especially need to guard. The first, already mentioned, is that of looking to our own works to bring ourselves into harmony with God. If we are trying to become holy by our own works in keeping God's law, we are attempting the impossible. All that we can do without Christ is tainted with selfishness. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy. The second thing to guard against is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping God's

commandments; that is, that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption. But we need to realise that obedience is not just an outward act; it is the service of love. God's laws are an expression of His very nature; they are full of the great principle of love. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in our hearts, the law of God will be carried out in the life. Obedience, then, through service and love is the true sign of discipleship.

We read in 1 John 5:3—"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments"; again in 1 John 2:4 the Apostle says—"He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him." Instead of releasing man from obedience, faith and faith only makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. We do not earn salvation by our obedience, for salvation is the free gift of God to be received by faith, but obedience is the fruit of faith. That so-called faith in Christ which professes to release men from the obligation of obedience to God is not faith, but presumption. "By grace are ye saved through faith," said Paul to the Ephesian church: and in James' Epistle we read, "But faith if it bath not works is dead."

The conditions for gaining eternal life are now just what they always have been; just what was required in Paradise before the fall of our first parents—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any conditions short of this, then the happiness of the whole of humanity would be in danger; the way would be open for sin with all its consequences. It was possible for Adam before the fall to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law, but he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen, and we cannot make ourselves righteous — we cannot perfectly obey a holy law.

Having no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God, Christ made a way out for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life; He died for us, and now He offers to cover our sins and give us His righteousness. Christ's character stands in place of our character, and we are accepted before God just as if we had not sinned. Christ also changes the heart; He abides in our hearts by faith, and the complete surrender of our will to Him enables us to say with Paul—"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of 'God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'" (Gal. 2:20.)

So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ which is given to us. When we speak of faith we do not mean the kind that merely believes the existence of God's power without acting on that belief. The Scripture says "the devils also believe and tremble," but this is not faith. Where there is not only a belief in God's Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love, and purifies the whole being.

The closer we come to Jesus the more faulty we will appear in our own eyes, for our vision will be clearer, and our imperfect nature will be seen in contrast to Christ's perfect life. If our life is changed by the grace of Christ we will admire His beautiful character, but if we do not see our own shortcomings we have failed to see the excellence of Christ. The more our need drives us to Him and His Word, the more we shall see of His character, and the more fully we shall reflect His image.

The richest quality of love is sacrifice, and the noblest credential of any work is the spirit which has laid every selfish interest down at Jesus' feet, and counts all things loss for Christ; which holds its money, its friendships, its life, all subservient to the Master's claim, and, living a dying life, at last gives life itself as a willing offering to Him who gave ' His life for *us*. In this selfish and luxurious age, it is the rarest quality found but it is the most needed as the end approaches.—Selected

The Way to Accept a Favour

A young woman who was secretary to the head of a college, when returning to her lodgings, slipped on the steps and sprained her ankle. She managed to reach her room, but was quite unable to go out and get something for her supper, and was delighted when the girl who had the room next to hers came in to see what she could do.

“Please let me go out and get you something to eat,” she begged.

“That is most kind of you,” said the secretary. “My purse is on the table.”

“No,” said her neighbour; “I want to get the things myself and come in and have supper with you here “

“How delightful!” said the secretary, “We will have a real party !”

So, instead of protesting, she let her friend give the “party.” She praised the food and thanked her for the supper.

A few days later there was an afternoon tea at the college, to which the secretary invited her new friend. She explained why she came with a crutch, and told of the other girl’s kindness to her, and of the impromptu supper-party and how she had enjoyed it.

We should accept favours, not grudgingly, not awkwardly, but graciously and appreciatively; then watch for the first opportunity to bless the giver in return, with gratitude and love.

Sympathy

The look of sympathy, the gentle word,
Spoken so low that only angels heard;
The secret act of pure self-sacrifice,
Unseen by men, but marked by angels’ eyes
These are not lost.

The kindly plan’ devised for others’ good,
So seldom guessed, but little understood;
The quiet, steadfast love that strove to win
Some wanderers from the ways of sin
These are not lost.

—R. Metcalfe.

Correspondence.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—Would you kindly forward to the above address one copy of “Hope Beyond the Grave” and one of “God and Reason.”

Enclosed is a small token to cover cost of postage and I wish to say how grateful I am for your broadcasts, how helpful they have been, and I feel much “richer” in soul for the light thrown on God’s Word. Once again my grateful thanks and best wishes. Yours very sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—As a regular listener to your very helpful session, which give me much refreshing thoughts of spirituality, may I ask you to forward me a few copies of your literature, as outlined in this morning’s Talk, which I would be happy to pass on to my friends.

Wishing your session God’s richest blessings, which it richly deserves. Yours in the Lord.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I am very interested in your Radio Talks and wonder if you could possibly enlighten me’ on the subject of the sabbath. The Seventh Day, Advents say that Saturday is the day we must keep and seem to be able to prove from the Bible. If you could help me in my bewilderment I shall be most grateful indeed.

Wishing you success in your good work. Yours most faithfully.

(The booklet “What is the Christian’s Sabbath” deals with this subject most helpfully and in considerable detail; its findings are most conclusive and satisfying, being based on the Bible alone. Of 32 pages, this booklet is supplied at 9d. each.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Sirs—I am a very regular listener to your wonderful session on 2KY; truly a feature to hear each week. I would be delighted if you could let me have your printed literature dealing with yesterday’s subject.

Hoping to hear your programme many more times in the future. Many thanks.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—Will you kindly send me the literature you spoke of in today’s broadcast through station 2KY, and any other you can spare. I look forward to your broadcast which is given in such a manner that one can easily take it in. Thanking you and with every good wish. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Greetings in the precious name of Jesus. Please find enclosed a postal note for 10/- for the undermentioned books—’Tabernacle Shadows,” “Our Lord’s Great Prophecy” and “The Plan of God—in Brief.” Please use the change towards your work.

Also I am enclosing a photo of a back-dated “Peoples Paper” which shows in the background a chart. I was wondering if you had a small one or any booklet with it in, as I would be very grateful for a copy. Yours in the service of Christ.

(The book “The Divine Plan of the Ages” contains the abovementioned chart, and gives a full explanation of it and the main truths of the Bible in a most helpful way. Of 350 pages, these books are supplied in strong cloth binding, pocket size, at 5/- each.—B.B. Institute.)

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you be so kind as to send me your broadcast on the Kingdom and

Satan, broadcast over 2KY yesterday morning.

We never listen to 2KY, but while trying to get the time yesterday I stumbled on your Talk, and my husband and I were greatly helped by it, and intend listening to you every week. Keep up the good work and may God bless you both. Yours very sincerely.

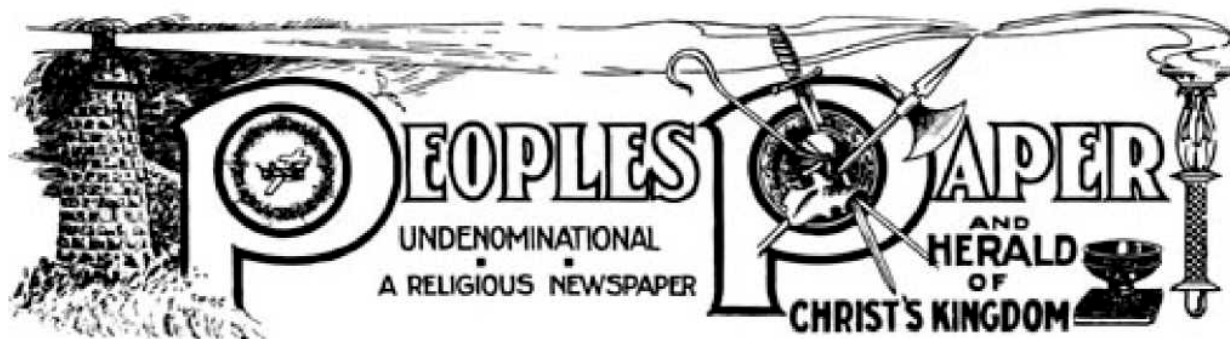
Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly forward me a copy of your very interesting Talk, which was broadcast Sunday morning. You certainly make your points very clear, and I would like to take a copy to my friends and tell them of your session. Thanking you in anticipation; yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would love very much to have a copy of the “Coming Dictator.” Thanks very much for your most useful Talks from Sunday to Sunday; may you be long blessed to do so. Wishing you the best and thanking you very much. I am; yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would you please forward me your notes on the last days, and the end of the world on which you spoke this Sunday morning. They will help me very much to speak to a friend at work, with whom I have been discussing the subject. Thanking you; I remain; Yours in Christ.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 N. ., 8.15 a.m.

Perth, SKY, 227 ., 4.45 p.m.



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In Remembrance of Christ.

THE time is at hand again to observe the Memorial of Christ's death, and which is gladly undertaken by all devoted followers of the Master. This does not mean, of course, that the Lord's people are less mindful and appreciative of the gracious sacrifice of their Saviour throughout each year, but rather that they delight to celebrate the Remembrance of His death in accord with the Master's request at the time of its institution, when He said: "This do in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22:19.)

It certainly does us good to meditate upon the conditions existing at the time of our Lord's first advent, and try to picture the feelings in His mind as He approached the time of that particular Jewish Passover when He became "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Our Lord would have observed three of the annual Jewish Passovers from the time of His full consecration to God at thirty years of age. He 'had trod up and down the countryside of Palestine many times in His loving ministry of teaching those who really delighted to sit at His feet and learn of Him. He had performed miracles of various kinds, not to make Himself popular in the eyes of the religious leaders or worldly wise, but rather to impress upon the true hearted of Israel that this humble Nazarine was truly the .sent one of God. He wished to appeal to the finer qualities of heart found in the Israelites indeed, in whom was no guile, and in this respect His ministry was fully successful. He found those of the humbler walks of life more generally able to appreciate the gracious words which proceeded, out of His mouth, and those who were assured that they had found Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, gladly gave up their earthly pursuits and followed Him as He went about doing good —teaching and drawing unto Himself those who would separate themselves from the world.

He taught from the natural surroundings—the fields, the lilies, the sparrows —or sailed with Him on the Lake of Galilee and observed with our own eyes "What manner of man this was, that even the winds and the sea obey him." (Matt. 8:27.)

Perhaps, however, our greatest desire would be to have been with our Lord and Master during the last few days of His earthly life; with Him as He visited the home at Bethany and listened intently to the "good part," and sorrowed and rejoiced with the dear sisters at the death and resurrection of Lazarus; with Him as He rode into Jerusalem on the ass to the strains of the multitude, "Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the

Lord: Hosanna in the highest."; with Him as He wept over Jerusalem because of their rejection of Him,

and hear His declaration, “Your house is left unto you desolate”; with Him as He observed the last annual Jewish Passover which could be acceptable to God and instituted in its stead the Memorial of His own death; with Him as He gave the last solemn instructions, warnings and encouragements to His own little band, as found in the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th chapters of John’s Gospel; with Him as He went through the Gethsemane experiences when the three chosen disciples could not watch with Him one hour; with Him as He was betrayed, taken prisoner and brought before the Jewish high priest, before Pilate, Herod and Pilate again, and through it all “endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself”; with Him in the critical moment when Pilate, wishing to have Him released, was forced to give assent to His crucifixion by the clamouring Jewish mob led by the chief priests; with Him on the way to Calvary bearing His cross, the actual crucifixion, the revilings, to feel cut off from His Father’s presence in the last, awful moment, that He may be made sin for us; with Him as He commended His mother to John and John to his mother, and the final words from His lips—“It is finished” and “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

Ah yes, it does us good to reflect upon the whole scene of our Lord’s sacrificial life at all seasons of the year, but especially upon the closing hours of His visit to earth at this time of another anniversary of the Memorial Supper which our loving Saviour instituted, just a few hours prior to His death, for all His dear members who would gladly walk in His steps and “keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

In viewing the accounts of the Memorial Supper given in the Gospels, we see how beautiful in its simplicity is this little observance which our dear Redeemer left for His disciples at that time, and for all who should believe on Him through their word. Following that particular yearly observance of the Jewish Passover ceremony, our Lord took the emblems of unleavened bread and wine and instituted a service which is the most precious to the hearts of all His true followers.

How devoid of all great ceremony, special church buildings, appointments, furnishings and robed priests was that first Lord’s Supper. How glad we are that our dear Redeemer did not specify that those who could conduct such a service be ordained and titled by fellow men. Rather, the eleven disciples who attended that first Memorial Supper represented the whole Body of Christ, made up of Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free, all one in Christ Jesus who have forsaken the world, accepted Christ Jesus as their personal Saviour and presented their lives to God, in response to His drawing power and invitation to sacrifice in the steps of His dear Son.

The simple emblems are most significant. The unleavened bread represents our Lord’s pure body. After blessing and breaking the bread our Master’s words at that first Memorial Supper were—“Take, eat, this is my body.” (Matt. 26:26.) Yes, this bread was to picture the Lord’s earthly body at all subsequent Remembrances, and by eating it the disciples thus show how they appropriate the merit of Christ’s sacrifice for their rustication. Likewise, the emblem of the wine, the cup, after giving thanks, was passed to the disciples with the words—“Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matt. 26:27, 28.) Yes, truly, this wine pictures our Lord’s pure blood poured out, sacrificed, and by partaking of it, the Lord’s followers thus again show how they appropriate the merit of His sacrifice by faith, for remission of sins—as a means of justification.

The partaking of the emblems also reveals the deeper significance of the Memorial, the broken bread impressing upon us the necessity for our being broken with our Lord, by presenting our justified bodies a living sacrifice to God through faith in our Saviour. Likewise, we see in the emblem of the wine the privilege of the Lord’s consecrated people to participate in the sacrificial life of Christ our Head, by our lives being used up, poured out, in the service of our Heavenly Father. How well did Paul express his own feelings in this sacrificial life—“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” (Col. 1:24.)

It is from this standpoint only that the words of our Lord—"Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament"—can be correctly understood. Our Lord was saying in effect that His true disciples must participate in His blood, His sufferings, during this Gospel Age, and then this valuable merit of His, His blood, would be available and would be the means of sealing the New Covenant when all His body members had completed their sacrifice. This means, of course, that the New Covenant is sealed, and becomes operative for Israel and ultimately for the world of mankind, following the exaltation of the Church, with the opening of the Millennial Age.

While, then, we do well to review the events leading up to our Lord's great sacrifice, we do not do so with any feelings of disappointment that we were not living at that time. Rather, the present time, "the days of the Son of Man" during which the harvest work of the Gospel Age is being accomplished, is one of the most wonderful periods in which to be living. Who knows how many more Memorial observances there may be; really there cannot be very many more before the complete Homegathering of the last members of Christ takes place, in fulfilment of our Lord's words—"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt. 26:29.) Blessed promise indeed to the faithful sacrificers in Christ!

With what delight, then, should all dear followers of the Master observe the approaching Memorial Supper, the date for which falls this year on Tuesday evening the 8th of April, whether they gather with assemblies of the Lord's people in large or small companies, whether they reside within reach of the one or two of like precious faith, or in complete isolation. Let no one who is sincerely seeking to walk in the steps of their Redeemer neglect this privilege of partaking of the Memorial of Christ this year, and thus join the members throughout the world in the true spirit in which this sacred observance may be a rich blessing to themselves, and an honour to our Heavenly Father and Lord Jesus Christ.

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every explosion nod, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Passover Memorial 1952

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 8th April. After sundown on this date will be the appropriate time to observe this Memorial in remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the middle of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services

Melbourne.—Tuesday 8th April at 8 p.m., at 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Near Glenferrie Station; few doors south of Burwood Road.)

Adelaide.— Tuesday, 8th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Stow Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at 233 Liverpool Road, South Strathfield. Take, No. 27 red bus from Strathfield Station (left side of station coming from Sydney) to Schaffer's Upholstery.

Perth.—Tuesday, 8th April at 7.45 p.m. For location of Service, apply to Secretary, Mr. W. L. Price, "Illawarra," Karragullen, W.A.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) in the four days, Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 11th to 14th, in the Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide. A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to join the members in Adelaide for these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further information is obtainable from the Secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy." —Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d. ; 6 copies for 4/-.

"The Plan of God—in Brief."—This 104 -page booklet covering the main features of God's Plan of the Ages. Most helpful ; heavy paper cover, price 1/-; 6 copies for 5 /-.

"The Lord is My Shepherd."—The beautiful 23rd is explained in a very helpful manner in this booklet of 24 pages. Price 5d. per copy ; 6 copies for 2/ -, posted.

Partakers of the Lord's Supper.

ONE of our brethren has recently sent along some thoughts in answer to a question as to whether the Sisters need be worried over - much about taking the Memorial, seeing the Lord invited only His twelve Apostles, and there is no mention of any women being present. While this matter does not seem to have been raised in past years, and should be easily answered in the minds of all who read their Bibles at all, there may be many readers who would appreciate the thoughts and they are gladly presented as follows.

In the partaking of the Lord's Supper, or Memorial, Sisters are as vitally concerned as any other member in Christ. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Notice that these texts use only the masculine gender, but it is similar in- most legal documents; where the masculine is cited the feminine is implied.

The Church is composed of both male and female, Jew and Greek and are all "One" in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:27, 28.) It is unscriptural, therefore, to suggest that it is composed of only one class—excluding womenfolk. Why, then, were there no women present at the Last Supper? For the same reason that there were no women included in the 70 sent-out ones, no women as pastors, no women even as deacons—no women elevated in any capacity to that of teaching .

Were women indifferent in the early Church in partaking of the Lord's Supper? Read 1 Cor. 11, which refers to the subject of the Memorial, and early in the chapter it will be seen that the letter is as much for the Sisters of the Church as for the Brothers.

Let no one rob you of the inheritance in Christ by making light of, or treating as "common" the most sublimest emblems that were ever given to any body of people. It is reserved for the Church to "show forth the Lord's death till he come," and how can she do it better in a symbolical way than by preserving in its simplicity and beauty the Memorial? All in Christ, whether they be "male or female" should be careful to observe the Feast of Remembrance, and observing, too, the Church's privilege of being broken with Him—one loaf.

Living by Every Word

(Convention Address.)

“Man shall not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”—Matt. 4:4; John 6:35, 47-58.

BREAD is the general word for food; for that which satisfies the cravings of hunger; for that which builds up and strengthens; for that which enables the continuation of life. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Lord should use bread as a symbol, or figure of that heavenly substance, which God has arranged should now build up and strengthen His people, and eventually, by the first resurrection, impart to them life everlasting. Divine truth is represented as being such spiritual food, and our Lord Himself, because in the divine plan He is the channel of the truth—“the way, the truth, the life”—is spoken of as being also the “bread of life” for His people. We are to eat, or partake of the lifegiving qualities which He freely gives us in Himself, if we would reach the goal of our hope—eternal life.

Our text is our Lord’s reply to the tempter when He was in the wilderness fasting and hungry. The tempter had suggested the use of the powers which Jesus had received a few days previously when, at His baptism in Jordan, He received the holy spirit, and with it the gifts and powers which subsequently enabled Him not only to heal the sick, but to turn water into wine and to feed a multitude by increasing the five barley loaves and the two small fishes. The Adversary’s proposition was that the Lord should use this power for the gratification of His own appetite; he said, “Command that these stones be made bread.”

However pleased our Lord was to have these divine powers communicated through the holy spirit He had received, however glad He was, at appropriate times, to perform the miracles incidental to His ministry, He knew that the powers were not given to Him for any selfish use, for any self-gratification; and, therefore, He declined the suggestion and His reply is our text. In passing, we note that there is a lesson here worthy of the attention of all God’s people; that spiritual and divine things are not to be used in a mercenary manner. So far as they can discern matters, the Lord’s people are to keep separate and distinct all of their own preferences, desires and appetites, from the heavenly and spiritual things, and not use the latter for the services of the flesh, however pure and good the fleshly desires may be.

Our Lord’s words accept the suggestion that bread, food, is necessary for human sustenance under present conditions, but they carry the thought further—they draw our attention to higher life. His follower — “Let the dead bury their dead, follow thou Me.”

From this standpoint we see that man cannot live by bread alone. He has the divine sentence “dying thou shalt die” against him, and he can find no kind of bread, no kind of food, that will produce life in the full and complete sense of that word—that will swallow up death in life. He must look for another kind of “bread of life” than any earthly food; he must have another kind of “water of life” than any earthly drink. It is this heavenly food or supply to which our Lord refers, saying, “Man shall not live by bread alone. but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

But how is it possible for us to live by the words that proceed out of the mouth of God? What did Jesus mean? How can God’s words give us life? He meant that all hopes of eternal life depend upon God—upon the divine plan and its promises. Looking into these promises we can see distinctly that the divine plan, dating from before the foundation of the world, is that all of God’s creatures, created in His likeness and abiding in faith, love and obedience, in harmony with Him, shall have life everlasting. This is, undoubtedly, what our Lord had in mind in using the words of our text; He may also have had the thought that He had come into the world upon a special mission, to do the Father’s will, and that His understanding from the beginning was that His perfect obedience to the divine will would insure His

glory, honour and immortality with the Father, eventually; but that any disobedience would mean the forfeiture of divine favour, and would involve the sentence of disobedience, namely, death.

Our Lord's prompt decision, therefore, was that to disobey the Father's will, and thus to secure bread for the sustenance of His body would be a great mistake; that food thus secured could sustain life for but a little time; that His better plan would be to trust in the Word of God, the divine promise that those who love and serve and obey Him shall ultimately come off conquerors, and have eternal life with God. And this, our Master's conclusion, is full of instruction for us who are His disciples, seeking to walk in His footsteps. We are to learn the lesson that a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth—food and raiment—but that his life in the fullest, grandest, highest sense, is dependent upon his complete submission to the divine will—his careful attention to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The words of God's mouth to us are not exactly the same as to our Lord Jesus and to the holy angels, because we are by nature children of wrath even as others, sinners. We must, therefore, be addressed from a true standpoint to begin with. Thus it is that we hear the words of God's mouth in different languages at different times in our experiences.

(1) The first word of God's mouth to us is the message of justice, informing us that we are sinners, imperfect, helpless, as respects our own restoration to the divine image. This first word which proceedeth out of God's mouth to us is alarming; He declares us to be under a sentence or curse of death because of sin, saying "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and "the wages of sin is death". It tells us that by nature we are "children of wrath even as others,"—strangers and foreigners, aliens from God and all His blessings, which are held in reservation for those who love and obey Him and maintain the perfection in which they were created. It is necessary that we should hear this voice; necessary that we should be alarmed and feel fearful of the penalty of death; and necessary that we feel lonely and discouraged in our separation from God and our alienation from His gracious provisions for those who love Him and whom He loves. This fear and dejection are necessary in a general way to prepare us for the next word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God; namely,

(2)

The Word Of God's Pity And Aid.

(3) The message that God, while manifesting His absolute justice and the immutable integrity of His first word and sentence, is, nevertheless, kindly disposed toward us—that He pities us in our fallen condition. (John 3:16.) This word is not to the effect that divine pity will admit us as sinners into divine favour, present and future; but that divine pity contemplated in advance a ransom-price which, meeting the claims of divine justice, would permit of man's recovery from his condition of sin and death—back to a condition of holiness and life everlasting—as though he had never sinned, had never been sentenced. This word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, prophesying a blessing and opportunity for recovery to as many as will accept, was first a voice to Abraham, saying—"In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." As this hope begins to dawn in the heart of the penitent one seeking life eternal at the fountain of grace and truth, the ears of his understanding listen intently for other words of life from his Creator and he hears (Acts 10:36),

The Voice Of God "Speaking Peace By Jesus Christ."

(4) The message of peace is that God has already provided the ransom price for sinners; that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted 'death for every man; that "Christ died for our sin., according to the Scriptures and rose again for our justification." This word from God's mouth informs us that through this transaction, which is entirely His own without our instigation or aid, "He may be just and yet the justifier of those who"; believe in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26.) Oh, what joy, What hope of life comes into our hearts as we

hear his word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God! We exclaim with the Apostle, "If God be for us who can be against us?" If God so loved us while we were yet sinners, much more does He love us since we are seeking Him, and since we accept the provision of His grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus to all who accept the atonement which is in Christ Jesus, through His blood. God indeed speaks words of grace and peace--7-forgiveness, reconciliation, mercy, love and kindness.

God's Word To Reclaimed Sons.

(5) Another word or message proceeds from the mouth of God to such as have heard of His grace in Christ and have accepted it. He calls them children, not now "children of wrath," not now "the children of the evil one," but He addresses them as reclaimed children. as His own. as those to whom He is pleased to give His blessings upon certain conditions which He specifies. saying, "My son, give Me thine heart." This call for the heart is a call for full consecration, for complete setting apart to the Lord and to His service. Our will is the centre of our intelligence, our being; if the heart, the will, be given to God, it carries with it the title to every action. word and thought. It is such only as delight to respond to this Word or message from the, mouth of God that He is pleased to own in a special way; these are owned of God in the special sense of sonship which pertains to this Gospel Age—sonship in the house of sons, of which Christ Jesus, our Lord, is the Head.

"The Word Of Promise."

(6) In our ignorance of the greatness of our Heavenly Father and the richness of His grace ward us in Christ Jesus our Lord, we might ail to appreciate the necessity or desirability of a full consecration of our hearts to Him. In our ignorance we might prefer to say, "Some of self and some of Thee." Knowing this, God, in His compassion. has been pleased to set before us team features of His plan, and hence we hear His voice again in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of His Word. In these He points out to us the wisdom of a full consecration and complete obedience to Him, assuring us in these promises that by obedience to them we may become partakers of the greatest of all blessings, the Divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4.) Oh, how wonderful that the great Creator should condescend not only to redeem sinners but to urge, to entice them to receive His bounties and blessings! From the time the consecration begins a measure of the holy spirit is granted, that the consecrated one nay, by application—by hungering and thirsting for 'the words which proceed out of the mouth of :God; and- by feeding upon them—be enabled to "Comprehend with all the saints what is the 'breadth and length and depth and height, and to know,' the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." (Eph. 3:18, 19.) Ah, yes, those who 'have heard and have fed upon "the words which proceed out of the mouth of God" thus far, find *indeed a new life begun, a new vitality, a new 'energy—new hopes, new aims, new ambitions. —Old things are passed away," everything 'is tinged with the glories of the heavenly things which "eye bath not seen nor ear heard, neither bath entered into the heart of man to conceive" —the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him;—an- understanding and appreciation, of which God, in some measure, gives to •such by His spirit, which "searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God."

Feeding. On The Word of Admonition.

(7) Harkening further for the words which 'Proceed from the mouth of God—' Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of -life,"—we hear a word of admonition. The 'Father instructs us, that the glorious things to which He now calls us cannot possibly be ours unless our consecration to Him and submission to 'the influence of 'His providences and promises shall change, transform, renew our minds, so that the things once loved we will hate, and the things Once hated we will love. As a father spareth not the rod. of chastisement from the son whom he -loves, so the Lord will not spare the rod of affliction and chastisement from those who are truly His, because He loves them, and because He desires- to develop in them such a character as will be pleasing to Him, and which will permit Him eventually to

make them His sons on the plane of glory, heirs of Himself, joint-heirs with, Jesus Christ their Lord.

This word respecting the necessity of chastisement and our correction in righteousness, that we -may become conformed to the image of God's dear -Son (Rom. 8:29), is accompanied with assurances of love from the Father— assurances that "Like as a father, pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence Him." He says to us through another apostle, "Faint not when thou 'Art rebuked of-him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scoureth every son whom he receiveth." He explains that such discipline is not prompted by anger towards us, but by His love, and if we are rightly exercised by the disciplines, trials, experiences of life, they will "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; they will work out in us such characters as the Lord Will be able to use in the service to which He has called us—the service of the Millennial Age, the service of the royal priesthood, to be associated with Christ in the work of judging and blessing the world of mankind. The proper response of all who have the true spirit of sonship is expressed in the language of our Lord and Master—"Not my will but thine be done, O Lord; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Such as thus respond to the chastisement of the Lord, step more and more into divine favour, and hear other words of comfort, of grace, of help. (Psa. 91.)

"Ye Have Need Of Patience."

(8) God's Word or message of patience is, "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:4). How necessary to our perfection is this divine counsel—this Word which proceeds from the mouth of God. We might imagine that we had received sufficient testing and proving to indicate our loyalty to the Lord, to the principles of righteousness, long before we had been sufficiently proved according to the Lord's standards in the testing of character. He therefore graciously explains to us how necessary patience will be, that we should not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which must test us, as though some strange things had happened to us. (1 Pet. 4:12.) On the contrary He points out to us, as we grow in grace and in knowledge and in ability to comprehend, that the glory, honour and immortality to which He has invited the church of this Gospel Age is so high, so grand a position, that those who would, share those honours must expect, necessarily, to be severely tested and tried that their absolute loyalty to the Lord and to the principles of His righteousness — justice, truth, love—shall be beyond question. Our characters must become crystallised along these lines, firm and adamant, before we shall be ready to be received as the "overcomers" who shall inherit all things, and share the kingdom and glory with the Captain of our salvation. He points out to us, further, that if it was necessary for the Captain of our salvation to be tempted and tried, tested and proved, much more reasonable is it that we who were children of wrath, and justified only through His grace, should be thoroughly proven as respects our loyalty.

Words Of Consolation From The Mouth Of God.

(9) We might well be exercised with the strictness of the divine requirements as respects this overcoming class, and might say to ourselves, "Others may attain to such glories and blessings, but we are too weak in the flesh through the fall and cannot hope to come off conquerors, cannot hope to stand the trials and tests which the Lord would impose." And here the Lord speaks again, a gracious word of comfort, consolation and encouragement, informing us that the perfection He is expecting is not a perfection in the flesh and of the flesh which is weak and imperfect, but

a perfection of the heart, of the mind, of the will, of the intention. He informs us that He is not judging us as human beings according to the flesh, but as new creatures according to the mind, the new will. He informs us that although He will expect the new mind to do its very best in the matter of controlling the flesh and bringing it into subjection. yet, nevertheless, He knows that the flesh being imperfect, perfection according to the flesh is an impossibility to any of the fallen race; therefore, His arrangement through

Christ is that the imperfections of the flesh which are not assented to by our wills are not counted as ours. They are covered by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and are ignored in the Heavenly Father's reckoning with us. He assures us that we are to be judged according to the spirit (will, intent) and not according to the flesh.

What comfort and consolation are in these assurances. These are wonderful words of life indeed. They inspire us with hope. If God will accept perfect heart-intentions, as instead of absolute perfection of the flesh, then indeed we have hope of attaining to the standard which He has marked for us, the standard of perfection. We can be perfect in intention, in will, or as the Master expresses it, "pure in heart," even though we cannot be perfect in the flesh. We hear through the Apostle the word proceeding out of the mouth of God to this effect,—"The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) We can walk after the spirit, though, so far as our mortal bodies are concerned, we cannot walk up to the spirit's requirements. Our minds can walk up to the spirit, our intentions can be perfect; and this is what our Heavenly Father seeks in us, perfection of intention.

The Word Of Resurrection.

(10) A further word from the mouth of God assures us that He knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust, under the sentence of death, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return"—weak, imperfect and dying—and that it is not His purpose that we shall always be in conflict with ourselves — perfect will against imperfect body,—that He has provided that in the resurrection we shall have new, perfect bodies in full accord with our new minds. He assures us that He is able and willing, to do all this, and that He proposes to give His "elect" bodies of a still higher order than the human—that He will give us spiritual bodies. They shall have a part in the first resurrection, and thenceforth be able to do the Father's will perfectly in every respect, as they now show themselves desirous of doing His will so far as they are able. O gracious provisions! - O wonderful words of compassion, inspiring us to wonderful hopes of eternal life and glory! It will be to such as thus overcome in spirit, in faith (1 John 5:4), that the Lord will give the final word of His mouth—"Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord."

We see that every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, every admonition, every encouragement, every promise, is necessary to the development of those whom God is now calling to eternal life as joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom. The eating of natural food could not bring this life-eternal, nor its attendant glories; but the eating and appropriating of these words from the mouth of God can bring to us all these blessings which we crave. Let us then, more and more, as the disciples, pupils of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory and act upon the suggestion of the words of this text, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The just shall live by faith. Let us take time to meditate on the Lord's Word—to allow His truth to sink into our hearts and shape our thoughts and actuate our words and actions. Let us seek for renewed supplies of grace and strength, so that we may press with vigour and courage along the narrow way that leads to life. We must keep in close communion with the Lord through prayer and watchfulness, and take some time each day to read God's Word and meditate on its messages. How helpful it is to meet with others of like faith and hope, and seek to exhort and encourage one another in the heavenly way.

A Living Sacrifice.

No doubt every person who comes to appreciate the plan of God and can grasp the wonderful high calling now being offered to those who consecrate their lives to the service of God have been much enlightened by the loving exhortation of Paul—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.)

One of the most impressive thoughts in these words of the Apostle is the reference—"by the mercies of God." This at once reveals that it is a great condescension on God's part to even invite anyone to, present their body, their all, a living sacrifice—to be dead with Christ, that we may live with Him. The same Apostle, in another of his 'epistles, shows how God honours those who really and fully present their all to

Him. He states—"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, and ye are not your own For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." (1 Cor. 6:17, 18.) "Your body is the temple of the holy spirit . . . ye are not your own . . . ye are bought with a price." Yes, 'and what a price! Even the sacrifice of God's dear Son! How it assists the Lord's people, to continually keep this precious thought in mind—I am not my own; I belong to another; I must, I really delight to glorify God in my body.

In the beautiful Consecration Hymn, written by Frances Havergal, the various members of our body are shown as being presented to God—Take my life—my hands—my feet—my voice—my lips—my silver and my gold—my moments and my days—my intellect—my will —my heart—my love—myself. It does us good to meditate upon the privilege of offering our members to God each day so that we may make the better use of His power in keeping these members of our body under the control of the new mind, and continually presented—a living sacrifice, our reasonable service. But try as we will, we find that our life is not always fully acceptable to Thee; our hands are not always moved at the impulse of Thy love; our feet may not always be swift on errands, Lord for Thee; our voice may not always bring honour to my King; and our lips may sometimes be far from moved with messages from Thee. It makes tis sad, and rightly so, when we find we have permitted our members to be misused, but our God is forgiving when we go to the throne of grace acknowledging shortcomings, and we can obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, for better progress in the future.

Further, it seems possible that one or more members of our body may be misused without being fully realised, and a detailed examination is really essential on the part of those dear followers of Christ who are willing, really willing to do everything to His praise. Take our lips, for instance. Apart altogether from possible misuse in speaking things which we should not at times, shall we ask God to take our lips for His service and then take them back for the purpose of smoking—for worldly use? Do we feel that our nerves are shaky and smoking helps to sooth them. Well, there are many good things for nerves, good food etc., which will more than replace this worldly habit, and best of all be honourable to our Lord and His cause. Again, shall we ask God to take our lips for His service and then take them back to colour or paint them—to appear at least a little like the world? Were we not called out of the world? Our Lord declared of His true followers—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them (set them apart for holy use) through thy truth; thy word is truth." (John 17:16, 17). "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit . . . and ye are not your own?"

Take my will and make it 'Thine;
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own;
Thus in me Thyself enthrone.

Take my love, my God:
I pour At Thy feet its treasure store:
Take myself—I wish to be
Ever, only, all for Thee

Pilgrimage Ended.

On the evening of 18th February last our dear Brother Charlton of Canberra finished the pilgrim way as the result of an injury received that same morning, and this was a great shock to the members of our Brother's family, and also to the brethren throughout Australia.

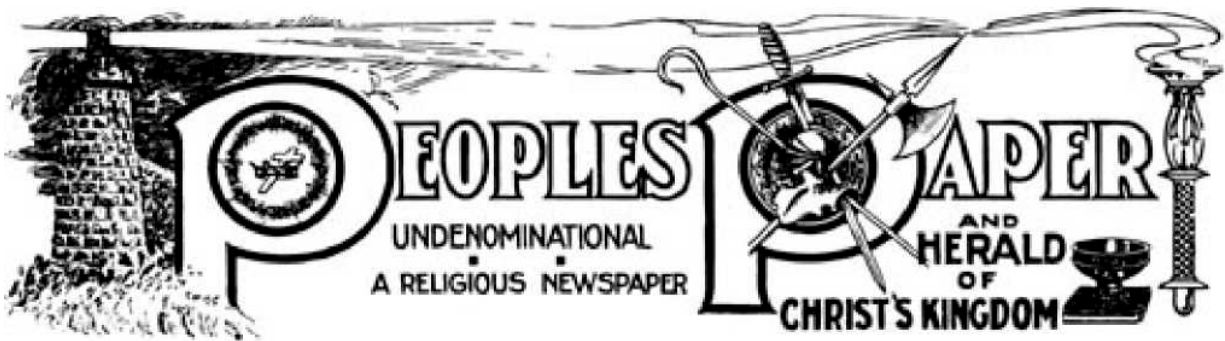
Our dear Brother Charlton had come into the truth in Western Australia, soon after his arrive' from England about 1914, and coming to Eastern Australia soon after settled in the Canberra area and associated ever since with those who loved the Lord and His truth above all else. Our Brother was well known to the brethren in Melbourne and Sydney, and many other friends had associated with him at Conventions held in those two cities over the years past, and all these will no doubt bear record of the true Christian character manifest in the life of Brother Charlton.

Of a quiet, humble disposition, our dear Brother was ever zealous for the truth, and continually sought to represent the Lord in action as well as in word. We feel sure that the Lord had seen that dear Brother Charlton had developed those traits of character, by His grace, worthy of an inheritance in His heavenly kingdom, and would receive the Master's approval—"Well done, good and faithful servant."

In visiting Canberra at the time of Brother Charlton's passing it was lovely to see how well the spirit of the Lord was supporting and comforting Sister Charlton and two daughters who are also in the truth, in their sad and sudden loss of a loved husband and father. Truly, the Lord does give grace and peace to those who commit their lives fully unto Him, and they are able to say from the heart—"It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good?" Our sincere sympathy is extended to the dear members who have suffered such a great loss, but we also give thanks to God for the life of one of His dear children here on earth now completed, and who we feel has been rewarded in the heavenly kingdom, as we are now living in the time of the gathering Home of the Lord's jewels. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Return Thanks.

Sister Charlton and daughters Sisters Audrey and Thelma desire to express sincere thanks to the many Bible Classes, also individual members, who wrote such comforting letters to us during our recent loss of a dear husband and father. We say thanks also for lovely floral tributes; we felt the Lord's spirit was very manifest in these actions a the dear ones.



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What Does Easter Sunday Mean to You?

IN taking up this subject it is to be understood that no particular significance is attached to Easter, but rather to those most outstanding events with which the term Easter has become familiar. A reliable Encyclopedia states the matter this way:—"Easter is a word of Saxon origin, and imports a goddess of the Saxons, or rather of the East, Esteria, in honour of whom sacrifices were offered annually about the Passover time of year, and the name began to be attached by association of ideas to the Christian festival of the resurrection, which happened at the time of the Passover; hence we say

Easter-day, Easter Sunday, but very improperly, as this by no means refers to the festival then kept to the goddess of the ancient Saxons.-

Now, in our Authorized Version of the Bible we find that the word "Easter" occurs once only, in Acts 12:4, and there it is a mistranslation; it should be rendered "Passover". While, then the name Easter was adopted from the heathen into the Christian teachings about the third century, it need make no particular difference in our minds, for we do not use it to celebrate the goddess of the East. However, it is helpful to remember that the Lord fixed the time of the Passover centuries before the heathen festival of Easter was thought of; so, when referring to Easter Sunday it should be understood that the very important third day of the Passover season is implied.

The manner in which God arranged the particular period of the Passover is of much interest to us, because the sacrifice of our Lord took place in accord with, and in fulfilment of, that typical ceremony enacted in Egypt at the time of the deliverance of Israel from that land of bondage. God gave very definite instructions to Moses concerning the Passover date, as shown in Exodus 12. "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month (Abib, or Nisan, the seventh month of the civil year) shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house . . . And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. . . For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the, land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are;

and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” (Exod. 12:1-3, 6, 7, 12-14.)

From the above setting for the Passover season, on the anniversary of which our Lord died as the antitypical Lamb, it can be understood that Easter does not always coincide with the Passover date. For instance, this year the 14th of the beginning of months, the 14th of Nisan, fell on Wednesday the 9th of April, commencing at sundown on Tuesday the 8th of April. In some years the difference is almost a month. However, we are not stressing the importance of any particular day, but rather the great importance of that event for which Easter Sunday stands, as we shall see,

Now, Israel, over the centuries following their deliverance from Egypt, lost the spirit of the Passover—only a comparatively few kept it in spirit and in truth. However, the parents of Jesus did observe the Passover in the right spirit, as we would expect, as shown by Luke 2:41.—”Now his (Jesus’) parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.”

Very little is mentioned about succeeding Passovers, but the message of John the Baptist, following our Lord’s baptism when thirty years of age, is most significant.—”John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world . . . Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” (John 1:29, 35-37.)

Our Lord thus began His ministry, finding those who were assured that they “had found the Messiah, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write”; those who were glad to “come and see”; those who were “Israelites indeed,” in whom there was, no guile. These disciples our Lord talked with, travelled with, lived with, and prayed with. They listened to “the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth”. No wonder they were cemented together in holy, sacred bonds; no wonder Peter, even at that time, under the power of the heavenly Father, could declare—”Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”.

Then, as our Lord’s ministry progressed, after three of the yearly Jewish Passovers had been kept, Jesus informed His disciples of the great purpose of His mission to earth, as shown in Matt. 16:21-23.—”From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed. and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan (adversary) ; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man.” We can sympathise with Peter in his reaction to the thought of Jesus leaving them, but our Lord must be firm in His rejection of any suggestion that would interfere with the Father’s will for Him — His sacrifice for a dying world of mankind.

Again in Matt. 17:22, 23 we read,—”And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto His disciples, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.” Yes, they were exceeding sorry, and no wonder even though they found it hard to grasp the full import of their Master’s words, as shown further in Mark 9:31, 32— “For he taught his disciples and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.” It all seemed so mysterious to the disciples that their Lord should allow Himself to be taken and be killed, in view of His mighty miracles. So, while not able to grasp the necessity for His sacrifice, they overlooked the repeated promise,—”he shall rise the third day.”

Within a few days of the last Passover of our Lord's earthly life we find Him, even more plainly, trying to impress upon the minds of His little band the momentous events about to take place, as we read—"And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way. and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the third day he shall rise again." (Matt. 20:17-19.) Then followed the preparation for our Lord's last Passover, when He knew that "His hour had come," and as He assembled with His twelve apostles, no doubt with much feeling, He declared—"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) Yes, with desire, our Lord had looked forward to this momentous hour — the culmination of His gracious mission to earth, when He would fulfil the type in becoming "Christ, our Passover Lamb, slain for us."

Following the institution of the Memorial Supper our Lord warned His little band of the sorrows, trials and persecutions which would come to them very soon. He declared—"The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying they will keep your's also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended . . . But now I go my way to him that sent me . . . But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send it unto you . . . And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." (John 15:20, 21; 16:1, 5-7, 22.)

Thus did Jesus seek to support His bewildered followers through the experiences in Gethsemane, the betrayal and trial throughout that awful night, and finally the cruel death on the cross the following morning. What terrific experiences for the disciples who had thrown in their whole lives with the lowly Nazarene—those who had talked and walked, toiled and lived, prayed and hoped with Jesus for the coming Kingdom. And now their Lord was crucified! Their Lord was dead!

Then followed the delivery of the body of Jesus to a rich man of Arimathea named Joseph, who also was Jesus' disciple. After wrapping the body in linen he laid it in his own new tomb, and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre; this procedure being especially noted by the devoted women who had also viewed the death of their Lord. (Matt. 27:57-61.) Thus closed that tragic day with the setting of the sun, and the Jewish sabbath began during which none of the disciples would approach the sepulchre of their Master.

But with the passing of the sabbath day prearranged plans were put into effect, as we read, ' When the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" (Mark 16:13.) Can we grasp something of the thoughts in the minds of these dear sisters, saddened by the cruel death of their Lord from heaven? And now, as they thought of the fast service to be rendered to Him, the anointing of His body, a considerable obstacle stood in their way—Who shall roll us away the stone? Who indeed?

These dear women were amazed at the spectacle awaiting them, as we note from Matthew's account,— "As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow . . . And the angel said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place

where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead . . . And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.” (Matt. 28:1-8.) The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door. What an experience! The stone rolled away! The empty tomb! The Lord is risen! Come, see the place where the Lord lay! And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead!

Need we ask, What did the resurrection morning (Easter Sunday) mean to these dear disciples who first experienced it? It meant that an absolutely new hope and joy had come into their lives; their loving Master was no longer dead; He had risen; He appeared to them shortly afterwards; they were sure that He was the same Jesus, though now in spirit form, as His varied appearances were intended to convey to them. Truly, now they could praise God as never before, and rejoice greatly in the words of their risen Lord—”I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John 20:17.)

What a day it was, that resurrection day, with the Lord appearing at least five times to His startled and delighted disciples, and making Himself known by the familiar tone of voice, or the blessing and breaking of bread as had been His custom during His ministry with them. No wonder the two disciples on the Emmaus road afterwards declared— ”Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures,” Then, on their return to Jerusalem these two disciples found the eleven apostles and others gathered together to recount the amazing experiences of that eventful day. What stories they had to tell; what joy was welling up in their hearts; and, then, to crown it all— ”Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” Oh, joy and gladness of heart!

Thus did the risen Lord, at various times throughout the forty days prior to His ascension to heaven, thrill the hearts of His dear disciples with convincing proofs of His resurrection from the dead. And then the time came for the Lord’s ascension to heaven, His mission to earth completed, but not before He assured His dear people that “the promise of the Father”, the holy spirit, would come upon them, as they tarried in Jerusalem, to bless and comfort, to guide and counsel, to sustain and strengthen them in their ministry of service and sacrifice in the steps of their risen and exalted Lord. Of the last appearance of our Lord we read—”And he led the disciples out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” (Luke 24:50-53.)

The Apostle Paul takes up this wonderful theme of the resurrection when he declares—”For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” (Heb. 9:24.) The result of that ascension “for us” — for “himself and his house”—the members of His Body and household of faith generally—was the outpouring of the Pentecostal blessing upon the waiting disciples, and from that time onward they experienced the fulfilment of the Master’s words—”I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” (John 16:22.) No, indeed; the joy implanted in the hearts of those dear disciples of the early church increased and abounded throughout their lives, as they gave their all gladly in the service and sacrifice of their risen Master.

We see the electrifying effect of Christ’s resurrection and the indwelling of the holy spirit upon the early Church, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, and is it not appropriate to ask ourselves—What does Easter Sunday (or the anniversary of Christ’s resurrection) mean to us? Does it bring us to the feet of Christ in full surrender? Does it inspire us to love God and our dear Lord whom He sent into the world, as never before? Does it prompt us to rededicate (reconsecrate) our lives to God? Does it give us a new song in our mouths? Does it help us to grasp, and by God’s grace, to appreciate fully the words of the Apostle—”But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

even when we were dead in sins, bath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved), and bath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ"? (Eph. 2:4-6.) Surely it does, to all who have yielded their whole beings to the heavenly influence of the exalted Lord.

However, on the other hand, do we sometimes find great obstacles, great stones, obstructing our Christian pathway, weakening our faith, and perhaps dimming our vision of the risen Christ? Do we sometimes find it difficult "to endure, as seeing him who is invisible?" Do we ever ask, Who shall roll away the stone? when confronted with great issues of belief, or trials and besetments in the Christian way? If so, let us ever remember the experiences of the dear sisters on that first resurrection morning—"The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and rolled away the stone"—revealing the open tomb, the risen Christ, and ultimately the power of His resurrection in their lives. As God sent His angel to open the way for the revelation of Christ on that first resurrection morning, so it is still true—"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that reverence him, and delivereth them", and as Paul declares, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Psa. 34:7; Heb. 1:14.)

According to our faith shall our relationship be with our risen Saviour, of whom Peter declares—"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," (1 Pet. 1:8.) From this standpoint of beholding Christ in our new minds, since our full consecration to God, we can approximate the intense yearning of Paul for a much larger vision and perception of his Lord on high, when he declared—"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3:10, 11.) A holy and sacred desire indeed, well pleasing to God, which must also be the supreme ambition of all who shall be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in that glorious inheritance where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Yes, says our dear Apostle Paul, "If ye then be risen with Christ"—if you have received that new mind through a full consecration to God; if you are dwelling in heavenly places in Christ; if you have been delivered from the power of darkness, and have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; if you have no continuing city here, but seek one to come; if you have been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, that you may be also in the likeness of His resurrection;—then, you will, you must certainly, with heart and soul, "seek (continually) those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:1-4.)

A living Christ, of wondrous birth,
Who trod the dreary paths of earth,
Shedding abroad His holy light
Through the deep gloom of sin's dark night.

A living Christ our spirits need,
A loving Christ our souls to feed;
A dying Christ, our ransom He,
A risen Christ to set us free.

A dying Christ, whose precious blood
Seals the poor sinner's peace with God ;
And fills the soul with fullest love,
Like to the joy prepared above.

This, too, our need—a Christ within,
A life with God, afar from sin,
A Christ whose love our hearts shall fill,
And quite subdue our wayward will.

A Christ ascended—all is done.
A world redeemed, a victory won.
With angel hosts, a glorious throng,
We'll sing with joy salvation's song.

Perth Meetings.

Friends in Western Australia are advised of a new address for the regular Sunday meetings at 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m., namely-9 Howard Street, Perth.

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Convention News from Adelaide.

IT was a pleasure to be able to meet together and enjoy the very helpful season of fellowship, and feast our new minds upon the rich spiritual food provided by our Heavenly Father at the Easter Convention at Adelaide. We feel it was one of the best Conventions we have ever been privileged to attend. The Lord's spirit was much manifest in the meetings—truly He opened to us the windows of heaven and poured out a blessing beyond our capacity to receive. (Mal. 3:10.)

The loving spirit of co-operation, each endeavouring to give of their best to assist and encourage and comfort others, was much in evidence, indicating that the Lord's words through His apostle—"By love serve one another"—were being kept in mind by the brethren.

We were glad to welcome in our midst some visiting Brethren from Victoria and also from country parts of South Australia. Our special prayers were offered on behalf of some of our members who were hindered by sickness from attending the meetings. We feel they missed a spiritual treat of a very high order, but no doubt our Lord compensated them in other ways when He sees it is not possible for them to attend.

We found the four Bible studies very helpful and instructive, refreshing our minds concerning some of the very important doctrines of the Bible. The passages chosen for study were found in Rom. 8:16-25 ; Mal. 3 :1-3, 15-18; Rom. 6:3-11 and 1 Pet. 4:12-17. These were a feast in themselves under the guidance and blessing of the Lord's spirit in our midst.

The addresses by various of the visiting and local brethren gave us much food for thought and tended to "stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance". Topics for the addresses were as follows:—"Men Ought Always to Pray"

; "The Administration of Kingdom Blessings" ; Spiritual Development" ; "The Weapons of Our Warfare" ; "The Blessed Life" ; "What Does Easter Sunday Mean to You?"; "Who is Sufficient for these Things?" and "Girding Up the Loins of Your Mind". Each in his own way our brethren endeavoured to encourage us to patient endurance and to the cultivation of faith and love and all the graces of the holy spirit, so that the character-likeness of Christ may be more and more impressed upon our hearts and minds.

It was good to hear in the Praise and Testimony meetings the words of heartfelt appreciation of the Lord's goodness and blessing experienced along the way, and the earnest desire of heart to walk more closely in the Master's footsteps in the future days. The always popular session, "Hymns we love, and why", afforded opportunity for many to speak words of cheer, comfort and encouragement to one another, and and to "sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord". The Question meeting was another helpful feature of our programme, and afforded opportunity to discuss several questions and added further to the interest and profit of our Convention.

It was a pleasure to receive messages from some Classes and friends; these were much appreciated. The message sent to the churches and individual members is found in 1 Pet. 4:12, 13. This message is commended to the Lord's people everywhere, along with the Christian love and good wishes from the brethren gathered in Convention.

It is the sincere hope and earnest prayer that the many good lessons brought to our attention again at this Convention season will long remain in our memories, and under God's blessing have the designed effect of producing in our hearts stronger faith, deeper love, brighter hope, purer joy and more abiding peace as the days go by, and ultimately bring us into closer heart-harmony with God and with our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast, bidding each other Godspeed and singing "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" and "God be with you till we meet again". Our hearts go out in deep thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for the rich blessing bestowed upon us at this very happy and profitable Convention. Truly "He has brought us to the banqueting house, and His banner over us is love".

"Teach me to do Thy will,
And look to Thee alone,
Ready to labour or be still,
So that Thy will be done.

"Teach me to show Thy praise
In silence or in speech,
By lip and life, through all my days.
As only Thou canst teach."

—E. G. Cherry,

Memorial Services

Melbourne.

ON the evening of 8th April, the brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled to keep the annual Memorial of Christ's death, the attendance being larger this year with the presence of some brethren who have arrived from Europe and who are warmly welcomed in our midst.

For three weeks prior to the anniversary service, studies had been held on the special subject of the Memorial, with meditations on "The Passover of the New Creation" from the study "The New Creation" and portion of the Apostle Paul's presentation of this matter in 1 Cor. 11:23-34. These studies proved very edifying in preparing our minds for the observance, and as a lasting benefit in our daily devotions to the Lord.

It was in quiet, reverential spirit that we approached the Lord's table. The lovely hymns, with sweet organ tones, were truly thanksgivings of praise to God above for the sacrifice of His dear Son; the prayers of gratitude to the Giver of every good thing ascended, on behalf of all dear brethren in Christ the world over; the words of explanation and encouragement in the address, stimulating our desires "to keep the feast" in spirit and truth in all the days ahead, were all so helpful and uplifting; and with the Lord's spirit so fully in evidence, it was a really hallowed occasion before His presence.

Following the blessing of the emblems of unleavened bread and wine, these were gladly and thankfully partaken of, in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice in the first instance; then, as we appropriate the merit of Christ by faith, to show the means of our justification before God; and finally, to demonstrate our willingness, yes, our delight to be broken with Christ, and our life blood to be poured out in service and sacrifice in His steps., Thus, in deeply meditative spirit, solemn thankfulness and praise to God and our Lord Jesus, the closing hymn brought to conclusion this simple yet blessed Memorial service for 1952.

Geelong, Vic.

On Tuesday evening 8th April, we met in the same room as former years to partake of the emblems of bread and wine in memory of our Saviour's loving sacrifice on our behalf, the merit of which must soon begin to be appreciated by all the world as well, for the divine Word and the signs of the time show it will soon be "the due time". (1 Tim. 2:6.)

Hymns 437, 166, 345 (B.S. Hymnal) were sung; the Brothers offered prayer, gave Scripture readings (Exod. 12:114, 29, 30; 13:1-3;

1 Cor. 10:1-17; 5:7, 8), and a short address. These, together with two class studies on previous Sundays, and meditation, prepared our hearts and minds to partake of the emblems in a discerning manner and with thankfulness.

Adelaide.

Once again it was a privilege to meet with the Adelaide Class on the occasion of the keeping of the Memorial of the death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We met on the evening of 8th April as a little band of His disciples, in obedience to His request,—”Do this in remembrance of Me.”

After reading the Scriptures which refer to this important event, and the singing of some appropriate hymns, the events of the last few days of our Lord’s life on earth were traversed by a Brother who also brought to our minds the significance of the Memorial.

Then, with earnest prayer for God’s blessing upon each one present, and also upon the Israel of God in every place, we partook of the emblems, thanking God for the gift of His Son to be the Saviour of the world, and for the privilege given to us not only of believing in Him, but also of being permitted to share in His sufferings. Coming annually, the Memorial affords us the opportunity of examining our hearts and renewing our vows or consecration to be dead with Christ to all earthly things, that we may also live with Him as members of His anointed body.

Sydney.

We held our Memorial on 8th April with 19 friends present—all the dear faces we see year after year. The ceremony opened with the hymn “In memory of the Saviour’s love we keep this simple feast”, followed by a welcome by the chairman and prayer for God’s blessing upon the special occasion.

Then followed an address on the meaning and purpose of the Memorial, both from type and antitype, with special reference to the trials and sufferings of Christ which began at the time of His baptism in Jordan and culminated on the cross. All this we were remembering in this Memorial. We were remembering also our share in His sufferings and in the glory that should follow, not through any merit of our own, but through His grace. We remembered that as His Body we were a part of that loaf that was to be broken; we remembered also His precious blood as a stream of life that was poured out on our behalf and on behalf of the whole world. Remembering our union with Him and the brethren, we were led to a thorough search of the inward man before partaking of the elements, and no crumb of leaven, we trust, was left there to cause us to hesitate to partake of this feast.

A Brother then prayed for a blessing upon the bread and it was broken and partaken of. Then followed a blessing upon the cup, representing our Lord’s precious blood shed for the remission of our sins and later applied for the sins of the whole world. This was also handed round, and the chairman pronounced the parting words of blessing. We then sang the closing hymn, “When I survey the wondrous cross”, and dispersed.

Canberra.

For some weeks prior to the annual observance of the Memorial of Christ's death the Canberra brethren had their attention focussed on the Passover and the institution of the Memorial by medium of Berean studies, etc. Six brethren participated on 8th April.

For the occasion we were reminded of the tense atmosphere prevailing at the inauguration of the Passover—the shadow of the “destroying angel” and the necessity of being under the blood. Also, on the occasion of the institution of the Memorial, how coming events cast their shadows over the participants; howbeit, lightened by the assurance of a reunion, when the Lord would drink the wine “new in the kingdom”.

Finally, with fast deteriorating world conditions hovering o'er us, the brethren solemnly partook of the emblems, esteeming it a favour to be associated with our Lord in His suffering and the joy when He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. Surely, our heartfelt desire must be “we will remember Him”.

Glenbrook,

Once again, by God's grace and love under the guidance of the holy spirit, a little company of six were privileged to partake of the solemn Memorial instituted by our precious, loving Saviour.

As we viewed the accounts of the Memorial Supper given us in the Scriptures we thanked God in prayer that with all dear Israel of God throughout the world we once again were privileged to partake of this solemn feast and to realise that our present Lord was with us in spirit. Our earnest prayer is that God's richest blessings may rest upon all dear brethren in Melbourne and throughout all the world.

Perth,

It was again our privilege to gather around our Lord's table on the evening of 8th April, the friends commemorating our Lord's death at both Fremantle and Perth.

On the Sunday prior we had studied Isaiah 53, which again forcibly reminded us at what cost it was to our Lord to leave the courts of heaven and become man for the suffering of death; to pay the price for sin, the just for the unjust.

We were reminded of the passing over of the firstborns of Israel on account of the blood of the lamb, and so we are truly thankful to have the blood of Christ, “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world”, to cleanse us from all sin, that we may be of that class which is termed “the Church of the Firstborns”.

With thankful hearts we partook of the emblems which our Lord used to represent His body and His blood firstly “In remembrance of Him”, and also showing our desire to sacrifice with the Lord—to have common-union with Him, so as to suffer with Him, that we may later live and reign with Him. After singing “When I survey the wondrous cross” we quietly dispersed as did our Lord and Apostles.

Tasmania.

There were five of us gathered at the usual home to keep the Memorial, to do this in remembrance of Christ's broken body and shed blood, and to renew our vows to go forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. (Heb. 13:13.)

In the afternoon an address was read for us and much enjoyed, and in the evening the emblems were gladly partaken of. We were also reminded that it was the beginning of our new year and we resolved to make it the best year yet.

Consecration

“Consecration is not a religiously selfish thing. If it sinks into that it ceases to be consecration. We want our lives kept’ not that we may feel happy and be saved the distress consequent on wandering and get the power with God and man and other privileges linked with it. We shall have all this because the lower is included in the higher; but our true aim, if the love of Christ constraineth us, will be far beyond this. Not for ‘me’ at all, but ‘for Jesus’; not for my safety, but for His glory; not for my comfort, but for His joy; not that I may find rest, but that ‘He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied’. Yes, for Him I want to be kept; kept for His sake; kept for His use; kept to be His witness; kept for His joy; kept for Him that in me He might show forth some tiny sparkle of His light and beauty; kept to do His will and His work in His own way; kept, it may be, to suffer for His sake; kept for Him that he may do just what seemeth Him good with me; kept so that no other lord shall have any dominion over me, but that Jesus shall have all there is to have; little enough, indeed, but not divided nor diminished by any other claim. Is not this, to you who love the Lord, worth living for, worth trusting for?”—F. R. Havergal.

A Christian.

Our every day, every hour silent conduct is more effective than our conduct when we are among the Lord's people. There has always been a tendency in two opposite extremes when describing what a Christian ought to be.

One is to look for absolute perfection; the other is to lower the standard, by excusing the defects and sins of the followers of Christ. Let us avoid both. We cannot place before our vision a standard too high.

While we cannot be perfect and faultless, it is required of us that we be “blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life.” And the Apostle tells those who are so doing that it will be a cause for rejoicing in the day of Christ, that they did not “run in vain, neither laboured in vain.”—Phil. 2:15, 16.

A Christian is one whose eye is single to God's glory. “If your eye is single your whole body will be full of light,” and the influences that proceed from you cannot but have a sanctifying effect upon those you meet and Associate with daily. How responsible a matter is daily life, particularly the daily life of the Christian!—Selected.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street) —Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—9 Howard Street, Perth.—Sunday, 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.” —Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d. ; 6 copies for 4/-.

“The Plan of God—in Brief.”—This 104-page booklet covering the main features of God’s Plan of the Ages. Most helpful ; heavy paper cover, price 1/-; 6 copies for 5/-.

“The Lord is My Shepherd.”—The beautiful 23rd is explained in a very helpful manner in this booklet of 24 pages. Price 5d. per copy ; 6 copies for 2/ posted.

“Peace Desired—War Continues.”—In this booklet of 24 pages the present world outlook is reviewed, and the only hope for peace set forth in the light of God’s Word. Price 5d. per copy ; 6 copies for 2/ -, posted.

“Do the Dead Know Anything”—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24- page booklet. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for 2/-, posted,

“He Went Apart to Pray Alone.”

Matt. 14:23.

It is the quiet evening hour, the sun is in the west,
And earth enrobed in purple glow awaits her nightly rest:
The shadows of the mountain peaks are lengthening o’er the sea,
The flowerets close their eyelids on the shore of Galilee.

The multitude are gone away, their restless hum doth cease,
The birds have hushed their music, and all is calm and peace :
But on the lonely mountain side is One, whose beauteous brow,
The impress bears of sorrow, and of weariness e’en now.

The livelong day in deeds of love and power He hath spent.
And with them words of grace and life hath ever sweetly blent ;
Now He hath gained the mountain top, He standeth all alone,
No mortal may be near Him in that hour of prayer unknown.

He prayed—But for whom ? For Himself, He needeth nought;
Nor strength, nor peace, nor pardon, where of sin there is no spot ;
But ‘tis for us in powerful prayer He spendeth all the night,
That His own loved ones may be kept and strengthened in the fight ;

That they may all be sanctified, and perfect made in one:
That they His glory may behold where they shall need no sun:
That in eternal gladness they may be His glorious bride:
It is for this that He hath climbed the lonely mountain side.

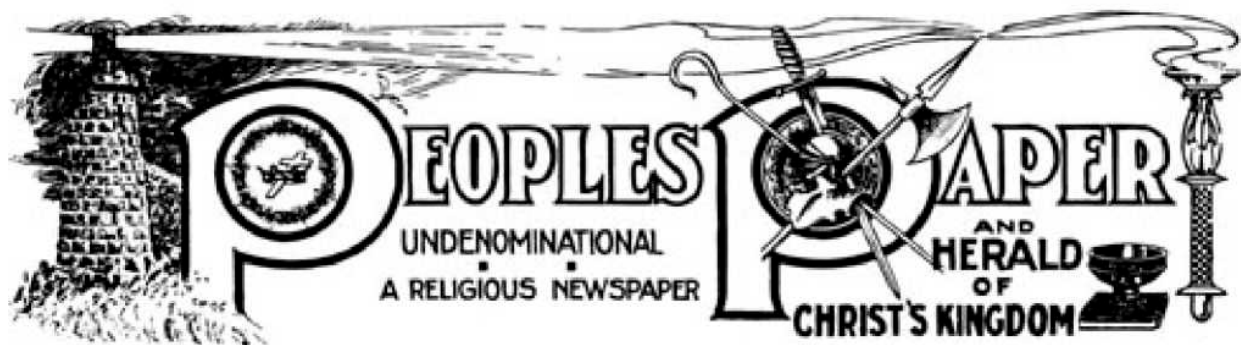
It is for this that He denies His weary head the rest
Which e’en the foxes in their holes and birds have in their nest ;
The echo of that prayer hath died upon the rocky hill,
But on a higher, holier mount that Voice is pleading still.

For while one weary child of His yet wanders here below,
While yet one thirsting soul desires His peace and love to know ;
And while one fainting spirit seeks His holiness to share,
The Saviour’s loving heart shall pour a tide of mighty prayer.

Yes! till each ransomed one hath gained His home of joy and peace,
That fount of blessing all untold shall never, never cease.

The daily deeds of kindness,
And words of truth and cheer,
Raise hearts like drooping flowers,
‘Mid withering sorrows here.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.
Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.
Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.



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“For Me to Live is Christ.”

(Phil. 1:22)

THESE were no empty words. The Apostle Paul boasted of nothing save the cross of Christ; there was no empty profession, no veneering Christianity with him, no sham religion, or formal Churchianity for respectability's sake.

No, with the Apostle Paul, Christ was a reality. He had seen Jesus, he had been convicted of a wrong course, the respectable religion of that day to which he had belonged had been proved wrong. The ceremonies of Judaism had become unacceptable to God; Israel, because of unbelief, had become blind. God in His mercy had laid His hand on Paul and stopped him in his zeal in persecuting the followers of Christ, and revealed to him the error of his ways. He was struck blind by the brightness of Christ, who appeared to him in the way. Paul was not disobedient to the holy vision; he was ready as ever to serve God, and, therefore, to join the persecuted followers of Christ. “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” What a dilemma he was in. There as a captain of a band he had been sent by the authorities to bring any who preached Christ, bound to Jerusalem, and now God had shown him that Jesus whom he persecuted was indeed the Messiah. What a position to be in! There was no vacillation with Paul, for all he needed was to see the truth and to know God's will, and his mind and heart were determined, and he at once began to witness that Jesus whom he had persecuted was indeed the Christ, through whom alone salvation was attainable.

What an example we have. He did not take long to count the cost. There could be nothing to weigh in the balance against what was right, what was truth. “Truth at any price,” should be the principle of every man and woman, irrespective of whom it would please or offend, or what it might cost. Paul was a man of such principle, and as soon as he was convinced that Jesus whom he had persecuted as an impostor was indeed the Christ, his energies were turned to support as strongly as he had previously opposed. Indeed, it would seem he felt much forgiven, and so he loved much and would seek, if possible, to make up for the damage he had done the cause.

Such a course we can understand from any honest, good human heart, but there was something deeper than this that came into Paul's life. He was at once ready to obey the will of Christ, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” The Lord did not explain such detail to the Apostle, for evidently it was good that he should suffer blindness for a day or two, during which time he could meditate upon the new aspect of things and count the cost, not just of standing up for what was right and true, which every one should do, but of yielding his whole heart and soul to God. The Lord used human instrumentality, a humble follower of Christ, who no doubt would have been one of the victims of Paul, had not the conversion taken place.

Ananias explained the Christian way, and Paul was ready to present himself a living sacrifice to God, to take up his cross and deny himself, to give up all his hopes and prospects of position and influence in Israel and join the cause of the despised Nazarene—to be dead with Christ.

When we read some of Paul's epistles in which he makes the Christian pathway so clear, and when we read of his life and how he demonstrated his teachings in his faithful zeal and sacrifice, so that he counted not his life dear unto him, one wonders how the millions of professing Christians can reconcile their easy going respectable religion with the contrast of his life, and his plain statements regarding the sacrifice involved in undertaking to be true followers of the Lamb. The usual thought is so different from what Jesus and Paul and the other Apostles taught; as though heaven is gained by a mere profession of Christ, or a simple act of faith, or by a confirmation service.

How necessary it is to have our pure minds stirred up along the lines of our consecration, and what it involves. In reading the history of the ancient Grecians, one is struck with the strict and thorough vow which the young men were required to make if they would be recognised as members of the State—I will never dishonour the profession of arms, nor save my life by a shameful flight. I will fight till my last breath for the religion and civil interests of the State in concert with other citizens or alone if needs be, etc." Here was a consecration to the State which involved one's life, if necessary, and the necessity very frequently arose and the vow was wonderfully carried out.

The Christian call requires the same spirit of sacrifice of oneself. No one is invited into Christ in any other way than this narrow way of sacrifice. There is no respectable easy way to heavenly citizenship. There is not one way for the rich and another for the poor. "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." —Matt. 10:38, 39. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." —Matt. 16:24.

How well the Apostle expressed the matter when he said, "For me to live is Christ." He had so much entered into the life of sacrifice and zealous service that he could say that, "If in this life only we have hope, then are we of all men most miserable." He had sacrificed name and fame, position and honor; and, wearied in the sufferings and experiences of foes without and false brethren within, he could hardly say whether he preferred to still live and serve the cause, or to die and rest in the sleep of death until the day of Christ, when the dead in Christ should rise first. His determination, however, was that Christ should be magnified in his body, whether it be by life or by death. For himself he would long to be at rest, and yet for the sake of the Church he was pleased to abide in the flesh. One thing he was decidedly desirous of, and that was for the day of the Lord's return, when the dead in Christ would be loosened from the tomb and be forever with the Lord.

Probably a good many of God's people as they get along in life and find that the "ties that bind them to a world like this" are becoming fewer and fewer, and many experiences are disappointing, trusted friends have failed, hopes we had have vanished, the work in hand seems different from what had been expected, and there seem, maybe, few, if any, who can sympathise with our hopes and aims. It would seem that a good many of the Lord's people reach some such condition and get almost like Elijah, who had been so valiant in God's service, and then, wearied and lonely, requested that he might die.

Paul had no flowery bed of ease to carry him to the paradise of God. His zeal brought him great hardships; shipwrecked, hungry, stoned and left for dead, beaten with forty stripes save one, and besides all his journeying and hazards, he had experiences among false brethren, and yet he felt the responsibility of all the Churches. No wonder he felt a longing to be at rest and waiting for that happy awakening at the presence of the Lord.

Yet he was beautifully submissive to the Lord's will, ready still to battle on and trust and wait and work. Earthly hopes had perished, his life was hid with Christ in God. If it be the Lord's will that I still remain, then it will not be for self that I shall live, it shall be for Christ. That is, his life was entirely devoted to God in Christ's service.

What a noble example we see in Paul of wholehearted self-sacrifice, thorough devotion to God, thorough -sinking of all earthly hopes, aims and ambitions. May we ask whether such was necessary for him but not necessary for us? We would not need to ask such a question if we had really properly gripped the Christian way.

It is no use our trying to find an easier way to the heavenly prize: "If any man will follow Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross." Sometimes we hear of people having self-denial weeks. That is that they will deny themselves little comforts, and even some things which are considered necessities. Is that what the Master meant by denying oneself? Oh, no, it is much more than that. It really means to deny that one's self has any rights, to deny one's own existence for oneself. It means that we made a covenant with God to be dead to self, and that henceforth our life should be lived for Him. We signified this in the water of baptism; it was a funeral of self, and a raising up to a new life, as a new creature, dead to human hopes and aims, alive as a spiritual being begotten of God's holy spirit, and so able to grasp heavenly truths and promises, and to rejoice in things not seen. This is what Paul means when he says, "I die, yet I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "For me to live is Christ."

Such is the Christian walk, and how far are we living up to it? How far are we allowing earthly interests of home, and business, of friends, and socialities, of pleasures and pastimes, to usurp our time and attention? How far are we living up to our consecration vow to the Lord?

We wonder if any can just feel that they have kept their vows fully, and are inclined to think that we all realise how much we have come short. The things of earth, especially the tender ties of human loves, of home and children and other relationships, are difficult to keep in their place. They come so tenderly, pleading for a little more attention. The loving heart longs to please, and, oh, how easy it is to forget that, "for me to live is Christ." All I have and all I am, I handed over to the Lord, and now only hold as a stewardship, so that it is not a matter whether I like to do so and so, to please even a loved one. it is: "What would Christ do? What would God have me to do?"

Such is the Christian way. The only way to the crown is by bearing the cross. If we do not like to bear the cross, then the crown will ne'er be won. This position is not new to us, but we are so apt to be affected by the influences about us this day that we need to be continually reminded and to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation.

There is, however, a joy in faithfully bearing the cross. It is the Adversary that would try to make us think contrariwise. Let us keep the end in view. Let us ever remember the Divine purpose for us, that God has chosen us to be members with Christ, members of His elect, and how He is overruling the circumstances of our lives so that the way of the cross may mould our characters and make us perfect. Let us try and note any little good effect in ourselves as a result of our trials or denials or zeal, and we shall count it all joy to be dead with Christ, to bear the cross and to despise the shame.

So we must bear the cross cheerfully. We must not try to make everybody know that we are bearing the cross. We can expect our brethren in Christ to appreciate it, but those of the world, good as they may be as men and women, cannot understand the position at all; therefore, all they need to know is that we have determined to be true Christians, and we are to try and prevent our sacrifices from affecting others. A wife -may be just as good and better a wife, and a husband a better husband. Mother, father, son or daughter, employer or employed can all meet the reasonable responsibilities of such relationships better than ever as

Christians, still doing all as for the Lord. Yet there must be a definite, firm stand against anything that the Lord would not do or allow, for "for me to live is Christ."

This is to be the rule of the Christian's life. not only in contact with our fellow-members in Christ, but in every affair of our lives in the daily contact with people of the world. We must remember that we are to do all things in the name of Christ, as stewards of God, not only in all honourable dealing, but we must manifest God's spirit, Christ's spirit in all patience, gentleness and consideration of others' interests and feelings. It is thus that we must let our light shine that others may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

All our words or preaching or Christian works or profession will count for nothing unless our lives accord. The most powerful witness for Christ and the truth will be our manner of life if we live the Christian life and manifest the Christian spirit.

It is surely a most important matter to continually keep in mind, for while it is so plain in the New Testament, it is easy to allow the day by day concerns to make us forget, that we are dead and our lives are hid with Christ in God.

What a splendid motto for life. It was Paul's motto; it is our motto if we are walking the same road as Paul. No earthly love can have precedence, our love to God and to Christ must be supreme. If we allow love to our dearest loved ones to intervene we shall not gain the prize of the high calling. We may deceive ourselves even in this respect, and fail to see that we are allowing some earthly love to influence us and interfere with our Christian privileges of the service of God and witnessing for the Truth, or our assembling together not only for our own building up in faith and hope, but to encourage and help others in the way. Each member in the body of Christ must do its part to edify the body. We have such a responsibility which we cannot shirk and be true to our consecration. "For me to live is Christ."

The Christian life is a practical life, as the Christian faith is logical and reasonable. Christ left us an example that we should walk as He walked, in His steps. "He who was rich yet for our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich." Is that the way that He is our example? Is that the life we must live as His followers? Surely it is, "because He hath laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Only by walking the same way in the same spirit, learning the same lessons of obedience and developing the same loving, zealous, perfect character can we hope to share the same reward. So, then, as Christians, we are consecrated to be dead with Christ. "I died, yet I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," "For me to live is Christ."

The question may arise, Is it not right that we love our loved ones who are members in Christ more than other members in Christ? We are reminded of our Lord's statement, "My mother and my brethren are those who do the will of my Father in heaven." We must love as Christ loves. Does Christ love our son or daughter, or father or mother, more than some other member's son, daughter, father or mother? No, we are all one in Christ Jesus. If we are dead to all human things and risen with Christ, "our lives are hid with Christ in God. If it is that "for me to live is Christ," then we will try to view matters from God's viewpoint, from the same aspect as our Lord. Probably all know these things, only we forget, and earthly loves are apt to creep in and hinder our way. They must be kept in their proper place. Our love must be to God and Christ supremely.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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To Serve, Not to be Served.

“The *SON* of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”—Matt. 20:28.

THE Master was impressing upon His hearers the difference between Himself and other great kings. He had come to be King of Israel, in fulfilment of Scripture prophecy. Unlike earthly rulers, He was not seeking how much He could get out of the people, but how much He could do for the people. He was not selfish. He was not trying to see how little He could serve and how much others could serve Him; but on the contrary, how little others might do for Him and how much He could do for others. And this is His expectation in respect of His followers. He and His disciples, called with a Heavenly Calling, called to a Heavenly Kingdom, are not called to be selfish or to appropriate honours to themselves for their own gratification; but they are called to service—especially to the service of the people of God. This is the true meaning of the word minister; namely, one who serves.

It is especially appropriate that all who are followers of the Lord Jesus should remember that we have each been called to service; and those who are ministering in spiritual things, those who are especially known by the name of “minister”, should bear in mind that theirs is an office which calls for service, not to themselves, but to others; and that they have consecrated their lives thus to serve. Our Lord entered upon His ministry at His consecration. Of His life previous to His baptism at Jordan, the Scriptures say very little, so that the more attention may be attracted to His three and a half years of ministry in the Truth, when He was laying down His life for others—for His friends and also for His foes.

The same is true of all His followers. Our ministry begins at the time of our consecration. We are not authorized to minister, to serve, in holy things until we have entered upon the way which the Lord has pointed out to us. We are not today, however, obliged to wait until we have reached the age of thirty before we begin our ministry; but at as early an age as we can comprehend what we are engaging to perform, we may give our lives to the Lord and to the service of Truth and of the brethren. This is because we are not under the Law covenant.—Rom. 3:19.

Our Lord speaks of Himself as the Son of Man, who came to “minister, and to give His life a Ransom for many”.

He was indeed the Son of God, even while He was the Son of Man. The perfect man Adam, before his fall into sin, was a son of God. Our Lord in calling Himself the Son of Man was emphasizing the fact that He was no longer on the spirit plane, but on the human plane. He came to earth for a specific purpose—as He explained, to minister, to serve. He could not have done the necessary service for man as a spirit being. The requirement was that He should become a man in order to ransom mankind. He could ransom man only by becoming man. He could purchase life for the perfect Adam and the race who lost life in him only by becoming a perfect man.

“An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man’s life for a man’s life”, was the demand of the Divine Law. Adam had sinned, and must be redeemed before he could be restored, either physically, mentally, or morally, or could be returned to God’s favour. Jesus had come to make possible this restoration. His life was devoted to the service of others, and He completed this great service on the cross. Throughout His earthly sojourn He gave us a noble example of the proper life of those who would be followers in His footsteps.

Many misunderstand the Bible and think that now is the time to save the world. Hence they are spending all their time and energies to comfort and uplift humanity. They are indeed engaged in laudable efforts; for every good work or effort is to be commended. But to those who are rightly informed respecting the

Divine Plan there is another, a far higher work, to be done now. The work of God in the present Age has not been the reformation of the world, but the development of the New Creation. This work is not yet fully completed. If we would work the work of God, our works must relate to the New Creation pre-eminently. We may do good unto all men as we have opportunity, as the Apostle says, but especially are we to serve the Household of Faith.

Jesus was in line for this work of ministry. Although there were no New Creatures as yet, while He was here in the flesh, His work was to prepare for these New Creatures. His work was the gathering out of some who would be faithful footstep followers of Himself, and the laying down of His life on their behalf and on behalf of the whole world.

In the context we note the fact that two of Jesus' disciples were especially desirous at that time of sitting upon the Throne with the Master in His Kingdom, one upon His right and the other upon His left. Jesus did not condemn them for this desire, but pointed out to them how difficult were the conditions, and asked them whether they were able to comply with these conditions. They replied, "We are able." They were willing, at least. That their answer was pleasing to Jesus was manifested by His words, "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup, and be baptized with My baptism." They asked for places in the Kingdom very near to Him. Jesus informed them that He was not Himself able to give them such places—that the places would not be given according to favour, but according to justice; and that the Father would dispense these.

The place that we occupy in the Kingdom will depend much upon the extent to which we become ministers, or servants. And if we simply try to get as much as possible out of others and to give as little as possible, we shall not be such characters as the Lord is seeking for rulership in the Kingdom; in fact, we would not gain the Kingdom at all. He is seeking a very choice class. This class will all be servants, willing and glad to serve, esteeming it a great privilege to lay down their lives in the service of the brethren, to the extent of their ability and opportunity; for the service of the brethren is the service of God, to whom they have rendered themselves in consecration, to whom they have professed to devote their lives.

It takes great love

"It takes great love to stir a human heart
To live beyond the others; and apart;
A love that is not shallow—is not small;
Is not for one or two, but for them all.

Love that can wound love, for its highest need;
Love that can leave love, though the heart may bleed;
Love that can lose love, family and friend,
Yet steadfastly live, loving to the end.

A 'love that asks no answer, that can live,
Moved by one burning, deathless force—to give!
Love, strength and courage ; courage, strength and love—
The heroes of all times are built thereof."

A Good Point.

Giving an address, an electrical engineer dwelt at some length on the difference between a cell and a dynamo, explaining that the cellular battery generated electricity, whilst the dynamo only produced it when it was first driven by some other force. He went on to point out that there was a similar difference in people. Some generated their own enthusiasm, and others only emitted it under a sufficiently strong external stimulus.

What we want in Christian work is not so much people who get very excited and warmed up by the contagious enthusiasm of a great gathering and fervid oratory, but people who can generate enthusiasm from inner resources of their own. We hear a great deal about people who are dynamic forces, but a number of small cells is much better for Christian purposes. The people who represent them are those whose efforts tell most. —Cutting.

Victory.

When I really am contented
That my wish be set aside,
When I cease from selfish longing,
When I triumph over pride,
When I'm willing, really willing
To be nothing, as they sing,
But a broken, empty vessel
In the service of the King ;
That is victory.

When I calmly take unkindness,
And as meekly bear a sneer,
When I'm willing to relinquish
All that earth is holding dear,
When the falseness of some dear one
Fails to waken in my heart
Any bitter, hard resentment,
Or to wing an angry dart ;
That is victory.

When I cease to long for earth's love,
Am content to be unknown,
When I smile when friends neglect me,
Happy in His love alone,
When I lose myself in Jesus,
And surroundings cease to be
With their little jars and discords
Able to discourage me;
That is victory.

Lord, I cannot hope to triumph
Over every form of sin,
And to live but for Thy glory
While my own will reigns within,
So I bring my will to Thee, Lord,
Rule Thou me in all Thy ways,
And the glory shall be Thine, Lord,
And the honour and the praise;
This is victory.

Author unknown

Perth Meetings.

Friends in Western 'Australia are advised of a new address for the regular Sunday "meetings at 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m., namely-9 Howard Street, Perth.

He that of greatest works is finisher,
Oft does them by the weakest minister.
Great souls snatch vigour from the stormy air,
While weaker natures suffer and despair.

Girding Up the Loins of Your Mind.

(Convention Address)

SPEAKING generally, the mind is that which represents the intelligence of a person. It is through the mind that our opinions are formed concerning persons and things; it is the mind that gives the driving force to all our actions. If a man is not doing a thing well we often hear the expression: His heart is not in his work, or his mind is not on it. If we see a person uncertain about any task we sometimes say: He doesn't know his own mind. We cannot read the mind of another person, though often it is revealed to a considerable extent by words and actions. There is a saying that a fool is known by his much speaking, and we know that we are seldom favorably impressed by a person who has much to say. We think of another old saying: Actions speak louder than words, and when a person has a mind to do anything he generally does not talk much about it; he simply gets on with the job—he does things. That was why Nehemiah got the walls of Jerusalem built under opposition and difficulty, for as chapter 4:6 says —"The people had a mind to work."

So we might say that the mind is the controller of all our actions; if it should be impaired or weakened in any way the actions become correspondingly uncertain, and if it should completely break down a person becomes incapable of responsible action.

We see, then, that the mind is a great power or driving force within a person, and it is capable of impelling one along ways of both good and evil. So it needs to be trained, and through training, the mind can reach great heights, even in the natural world. Of many a notable man we have heard it said: He was a man of great and noble mind, implying that he accomplished great things. On the contrary, we hear it said of those whose way of life is not inspiring: He is a man of small mind.

When Peter speaks about "Girding up the loins of the mind," we can be sure that he is not thinking of the natural mind, but of the Christian's mind, and concerning spiritual things. But first, let us see why he uses such an expression; what he means by it. To understand, we need to be acquainted with the custom of dress in those days. We are told that the Jews wore two principal garments, an interior and an exterior. The interior was sometimes called a "coat"; it encircled the whole body and extended to the knees. Over this was worn an outer garment, often alluded to as a cloak or mantle. They were in the nature of loose, flowing robes, and if the person had to perform certain tasks, or run, or fight, they tended -very much to get in the way and interfere with free movement. Therefore, they additionally wore a girdle which to us would appear as a kind of glorified belt. With this they could bind their clothes quickly to them, and we are told that sometimes they tucked up the loose ends of the flowing robes with the aid of this girdle. So, when girding their garments to their loins it always suggested that they were busy in some task, or were preparing to run, as in a race, or preparing to give battle.

From this we see what Peter meant when he exhorted Christians to gird up the loins of their minds. In brief, it means to have our minds in preparation to discharge our duties, alive to our privileges of service, and ready to endure any trials that might prove to be our lot. In the words of another: "To gird up the loins of the mind became a significant figurative expression, denoting readiness for service, activity, labour and watchfulness."

There are many things in the natural world upon which men set their minds, and they do not need

exhortation to gird them up, for they are always vigilant. If a man purposes to make money, whether he proves successful or not, we can be sure his mind will be well girded to lose no opportunity that 'night present itself. If a man becomes obsessed with a certain sport his mind will be constantly girded up along that line. He will practise it and talk about it all day; the subject never becomes dull or uninteresting to him.

But in the realm of spiritual things with which Peter was concerned, it is different. We have the things of great treasure in an earthen vessel, and it is easy to become lax in keeping our minds or affections set on heavenly things, the things above.

Peter writes in his next epistle (2 Pet. 3:1) of endeavours he made to "stir up" their pure or sincere minds, and no doubt the thought is closely related to that of our text, "girding up the loins of our minds." Weymouth's rendering of our text is—"Therefore, prepare your minds, and fix your hopes calmly and unfalteringly upon the boon that is soon to be yours at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The Diaglott is slightly different—"Therefore having girded up the loins of your mind, and being vigilant, do you hope perfectly for the gift to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Both thoughts seem good. We must prepare our minds, gird them up, and having done so, remain vigilant—we must not relax into the former state, as Peter points out in the next verse; "As obedient children not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts etc. And through all we must maintain our hope, that God will ultimately, in His own time, release us from all strain and grant us that perfect rest that remains for the people of God, even though we now enjoy a goodly measure of rest; for in our trial time (our period of probation for the heavenly kingdom) we find that Isaiah's words are true—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isa. 26:3)

Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians (chapter 4:23), exhorts those who were endeavouring to keep off the old man, to be renewed in the spirit of their mind; according to Weymouth—"get yourselves renewed in the temper of your minds and clothe yourselves with that new and better self which has been created to resemble God in the righteousness and holiness of the truth." We all want to do that do we not, but we know of another power in our imperfect bodies that wars against our better mind and takes us captive, oh, how often. How we rejoice for the provision made for that—"There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk after the spirit"; those who keep the loins of their minds girded to keep off more and more the ignoble and hateful works that are sponsored by a fleshly mind. The fleshly and the spiritual mind will not combine, though some 'professing Christians seem deluded in thinking that they will. We must love the Lord with all our heart and soul and mind; a double minded man is unstable in all his ways. (James 1:8).

In Paul's letter to the Philippians we are counselled to "let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus." While we see Jesus to have had a meek and humble spirit or mind, we see that it was a well balanced mind. He quickly perceived the deceptive suggestions of Satan to ease His own position in a time of severe trial after the fasting in the wilderness, and promptly repelled them, because He wanted only God's will done. His mind was so intent in doing His Father's will that when His disciples reminded Him on one occasion of it being time to dine, He was apparently oblivious to any need of the physical body and said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work." When Peter tried to dissuade Him on another occasion from going to a place of danger Jesus called him a Satan, or opposer, who savored only the things that be of man—the fleshly or natural mind of self-preservation.

Jesus' mind was truly great; He went about doing good, and always noticed the one in need of sympathy and help. He could spare a minute to tend the sick, and ever noticed the wide disparity between those who are pictured by the Pharisee, and the publican praying, and sought to comfort and help the one who was consciously sin-burdened. Amongst those who gave their gifts He discerned the heart or mind condition—the one who had no worldly possessions to give, only two mites, gave more than they all.

How utterly different to the fleshly mind that appreciates most he who can give the largest amount.

Jesus sought not place nor power save as it should please His father in heaven to grant it unto Him. He did not meditate a usurpation to be equal with God, but was ready to take the lowest place, if in that way God's will would be worked out for the largest blessing to all. He could bide God's time—let this mind be in you.

Paul saw things the same way. In his epistle to the Romans (chapter 11), as he explained the work of various dispensations and the manner in which natural Israel lost the principal blessings through unbelief, and were yet to learn through that experience and in due time be reconciled and entrusted with the responsibility of proclaiming the glad tidings to other nations in the new day, he (Paul) was lost in the wonder and wisdom of it all. "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Who hath known the mind of the Lord?"

The Apostle uses the same expression in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 2:16). "Who hath known the mind of the Lord that he could instruct him. But we have the mind of Christ." And that briefly is summed up in Jesus' own words—"Even so, Father, not my will but thine be done; for so it seemed good in thy sight." The way of the Father was accepted without question as being the best way. "He knoweth the way that I take." And all of Christ's followers are to have the same mind—"Fulfil ye my joy . . . that ye be of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2) ; "with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel"; "that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God" (Phil. 1:27; Rom. 15:6). The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. If the mind is right, the mouth will speak right.

All religion that fails to cleanse or purify the mind and bridle the tongue is vain. (James 1:26.) But to the defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure, for even their mind and conscience is defiled. (Tit. 1:15.)

Paul, when exhorting oneness of mind amongst the Philippian Christians (chapter 1:27, 28), said, "be not terrified by your adversaries." Weymouth puts it, "Never for a moment quail before your antagonists." Tremendous are the oppositions that would frustrate our good endeavours to be faithful to the truth, but "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." It is necessary to understand something of the philosophy as to why we suffer with Jesus now, or we would become wearied and faint in our minds to the point where we would no longer be able to resist the tempter's snares. So, we "look unto Jesus and consider him," (Heb. 12:2, 3), and this helps greatly.

Perhaps there has been no time like the present when it has been more fitting to exhort Christians to keep the loins of their minds girded up. Pressure upon people today is so great that we discern many unbalanced minds. Never before have people enjoyed such comforts and luxuries, and never before have they been so restless, discontented and unhappy. Why? Fear. Whether they will admit it or not, fear of the future is at the bottom of all the unrest. Truly we are in the day when "men's hearts are failing them for fear for the things that are coming on the earth." But the Lord hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Tim. 1:7.) Is it not something for which to be very thankful that we can stand on the sea of glass in these distressing times and see through to the other side of the trouble? The world grows worse and worse and all that men had fondly hoped would materialize into a golden age, through their efforts, is rapidly being consumed, but, we are privileged to "stand still and see the salvation of our God."

Yet, it is a time of great danger for us too, and we need to earnestly watch and pray that we might be counted worthy "to escape all those things which are coming to pass and to stand before the Son of man." He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. Who shall be able to stand. The testings and siftings amongst the Lord's people we are led to believe will be very severe. Though all be removed or turned away from us, can we stand alone? Are we living so close to the Lord that we can lean wholly upon Him?

Can we continue to serve the Lord's people as we might be privileged, even though our efforts seem apparently little appreciated. Paul's labors of love were not always appreciated—the more abundantly he loved and served, the less he was loved. (2 Cor. 12:15.) He must have had the loins of his mind well girded up, to continue so faithfully as he did. Think of him, so early in his ministry, beaten with many stripes and cast into prison, his feet fast in stocks. What a picture of misery we might imagine; but no! He prayed and gave thanks to God, and sang songs.

Let us, then, be renewed in the spirit of our minds daily, and seek grace to keep our affections on the things above. In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let our requests be made known unto God and His peace which passes understanding will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6, 7.) "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

My God I thank Thee

My God I thank Thee, who hast made the earth so bright,
So full of splendour and of joy, beauty and light ;
So many glorious things are here, noble and right.
I thank Thee, too, that (Thou hast made joy to abound;

So many gentle thoughts and deeds circling us round;
That in the darkest spot of earth some love is found.
I thank Thee more that all my joy is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours, that thorns remain;

So that earth's bliss may be my guide, and not my chain.
For Thou who knowest, Lord, how soon our weak heart clings,
Hast given us joys, tender and true, yet all with wings,
So that we see, gleaming on high, Diviner things.

I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast kept the best in store:
I have enough, yet not too much, to long for more;
A yearning for a deeper peace not known before.
I thank Thee, Lord, that here our souls though amply blest,

Can never find, although they seek, a perfect rest—
Nor ever shall, until they lean on Jesus' breast.

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They Reigned a Thousand Years.

IT has been suggested that a short article in these columns on the reign of Christ and His church, in contrast with the harvest period of the Gospel Age when the faithful members are gathered to the heavenly inheritance, would be of general benefit at this time. A short quotation from an able writer on the Scriptures is as follows:—"Messiah's Kingdom repeatedly referred to throughout the Old Testament was the centre of all Jewish hopes. But the fact that it will last a thousand years was not mentioned; it was merely Messiah's Day. The holy spirit by the Apostle Peter first declared, 'A day with the Lord is as a thousand years.' The Apostle Paul did not mention the thousand years, but merely proclaimed Messiah's Kingdom, and that He would reign victoriously until He shall have put down all opposition to God's will. (1 Cor. 15:25.) It is in the book of Revelation that we have the clear statements that Messiah will reign for a thousand years; that His faithful Bride will reign with Him a Royal Priesthood'; that during that thousand years Satan will be bound and the whole world will be granted a judgment or trial, the result of which will be life-eternal or death-eternal."

The above statement that "Messiah will reign for a thousand years, and that His faithful Bride will reign with Him," is important and fully attested in such Scriptures as Revelation 20:4,— "And they (faithful overcomers) lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"; also in 2 Tim. 2:11, 12 and Rom. 8:17,— "For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him . . . If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint- heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Also in Rev. 3:21 we read, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne."

It will be noted that the reference to the faithful Bride reigning with Christ points to the time when there really will be a Bride—at the close of the harvest of this Gospel Age when "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." (See Rev. 19:6-8.) It seems very clear, then, that the reign of Christ could not commence until the full gathering in of the members of His Body, and this Home-gathering or harvest of the faithful church takes place during "the days of the Son of Man"—the days of His presence (Matt. 24:31, 37-42)*—and also described by the prophet as "the day of his preparation." (Nahum 2:3, 4.)

The above thought respecting the Bride of Christ is clearly presented in Vol. 3 of Scripture Studies, page 230, as follows:—"Then 'God will help her, at the dawning of (her) morning' (Psa. 46:5, Leeser's translation)—not the morning which is to dawn on the world at the brightness of her rising with her Lord

as the sun of righteousness, but at the dawning of her morning, in which she is to be changed to the nature and likeness of her Lord. Her morning is to precede the Millennial morning.”

It is of much interest to students of God’s Word to find that our Lord, by His own words and through the Apostles, clearly presented the truth that His second advent would be accomplished in progressive stages. The Greek word “parousia”, meaning presence, is used in respect of the earliest stage of the second advent, while the words “epiphania”, meaning bright shining or manifestation, and “apokalupsis”, meaning revelation, uncovering, unveiling (as of a thing previously present but hidden), relate to the same advent later;—not that epiphania and apokalupsis relate to another or a third advent, but merely to a later feature of the second advent.

A full list of the Scriptures where the word “parousia” is found, is given in the booklet “The Manner of Christ’s Return and Appearing”, and the passages where the words “epiphania” and apokalupsis” are used are also enlightening, especially in relation to the subject of the reign of Christ and His church.

The Greek word “epiphania”, rendered “appearing” and “brightness” occurs in five Scriptures, and we quote as an example 2 Tim. 4:1— “I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his ‘appearing’ and his kingdom.” It will be noted that the “quick” (the saints—Eph. 2:1), are judged at the “epiphania”, while the “dead” (the world of mankind) are judged at the time of His Kingdom—following the exaltation of the Bride class, at which time “the saints shall judge the world” with Christ (I Cor. 6:2), reigning with Him in Kingdom power and glory,

Another passage in which the word “epiphania” is used is Tit. 2:13—”Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious ‘appearing’ of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” This shows that while the Apostle and the Lord’s people generally earnestly desired the second advent of Christ, it is the epiphania stage of the Lord’s presence that would complete their “blessed hope”—the union with Christ of the full number of the Bride of the Lamb. The three other passages in which “epiphania” appears are—1 Tim. 6:14, 15; 2 Tim. 4:8 and 2 Thes. 2:8.

The Greek word “apokalupsis”, meaning uncovering or unveiling, is rendered revealed, revelation, appearing, coming and manifestation in various Scriptures. The name of the last book of the Bible is from the same root— Apocalypse or Revelation. As an example of the use of this word we quote Rom. 8:19—”For the earnest expectation of the creature (mankind) waiteth for the ‘manifestation’ (apocalypsis-revealing) of the sons of God (the Church).” It will be the manifesting or revealing to the world of mankind that the sons of God, the Church, are exalted and reigning with Christ that will fulfil the earnest expectations or desires of all races, which at the present time they are unable to accomplish by their own imperfect and selfish governments. This manifestation of the “new heavens” (2 Pet. 3:13) cannot take place, of course, until the Bride of Christ is complete, and following the great leveling process which will thoroughly humble mankind, as expressed by the prophet—”For thus saith the Lord of hosts . . . I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.” (Haggai 2:6,7.)

The passage in Isa. 52:7 also refers to the Lord’s reign. The apostle Paul in Rom. 10:15 applies the main part of this verse to the Gospel Age—”How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” Yes, indeed, how beautiful, what a privilege to run with the Lord’s message during this Gospel Age, including the harvest; and will it not also be “How beautiful are the feet of them that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace” when the Kingdom is established? Surely it will, and this statement in Isa. 52:7 seems to refer to that very time, when the ancient prophets, as princes in all the earth, will proclaim the message of good tidings; they will indeed publish peace, and declare unto Zion, natural Israel, “Thy God reigneth” and eventually to whosoever will then own the Lord as their God. The following verses in Isa. 52 are in agreement. Verse 10 reads—”The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

It would seem clearly established from God's Word that during the harvest of this Gospel Age, during the gathering in of the first fruits unto God (James 1:18), our Lord is still the sacrificing High Priest, while being present as the Chief Reaper of the harvest. (Rev. 14:13-16.) However, with the completion of the "fulness from the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25), and the passing of the present "heavens and earth" (2 Pet. 3:10), the time will be due for the reign of Christ and His Church to commence—"and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ' "

(Further information respecting the reign of Christ and His Church, as revealed in the tabernacle types, is contained in the "Peoples Paper" of October, 1951. The articles "The Offerings for sin," and "Harvest, Winter, Sabbath," take up this subject in some detail. Copies of this "Peoples Paper" are gladly supplied upon request.)

Practical Prayer.

Two little girls were hurrying in the direction of their school. As they passed the town clock they noticed that it lacked only two minutes of nine, and they still had quite a distance to go.

"We shall be late," the smaller girl said anxiously. Let's kneel down right here and ask God to help us get there in time."

"No," said the older girl, quickening her pace, "let's run our best and pray as we run."

"Ask and ye shall receive" does not mean that you shall request God to help you attain some coveted goal, then sit with folded hands until your' prayer is miraculously granted.

"Heaven helps those who help themselves."

Nothing worth while is accomplished without effort; and prayer and effort combined will bring about a realisation of your dearest hopes and desires - Clipping.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

The General Work of the Institute.

ANOTHER year's work of the Berean Bible Institute has been completed, and looking back over the past twelve months our first thoughts are of gratitude and praise to our Heavenly Father for His blessings and over-ruling providence in connection with the efforts in serving His cause of truth together with a number of brethren who have voluntarily and lovingly cooperated and to whom sincere appreciation is also expressed at this time. It is lovely to feel assured that all the assistance by our brethren in the use of various talents possessed has 'been cheerfully rendered to the Lord Himself. There is no higher honour on this earth than to be invited of the Lord to serve His cause of truth—of "holding forth the word of life," or assisting others to do so. The words of our Lord at the first advent seem also most applicable now, during the harvest of this Gospel Age—"I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour; other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (John 4:38, 36.)

Through the production of our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom," now in its 35th year of publication, regular contact is provided with a goodly number of brethren and friends throughout this land and other countries overseas. Appreciation of the contents of the "Paper" is continually being expressed, especially by those who are rejoicing in the harvest truths which are truly the means; by the Lord's spirit, of deepening and maturing the spiritual life of all followers of the Master. To those brethren who have assisted with contributions to the columns of the "Peoples Paper" sincere appreciation is expressed, and other friends are invited to forward along any articles which they feel would be helpful for publication.

Greatly increased costs of printing have been met throughout the year, and it will be seen by the General Tract Fund that a deficiency in the production costs of "Peoples Paper" has again been covered from the General Fund, but as mentioned last year, as quantities of the "Paper" are provided free to those interested in spiritual things, it is felt that this expense on the General Fund is wisely and well spent in the service of the truth. The assistance of some of our friends in checking proofs, and folding, wrapping and despatching of the papers month after month is of great service and much appreciated. Additional subscriptions to "Peoples Paper" are welcomed and our brethren who assist in this way are doing good work; sample copies of the "Paper" are gladly provided free to all who can use them to advantage where there may be ears to hear the glad message of the Kingdom.

Considerable quantities of books and booklets have been despatched to our brethren and interested friends throughout the year. Apart from the witnessing of the glad tidings of the kingdom by means of the radio (reference to which is made separately in this issue of the "Peoples Paper") various ways of preaching the Word have been undertaken and in which loyal servants of the Lord delight to engage. Supplies of tracts and Kingdom Cards have been provided for distribution by those who are active in commending to others the glad message that has been such a blessing to themselves; especially are these tracts and cards useful outside the range of the message over the air, and other friends are invited to keep a supply on hand for judicial use, as they seek to serve "instant in season, out of season." The Consolation Cards, for use amongst the bereaved, have also been used to good advantage throughout the past year. It is surely a privilege to be able to comfort those who mourn in bereavement, as well as those who mourn in Zion, and all who have the spirit of the Lord upon them will be found alert and active in this ministry of comfort. These Consolation Cards, as well as the tracts and Kingdom Cards, are supplied free to all who wish to co-operate in this work, as unto the Lord.

A series of public lectures were held throughout the year on subjects which appealed more than usual to thinking people, and the average attendances were encouraging. As a result, a number of new friends are

continuing in appreciation of the truth and reading the literature with interest. The Lord knows those who are worthy of receiving the truth fully, that they may be free indeed in Him, and we are glad that He will give the increase in the hearts of all who are "Israelites indeed" in this harvest time. What a favour it is to be used of the Lord of the Harvest in any way, and our brethren in other centers should feel that any and all efforts to communicate the Lord's truths to others should not be neglected while the opportunities are still with us. These co-operative efforts of the brethren are often so blessed of the Lord that it is evident that He is rewarding the zeal and earnestness of His people, and they are thus promoting their own welfare by the efforts on behalf of others.

The General Tract Fund reveals the financial part of the work (excluding the radio) and all the assistance thus voluntarily contributed represents much love and sacrifice on the part of those who feel led to use their talents in this way, as unto the Lord. The expenses covered are those which it is felt would have the Lord's approval, and it will be seen that a credit of over £ 8 is carried forward in the General Fund for the work ahead.

Our brethren and friends generally no doubt realise that apart from the Lord's guidance and blessing any work would be in vain, and apart from earnest prayer and waiting on the Lord no one is fitted to serve in holy things. Would our dear brethren join with us in prayer for the Lord's blessing upon His people, and the work undertaken in spirit and truth, that His cause may prosper in the way and to the degree well pleasing in His sight in the remaining days of this harvest time. That we are living in momentous times is very evident; the dark clouds of trouble encircle the globe, and another great spasm in earth's travail cannot long be delayed. However, the glad morning of the Kingdom succeeds the dark night, and it is to this glorious time that all the Lord's people look forward, rejoicing in the fact that by proving faithful in the little things of the present, they shall then be associated with Christ in the great things of the future, in Kingdom glory, by His grace. It is to these faithful servants that Paul's words apply—"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. 6:10.)

GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/51 . . .		131	5	1
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„ Donations		£460	6	1
	“Peoples			
By Free Tracts and Deficiency		£87	9	1
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Extra Printing Paper		31	19	0
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Hall Rents, Advertising . . General Expenses	190 0	0		
(Office, etc.) Towards Personal and House		37	13	10
Expenses Postage. . . .		13	8	0
		8	9	3
Pilgrim Work, Sundries		7	12	0
		5	10	0
Assistance to Friends		8	14	6
		£460	6	1
Free Books and Booklets				
Consolation Cards				
Credit Balance 1/5/52 ..				

The Radio Work.

IT is a pleasure to report another year of encouragement with the witness of the truth by means of the radio, and it is evident that the Lord's blessing has gone with the message, giving light and hope to many over a wide area. We thank the Lord for His blessings bestowed on these efforts also, and consider it a great privilege to be granted this opportunity of announcing the glad tidings of the Kingdom in this way, in these days,

This particular feature of the work is now well into the 10th year, and of the great number of responses received from this witness it is a joy that a number have made the truth their own, by the Lord's grace. Radio stations 3GL Geelong and 2KY Sydney have continued with our sessions in Victoria and N. S. Wales, and the continued interest in the messages over these two stations has been encouraging. Not only new friends, but our brethren also find these broadcasts refreshing. The truth in its simple form never grows old, but is ever fresh and stimulating to all sincere children of God. If ever one feels that he or she has advanced beyond the plain, simple truths of the Plan of God, in the sense that these are considered out-of-date, from that time such an one may mark their retrogression in the Christian way, for all who gain a true appreciation of the deep things of God must surely also hold very dearly the simpler truths of the Gospel.

The friends in Perth have also continued with the broadcasts over 6KY throughout the year past and there are apparently some appreciative listeners there also, though the numbers are fewer. Commencing on June 8th last these Frank and Ernest Dialogues began for the first time in Brisbane, Queensland, over 4KQ at 9 a.m. Quite a number of good responses came from the June sessions in that area, and there are hopes of much good being done amongst these sincere listeners. As with all the Lord's work, His spirit only can

give the increase to the labours of His servants.

Considerable quantities of the printed Dialogues are distributed free, being provided from the Radio Fund, and in quite a number of cases the first interest has been through reading these copies. Advertising slips for making the sessions known have been used also, and friends who feel a desire to assist others to hear the message over the air should apply for these. Advertising in any appropriate way is always in order, and those who are active in commending the radio sessions to others will find that their efforts are certainly not in vain.

On the financial side of this work there has been marked increases in radio fees, as in all other commercial activities. Our friends will realise, of course, that the time secured on the stations is on a commercial basis, and the fact that some stations pay double time for their operators for Sunday work adds to our costs. However, the voluntary contributions to the Radio Fund, in addition to the General Fund, representing much sacrifice of the good things of the present time, have been most encouraging, and by the Lord's overruling providence have enabled this work to continue. With all expenses met over the year past the credit of over £ 64 is in hand towards the work of broadcasting the truth in the new year. Once again it is requested that the brethren join in prayer for God's continued blessing upon His message over the air, that it may find those who are really hungering and thirsting for the comfort which His truth alone can give. The words of our Lord, applicable to Himself at the first advent, seem also most appropriate to His followers today.—"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."—John 9:4.

RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/5111120	11
„, Donations	4350	6
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By Radio 3GL Geelong, 2KY Sydney ..	£397 4	6
„, Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 6KY ..	46 6	0
Printing Quantities of Dialogues . .	25 10	0
„, Freight, Postage, etc	8 10	8
„, Travel and Sundries . .	5 5	0
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How to Proclaim the Truth.

“Speaking the Truth in love . . . grow up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.”—Eph. 4:15.

THE truth is always to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak anything but the truth. The great Apostle declared that he counted all things but loss and dross that he might win Christ and “be found in Him”—that he might gain a place in the everlasting Kingdom of Messiah. So then the speaking of the truth is quite essential to the life of a Christian. The truth of God’s Word is to be enshrined above all else in the heart of a child of God, and he should esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it.

Our power of speech of communicating our thoughts to others is the greatest power we possess—the most far-reaching. It is a potent factor for good or evil, for either truth or error. The opportunity to confess Christ before men either publicly or privately is a great privilege. In order to be pleasing to the Lord and to be used effectively, we must speak the truth in love. When one has just entered the family of God, less might be expected of him than of one who has been longer therein. We, as God’s dear children, are to grow up into the likeness of our dear Elder Brother, our Pattern, our Head. We are to grow up into Him in all things, and recognise that He is the Head of the Church, that if we are to be members of His body in glory we must be developed. We are to bear the fruitage of the holy spirit that we may be qualified to share in the future that glorious kingdom which is to bless the world.

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship and show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of the darkness into His marvellous light. And in telling the message of His grace we shall grow spiritually. “He that watereth shall himself also be watered.” As we proclaim the truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart, we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves. “There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth and it tendeth to poverty,” to leanness of soul. As we give out to others our own store of blessing is increased. We are to develop day by day this quality of love. Why is this? Because it will make us like God, and that is one thing to be desired, the one thing necessary.

Our God has other glorious attributes besides Love, but this attribute is the especially predominating, overruling quality of His character. God’s justice co-operates with His love, and His wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that His love would not approve. So as we grow, this quality of love should be more manifest. We are to see that our words are loving, kind and gentle. We are to curb any tendency to self-glorification in telling of God’s great plan to others. Let us keep out of sight that the beauty of the truth may be seen. Our manner of presenting the truth has much to do with its effectiveness. Speaking the truth in love, we shall not only be doing much more for others, but the message will also be more impressed upon our own minds.

Whoever appreciates these things of God, and then speaks forth in love and sincerity will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind, and the truth will become clearer and sweeter. In helping others he will be helping himself. Thus the various features of the plan of God become more firmly engraved on his mind. It is God’s plan, not ours, therefore we should try to present it in meekness, gentleness, brotherly kindness and love.

Take my life and may it be
Lord, acceptable to Thee ;
Take my will and make it Thine
It shall be no longer mine ;
Take myself—I wish to be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

The Blessed Life

(Matt. 5:1-16.)

IN this lesson our Lord, the Great Teacher, presents to our minds the importance of attaining to the perfect character or disposition which we all must attain in heart and mind, in order to be counted worthy to be associated with Him in His Kingdom.

We see what an important matter this is. Our Lord made it the topic of one of His principal discourses. It behoves us as disciples, learners of Christ, to study this matter very carefully, and seek to trace out the lessons, so that we may imbibe them into the very fabric of our being.

In order to present the perfect character the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides it into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part.

The first character-picture which our Lord presents may be regarded, in some respects at least, as most important. It is humility. "Blessed are the poor in spirit (the humble-minded), for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." Humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

The Kingdom is "theirs", in 'the sense that it is possible for this Class to accept the terms and to attain to the honours and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind—the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited—are hindered from any possibility of attaining the Kingdom so long as they remain in a haughty, proud condition of heart. We must be of humble mind and teachable spirit in order to receive the wisdom that cometh from above. (See Matt. 18:1-4; Luke 22:24-27; Matt. 23:10-12; Rom. 12:3; Phil. 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 5:5-6.)

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Here the thought seems to be, Blessed are ye that mourn now; to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happyfying, who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family is passing—sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying. Blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions.

Those who are sympathetic of heart toward others, are the ones who are in the proper heart condition to be comforted of the Lord through His Word. (2 Cor. 1:3-7.) Just as we can cultivate humility of mind, so we can cultivate also -the sympathetic spirit. We should think frequently of the trials and difficulties of others, and enter into these as though they were our own. Let us cultivate this disposition of sympathetic understanding of the trials and difficulties of others, especially of our brethren in Christ. (Gal. 6:1-2, ,10; 1 Pet. 3:8.) (Convention Address)

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Webster's Dictionary defines "meekness" to be—"Submission to the divine will: patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." Meekness is that quality which enables us to receive injuries in a patient and forbearing manner. (1 Pet. 2:19-23.)

"They shall inherit the earth" or "the land", meaning the blessings suggested by Canaan. This expression "inherit the earth" or "the land", was used among the Jews as a proverbial expression to denote any great blessing, perhaps as the sum of all blessings. (Psa. 37:22, 34; Isa. 60:21.) Our Lord probably used it in this sense, and meant to say that the meek should possess peculiar blessings. (2 Tim. 2:24, 25.)

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Hunger and thirst are expressive of strong desire. The Lord would have us cultivate in our hearts that earnest longing for righteousness, truth, holiness, which the feelings of hunger and thirst convey to our minds. Just as a hungry and thirsty man ardently desires food and drink, so we should ardently desire and strive after righteousness. The Golden Rule should be our guide. Let us, like Paul, strive to have a conscience void of

offence toward God and men. (Psa. 42:1-2; 63:1.) Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled — satisfied. (John 7:37; Psa. 17:15.)

“Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.” The Lord would have us cultivate mercy, compassion, and forgiveness toward the shortcomings of others. The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to Him; if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. (Matt. 6:14-15. Manna Text, Dec. 14, and Comment. Matt. 18:21-35).

“Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” Pure in heart means pure in motive, pure in intention, pure in the sense of sincerity. Blessed are the honest-hearted. Purity of heart does not signify absolute perfection of all our words and deeds and thoughts, but it does signify perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection, in thought, word and deed.

To the “pure in heart” the promise is that “they shall see God.” If we are sincere and pure hearted, we will have ever clearer visions of the attributes of God’s character. God will reveal Himself to us. How we must strive to “keep our

hearts with all diligence”—to keep our hearts pure; and to keep our thoughts along the right lines. (Phil. 4:8; Heb. 12:14; Psa. 17:15; 1 John 3:2-3.)

“Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called sons of God.” We should strive to be peacemakers, not strife breeders. (See Rom. 12:18; Mark 9:50; 2 Cor. 13:11; Heb. 12:14; Rom. 14:19.)

God is the God of peace, and those who seek to promote peace are in that respect like God—His sons. This does not mean peace at any price. (See Jas. 3:17, 18.)

‘Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake; for their’s is the Kingdom of Heaven; Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in Heaven.” These words of our Lord are spoken to

encourage His followers to faithfully and patiently endure the difficulties and oppositions which He knew would come to them. A good strong faith is necessary so that we do not grow weary in well doing. Only those who patiently endure to the end shall be saved, and have the fulness of blessing by gaining the character-likeness to Christ, and receiving an abundant entrance into His Kingdom in due time.

A Convincing Argument.

Travelling through a part of New Guinea, where the natives had been converted from cannibalism, a white trader was surprised to see a native reading his Bible under a tree.

The white man looked down upon him disdainfully, with a cynical sneer curling his lips. Then pushing his helmet to the back of his head, he asked the man what he was doing.

“Why, reading the Bible,” was the reply.

“Oh,” said the trader, “you had better give that up. I did long ago. It has done me no good; and it certainly can do you none.”

“What!” said the native. “Not done you any good?”

“No, of course not,” replied the trader.

“Ah, I am not so sure of that,” said the native. “If it had not been for the Bible, you would have been killed and eaten long ago.”

There are many people who fail to realise that they owe all—their very lives—to the Bible and Christianity.

“I cannot do it alone:
I change with the changing sky:

To-day, so glad and bright,
To-morrow, too weak to try:

But He never gives in,
So we two shall win, Jesus and I.”

Correspondence.

New Zealand.

Dear Brother in Christ—I enclose herewith a Money Order as a subscription to the “Peoples Paper” and use the small remainder as you see fit. I should be glad to receive three copies of the booklet, “The Lord is My Shepherd.”

The articles in the “Peoples Paper” are very helpful and inspiring—well chosen for these difficult days. Kind regards and dear Christian love to you and yours. Your Brother by His grace.

New South Wales.

Dear Brother—I thank you very much for “Peoples Papers” and other literature received this month for May and June and trust you will kindly continue sending to my address.

I enclose Money Order for 15/- to pay for another year for “Peoples Paper” and the balance to go to help to pay for the radio broadcasts which are a real help and blessing both to my wife and myself. Greetings to the brethren in the truth in Melbourne. Ever your Brother in the love of Christ.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Thank you so much for the papers you send along from time to time and which I enjoy.

Your Talks over 2KY Sunday mornings too are most illuminating and of great interest I hope, to all who listen. I always look forward to them and pray that many listeners will be given much food for thought and enlightenment. Enclosed is a small subscription which will at least pay for postage. Very sincerely yours.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Having heard your very interesting conversation over the air this morning, I would be glad to receive a copy of same, or two copies if convenient to you. I would keep one by me and lend the other out to two or three friends who may be interested and who I don't think listen in. I would be pleased also to receive all future copies and one or two previous ones if you have any on hand. I am very interested in the new and close dispensation. Yours in the Master's service.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have listened to many of your very interesting Dialogues and enjoyed them very much, and thank you very much for them.

I thank you for the “Peoples Papers” and the Dialogues which come from time to time. May God bless you in your work for Him and make it very fruitful. Please find enclosed small donation for your work. Yours in Christ.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you please forward to me a copy of your last broadcast from 3GL. The subject was “The Return of Christ.” I am very interested in this subject and I believe I can obtain some help from your notes Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—My husband and I are very interested in your radio programme; would you please send us a copy of this morning's broadcast. I hope I'm not asking too much, but if possible we would also like one of last Sunday's.

Thank you for your Sunday morning Talks; I think you are doing a fine Christian work in helping people to understand the Bible in these troublesome times. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Having listened to your broadcast on Sunday I would like to receive literature regarding the subject, as I was immensely interested in same. Hoping to hear favourably from you at your earliest convenience. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly forward to the above address a copy of each broadcast as from 8/6/52. We have listened to each broadcast and are very interested in same. May God bless your every effort in proclaiming the truth of His Word, and I, like you have said, believe that God will reward those who strive to do His will and obey His commandments. I take the Bible as my guide in the walk of life. Would it be possible for you to forward each future broadcast? Thanking you kindly.

(Copies of all broadcasts are gladly supplied to all friends who desire them regularly.—Frank and Ernest, B.B. Institute.)

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Re your Broadcast on Sunday mornings, I was taken by that of the 15th inst., and as it was the first time I had heard you I thought I would like to have further information as promised.

Would you please forward your booklet, or whatever it is you have for distribution on the views as set forth by you. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have been enjoying your radio Talks on a Sunday morning, 4KQ, 9 o'clock, and would very much like to have copies of these Talks so that I can further study them with the Bible and then pass them on to my friends in England. Wishing you great success in your good work. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you please send copy and leaflets of your Talks over the wireless given at 9 a.m., Sundays. They are very interesting and I always tune in, but I would like to pass copy on to my friends; any expenses

I will forward on. Thanking you; yours faithfully.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I have just listened to your discussion on “Where are the Dead?” from 4KQ and would like a copy of the Talk, also the booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave.” I shall look forward to other Talks and say, Thank you and God bless every effort to enlighten the people on the points of Scripture which are hard to understand.

I am, yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was rather interested in your broadcast from station 4KQ this morning on the fate of our dead. I shall esteem it a favour therefore if you will post me any literature you may have available on this absorbing subject. With best wishes for the future of your work. I remain yours faithfully.

Messrs. Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I happened to tune into station 4KQ Brisbane this morning and heard your discusssion—thank you. May God richly bless you in your Christian labours.

I noted with interest that next week you are to speak on the subject “Where are the Dead?” It is one of others, too, about which I would seek light. Your kind offer to forward copy; would you please post me

one on this subject. Thanking you.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was interested in the Talk given over radio station 4KQ in Brisbane last Sunday morning and thought I would write for a copy of the Talk and booklet mentioned therein. I intend to listen to all further Talks in this Series and will be glad of any further information you can give me. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours sincerely.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.
Brisbane, 4KQ, 485 IL 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 V. ., 4.45 p.m.

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“She Hath Done What She Could.” (Mark 14 :8.)

THE sixth day previous to the Passover was the Jewish Sabbath, which ended at 6 o'clock in the evening, and it is possible that it was at that time that our Lord and His disciples were entertained by Martha and Mary at “the house of Simon the leper”—probably their father; Lazarus, their brother, whom our Lord raised from the dead was also one of the table-guests.

We may suppose that this was no ordinary supper, but in the nature of a feast or banquet in our Lord's honour. Nevertheless, one incident connected with it so outshone all its other features that the narrator mentions it alone—the anointing of our Lord with the “spikenard ointment, very costly.” Our Lord Himself declared, “Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.” (Mark 14:9.) It is entirely proper, therefore, that we should examine with some particularity the details of this service so highly esteemed by the Master.

An authority on the ointment used, states, “By the ointment we are to understand rather a liquid perfume than what we commonly know as ointment.” The alabaster box was rather in the shape of a flask or vase, and the breaking of the box (Mark 14:3) signifies the opening of its tyings and seals by which the precious odors were confined. Judas' words of dissatisfaction furnish us a clue respecting the costliness of this perfume, for he says that it “might have been sold for three hundred denarii.” A denarius, translated “penny” in verse 5, is represented as being the average daily wages at that time—“a penny (denarius) a day.” (Matt. 20:2.) If we compare these values with present money values, counting farm labour at even £ 1 a day, the three hundred denarii would be equivalent in wages to £ 300 of our money. Thus we see that the perfume was indeed “very costly.” There was nearly a pint of the perfume, a Roman pound being twelve ounces. Nor need we question the possibility of perfumes being so expensive, for even today we have a counterpart in value in the attar of roses made in the Far East. It is claimed that four hundred thousand full-grown roses are used to produce one ounce of this perfume, which, in its purity, sells at a high figure, and we must realise that Mary used twelve ounces of this precious perfume. It is said that Nero was the first of the Emperors to indulge in the use of costly perfumes for his anointing; but one much more worthy of tribute, homage and anointing with a sweet perfume was the “Prince of the kings of the earth,” whom Mary had the honour to anoint.

Judas was first to object to this as a waste, the difficulty with him being that he loved the Lord too little and money too much. The amount that love is willing to expend for others is, to some extent at least, a

measure of the love. Another Evangelist informs us that several of the disciples, under the influence of Judas' words, took the same view of the matter, and spoke disapprovingly of Mary's action. The Apostle John, however, takes this opportunity to throw a little sidelight upon the character of Judas, more than is apparent in the common translation of verse 6. His declaration is, "Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the box, and stole what things were deposited in it."—Diaglott.

Our Lord's words, "Let her alone!" are in the nature of a severe reproof to those whose sentiments of love had no other measure than that of money. It was indeed true that there were plenty of poor, and there would still be plenty of poor, and plenty of opportunities to minister to them; but the opportunity to specially honour the Lord, and to pour upon Him the fragrant odors so beautifully expressive of Mary's love and devotion, would not be for long, and our Lord declares that the circumstances fully justified the costly expenditure. We may take from this beautiful incident, then, that blessings of a spiritual kind, upon God's spiritual children was the main lesson intended by our Lord; as though He would say—"there will be the whole thousand years of the Kingdom in which to do good to the poor—"but me ye have not always." No, our Lord's days were few, and so are the days of His true followers upon whom blessings may be bestowed, as unto the Lord Himself. Our Master showed Himself out of sympathy with the sentiments which balance themselves too accurately with money values. Moreover, we may esteem that in many instances like the one here recorded, the persons who are so careful lest money should be spent except for the poor are often like Judas, so

avaricious that whatever money gets into their possession very little of it gets to the poor.

On the contrary, it is the deep, loving, benevolent hearts, like that of Mary, which delight in costly sacrifices at times upon God's spiritual children, which also are likely to be deeply sympathetic and helpful to the physically poor. And in our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need— some need love and sympathy, who do not need money. Our Lord was one of these: His own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented amongst His apostles. In Mary He seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to Him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic; and Mary apparently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Master's character; she not only delighted to sit at His feet to learn of Him, but now delighted, at a great cost, to give Him some manifestation of her devotion, her love.

She poured the perfume first upon our Lord's head (Mark 14:3), the usual custom, and then the remainder she poured upon His feet. But the Apostle John, in recording the matter, seems to have forgotten entirely the anointing of our Lord's head, so deeply was He impressed with the still more expressive devotion manifested in the anointing of the feet and the wiping of them with the hairs of her head. It is indeed a picture of love—a devotion well worthy of being told as a memorial.

Some one has said: "She took 'woman's chief ornament' and devoted it to wiping the travel-stained feet of her Teacher; she devoted the best she had to even the least honourable service for Him. It was the strongest possible expression of her love and devotion. She gave her choicest treasures in the most self-devoted manner. She was bashful and retiring, and could not speak her feelings, and therefore she expressed them in this manner."

We are not surprised to learn that the whole house was filled with the odor; and we doubt not that the odor remained for a long time; but far more precious than that was the sweet odor of Mary's heart-affections, which the Lord accepted and will never forget, and the sweet odor of her devotion which has come down through the centuries to us, bringing blessing to all true hearts who have honoured her service and desired to emulate her conduct.

It is not our privilege to come into personal contact with our dear Redeemer, but we have, nevertheless, many opportunities for doing that which to some extent will correspond to Mary's act—it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto His brethren, we do or do not unto Him. Moreover, He represents these "brethren" in a figure as "members of His body;" and from this standpoint we see that, while it is not our privilege to pour the perfume upon the Head of the Body, now highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—next to the Father—it is our privilege to pour the perfume upon the feet of Christ—the last living members of His church of this Gospel Age.

We know not to what extent the closing years of this Gospel age may correspond to the closing days of our Lord's ministry—we know not how similar may be the experiences of the "feet" of the body of Christ to the experiences of the Head of the body: we do know, however, that in any event it is our blessed privilege to comfort one another, to encourage one another, to sustain one another, in the trials incident to our "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24.) And to whatever extent we would improve these opportunities, as did Mary, we must first appreciate them as she did.

Nothing in this suggestion is intended to imply any neglect of the members of our natural families "according to the flesh;" attentions to these are proper always, and are generally understood, and should more and more be appreciated and used in proportion as the Lord's people receive freely and fully of His spirit of love—kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering. But we emphasize that which the Scriptures emphasize, namely, that our interest and efforts are not to be confined to those of fleshly tie, but, on the contrary, are to be "especially to- the household of faith."

(Gal. 6:10.) There will be other and future opportunities of doing good to mankind in general, but the opportunity for serving "the body of Christ" is limited to the present age.

Respecting this propriety of doing good to others—expressing our love by our conduct, as well as by our words to the members of our families as well as to the members of the body of Christ, we quote the words of another: "The sweetest perfume that the home circle ever knows arises from deeds of loving service which its members do for each other. The sweetest perfumes of our homes do not arise from elegant furniture, soft carpets, elegant pictures, or luxurious viands. Many a home, having all these, is pervaded by an atmosphere as tasteless and odorless as bouquets of waxen flowers."

Another has said: "If my friends have alabaster boxes full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them, that I might be refreshed and cheered with them while I need them . . . I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy . . . Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

“Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me.”

The children wanted to come to Jesus. They were attracted to Him. There must have been something very fascinating about Jesus in His personality, the beauty of His spirit, the charm of His conversation, the love He bore to all. It is no wonder that they came to Him.

Are we presenting the true spirit of the Master in our dealings with the children? Can they see anything of Him in us? Are we truly reflecting His character, so that there is something in us, too, which attracts them?

“Mother,” a little child once said, how old must I be before I can become a Christian?”

The wise mother answered: “How old will you have to be before you love me?”

“Why, mother, I have always loved you!” was the child’s reply.

And as no child is too young to love the Saviour, our lives and characters should be so beautiful that they show to the child what the love of Jesus is.

“I know how anxious thought can press,
I know the weight of carefulness;
But now I know the sweet reward
Of casting all upon the Lord.
No longer bearing what He bears,
Because I know that Jesus cares.”

—F. R. Havergal.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue,

“After this Manner Pray Ye.”

The model prayer which Jesus gave His disciples is grandly simple. It opens with a reverent acknowledgment of the greatness and sacredness of the Heavenly Father’s name, or character. The petition, “Thy Kingdom come,” is an acknowledgment of faith in God’s promise that eventually His Kingdom will be established on earth, and an expression of the suppliant’s heart sympathy with God and righteousness.

“Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven,” signifies full confidence that Satan will be bound; that the reign of Sin and Death will end; that the knowledge of God’s glory will fill the earth and that all wilful opposers will be destroyed.

The request for daily bread implies our realization that our sustenance, both temporal and spiritual, must come from God. The failure to specify the kind of food implies full resignation to Divine providence.

When the justified pray, “Forgive us our trespasses,” they do not refer to original sin; for they were freed from it in justification. Trespasses signify those unintentional imperfections which appertain to all and which Jesus’ followers strive to overcome. The request that we shall have forgiveness as we are forgiving towards those who trespass against us is a reminder of the general terms of our relationship with God. We cannot grow in grace except as we cultivate the spirit of love—a forgiving, generous spirit in our dealing with others.

“Abandon us not in temptation” indicates that we are aware that we are surrounded by the powers of evil, which we as New Creatures cannot withstand successfully without Divine aid. “Deliver us from the Evil One” is a recognition that Satan is our great Adversary; and that we are on the alert to resist him, yet realise our need of Divine assistance. “We are not ignorant of his (Satan’s) devices”; “We wrestle not against flesh and blood (merely), but against wicked spirits in high positions.

Jesus admonishes that prayer be fervent—not Merely formal words. He gave the illustration of the Man who was finally moved by the earnestness ‘of his friend’s petition. So we are not to think that our prayers are unheeded. Although we are hastening the Kingdom by our prayers, yet we are entering a blessing of rest through faith in God’s promises.

What God really wishes to give His people is His holy spirit. Because of the imperfections of the flesh none of us can be filled with the spirit at first. But we can come to God, desiring to be in His character likeness; and to our knocking the door will be opened. Nor should we fear; our Father delights to give His spirit to those who seek it.

“Covet Earnestly the Best.”

God has His best things for the few
Whose love shall stand the test ;

God has His second choice for those
Who do not crave His best.

It is not always open sin
That risks the promised rest ;

A good more often is the foe
That keeps us from the best.

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Perth Meetings.

Friends in Western Australia are advised of a new address for the regular Sunday meetings at 3.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m., namely-9 Howard Street, Perth.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 17/1216. plus freight

That which enables us to know and understand aright the things of God, must be a living principle of holiness within us. The sun of truth never shines into any unpurged souls . . . He that will find truth must seek it with a free judgment and a sanctified mind.—John Smith (1616-1652).

Building a Disposition.

“Well, I do hope that when I reach the age when I have to be taken care of, I shall be willing to let other people have their way instead of insisting upon my own and making it hard for everybody else,” said a clear, decided voice as three women parted at the street corner.

They had been discussing the troubles of an acquaintance. As the speaker departed, the other two looked at each other with a significant smile. This friend of theirs was one who had great faith in her own wisdom.

“I am afraid that virtue does not develop suddenly,” remarked one. “I suspect that the person who is to be gentle and unselfishly considerate in old age has to begin to cultivate that spirit much further back.”

That is the story of so many of our failures to attain our ideals. We do not begin to practice their graces early enough. The strong, self-controlled, useful manhood or womanhood does not grow naturally from a careless, self-indulged youth, and the beautiful old age that is a benediction is not likely to spring from the hasty, domineering spirit that has been allowed to rule middle life.

Character is a garden whose gracious flowering calls for early planting.

Why Doubt the Resurrection?

Who would imagine that from a single grain of seed a huge tree would rise up, unless he had it as a certain fact by experience? In the extreme minuteness of a grain where is the wood buried, the roughness of the bark, the greenness of the root, the savour of the fruit, the sweetness of the scents, the variety of the colours, the softness of the leaves? Yet because we know this by experience, we do not doubt that all these spring from a single grain of seed. Where, then, is the difficulty that dust shall return into limbs, when we have every day before our eyes the power of the Creator, who in a marvellous manner from a grain creates wood and fruit.—S. Gregory.

Convention Notes.

Copies of Notes on the Adelaide Convention are now available, and are supplied free upon request.

Proved.

There is never a trial that comes to you but what is ordered by the loving hand of thy Father. It is sent to thee to prove thy faith, not to try thee. Accept it of His hand as a cherished gem, realising that when your faith is perfected you shall come forth as gold, made meet to adorn the Kingdom of thy Lord.—P.E.M.

It may be thou art entered into the cloud which will bring a gentle shower to refresh thy sorrows.—J.T.

Moses, the Servant of God

(Convention Address)

WHEN we review the life of Moses, we stand amazed at the way Divine providence overrules even in the face of man's strongest opposition. Not only is God able to set at naught man's endeavours to hinder His plans, but He is able to turn them to good. Well did the Psalmist say, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee." (Psa. 76:10.)

It is not without man's free choice that God uses any one as His instrument, but He desires their co-operation. Indeed, the one who cooperates with God the most, is the one whom God uses the most and bestows the greater blessing. And this is what we find in the life of Moses. How wonderfully did Divine providence overrule and direct in laying the foundation for Moses to become the great leader that God intended.

While Joseph was ruler of Egypt, and for some years after, the children of Israel lived peaceably in Egypt. Then the account tells us—"There arose up a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph." It was because of the rapid increase of the children of Israel, causing this despotic monarch some concern, that after taking several repressive measures, he sent forth an edict—"Every son that is born, ye shall cast into the river." (Exod. 1:22.) It was under these conditions that Moses was born.

Perhaps we all remember the story respecting Moses' mother building a little ark out of bulrushes and placing him in it on the river where Pharaoh's daughter used to come to bathe, and how the princess took compassion on the child when he wept, and she decided to adopt him for her own son, and even arranged to have Moses' own mother to nurse him. There is a simple, yet wonderful romance in this narrative. One day the child, Moses, is a danger, a menace in the house of his parents; at any moment his presence may be discovered and made known to an Egyptian officer. Then he would be killed and the home broken up, and possibly the lives of his parents would be lost for attempting to disobey the royal edict. Next day, through divine providence, the child is back in the same home, and it's own mother is paid by the Egyptian princess in caring for it, and it is in every way protected by royal favour.

The wise man declared, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," and we may be sure that Moses' parents would teach him the basic principles of righteousness, and that his faith in God would be inspired by the promises God gave to Abraham and reiterated to Isaac and Jacob, namely, "that in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And how true was this in Moses' case. We are told in Acts 7:22 that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." But none of these things swerved him from the pathway of righteousness and justice.

"In all the learning of the Egyptians," as the adopted son of Pharaoh, the result must have been a very noble and handsome man; yet, with all these accomplishments by nature and education, Moses is described to us as "the meekest man in all the earth." We do not mean that he was the meekest man in all the earth from the time he finished his learning in the Egyptian schools, but he was by the time God had taught him further lessons.

We are not told much about Moses from the time he was handed over to his foster mother to be educated until he was a man of forty years of age. But that his early training left a deep impression upon his heart and mind, and that he was also a man of faith is evident from what is implied in Heb. 11:24, 25,—"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." It was Moses' keen sense of justice and his utter hatred of wrong doing, that caused him to make his attempt to

relieve his brethren from the evils they were suffering from the Egyptians; thus, the time came when Moses decided to cast in his lot with his brethren. He renounced his relationship to the king's family and refused any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God and to share with them in the promises made to them and their fathers. While he was with the Egyptians he shared in the riches and pleasures that were accruing to that people through the oppression of the Israelites, but he could no longer be a participator in the fruits of their wrong doing, nor enjoy the pleasures of this injustice.

“And it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren and looked on their burdens, and he spied an Egyptian smiting one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way and when he saw no man he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.” (Exod. 2:11, 12.) Although Moses was naturally meek he was not unmindful of his education and ability. This being known to his people, and the fact that they were expecting a deliverer to take them out of their bondage, Moses fully expected that they would rejoice at the thought of having him as their law-giver and counsellor. He hoped that by taking this step he would awaken the spirit and energy of his people and that they might accept him as their leader; but his disappointment was great when the next day he was endeavouring to correct a dispute between two Israelites he found that his brethren had no such loyal feelings toward him as he had toward them, for the erring Israelite demanded, “Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killest the Egyptian?”

Moses fondly hoped that the sacrifice he had made in giving up the honour and glory of Egypt for the sake of his brethren would at least be appreciated by them, but not so. Thoroughly disheartened and cut off from a cultured class in Egypt, and cut off also from his own kinsmen whom he hoped to assist, Moses settled down to a life in the wilderness. This led to him marrying one of the daughters of Jethro, and himself becoming a shepherd, and caring for his father-in-law's flocks.

For forty years Moses lived the life of a shepherd, and, so far as we are informed, he had no direct manifestation of God's favour; but he did have a knowledge of the hopes of his people and of God's promises to Abraham. From what we gather from the sacred writings he must have been a man of faith, and his faith never wavered. The first forty years of Moses' education was of an ordinary kind, but the next forty were of a special kind. We can see the Lord's supervision in all his affairs, for although he would be ignorant of it, in all of his experiences the Lord would be testing his loyalty and preparing him for the great work He had for him to do in the future. In his wanderings as a shepherd, he would no doubt become very familiar with the layout of the land; he would know every road and stream in that country. What a great advantage this would be to him, when, under the direction of the Lord, he would be leading the children of Israel through that wilderness to the land of Canaan. And we may be sure that he would learn lessons of patience, humility and obedience to the Divine will during those forty years.

Now that Moses had grown to eighty years of age he would look back at the attempt he made to become Israel's leader forty years previously, and would realise more fully what a great task it was to carry out, and would possibly think of it as a mistake. Doubtless, like David the shepherd, he would learn to think of his sheep and his care over them, and to consider God the great Shepherd over His flock, and probably wondered why, after giving the gracious promises to Abraham, God had left His flock, the children of Abraham, in apparently a hopeless bondage.

There is something about the quiet solitude of the wilderness that gives one a feeling of nearness to God, the Great Creator. There is something also about the sight of the mountains that helps us to appreciate the greatness of God; as the sight of the mountains inspired the poet to write, “Forever firm God's justice stands, as mountains their foundations keep.” Perhaps Moses was wondering if God had really forgotten His people back there in Egypt, and if that could be, how was it that he himself remembered them? And as Moses was thus philosophizing, his attention was directed to a very unusual sight—a bush seemed to

be on fire, yet it was not being consumed. As Moses turned aside to examine this phenomenon, the Lord spoke to him, from the midst of the burning bush. Moses at once realised that what he had witnessed was a miracle by which the Lord would attract his attention, for the purpose of communicating to him an important lesson. There seems to have been a symbolic meaning in the miracle of the burning bush, which would represent Israel in the midst of tribulation, yet not consumed. And what a good illustration the burning bush is of the experiences of Christ and all His members. Are they not surrounded by fiery trials, and do they not come through unscathed, uninjured; on the contrary, they are blessed and strengthened, “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.”

“Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground,” is what the angel of the Lord said to Moses. “The fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Psa. 111:10.) “Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God.” Whether the house of God be a great house as it was in times past under Divine direction, or whether it be the Temple, which is the church in the flesh, we should realise that reverence is befitting to us in connection with everything holy and consecrated. Whoever neglects the cultivation of reverence makes his own pathway slippery and dangerous, and is much more likely to stumble, to fall, and be utterly cast down. If even Moses, the meekest man in all the earth, needed from the Lord the lesson of humility as his first instruction, shall we not suppose that such a lesson is necessary for us. God’s message to Moses was the foundation for his hopes and those of Israel.

“I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” These words would assure Moses that God had not forgotten the good things He had promised; and thus his faith would be re-established. What a great change had taken place in Moses in those forty years in the wilderness. As the man of forty years he felt ready and equal for the mighty task of delivering his brethren out of Pharaoh’s land, but now, when the invitation comes, he does not trust himself, and feels with all the educational advantages he had that he was fit for nothing better than a shepherd, and wanted to leave it to someone much more competent. Now the Lord needs to encourage him, and Moses receives more deeply than he could have done forty years before the understanding that Israel’s deliverance was not to be by man, or through man, but by the Lord Himself, and the human agent would be merely the Lord’s representative.

What a valuable lesson Moses was learning and how necessary is such a lesson to all the Lord’s people, especially to any and to all whom God would use in any special sense in connection with His work; not our power or ability or wisdom, or greatness or learning is esteemed of the Lord, but the essential thing is the Divine power working in and through us, “which is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds,” and to the lifting up of the weak, and to bring in everlasting salvation which He has promised. The more thoroughly we learn this lesson, the better it will be for ourselves and for all who, in the Lord’s providence, we are sent to assist in His way—to deliver from the bondage of sin and death.

“Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring my people of Israel out of Egypt.” ‘ It is to be noted that God expressly declares Himself to be the Deliverer; had Moses then been disposed to boast of his own powers and doings we presume that the Lord would not have used him, but would have found someone else for the work. Whenever the Lord sends us on any special mission, we may be sure that He does not wish us to undertake it as our mission, nor to claim the honour of the success attending it. He merely deigns to use us as His instrumentalities, whereas He could do the entire work much easier, we might say, without us. How wonderful it seems that God throughout all His dealings, past and present, has been willing to use His consecrated people. Telling them on the one hand that they are unworthy, He assures them on the other hand of His willingness to use their imperfections and to overrule and guide in respect of their services for Him and His cause.

The prime essentials, evidently, in the faithful performance of such a commission, would be reverence for the Lord and humility as respects our own talents and abilities. It was so with Moses, “the meekest man in

all the earth.” He was overwhelmed with the thought that the Lord would deign to use him as a messenger, and promptly disclaimed any special qualifications therefore. Indeed, he evidently felt, as well as said, that there were others much more capable for the work than himself. But was it not this very appreciation of his own unworthiness that helped to make him suitable for the Lord’s business? And so with us; we may be sure that when we feel strong, then are we weak; and when we feel weak in our own strength, then we are best prepared to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and to be used of Him as His instruments.

In all the forty years as a leader of Israel, with all the great responsibilities and burdens that fell upon the shoulders of Moses, yet he made only one deflection, and that was the smiting of the rock. The Lord distinctly told Moses he was not to strike the rock but to speak to it. For a moment Moses forgot himself and permitted a spirit something akin to pride and anger to control his actions. “Ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice.” (Num. 20:10, 11.) The effect may have been dramatic; the people may have stood in awe of Moses, but all the same, that was not the best way of dealing with the matter, for it was not God’s way. Better would it have been for Moses to have hidden himself, humbled himself, and to have asked water from the rock in Jehovah’s name, as he had been instructed to do.

There never was a time, surely, when the honesty and the faithfulness of the Lord’s servants were more severely tested than now. What all need is meekness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, love and loyalty to God— faithfulness to their covenant. In conclusion, the following is a quotation from the author of Scripture Studies. “So Moses the servant of the Lord died . . . ‘According to the word of the Lord: This is the land which He swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed . I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.’ As we look into the beauties of the Millennial epoch, the Lord tells us that we shall not go over to possess it, but that it shall be for mankind. But He tells us more, namely, that He has ‘provided some better thing for us.’ He tells us that we must die, that ‘flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven.’ The glorious vision shown us is merely for our comfort and strengthening in connection with the closing scenes of this age. In the Hebrew language the expression, ‘according to the Word of the Lord,’ would literally be ‘by the mouth of the Lord,’ and Jewish rabbis have given this a poetic turn and say, ‘by the kiss of the Lord.’ It is a beautiful thought, for while Moses was about to pass to the extreme limit of the curse, death, he was recognised of the Lord and dealt with as a faithful servant; and in view of the fact that the Lord in His plan had arranged for Moses’ redemption from sheol, the grave, his death is appropriately described as a sleep. And thus we have the picture of a father kissing his child to sleep; and also the other picture of the glorious morning of the resurrection in which the Antitypical Moses (Christ and His Church) , as the Father’s representative, will awaken Moses to the blessings and eternal rewards of the perfect earth, and which are his in the divine plan because of his faithfulness.”

The poet has said of him
“This was the truest warrior
That ever buckled sword;

This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word.

And never earth’s philosopher
Traced with his golden pen
On the deathless page, truths half so sage
As he wrote down for men.

“And had he not high honour?
The hillside for his pall
To lie in state, while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall;

And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave,
And God’s own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave.”

Choose Ye This Day.

“As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.”—Joshua 24:15.

THE Children of Israel had crossed Jordan. Moses was dead and. Joshua was their Leader. They were having no difficulty at that time; but Joshua thought ‘that it was proper just then for them to make their decision—proper for them to decide whether or not they would be faithful to the Lord, or would allow themselves to be led away by the idolatry of the people who lived in Canaan. Joshua had called them together and had recounted to them the Lord’s blessings and favour which they had thus far enjoyed, and then expressed himself in the grand and noble sentiments of our text.

So, we who realise that the Lord has been blessing, guiding and sustaining us in the past, should come to a full, positive decision as respects our course of life. The very fact of coming to a positive decision is a great help in the formation of character. Every time we come to a wise decision on any question, it strengthens mind and character, and makes us much more ready for another test—along some other line, perhaps.

We well recognise the fact that the entire consecration which the Christian makes, leaves nothing out; but we need to have some touchstone, something which will enable the mind to reach a decision quickly, and this touchstone should be God’s will, so that to perceive the Lord’s will on any subject would be to settle it without any temporizing. Again, it is highly proper that we should reiterate our consecration, and thus make it prominent before others.

For instance, there would be nothing wrong in saying, “Whatever any one else may do, I acknowledge God and will serve Him”—not as a new vow, but as a fresh acknowledgment of the consecration Vow we have already taken.

Every day we should renew our covenant with the Lord—renew it and make it fresh in our minds, thus showing that there has been no change on our part; that we are still in the same attitude. We are exhorted to make this review of our lives and renewal of our consecration daily; to continue to keep this before our minds and hearts; to render our sacrifice to the Lord.

If the Lord’s consecrated people could be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! if then they should wrestle with Him until the breaking of day, their hold upon Him would be sure to bring the desired blessing. The Lord reveals Himself for the purpose of giving this blessing: but He withholds it until we learn to appreciate and desire it.

It is Not the Deed We Do.

“It is not the deed we do
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care

In the heart of the deed so fair.
“The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told.”

Spiritual serenity is spiritual strength. It comes in by no softness of sentiment, but by thorough work. It comes by a faith that emboldens and energises the whole soul.—F. D. Huntington.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—9 Howard Street, Perth.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

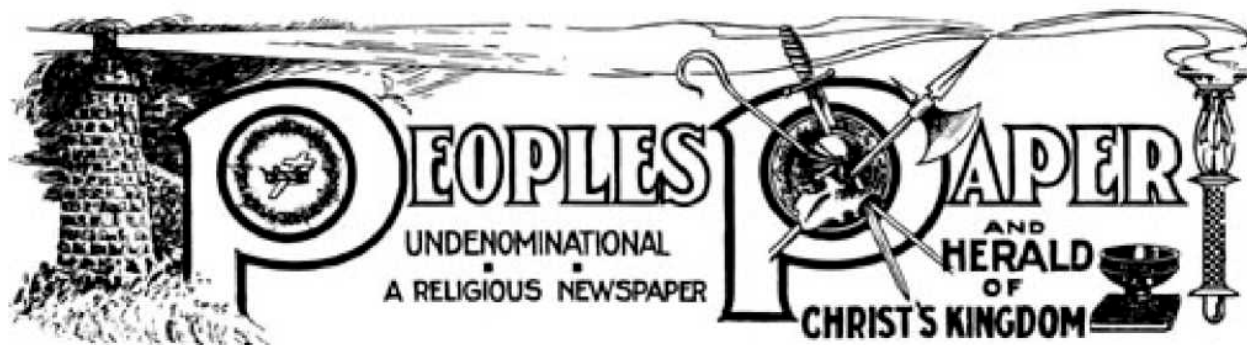
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ., 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ., 4.45 p.m.

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The Present Truth.

“Hold fast that which thou hast.” (Rev. 3:11) .

THE Lord's people find it is appropriate from time to time to consider progress and prospects, and to review conditions. We are not concerned with things social, political or national, excepting as we can recognise in these connections the fulfilment of Prophecy. ‘ It requires no great power of discernment to those acquainted with the Scriptures to note how perfectly the present-day conditions fulfil what has been foretold by the Lord, His Apostles and the Prophets nearly and over 2000 years ago. We may say in the words of the historian Rollins, who viewed the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy in the events he was recording: “Can any reasonable man who makes use of his understanding ascribe such a prediction either to mere chance or to the conjectures of human prudence and sagacity? Can any light but that „Which proceeds from God Himself penetrate. in this manner, into the darkness of futurity and point out the events of it in so exact and circumstantial a manner?” In this connection we need only mention one or two passages as instances:—Daniel 1 2:4 2 Pet. 3:2-4; 2 Tim. 3:1 -7 ; Luke 17:26-30, etc. The state of the world today becomes more and more “as it was in the days of Lot” in Sodom, and “as it was. in the days of Noah” before the Flood, and there can be no doubt that a greater calamity on the human race is impending.

Our particular thought, however, is in connection with the present truth and the privileges, prospects and dangers which exist at this time.

There is quite prevalent a notion that it matters little what one believes, and that there should be no divisions on account of differences in faith. There are even those who have understood present truth, who underestimate the value of “the things we have received and know of whom we have received them,” and seem ready to compromise for the sake of preserving unity.

In the past our fathers so valued their convictions of truth that they preferred death rather than betray their faith. The question arises, who is right, who is the more pleasing in the sight of God — those who love unity by compromising truth or those who in Christian spirit must stand firm ‘or truth at the expense of unity?

We readily concede that quite often differences are magnified and extremes are taken and bitter

separations have taken place which were quite unnecessary, and indeed even when divisions are unavoidable, bitterness can never be excused. However we may differ, even on the most fundamental principles of Christian faith, Christian love should so prevail that there could be no unkindness, but simply a committing the whole matter to the Lord with the prayer that He may open the blind eyes and, If He will, lead us again into the unity of the faith and happy bonds of fellowship.

We need, however, to remember that the Christian religion is not a flexible, compromising one. system established and governed by men may make changes to meet circumstances, both in their principles and methods, but the principles of Christ - established at Pentecost are fixed and no authority on earth can change them. Many authorities have, however, sought to accommodate Christianity to times and circumstances, and have brought in many antiChristian teachings so, that the creeds and dogmas of the churches to-day very greatly misrepresent God and His great plan of salvation. The downfall of the church was not through faithful men and women maintaining an attitude of loyalty to truth and righteousness, though history records many such noble characters. The downfall of the church came about because there were not sufficient unflinching defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints, and because the majority sought conformity with the world and undervalued the truth.

Particularly in this day is the spirit of compromise abounding. It is the Laodicean spirit that is neither hot nor cold, and says, do not trouble about doctrine, only let us join together in one great confederacy.

There is a spirit which is quite prevalent, to let down the standards of truth and ethics. It has: indeed wrought havoc in the churches, so that they have become altogether worldly and indifferent to the true spirit of the truth and consecration, as taught by the Lord and His Apostles. The adversary would seek in the same way to “quench the spirit” among those who have become awake to the “present truth” (those things which have been revealed by the opening up of the Scriptures as “meat in due season” or truths specially applicable in our day). It is no doubt these matters pertaining to our Lord’s Second Presence, the harvest work, the closing down of the present age, etc., that we are exhorted to “Hold fast that no man take thy crown.”

The questions arise as to what does a true Christian really need to believe? What are the essentials of our faith?

What is it that we must “Hold fast.” Does it mean only that we preserve a clear knowledge of truth,, or does it not imply “walking in the light”?

What, then, constitutes a Christian. The Bible shows how in due time “God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,” and how under the New Covenant and its great Mediator all the willing and obedient will be assisted to work out their justification to life and works of obedience and righteousness. The New Testament just as clearly shows that the Divine purpose for this Gospel Age, or “The Kingdom of Heaven” Age, as the Lord designated it, is to select a spiritual class to be joint heirs with Christ, to reign with Him in the coming Kingdom Age, when the wider opportunity will come to all mankind. . That will be when the Church or Bride of Christ will be complete, and “the spirit and the Bride will say, come, and whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely.”

This class of “Priests and Kings”—The Church —is dealt with quite differently, in its selection, from the way the rest of mankind will be in the next age. That will be an age of works, justification by works. This is an age of faith, justification by faith, and that faith is the gift of God. (Eph. 2:8). Our Lord declared, “No man cometh unto Me except it be given him of My Father”; “No man cometh unto the Son of Man except the Father draw him.”

The first essential, then, is that we be invited. How are we invited or drawn? It is through the Word, as the

Lord intimated in His prayer, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe through their word.”

(John 17:20.) So it is God who invites those who may be joint heirs with His Son, by bringing His Word to their attention, and by His holy spirit He grants the faculty of faith. There is the conviction of sin, and the longing to be at peace with God and to be righteous. Then in true penitence, faith in Calvary’s atoning sacrifice lifts the load of sin and we find peace and rest. What a great favour this is, first to be called of God and then instead of being slowly justified by works under the New Covenant of the next age to be at once “Justified by faith and at peace with God.” This particular arrangement of grace is in order that we may be able, through the merit of our Redeemer “to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” This is the second step of Romans 5:1, 2, after being justified by faith through our Lord. Jesus Christ, “By whom also we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and now rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

Following this step of consecration, we receive the begetting of the holy spirit—the spirit of sonship—and God calls us His sons. This holy spirit begets in each one a new mind, a new heart, a new creature, so that though the human being is laid upon the altar of sacrifice to be done to death, for “as many as have been baptised into Christ have been baptised into His death” (Rom. 6:3) ; yet a new life is begun, a spiritual life, and as new creatures we have become Christians in the full sense.

As Christians, then, we have so far these essentials—The favour of having been called of God. The gift of faith. Justification through the exercise of that faith. The holy spirit of sonship through the further step of faith— consecration. The wonderful hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Having reached to these things are there no other essentials for the Christian? We would answer that the new creature needs nourishing. If we fail to feed upon the Lord’s Word, if we fail to drink of that water of life which is provided for us, we shall fail to develop and probably soon lose our faith and our hope. We must go on from these first principles and learn to appreciate the deep things of the Word. We remember how St. Paul felt that it was useless to try and explain the deeper things to the Hebrews because they had not exercised their minds along the lines of truth. They had stunted their growth, they were still babies feeding on milk, when they ought to have been able to teach others.

How essential is the present truth as it is revealed from God’s Word. The Word of God is the instrument not only for calling the saints, but also for supplying grace and strength and enabling them to meet the difficulties of the way.

It unfolds its precious truths as “meat in due season” to meet the needs of the Christian in his own day. It is then very essential that we understand present truth—the Word of God—as it opens up, in order that our Shield is bright and strong, our Helmet of hope is firmly fixed, the Breastplate of righteousness properly adjusted, that our feet be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, our loins be girt about with truth and that we may be able to wield the Sword of the Spirit, and be overcomers in the “good fight of faith.”

How important is the truth. It is the means by which we are sanctified and strengthened to run our course. Just as truth helps, so error hinders.

How far may we differ from one another in respect of truth without interfering with our fellowship? The fact of differing on what we may call non-essentials provides opportunities for the exercise of brotherly kindness in respecting the opinions of others though not endorsing them.

It is quite a different matter when we come to deal with the clear lines of faith and hope, or truths which

are Divinely revealed for the purpose of accomplishing some particular feature of work in connection with God's great plan. It would indeed be presumption to say that such truths were of so little importance that it did not matter whether or not we believed them. We would also find it impossible to enjoy the same helpful fellowship with those who denied

or belittled these things as we could with those who appreciated them, and who were seeking to faithfully sound forth the message and conform their lives to it.

It is quite understandable that those who do not know present truth, who do not recognise That we are living in "the days of the Son of Man," and the harvest time of the age, etc., should think such things are non-essentials. They cannot see the present truth to be essentials if they do not recognise that the harvest work is in progress, and that the separating of the "wheat" from the "tares" is taking place. They cannot value the truths now revealed as we do, who realise the presence of the Lord as "Reaper," and that He is now reckoning with His people respecting the use of their talents and their structure building of character and teachings, and that the present truth is indeed the feast which He promised to the faithful watchers in Luke 12:37 and Rev. 3:20. What may seem non-essential to some may be very essential to others, for it is the "present truth" which is doing the harvest work. On the one hand it sanctifies and prepares the Bride class for the great consummation of her hopes, and on the other hand it separates those who from some cause or other seem unable to understand it.

The "present truth," or "meat in due season," or the unfoldings of truths respecting the Divine Plan, the second presence of Christ, the Harvest, the gathering of the saints and the consummation of the age, etc., appear to be essential to those to whom they have been revealed, if they will make their calling and election sure. Those who lightly esteem such things will surely fail in the use of their talents.

Similar conditions existed at the first advent of our Lord. New truths were sent forth. Many were inclined to say that such matters were all right and might be true, but they should not be carried too far, they were not essential, they could still hold on to the Law ceremonies and synagogue gatherings. The then "present truth" was, however, essential to such as the Lord was calling, and it did its work of separating the "wheat" from the "chaff."

Let us not undervalue the things which God has revealed to us, which have opened our eyes to see the wideness of His purposes and shown us that we are at the end of the age and living in "the days of the Son of Man," and that "as in the days of Noah" preceding the deluge, so now a great calamity is pending, which will end this dispensation, after which the new age will commence when Christ shall be King over all the earth.

These things we are exhorted to "hold fast" in the message to the Philadelphia Church (Rev. 3:10, 11). "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly, hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown."

We are living in a day of such a variety of confused teachings. We are forewarned of the many deceptions that were to come, so that even if it were possible the very elect would be deceived. Peter says that there would be false teachers and that many would follow their pernicious ways, by reason of which the way of truth would be evil spoken of. Paul admonishes, "Be not carried about by strange doctrines, for it is good that the heart be established with grace." The church is called "the pillar and ground of the truth." It is her responsibility to preserve the truth in its purity, to guard it and to let it shine. Our Lord declared, "To this end came I into the world that I should bear witness to the truth," and it is for those who will follow Him to do His work, and to be among those who are "beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God."

Many are the injunctions of the Apostles respecting this matter of "Holding fast the form of sound words" and the truths which God has revealed in His Word. The following are some texts showing our responsibility regarding knowledge Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 2:14-18; 2 Tim.2:23-26; 2 Tim. 3:13, 14; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; 1 John 2:20-24; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 7-11; 1 Tim. 1:3-6; 1 Tim. 4:16; 1 Tim. 6:20, 21 (Diaglott).

That, however, is not all we must "hold fast." There is the possibility of holding fast the form of sound words, of having a correct understanding of the main features of the truth, even of being "virgins" and of understanding "present truth," and yet to fail to be prepared, and so fail to enter the marriage chamber.

A clear head is a good thing to have, but if the knowledge does not go down to the understanding heart, it fails in its intended purpose of sanctification, and we should prove to be but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. The trials of our day will not only try the doctrines but will test our faith, our hope, our love and our loyalty to God and to one another as members in Christ.

Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid in Christ Jesus. There is no standing before God apart from His Son, our Saviour, but having this foundation, we must build thereon, What must we build?

We must build 'our doctrine and see that all our teachings are in line with the foundation we must also build character. We must hold fast our foundation, our faith in the great Ransom for all. We must hold fast our consecration, our love to God in operation; we must bind the sacrifice with cords to the altar. We must "hold fast the confidence of our hope firm to the end." We must keep on the whole armour of God and continue the good fight of faith. We must preserve our zeal for the Lord's cause.

There is everything in this day to discourage us. Some have trials and temptations in one way, some in another. Maybe the failure of brethren whom we had highly esteemed in the Lord is apt to discourage us. Sometimes in contact with the world we meet plausible arguments against the truth by agnostics or scientists, and if we trusted to our own wisdom and strength to save us we might go down, but let us hold fast the Word of God. If we cannot understand everything, we do understand enough of God's wisdom, justice, love and power, which we have exemplified in His dealings with Israel and explained in His Word and experienced in our own lives, so that we can reasonably trust where we cannot quite understand. Even our Lord Jesus was tested in this way. He could not understand why the light of the Father's countenance should be withdrawn just at the moment when, more than any other, He needed the assurance of His favour and presence. We must nerve ourselves and seek to grow in grace that we too may reach that condition of heart that can say, "Yea, though He slay me yet will I trust Him."

Probably all can look back upon trials and temptations and trace the kind hand that has overruled for our protection, guidance and provision, and thus tracing the way God has led us shall we not hold fast the confidence of our faith firm to the end?

Let us hold fast our love to the Lord. If we love God we will also love those begotten of Him, and it will be painful indeed to us to even think evil of a fellow member. We would shun listening to reproaches against brethren, we would be loyal to God and defend His children and each member in the body of Christ would be loyal to one another.

That loyalty, however, will be secondary to our loyalty to God and His Word and the doctrine we have proved to be true. It may be necessary for us to withdraw even from those we love in Christ, if they 'teach things which we believe to be contrary to the truths that we have been by God's grace entrusted with, to preserve and to proclaim.

While we may thus sometimes find separations unavoidable, there is never any occasion to be unkind. We

may have to speak plainly against wrong teachings or practices, but we are not to condemn nor cease to love those who think differently. As long as they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind, by His own blood, and profess consecration to God, we may still think of them as brethren, though they may be erring brethren.

Let us hold fast our faith, our hope, our love, our doctrine, which includes “present truth.” “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them.” How important it is that we hold fast that which we have proved to be an unfolding of God’s Word—”Meat in due season.” If we begin to let slip this or that truth, other truths will likely soon be lost, and “if the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness?” “Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown.” (Rev. 3:11.)

Notice.

Will our friends kindly note that the office of the Berean Bible Institute is expected to be closed for correspondence, etc., from the 19th September until after the weekend 11th and 12th October-next.

Only a word for the Master,

Lovingly, quietly said

Only a word! Yet the Master heard,

And some fainting souls were fed. —Charlotte Murray.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

The Ministry of Comfort.

“The Lord hath anointed . . . to comfort all that mourn; to appoint them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.”—Isaiah 61:1-3.

OUR text is surely good tidings in a very broad and a very deep sense. Its message is one of “comfort,” not only, to Zion, the consecrated Church, but to all that mourn; and as mentally we cast our eyes over the world we are deeply impressed with the thought that the vast majority of mankind are in mourning. As the Apostle expresses it: “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.” There are undoubtedly a few who are full, satisfied, and who mourn for nothing, and who, therefore, under these conditions, are excluded from any share in this. promised blessing; but they are exceptions to the rule. Some of them are wealthy in this world’s goods, and feel they have need of nothing and are kept busy with their efforts to enjoy themselves. There are others of the same full class who, though not wealthy, have a very self-satisfied feeling as respects their moral status; they do not realise themselves as sinners; they do not realise their daily imperfections nor their need of a Saviour, and are not mourning for anything, and not, therefore, in the way to be comforted with any of the comforting assurances and promises and provisions, which the Lord has made for those who mourn.

So far as the world is concerned, our Lord’s ministry of comfort to them is chiefly a future work. We rejoice, however, that the time is sure to come when all that mourn, all the “groaning creation,” shall be brought under the blessed influences and provisions of the Messianic Kingdom, and shall there come to know the consolations which God has provided in Christ—the balm for every trouble, every wound, the cure for every blight, every sin, and every imperfection, and their privilege of profiting by these to the fullest -measure by giving themselves unreservedly into the care of the Good Physician. But the poor world, blinded and deceived by the god of this world as respects the character and plan of Jehovah, can neither see, hear, nor appreciate now the wonderful provisions made for them, and hence they cannot receive the blessing, the consolation, the comfort now, but must wait for it until the establishment of the Lord’s Kingdom, the binding of Satan, and the opening of their understanding with the eye salve of truth.

But as respects Zion, the consecrated Church, this comfort is now her privilege, and all the children of Zion need to be comforted. First of all they need the comforting knowledge that their sins are forgiven, and that they are no longer strangers and aliens and foreigners, but children of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they suffer with Him. They need to be comforted, too, with the assurance of the Lord’s Word, that our God is very sympathetic, “very pitiful,” and that if anyone be overtaken in a fault, that he may be restored, and “not be utterly cast down.” If the children of Zion had no such consolations as these, they surely would be utterly discouraged, disheartened, and faint by the way; hence the Lord has provided these comforting assurances, pointing out to them that, having begun a good work in them, He is desirous of completing it, if they will permit Him to do so, and that to this end they must abide in Christ by faith, coupled with obedience to the extent of their ability. What Christian is there who has not shared these consolations, these comforts, and what Christian has not needed them, and realised without them he would long since have been undone?

The Scriptures point out to us that our comfort comes through fellowship with the Heavenly Father, and with our Lord Jesus; we are comforted not by believing that they are ignorant of our weaknesses and short comings, nor that they have a low standard of righteousness and a sinful basis of friendship, but quite to the contrary of all this they comfort us with the assurance that although our every imperfection is known to the Lord, He is yet very sympathetic, very merciful; and that, having provided in the great sacrifice at

Calvary a full propitiation (satisfaction) for all sins, the Lord is very pleased to apply on behalf of each of His true children, in full measure, the riches of grace necessary to the covering and offsetting of every unintentional, unapproved error and failure. What comfort is here! What consolation! What privileges of fellowship with the Father and the Son!

And this comfort, the Scriptures assure us, comes to us through the holy spirit—it is the channel, and hence indeed called the Comforter. (John 14:26.) Those who have it may have the comfort, and those who do not have it may not have this comfort, this consolation. It is only as we receive the spirit and the mind of the Lord, His disposition, that we are able to understand and appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of His love and compassion and provision for us, and to be comforted thereby.

Nevertheless, this comfort of the holy spirit (the channel of divine favour) reaches us through the Scriptures as the medium or sub-channel through which the knowledge of God's grace and the comfort of all knowledge reaches us; in the Apostle's language, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.)

Yet while this comfort is of the Father, through the Son, by the holy spirit, communicated though the Scriptures, we are informed that in great measure it is communicated by the members of the body of Christ one to another, as the Apostle, for instance, after relating certain features of the divine plan respecting the deliverance of the Church says, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:18.) Similarly the Apostle declares that he sent Timothy to the Church at Colosse, that he might comfort their hearts. This, of course, signifies that he was to draw their attention to the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's Word, and that thus they might drink in the holy spirit of all the promises, and that thus they might be comforted, and not only with respect to the things promised, but with respect to the loving compassion and sympathy of Him Who promises them.

Writing to the Thessalonians, the Apostle says that he sent Timothy "to establish you and to comfort you concerning your faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto, for verily, when we were with you we told you we should suffer tribulation even as it came to pass, and ye know.

For this cause when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith lest by some means the tempter had tempted you." (1 Thess. 3:2-5.) Here again it is evident that the comforting signifies and implies establishment in the faith once delivered to the saints, that all the terms and conditions of our covenant should be clearly held in mind, and that the promises of reward at the end of the journey might serve to comfort, strengthen and establish the children of Zion in their endurance of the tribulations as good soldiers. This comfort again was of the Lord, through the holy spirit, through the agency of Paul, and Timothy. Again, the same Apostle, speaking in the same strain, says, "Wherefore, comfort yourselves together and edify one another, even as also ye do." (1 Thess. 5:11.)

All of the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and His representatives, it will be their privilege not only by and by in the Kingdom to "comfort all that mourn," and to be trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:2.) But they should remember that in the present life they have a ministry of comfort, to perform also towards all who mourn in Zion, towards all of the Lord's people who are in any tribulation, physical or mental disquiet, disease." And they should remember, too, that just in proportion as they are filled with this spirit now, it is their privilege to bind up the broken-hearted and comfort the mourning ones. No one can have this spirit of helpfulness, this disposition to comfort and to strengthen, and to edify and to up-build the household of faith, except he have in considerable measure the spirit of love, of truth, and the spirit of the Lord; and in proportion as each one seeks to cultivate this privilege of brotherly helpfulness in comforting

and upbuilding and strengthening, in that same proportion he will find the spirit of love developing and abounding in his own heart, and that his likeness to the Lord Jesus, the Head of the body, is becoming more pronounced from day to day, and from year to year.

Finally, in view of What we have seen respecting the Lord's goodness towards- His people, and the method by which He comforts them through the holy spirit, the Scriptures, and the brethren, let us note one of Apostle's expressions respecting the great comfort and consolation which God has provided for His consecrated, faithful people, saying:

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort them, which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. 1:3, 4.)

So then, all of our lessons and experiences in life in connection with trials and difficulties if we are rightly exercised by them, should bring us larger experiences in the Lord's comfort, through the gracious promises of His Word, and the spirit of the same; and should make us the more capable and efficient agents and representatives of the Lord, His Word, and His spirit in communicating comfort to others in their trials and difficulties.

Darkest night

"Darkest night will always come before the morning,

Silver linings shine on God's side of the cloud;

All your journey He has promised to be with you,

Nought has come to you but what His love allowed.

"Have faith in God. The sun will shine,

Though dark the clouds may be to-day;

His heart has planned your path and mine;

Have faith in God, have faith always."

Beware of a half-truth; you may have got hold of the wrong half.

Question Box.

Question:

One of the commandments the Lord gave to Israel through Moses, states—"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God."—Deut. 22:5. Should this commandment be understood as a guide for Christians today?

Answer:

It would seem that all the instruction God gave to His typical people, Israel, was really important and was intended to keep them as pure and healthy physically and morally as possible under the reign of sin and death. It is very evident, then, that the Lord's command, as stated above, was intended to impress upon the men and women of Israel that their own sex must be considered very sacred, that they must not think loosely or act in a way that would make their sex cheap in the eyes of the opposite sex. The fact that the commandment states that all who act contrary are abomination to the Lord, shows that it was a serious matter and must be so regarded by all Israel.

What shall we say of spiritual Israelites today; could they adopt a lower standard than natural Israelites? Surely not; rather should true Christians to-day have a higher estimation of their place in the Church of Christ, the Body of Christ, than did the natural Israelites have of their position as God's natural people. As God has set the members in the Body as it has pleased Him (1 Cor. 12:18) , the brethren to perform the public ministry and represent their Lord and Head, and the sisters to undertake the quieter and supporting work in the Church and represent the Church as a whole, who would wish to present a wrong example and witness for God by wearing apparel belonging to the opposite sex? Surely no one who wished to please the Lord and represent His cause in all modesty and wise gentleness of which the world is sorely in need to-day.

It was in the days of Noah that loose conditions in the world developed into such a corrupt state that God found it necessary to send the Flood to destroy all except Noah and his family. Now, in the end of the Gospel Age, we are living at the time which our Lord stated would be similar to the days of Noah. (Matt. 24:37-39.) Young people to-day, and some not so young, especially in the larger cities of the world, are causing concern to those in authority because of their loose morals. Christians come in contact with worldly conditions, and it is part of their daily discipline to "keep themselves unspotted from the world." Familiarity with the worldly ways tends to lower the standard of Christians if they are not fully alert; however, the power of the Lord overcomes the world and its spirit in the hearts of those who have really submitted their lives to His service. They will esteem it a privilege to belong to those of whom our Lord prayed to the Father—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." (John 17:16, 17.) And Paul's exhortation to Timothy is also appropriate for Christians to-day: "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conduct, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12.)

A Tried Prescription.

On one occasion a clever physician, who was an unbeliever, said to a Christian: "I am surprised that such an intelligent man as you should believe an old fable like Christianity."

"Well," said the Christian, "suppose, years ago, somebody had given you a prescription for pulmonary consumption, and you had tried it, and been cured of that terrible disease. Suppose you had used that prescription in your practice ever since, and never knew it to fail. What would you say of the man who refused to believe in it.?"

"I should say he was a fool," replied the physician.

"Twenty-five years ago," said the Christian, "I tried the power of God's grace. It made a different man of me. All these years I have preached salvation to others, and have never known it to fail. I have seen it make the proud man humble, the drunken man temperate, the profane man pure in speech, the dishonest man true. Rich and poor, learned and unlearned, old and young, have alike been healed of their diseases."

"You've caught me fairly; I have been a fool," was the admission of the sceptic.

There are many who scoff at Christianity, but they cannot deny its power for good.—Selected.

Posting "Peoples Paper"

Some of our readers of "Peoples Paper" are not yet acquainted with the mailing of two copies of the "Paper" together each two months, and sometimes think their copies are going astray. However, the high postage rate now operating makes this arrangement necessary, and it is hoped all our friends will now understand. It should not be expected that copies of "Peoples Paper" will always arrive early in the second month, but rather during the month of issue of the later one of the two copies mailed together.

Christian Way Ended.

On the afternoon of 22nd July last, one of the younger members of our truth friends, in the person of Sister Pocock (nee Sister Thelma Charlton) of Canberra, finished the Christian way.

Our young Sister had been brought up in the good influence of the truth in the home circle and after coming to years of discretion had consecrated her life to walk in the steps of Christ. With a physical disability from childhood she had many trials during her Christian walk which, however, were no doubt tempered and relieved by the influence of the truth in her heart. We are glad to know that all these trials are now over, and trust that our dear Sister Girlie, as she was known to her nearer truth friends, has received the Lord's approval and blessedness in the heavenly reward, by His grace.

Sincere sympathy is extended to Brother Pocock and other dear relatives in their sad bereavement. Especially is the loss felt by Sister Charlton and Sister Grant, inasmuch as only five months previously our dear Brother Charlton had finished the Christian way. However, in visiting the Charlton home again at the time of sorrow, it was a joy to realise that the Lord's grace and blessing was again manifest in a very marked degree in the hearts of these dear Sisters, enabling them to accept the Lord's will so fully, as expressed by our Sister Charlton in a letter—"Many things have happened since you were here, some bright spots and some sombre ones, but we are trying hard to keep ever so close to our Lord and Master. We will try and readjust ourselves to the changed conditions and we feel the Lord will help us, because He has never forsaken us yet, and we do want to accept His will in all things, even to have Him 'more intimately nigh than e'en the sweetest earthly tie.' "

The Flight of Time.—From Two Standpoints.

To those whose hopes and aims are of this life it is a sad thought, so quickly the time flies and so little is done. So many things they hoped for and expected to accomplish and to have, are still undone and are becoming more difficult and doubtful of attainment, and hope and interest gradually sink into a resigned disappointment, or worse still into bitterness.

How different with us—the Lord's people. All we value most is still in the future and yearly growing nearer; it is certain and sure. Based upon the eternal promises, there is no possibility of disappointment so long as we ourselves are true and faithful. The passing time we can smile at so long as we try to do our best each passing day, and even when we fail to do as well as we wish, we need not grieve but remember our unwilling faults are covered, and so rejoice and press on.

God's Will Is Best

“God's will is best: faith's vision may be darkened,
And tangling influence our feet arrest;
Yet to our cry for guidance
One has hearkened:
God's will is best.

“We raise our tear-dimmed eyes with eager longing,
To pierce the clouds that crown the mountain's crest;
And watch the chill mists round the pathway thronging,
With hearts distrest.

“God's will is best—oh! tired heart and weary:
Each footfall finds you nearer to your rest;
And God prints on your pathway, lone and dreary,
‘God's will is best.’

“Why seek to know the secrets of the morrow;
Or what new dangers may your way infest?
‘Tis Providence apportions joy or sorrow
To be your guest.

“God's will is best—seek not to do God's planning:
Nor of the future make untrusting quest:
He only of your whole life has the scanning;
God's will is best.

“Enough for mortal feet the step before them;
Enough, for mortal hands, life's next behest;
Enough to know Immortal Love is o'er them;
God's will is best.

“God's will is best—your first dawn may be over;
Life's noon be past, its sun low in the west,
And night full nigh; but Heaven's morn will discover
God's will is best.”

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—9 Howard Street, Perth.—Sundays. 3 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

moments as they go

Buy up the moments as they go,
Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;
Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
And find the harvest-home of light.

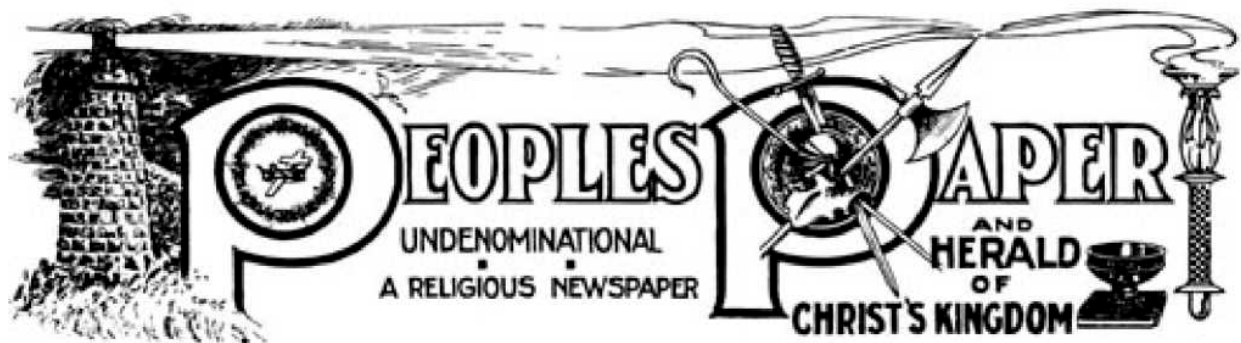
Our love to Jesus Christ is no other but the reflex of His on us.—Leighton.

“Gentle words fall lightly, but they have great weight.”—Anon.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

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Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon?

Will Australia Be Involved?

(This article, the subject of a Public Lecture, is published by request, as fully as space permits.)

THE subject of the Battle of Armageddon is, we believe, a most interesting and vital one in the minds of a great number of people, not only those who are really interested in the Bible. This is understandable, because in the minds of most thinking people the term Armageddon has attached to it the idea of a great day of reckoning, in which God will be the Controller and Overseer.

This general idea of Armageddon on the part of thinking people, many of whom make no claim of understanding the Bible, is very much in harmony with the Scriptural record, for the only place where Armageddon is mentioned in the Bible, namely, Revelation 16:16, it is stated in the context (verse 14) , that “the kings of the earth and of the whole world are gathered to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

Now it is usually helpful, when trying to fit any great event into the history of mankind, to take a broad view of God’s Plan of the Ages and seek to determine at what time the Bible indicates a change takes place in God’s dealings with mankind. In other words, God has called a halt to man’s disobedience at various times throughout the ages. We think of the time in Noah’s day, when mankind went on in their pleasures and wickedness, and it is recorded—”They knew not till the Flood came and took them all away,” (Matt. 24:39.) Only Noah heeded God’s advice and instruction, and was saved with his family from that terrible judgment of God.

Then, at our Lord’s first advent, God sent a great judgment upon Israel because of their blindness and hardness of heart in rejecting their Messiah. Jesus’ spoke of this severe experience for Israel a few days prior to His death on the cross, as follows—”And when he was come near, he beheld the city (Jerusalem), and wept over it, saying, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children with thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” (Luke 19:41-44.)

The Apostle Paul in writing to the Thessalonians, also referred to. this great judgment of God upon Israel, when he stated, “They both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sin alway; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.” (1 Thes. 2:15, 16.) In the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was fulfilled also the words of the multitude when Pilate would have released Jesus—”His blood be on us, and on our children.” However, God had good reasons, no doubt, for permitting that great judgment upon Israel at the close of the Jewish Age, and which will yet be to their advantage when the Kingdom Age is established, and Israel and all mankind are raised from the dead to benefit, if they will, from past experiences and the blessings then to be available for all.

Further, in the end of this present Gospel Age, at the time of Christ’s second advent, God is going to call the greatest halt to man’s disobedience in the whole history of the human race. Various terms are used in the Bible to describe this great time of God’s reckoning with the human race, such as we have seen—”That great day of God Almighty.” And again, “The great day of God’s wrath,” “The day of Jehovah,” etc. Then, in Revelation, we have the symbol of a great earthquake given to describe this same upheaval and great levelling process which will humble the human family before their Creator. It reads in Rev. 6:12, 15-17—”And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake . . . And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens (secret societies, etc.) and in the rocks (fortresses of society, civil and ecclesiastical) of the mountains (kingdoms) ; and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us. (over or about, to cover and protect us), and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?”

From the faithful Apostle Paul we find the true setting for the time when all men, great and small, shall be required to render their accounts to the Lord, so to speak. In his second letter to the Corinthians, chapter 10, Paul explains that the weapons in the Christian warfare are not carnal, but nevertheless they are “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds (of error and sin) ; casting down imaginations (human reasonings), and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” This is the important work that is going on in the lives of all true followers of Christ, through the power of God; and then the Apostle adds—”And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience (in the world at large), when your obedience (the Church’s obedience) is fulfilled.” (2 Cor. 10:4-6.) In other words; this is a prophetic statement revealing that after the followers of Christ have fulfilled their covenant of sacrifice, after their “obedience” unto death has been accomplished, joyfully, gladly, in the steps of the Master, at the end of the Gospel Age, the time will then be due for God to deal with all disobedience amongst the masses of mankind.

This judgment of mankind is described in various terms also by the prophets. The Lord, through the prophet Joel, gives some vivid descriptions of His “ revenging of all disobedience” in chapter 3, as follows—”Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near . . . Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen. and gather yourselves together round about . . . Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat (God’s pleading judgment) ; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; tome, get ye down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision (trial, crisis).” (Joel 3:9-14.)

Through the prophet Jeremiah we have the further record from the Lord—”Therefore thou shalt say unto them (the nations generally), thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and

spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink. For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city (Babylon, Christendom) which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished?

Ye shall not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord.” (Jer. 25:27-31.)

The statement, “The Lord hath a controversy with the nations,” is of special interest. The meaning of the word “controversy” is contest. The Lord hath a contest with the nations—the day of reckoning is indicated. And this is just the thought contained in the term “Armageddon” which means “mount of destruction.”

The Mount of Megiddo was noted in olden times as the scene of great battles, and so it is used in the Scriptures to describe God’s decisive controversy or contest with the nations of the earth. But why does the prophet say, the Lord hath a controversy or contest with the nations—all the nations? For the same reason, that in Revelation it says that the kings of the earth and of the whole world are gathered to the battle of that great day of God Almighty—to

Armageddon.

But could all nations be gathered to the literal Mount of Megiddo in Palestine? Is that what the Scriptures mean?

No, we do not think so! Just as Babylon of olden times was literal, and Babylon of the New Testament is symbolic; just as Egypt of olden times was literal, and Egypt of the New Testament is symbolic; so Armageddon of olden times was literal, and Armageddon of Revelation is symbolic. When we speak today of an army, or even of individuals meeting their “Waterloo” we do not think of them going to the actual place of Waterloo, in France, where the Duke of Wellington’s soldiers defeated the French army. No, we mean that such an army or individuals are defeated in any particular engagement. So, in the same sense, all nations, all mankind, will meet their “Waterloo” in the great Battle of Armageddon—the great Day of God Almighty.

Does that mean that events in the Middle East, in the vicinity of the Mount of Megiddo, are of small or no importance in connection with the Battle of Armageddon? No, it does not mean that! Events in Palestine, Persia, Iran, Egypt, etc., are most significant, and certainly so foreshadow Armageddon—that part of Armageddon which has to do with that part of the world. A prophecy of Ezekiel is most informative in this connection; from the 38th chapter, it states—“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army. And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, (set apart, distinguished as thy conqueror) O Gog, before their eyes . . . And it shall come to pass at the’ same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, so that . . . all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains

(kingdoms) shall be thrown down, . . . and I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God; every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. 38:14-23.)

Also, from the prophet Jeremiah, we have a record with marked information concerning not only the Armageddon experiences of Israel, but also revealing the deliverance which will follow the necessary corrections which the Lord sees fit to permit to come upon the descendants of His ancient people gathered in the Holy Land in these last days of the Gospel Age. The prophecy reads —"For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. (Since 1918, particularly, this prophecy has been in course of fulfilment.) And these are the words that the

Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord; we have heard a voice of trembling of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. . . . Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." (Jer. 30:3-11.) Surely, a most wonderful promise of God's protecting care and final deliverance of Israel in their Armageddon strife, in preparation for their blessing and establishment as the earthly center of the Lord's Kingdom on earth, after which the ancient prophets will be resurrected to take their place as "princes in all the earth" (Psa. 45:16), to administer the New Order, as "the law shall go forth of Zion (the heavenly phase of the kingdom), and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Micah. 4 :1. 2. See also Zech. 14:1-3, 6-9.)

But what of other parts of the world? Do events in Korea, China, Malaya, India, The Balkans, Europe, Soviet Russia, North and South America, etc., foreshadow Armageddon? They surely do! Hear the Lord, through the prophet Zephaniah—"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth (order of society on earth) shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." (Zeph. 3:8.) Could there be anything clearer than that this is the Lord's "controversy (contest) with the nations,"—all the nations, great and small? And who can doubt the outcome!

The prophet Haggai adds his testimony from the Lord, as follows—"For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens (ecclesiastical systems, rejected by the Lord), and the earth (organized, law-abiding society), and the sea (restless masses of mankind), and the dry land (social aristocracy of wealth etc.) : and I will shake all nations. (Haggai 2:6. See also Heb. 12:26, 27.)

Is it not very evident that the nations at large must all pass through Armageddon? Does this include Australia; will Australia be involved in Armageddon? Yes, absolutely! But Australians do not go to the Mount of Megiddo, in Palestine, for the Lord's "controversy (contest) with the nations." No, indeed! Armageddon experiences are coming to Australia; to every state in Australia; to every city and town in Australia; to every home in Australia; to every individual in Australia.!!

How do we view these matters; with grief and sadness? Or do we love God's will concerning each feature of His plan which He, in His wisdom, sees is necessary for the ultimate prosperity of the human family? Armageddon strife will really humble all mankind, and the Lord declares, through the prophet—"Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9.) Thus, "the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai 2:7.) Just to think of that—no more contention and strife between the nations behind the "Iron Curtain" with those of the West; no more wars or preparations for war, because the lasting lessons will have been learned, and those who then will not hear (obey) that prophet (Christ and His Church in glory) shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23.)

Who, that grasps the glorious, outcome of the Divine purposes for mankind, including God's victory for the benefit of the human race in His "controversy (contest) with the nations" cannot truly say—"I love Thy will, O God; Thy blessed perfect will; in which this once rebellious heart lies satisfied and still?"

And while we saw from the Apostle Paul, that God has "in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your (the Christians') obedience is fulfilled," showing that most of Armageddon's strife will follow the deliverance of the Lord's people to the heavenly kingdom, yet some of God's true people will likely pass through a measure of earth's travail, and the appropriate questions such would do well to bring to mind are, How shall we act when the pressure comes? Shall we be at our wits end, like the world of mankind? And the answer, No, the Lord's people may, and shall still be, as "lights in the world," examples of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. The harvest work having been completed, public lectures will all be past, classes for Bible study, etc., will be impossible, but these gatherings will have accomplished lasting benefit, by the Lord's grace, in the hearts of those who, now, having still the opportunity, delight to meet in the Lord's name, in spirit and truth, with other dear Christians of like precious faith. With Armageddon strife all around the last members of the Lord's people in the flesh, such may take comfort from the words of Moses to the Israelites on that memorable occasion of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage—"Fear ye not, standstill, and see the salvation of the Lord." Also, as the little hymn expresses the matter—"Nothing left but time for prayer; waiting to be gathered there."

While this must surely be the happy condition of God's true people, waiting for their deliverance to the heavenly kingdom, what of other human beings, many of whom are good people who love the Lord, and yet are not consecrated followers of the Master? It may be fitting here to mention the view presented from the headquarters of a certain religious organization and proclaimed by their adherents, that the Lord will grant protection through Armageddon to all people of good will who join their "Theocratic Organization." In other words, these adherents are practically promised a passport through the Armageddon strife because of their affiliation with this movement which claims the exclusive right to represent Jehovah in the earth today. But does God's Word support such a theory? We know of no Scriptures which promise either heavenly or earthly blessings to any of earth's inhabitants because of their association with an earthly organization. The only ones to whom the Lord promises the heavenly inheritance are those "whose names are written in heaven"—not on any earthly membership roll. (Heb. 12:23.) And the only ones on earth who "may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger," are the meek, as expressed in Zephaniah 2:3—"Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Seeking righteousness and meekness is very good, and the prophet's words imply that the lowly minded will not be involved in the struggles and strife of trying to prop up the present "heavens and earth," and so they may be measurably "hidden," outside the influence of the chaos which will extend throughout all lands. Be it noted, however, that there is no Scriptural authority for any systems of men to grant protection through Armageddon to any of their followers. False claims of this kind can be very deceptive, just as false claims of the Papacy to be the only true church on earth has deceived millions through the centuries. God does not deal with groups of people—because they belong to this or that church on earth. God deals with individuals only whose hearts are lifted up to Him in spiritual communion, now; and to a lesser degree with individuals

who feel after Him and desire righteousness with a meek disposition, even though they may not be seeking the heavenly kingdom.

In conclusion, the Psalmist presents a comforting message of assurance to the last members in Christ when he declares—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth (organized society) be removed (unsettled and overthrown), and though the mountains (kingdoms) be carried into the midst of the sea (swept into the lawless, ungovernable masses of mankind) ; though the waters thereof roar (become infuriated) and be troubled (with the disputing of contending factions), though the mountains shake (by terrible revolutions) with the swelling thereof." Yes, God's people may commit their whole existence into the care of their Heavenly Father in full confidence, during the passing of the "present evil world." They will be just waiting the Lord's good time for their full deliverance into the kingdom of His dear Son. And even in the waiting attitude they are supplied with heavenly sustenance — "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God (the Church, in which God dwells), the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her at the dawning of her morning,"—when she has passed through her night time, in which "no man can work," and has been ushered into glory. Her morning is to precede the Millennial morning. (Psa. 46:1 - 5 .)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention ,will be held this year

(D.V.), from December 25th to December 28th inclusive, with extra gatherings on New Year's Day, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. An invitation is extended to all friends able to assemble for these gatherings around the Lord's Word. Further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue,

Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

Harvest Fruit.

Should we not esteem the fruit borne in our lives of more consequence than the results of labours in the harvest work? Does not 2 Tim. 2:6 teach this?

So, even if there was no fruit from the harvest work except the fruit of patience, humility and fortitude borne in our own lives, it would more than pay to be in that work.

“God’s mercy ‘tis which hides results—
A mercy which our good consults;
For did He choose He could reveal
The fruitage of our Christian zeal.”

“He might have shown the seed you thought
Had surely died and come to naught
Was living in some unknown place,
Producing words and works of grace.”

Our heavenly Father wants us to work for Him, not for results—work from principle, not from a mere desire to see our efforts prospering.

Each in his way is indispensable. To do our own share in the acting, and to feel that each one is an integral, essential portion of the whole, not interfering with the rest, is cooperating best in the work.—F. W. Robertson.

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Restitution Opportunities for All People.

RESTITUTION for the human family is a wonderful truth which abounds throughout the Word of God. What a gracious provision God has made in His Plan in providing that the benefits of Christ's sacrifice shall be as extensive and far-reaching as the condemnation has been through Adam's disobedience. The Apostle's words, that Jesus "by the grace of God tasted death for every man," (Heb. 2:9), really mean what they say—that every human being who has lived will be given an opportunity to gain life through accepting Christ, in due time. How strange it is that any teaching should seek to prohibit the opportunity for restitution to certain races or sections of humanity, without any Scriptural authority. This article is presented in the hope that it may prove helpful on the subject of the Kingdom opportunities for "all the families of the earth."

The Apostle Peter tells us that restitution is spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets. (Acts 3:20, 21.) They do all teach it. Ezekiel says of the valley of dry bones, "These bones are the whole house of Israel." And God says to Israel, "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I . . . shall put my spirit in you, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."—Ezek. 37:11-14.

To this Paul's words agree (Rom. 11:25, 26)—"Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles (the elect company, the bride of Christ) be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved," or brought back from their cast-off condition; for "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew." (Verse 2.) They were cast off from His favor while the bride of Christ was being selected, but will be reinstated when that work is accomplished. (Verses 28-33.) The prophets are full of statements of how God will plant them again, and they shall be no more plucked up. "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, . . . I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; and I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." (Jer. 24:5-7; 31:28; 32:40-42 ; 33:6-16.) These cannot merely refer to restorations from former captivities in Babylon, Syria, etc., for they have since been plucked up.

Furthermore, the Lord says, "In those days, they shall say no more, the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge, but every one (who dies) shall die for his own iniquity." (Jer. 31:29, 30.) This is not the case now. Each does not now die for his own sin, but for Adam's sin—"In Adam all die." He ate the sour grape of sin, and our fathers continued to eat them, entailing further sickness and misery upon their children, thus hastening the penalty, death. The day in which "every man (who dies) shall die for his own sin," only, is the Millennial or

Restitution day.

Though many of the prophecies and promises of future blessing seem to apply to Israel only, it must be remembered that they' were a typical people, and hence the promises made to them, while sometimes having a special application to themselves, generally have also a wider application to the whole world of mankind which that nation typified.

While Israel as a nation was typical of the whole world, its priesthood was typical of the elect "little flock," the head and body of Christ, the "Royal Priesthood;" and the sacrifices, cleansings and atonements made for Israel typified the "better sacrifices," fuller cleansings and real atonement "for the sins of the whole world," of which they are a part.

And not only so, but God mentions by name other nations and promises their restoration. As a forcible illustration we mention the Sodomites. Surely, if we shall find the restitution of the Sodomites clearly taught, we may feel satisfied of the truth of this glorious doctrine of Restitution for all mankind, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.

And why should not the Sodomites, have an opportunity to reach perfection and everlasting life as well as Israel, or as any of us? True, they were not righteous, but neither was Israel, nor were we who now hear the gospel. "There is none righteous; no, not one," aside from the imputed righteousness of Christ, who died for all. Our Lord's own words tell us that although God rained down fire from heaven and destroyed them all because of their wickedness, yet the Sodomites were not so great sinners in His sight as were the Jews, who had more knowledge. 19:-24; Luke 17:29.) Unto the Jews of Cigixiiianni He said, "If the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."—Matt. 11 :23.

Thus our Lord teaches that the Sodomites did not have a full opportunity; and He guarantees them such opportunity when He adds (verse 24), "But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee." Thus, it will be a tolerable time for Capernaum, and yet more tolerable for Sodom; because, though neither had yet had full knowledge, nor all the blessings designed to come through the "Seed," yet Capernaum had sinned against more light.

And if Capernaum and all Israel are to be remembered and blessed under the New Covenant, sealed in due time by the blood of Jesus, why should not the Sodomites also be blessed among "all the families of the earth?" They assuredly will be. And let it be remembered that since God "rained down fire from heaven and destroyed them all" many centuries before Jesus' day, when their restoration is spoken of, it implies their awakening, their coming from the tomb.

Examining the prophecy of Ezekiel 16:48-63, it will be noted that God speaks of Israel, and compares her with her neighbour, Samaria, and also with the Sodomites, of whom He says, "I took them away as I saw good." Neither Jesus nor the Prophet offers any explanation of the seeming inequality of God's dealings in destroying Sodom and permitting others more guilty than Sodom to go unpunished. That will all be made clear when, in "due time," His great designs are made manifest. The Prophet simply states that God "saw good" to do so, and Jesus adds that it will be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment than for others more guilty. But upon the supposition that death ends all probation for these people, and that thereafter none may have opportunity to come to a knowledge of the truth and to obey it, we may well inquire, Why did God see good to take away these people without giving them a chance of salvation through the knowledge of the only name whereby they can be saved? The answer is, because it was not yet their due time. In "due time" they will be awakened from death and brought to a knowledge of the truth, and thus blessed together with all the families of the earth, by the promised "Seed." They will then be on trial for everlasting life.

Further, in this prophecy, after comparing Israel with Sodom and Samaria, and pronouncing Israel the most blameworthy (Ezek. 16:48-54), the Lord says, "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them." The captivity referred to can be no other than their captivity in death; for those

mentioned were then dead. In death all are captives; and Christ comes to open the doors of the graves, and to set at liberty the captives. (Isa. 61:1; Zech. 9:11.) In verse 55 this is called a "return to their former estate"—a restitution.

Some, who are willing enough to accept of God's mercy through Christ in the forgiveness of their own trespasses and weaknesses under great light and knowledge, cannot conceive of the same favor being applicable under the New Covenant to others; though they seem to admit the Apostle's statement that Jesus Christ, by the favor of God, tasted death for every man. Some of these suggest that the Lord must, in this prophecy, be speaking ironically to the Jews, implying that He would just as willingly bring back the Sodomites as them, but had no intention of restoring either.

But let us see how succeeding verses agree with this idea. The Lord says, "Nevertheless, I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then, thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters . . . And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." When a promise is thus signed by the Great Jehovah, all who have set to their seal that God is true may rejoice in its certainty with confidence.

To this Paul adds his testimony, saying, "And so -all Israel (living and dead) shall be saved (recovered from blindness), as it is written, 'There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.' . . . They are beloved for the fathers' sakes; because the gracious gifts and callings of God are not things to be repented of." —Rom. 11:26-29.

We need not wonder that Jews, Sodomites, Samaritans, and all mankind, will be ashamed and confounded when in His own "due time" God shows forth the riches of His favor. Yea, many of those who now claim to be God's children will be confounded and amazed when they see how God so loved the world and how much His thoughts and plans were above their own.

A King

Talking on board ship to an English acquaintance, a leading American statesman was discussing the problem of bettering the conditions prevailing in great cities, and finally said that the only solution was a king.

"Oh," said the Englishman, "I thought you Americans had done with all that."

"No," said the other, "we know the King we want, and are waiting for Him. His name is Jesus, and we pray daily 'Thy Kingdom come.' "

Prayer.

To offer prayer I never durst presume.
Did not dear Jesu's name my prayer perfume;
'Tis, O my God, for the loved Jesus sake,
That day by day address to Thee I make;
Though sinful, I dare Thee my Father own,
With humble confidence approach Thy throne.

O wondrous love, which gives us free recourse
To drink our fill at love's unbounded source,
Our sorrow to unbosom, and our need,
And a rich promise for each want to plead;
With heaven while here below to keep commerce,
Familiarly with God to hold converse:

To intercede for blessings on mankind,
The pleasure of a charitable mind;
To beg all graces, deprecate all bane,
Heaven for ourselves and others to obtain.—T.K.

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Melbourne,—Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus, Greetings. Our Lord said, "Who are my brethren; he that doeth the will of my Father." And as I believe you are endeavouring to do the will of our Heavenly Father I am pleased to call you brethren.

I was pleased to receive your letter, also booklets, broadcast copies, etc., and am very glad to have at last caught up with you. I think the Lord must have led us to your broadcast, as we have been looking for a long time to find someone whose teaching we could harmonize with our own, and as soon as we heard the first broadcast we recognised the tie that binds.

You see, we used to be very active in the I.B.S.A. Class in for many years; then we lost touch for some years. After we came to the seaside we tried to fellowship with the J.Ws., but they are impossible. One must not ask questions, and only answer what is in the Tower; there is no salvation outside of the Theocratic Organization; all the people who lived before the Flood have had their judgment day, no resurrection for them; also Sodom and Gomorrah, no resurrection for them. What a wonderful victory for Satan if they were right but thank God we know they are not right.

We still love the Lord and pass on the glad tidings whenever we have the opportunity. We have not read all that you sent, but we have read enough to know that we are in harmony with it. For a start will you please forward the following-6 copies each of "Plan of God"; "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"; "Do the Dead Know Anything?"; "The Lord is My Shepherd"; "Peace Desired." Also "Peoples Paper" subscriptions for myself (two years) and two friends. I am enclosing cheque covering cost of the above, and £5 to the Radio Fund. If ever you come up this way we would be very pleased to see you, and if you should require it we could put you up for the night.

We pray that the Lord will richly bless your labor of love in His service. Your Brother and Sister, by His grace.

Berean Bible Institute,—Thank you very much for your kind letter and the literature which my husband and I have read with great interest.

We are most interested in the Bible and we feel the more we delve into it the more we shall understand it and learn to appreciate its great value. We do not like to miss your Sunday morning talks, as we find them most informative and instructive and makes us want to search the Scriptures more. It is a living Book and so up to date.

We would very much like to have copies of the broadcasts and any other literature which you think will be helpful to us, and which we will pass on to others. I was brought up Baptist, but like so many other churches, the Bible was never made really interesting and it is only now that I am realising what wealth there is in it, and that everything is coming true to prophecy.

Again thanking you for your help and the literature. Yours sincerely.

Dear Christian Friends,—Your broadcasts are wonderful. Would you send me a copy of last Sunday's talk please?

I will send you a donation later on, as I am not able to get out at present. I am a converted R.C., so you can see how greatly I need your help to overcome all the false doctrines I've been taught, and my people are mostly all still blind and very bitter towards me. I only found my blessed Saviour three years ago. Yours in His keeping.

Dear Frank and Ernest,—My husband and I are interested in your discussions over 2KY Radio Station, and would like to receive some of your literature setting out if you are undenominational, or if denominational what creed do you profess? We think it is only fair to state that we find it difficult to make a selection out of the many Protestant creeds and several Catholic creeds recognised to be generally in existence, and in the circumstances are compelled to interpret the Scriptures, which admittedly is confusing, according to those faculties which have been passed on to us. Sufficient it is to say that in the absence of any other light given to us, we call ourselves Christians without any of the creeds of Christendom.

We think that theologians, over the years, have only succeeded in confusing the teachings of Christ and His Apostles and have concluded the best way to understand Christianity is by diligent study of the Bible and by prayerfully seeking the grace of God for our enlightenment whilst at the same time keeping an open mind for enlightenment from the various commentators on Christianity. Awaiting the favor of your esteemed views. Yours faithfully.

(The broadcasts of Frank and Ernest, and work of the Berean Bible Institute are wholly on an undenominational basis, with the Bible as the only authority for truth.—B.B. Institute.)

Brothers Frank and Ernest—Greetings in the matchless name of Jesus. I am so glad that you are also free from the bondage of denominationalism. "Whom the

Son sets free is free indeed." May the Father of us all pour into you His richest blessings of light, truth, love and power through His spirit.

In my diligent search for Truth our Father led me to listen to your program last Sunday. The holy spirit in me agreed with your vision of God's plan for Jew and Gentile; I would be delighted to receive your offer of the booklet and printed messages, so that I may share with others the good things that are available for all who seek. Your Brother in Jesus.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Brothers in Christ,—I have been listening to your broadcasts each Sunday morning, and I have enjoyed them very much. I have followed up the series on the “Plan of God,” and it has helped me to understand God’s Plan better. I would like to have a copy of that booklet called “The Plan of God in Brief”, also a copy of the new booklet.

I am fourteen years of age and I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour two years ago . . . I was baptized last October. Thanking you for your help. I am; your Sister in Christ.

Dear Frank and Ernest,—We have heard a lot of interested comments on your session, and though we have tried to get your broadcast, our set does not seem strong enough to pick up your wave length; and so our information regarding your talks comes from a friend who tells us sufficient to make us want to hear more.

We are very interested in Bible study, and indeed have a study group every Sunday night at above address and are glad of any added light on the Scripture teaching.

Would you be kind enough to forward us some literature on all Bible subjects, as we are never tired of learning of the wonderful things contained therein. If there is any charge or postage, let us know, and we will defray the cost by return. Thanking you; yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs,—Happening to listen-in the last three Sunday mornings, 10 a.m., session talks by you, I was much interested in your somewhat unusual views, particularly last Sunday’s, and so am writing, as invited, to ask for the literature you say you have on that subject, or kindred subjects.

As a church worker, and S.S. teacher for years, and so a Scripture student, I seek this favor. Have you anything dealing with John 1:9? For the present I am enclosing note 1/- to cover postage. I am; yours sincerely.

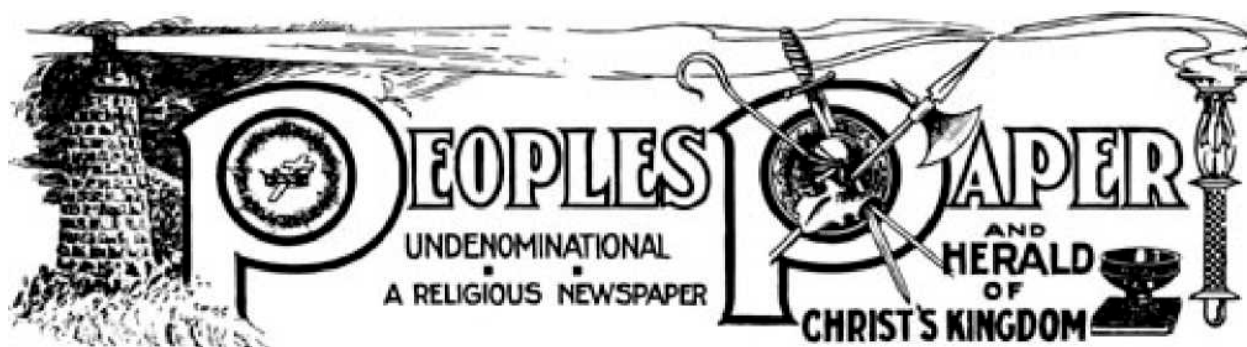
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 N. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 N. ., 4.45 p.m.



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Faithful and Unfaithful Use of Talents.

“Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”—Matt. 25:30.

WE WHO delight to be known as Christians, followers of Jesus, have heretofore been very careless in our study of God's Word, and have thus been disrespectful to our Teacher, and have gotten ourselves into a world of trouble and confusion of thought which is driving many into unbelief. We must learn to be more critical in our reading of the Word of God. We must not assume so much, but must carefully note the Master's exact statements, that we may be able to distinguish between His literal utterances and His parables, dark sayings, figures of speech.

Take, for instance, our text. How few have ever sought to weigh it and to draw proper inferences from it! The usual custom is to conclude that it refers to an eternity of torture into which the majority of our race enter at death; whereas no such conclusion would be a reasonable deduction from the narrative from which the text is taken. It is part of a

parable, every element of which is figurative. Whoever reads the connection will perceive that the person or class mentioned as going into the outer darkness is not represented as going into death at all. Furthermore, the phrase “outer darkness” could not refer to such a place as is generally pictured by evangelists as the future abode of the non-elect; for that place is invariably said to be the very reverse of dark, and its inmates to be shut in—not cast out!

It should be noted that the person or class referred to in our text as cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, is a Christian—not a worldling, not a stranger, alien, foreigner to the Divine promises, but one of the Lord's recognised followers. The punishment comes upon him, not because of murder, theft or blasphemy, not through immoralities, but because of neglect of opportunities of service. Had he been guilty of gross sin, he would not have been recognised of God as a follower of Christ, regardless of any profession he might make to that effect. Having become a consecrated believer in the Lord, he had received a talent of privilege and opportunity in the Master's service, and this he had neglected to use.

From this viewpoint many Christian people should be startled and thoroughly awakened by our text; for undoubtedly many are in the very position described in the parable. An investigation of the matter, which comes close home to themselves, will assist them in the exercise of common sense in the interpretation of

this Scripture; whereas the general tendency seems to be to permit unreason to interpret such texts as these, which are always inferred to belong to the very grossest, immoral enemies of God and the principles of righteousness. The majority of people are much more merciful in thinking about matters which are applicable to themselves; for their love is not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to feel an equal interest in their neighbour—yea, in their enemies.

Let us examine the parable as a whole, in order that we may make no mistake in the application of any of its parts. (Matt. 25:14-30.) It represents the entire Gospel Age—from the time when our Lord ascended on High, going to the far country, even Heaven itself. He left His interests in the hands of His servants—the Apostles and believers in general; and in their hands these interests have remained ever since. The whole narrative shows that not merely nominal Christians are meant by the servants, but true Christians—fully consecrated believers. These alone have the talents belonging to the Lord in their charge for use in His service, “every man according to his several abilities.”

In olden times a talent represented a sum of money, but all will agree that the real thought in the parable is that these talents represent not only financial ability, but also social standing, education, mental equipments, etc.

Those who hear the Lord’s voice calling them as sinners to repentance are not as yet His servants, nor are they entrusted with any of His talents. They are still strangers, aliens and foreigners, without God and having no hope.

(Eph. 2:11-13.) But after they have learned of the grace of God in Christ and of the provision made in Him for the covering of the sins that are past and of the blemishes which are present, then if they rejoicingly accept Him as their Saviour they thereby take the first step toward God. Being thus justified by faith, they have peace with God as respects their former sins and the condemnation under which they realise that they have rested. (Rom. 5:1.) But still they have not yet become servants of God. However, they are in that attitude of mind where the Lord would be willing to accept them as His servants; and hence the Apostle invites such, saying, “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, and your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1.

In his consecration the believer thus lays at the Lord’s feet his life, his time, his influence, together with whatever property or mental endowment he may possess—all for the Lord, “to be used in joyful service for the glory of our King.” It is at this juncture that the Scriptures represent that we are begotten again by the holy spirit to newness of life, newness of aim, newness of purpose. “Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17.) It is these New Creatures whom God recognises as His servants, consecrated in His service; and it is this class which is represented in the parable under discussion. To these servants He gives various talents to be used by them.

Someone may ask, “What are these talents?” We reply, The very talents which they possessed before consecration, and which in consecration they laid at the Lord’s feet. These He now gives over to them, gives into their custody, thus making them stewards of their own time, influence, means, education, mental ability, etc. From this viewpoint we can see how some have one talent, others two talents, and still others five talents; for no two of the Lord’s people are exactly alike in mentality, in influence, in opportunity or in wealth. Each, however, is responsible for exactly the amount thus entrusted to ‘his stewardship, plus whatever increase he may be able to effect; and his love for his Master and his loyalty as a servant are to be tested by the degree of activity he will exercise in the use of these talents, opportunities, etc., under his care.

Although the parable represents the faithfulness of the one having the five talents and of the other having the two talents, and the unfaithfulness of the one having but one talent, this we are to understand is merely

an illustration. It is possible for the person having the one talent to be faithful, and equally possible for those having two or more talents to be unfaithful. Indeed, our experience has been rather along the line that those possessing the most talents are as likely to be amongst the unfaithful as are those who have but the one talent. It is not unreasonable to suppose that by far the majority of those consecrated to the Lord have possessed only one talent.

Hence the Lord's statement of the parable is undoubtedly the most appropriate one, applicable to the larger proportion of His people who will prove derelict, unfaithful, in the use of their consecrated ability in His service.

As a matter of fact, the Lord tells us that not many of those who have money talents will accept His invitation at all. Not many of them will make consecration of themselves, so as to place their natural talents at His disposal or make it possible for them to become stewards of the same. The Scriptural statement, we remember, is that "not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble, according to the course of this world, but rather the poor, rich in faith, hath God chosen to be heirs of the Kingdom."—1 Cor. 1:26-28; James 2:5.

"After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." The reference here is undoubtedly to our Lord's Second Advent, and indicates that then His first work will be with the Church, not with the world. To this agree the words of the Apostle Peter: "Judgment must begin at the house of God." (1 Pet. 4:17.) In this we have a most positive assurance that the servants of the parable are not worldly people at all, who have neither lot nor part in this matter, and who are not in any sense of the word stewards of the grace of God. True, the Lord causes His sun to shine upon the just and the unjust, and His rain to fall upon good and bad alike. But He recognises none as His servants except those who have come to Him in the appointed way—"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—John 14:6.

From the Scriptural outline of the "times and seasons" it is evident that we are now living in the very time of the Second Advent of Christ—the time during which He is reckoning with His servants, preparatory to assuming the Kingdom control of the world. This transfer of the world to Immanuel's Government will be accomplished through the overthrow of present institutions—financial, political, social and religious—in "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:1.

This reckoning of course must include the resurrection change of all the faithful in Christ Jesus, mentioned in the Apostle Paul's description of the First Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:42-44.) Those who during this Gospel Age have been faithful to the Lord in the use of the talents committed to them are in line for the glory, honor and immortality of this First Resurrection, by which they will enter into the joy of their Lord. The Apostle's statement respecting these—that they will differ in the degree of glory received "as star differeth from star in glory"—is corroborated, if not directly by this parable under consideration, at least by the corresponding parable of the pounds. (Luke 19:12-27.) There the rewards are specified in parabolic form; Our Lord declared that one of the faithful should have authority over ten cities, another over five, etc., in His Kingdom.

But now comes the particular feature of the parable from which our text is taken. The servant who had but one talent entrusted to him hid it in the earth. In excusing himself for not having made better use of it, he intimates that his heart was filled with fear instead of with love for his Lord; for he thought of his Lord as unjust, hard, unmerciful, unloving, exacting. He had a bad theology. Alas, how many Christian people are in a similar plight! Having a wrong conception of the Lord's character and purposes, they are deterred from using in His service what talents they possess. Evidently this class is pictured most distinctly in this parable. The hiding of the talent in the earth is full of meaning. It implies that the opportunities and abilities consecrated to the Lord are being buried in earthly interests, earthly affairs — business or pleasure, family or society or what not—to the neglect of the stewardship, and hence to that extent in the

repudiation of the original consecration.

If you, my dear brother or sister, are not in the place of this unfaithful servant, you probably recognise the likeness of some of your fellow servants. They are not bad people; they are not wicked. They are moral, honest in their dealings with their fellow men—though not honest with the Lord in the use of their consecrated talents. Now that you see the person or the class represented by the unfaithful servant in the parable, doubtless your love and your sympathy begin to exercise themselves toward these dear neighbors, friends and relatives. You begin to hope that in God's mercy they are not to be sent to eternal torment because of their carelessness in respect of their consecration vow.

Although there is nothing in the parable to indicate eternal torment for this class of unfaithful servants, nevertheless the punishment outlined is certainly bad enough, severe enough. Our hope is that this article may prove helpful to some who are now in this attitude, to the intent that before their earthly accounts are called for they may take their talent out of its earthly investment, and with redoubled energy and zeal apply it according to their original covenant, hoping in the mercy of God for forgiveness of their previous laxity; and that by His grace they may yet hear His words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The first part of the punishment meted to the unfaithful servant is the loss of the talent—the loss of the opportunity and privilege of service as a co-laborer with the Lord. This implies that the unfaithful one can have neither part nor lot in the Kingdom—cannot be accepted as a member of the glorified Body of Christ. His failure to use his consecrated talent signifies his failure to make his calling and election sure.

The second feature of the punishment is the being cast out from the light and from the privileges enjoyed by those who are the Lord's faithful followers. To be thrust into the outer darkness of the world is to lose what light, privilege and appreciation of spiritual matters had been previously enjoyed. The third feature of the punishment is that the unfaithful servants shall share in the great time of trouble with which this Gospel Age is to end—the time of anarchy and confusion which the faithful class of the Lord's people shall be accounted worthy to escape, as our Lord declared.—Luke 21:36.

The parable merely mentions the punishment of the unfaithful servant without showing what the result will be—how he will be exercised by the tribulations through which he will pass. But the great Teacher who spake the parable sent a message later on to His people in which He indicated just where all unfaithful servants may be found, and through their tribulations be enabled to some extent to recover their standing and obtain a share in the Divine blessing—although not in the Kingdom class. We refer to Revelation 7:9-17. There we see the unfaithful servants after they have passed with weeping and gnashing of teeth through great tribulation, which will have been the experience of this class all down the Gospel Age, and which finally marks the full end of the Age. We see that their severe experiences will work with many of them such a change that they will gladly acclaim their Lord, and rejoice to be serving in His Temple and before His Throne, though not in the Throne as members of the Bride of Christ.

Faithfulness in the use of their talents would have given this class a place with their Lord in His Throne, even as He promised. (Rev. 3:21.) But in His great mercy, while rejecting them from association in the Throne and while causing them to pass through merited tribulation for their unfaithfulness, He will nevertheless permit them to come up through that tribulation, washing their robes in the merit of His sacrifice. To those who are rightly exercised by these experiences He will give the palm of victory, but not the crown; for this is reserved for the faithful servants alone.

But it is not our thought, nor that of the Scriptures, to guarantee that all of the consecrated shall be either in the Throne or before the Throne, shall be -either crowned with our Lord as joint-heirs or else stand as servants with palms of victory in their hands. The Scriptures, bring to our attention still another class

amongst the truly consecrated, namely, such as are described in Heb. 6:4-8 and 10:26, 27. "There is a sin unto death,"—the Second Death. But this sin is some thing beyond the sin of hiding the talent in the earth—neglecting the covenant made with the Lord. From that wilful sin unto death there is no hope of recovery, either in this Age or in that to come.

Let us arouse ourselves, dear fellow servants of the King of Glory. Let us use every talent that we possess to "show forth His praises who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light." Let us develop in our hearts more and more the graces of the holy spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. "For if these things be in you and abound, they will make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the service of the Lord; . . . and so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."-2 Pet. 1 :8- 11 .

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greetings Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

There are five varieties of these cards as follows:—"Just for To-day," "One Here and There," "How Readeest Thou?," "The New Leaf," and "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love." It should be understood that these are not Christmas Cards, but are suitable for general greetings. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid. Samples sent on request.

Friends desiring these cards are asked to order promptly, preferably by the first week in December; orders near the Christmas season may not be filled till early in the new year.

Tracts.

Would you like copies of the article on Armageddon in October's "Peoples Paper" in tract form for distribution?

If so, please order promptly what you can use wisely. As printing costs are high it is suggested that tracts be placed personally or through the post where there are prospects of good being done.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

See notice on this Convention in October "Peoples Paper."

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

If Christ Is God —?

IS IT NOT reasonable that He would establish only ONE Church, and make sure that she did not depart from the Truths He taught?

You are invited to come each Wednesday at 8 p.m., to the meeting room at the rear of St. Mary's Church, to hear a series of talks explaining Catholic teaching. You will be under no obligation of any kind. Other non-Catholics will be present.

The above heading and statement appeared recently in one of Victoria's provincial newspapers, together with an advertisement covering the same information. This method of seeking to make known Roman Catholic teachings is apparently new, but it is certainly helpful to truth seekers to have as much of Roman Catholic teaching revealed in the few statements, which our Catholic friends apparently think is truth.

The heading—"If Christ is God"—can be clarified by any school child able to read the Bible. One of hundreds of texts in explanation reads--But to us (Christians, who have the light on God's Word) there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6.) Again, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved;" "And if the spirit of him (God) that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." (John 3:17; Rom. 8:1 1.)

The claim that the Lord would establish only one church on earth, and make sure that she did not depart from the truth, is answered by the Apostle Paul—"Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day (the day of Christ,

His second advent) shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," etc. (2 Thes. 2:3-8.) Also, see Rev. 3:14-17, respecting the Lord's rejection of the Laodicean church systems of today.

Any of our readers desiring further information on these matters are invited to procure literature on the subject— "Jehovah Our God is One."

Also copies of the poem "The True Church" will be supplied, quite free. The closing lines of this poem read

"O Christ, the Lord! end Thou my search,
And lead me to the one true Church."
He spake as never man may speak
"The one true Church thou shalt not seek,
Seek thou, forevermore, instead,
To find the one true Christ, its Head."

Question Box.

QUESTION:—Please harmonize your statement on page 80, “Peoples Paper,” October 1951 —”The Offerings for Sin,”—with our belief that the Lord’s second advent has already taken place some years back. What garments is He now wearing, seeing He cannot wear both at the same time?

ANSWER:—In considering this question it is important to keep in mind that our Lord’s second advent takes place some considerable time before the commencement of His 1,000 year reign. The first part of our Lord’s “presence” is devoted to a work among His church, called in the Scriptures “the harvest.” This truth is shown very clearly in Matthew, 25th chapter. This chapter contains three parables. In verses 1-13 we have the Virgins parable which illustrates the condition of the Lord’s true church from the commencement of His parousia” until the last members of His true church have been gathered “home.” It therefore covers the harvest period; the “end of the age.”

In verses 14-30 we have the parable of the talents. Verse 19 refers to the second presence of our Lord, and shows that His first work is to deal with His servants to whom He had entrusted various talents. So, then, verses 19-30 would cover the same period of time as verses 1-13. These two parables show clearly that the first work of our Lord at His Second Advent is not a work of ruling over mankind, but rather describe a work among His consecrated people during the “harvest” time—the closing period of the Gospel Age.

Looking now at verses 31-46 of our chapter a very different picture is presented, and we see in these three beautiful parables a sequence in the order of events which are due to take- place at the second presence of our Lord. While the “Virgins” and “Talents” parables undoubtedly have their application to the end of the Gospel Age, the “Sheep and Goats” parable applies to the Millennial Age—the period of Christ’s Reign. It is the time when the Son of Man shall have come in all His Glory. This time is still future. This will be the time when the garments of glory and beauty will adorn the High Priest. He will then fill the Melchisedec picture—the priest no -longer sacrificing and suffering with His body members, but reigning as Kings and Priests for the blessing of all mankind. All the holy angels are said to be with Him, when He sits upon the throne of His glory. “All” the holy angels would surely include the church, His “Body,” all complete and glorified and reigning with Him.

It is noted that in verses 34 and 40 our Lord is designated “the King.” This is significant. Christ will be King over all the earth in that day, the Millennial Day, and His Bride, His Queen, will be with Him and share His glory. While we may not improperly think of Christ as our King, as well as our Redeemer and Lord, and accord to Him our reverence and adoration, yet we find the illustrations used in the Scriptures to indicate the relationship between Christ and His body members during this Age are not those of a King ruling over subjects, but rather of an Advocate who assists us in our weakness, an Elder Brother who advises and sympathises with our inexperience, a High Priest who has been touched with the feeling of our infirmities and able therefore to render us help and grace for every time of need. (1 John 2:1; Heb 2:11, 3:1, 4:14-16.)

In answer to the question What garments is our Lord now wearing?, we believe that we are still living in the antitypical Day of Atonement, the time when the last of the members of Christ’s body are being “offered” by the High Priest in sacrifice; and therefore the type of the priest in the white linen robes—the robes of sacrifice is the one which is applicable to our Lord at the present time. Not until the whole church, including the last members of the body, have been completely offered in sacrifice, does the High Priest put on the garments of glory and beauty indicative of the change to the Divine nature of the entire Christ, Head and Body.

QUESTION:—How can we harmonize Heb. 1:13 with the belief that our Lord has been “present” for many years, seeing that apparently God has not yet made His enemies His footstool? I understand that we are now living in the Day of Preparation, or the Day of God Almighty. As it is quite obvious that the nations are now being smashed, who would we say is doing the smashing, the Father or the Son?

ANSWER:—The great work of subduing all the enemies of God and righteousness will require the entire 1000 years of Messiah’s reign. (See 1 Cor. 15:24-28) . Reading the divinely provided “Signs” in Matt, 24th chapter, we believe that our Lord has indeed been present for many years; but so far His main work has been that of supervising and directing the work of the “harvest” — the gathering of His elect in preparation for the coming 1000 year reign.

During this period of His “presence” as, Chief Reaper of the harvest, our Lord is also exercising a supervision of earth’s affairs, directing the course and outcome of the “time of trouble.” In Dan.12:1 Michael (i.e., one representing God) is said to “stand up.” That is, Christ, as God’s Commander-in-Chief begins to take a hand in earth’s affairs during this period of His “presence,” but not yet as the Prince of Peace blessing and uplifting mankind. Before that glorious day of blessing and restitution can come to mankind, the church, the elect, must all be gathered “Home,” and the great time of trouble must do its work of humbling the hearts of men, and making them ready to hear “the still small voice” of heavenly truth and peace and grace. We see that there is a great deal of preparatory work which our Lord must complete before His enemies are subdued. The church, the “little flock” must all be complete and glorified; and mankind must yet pass through the greatest time of trouble which this world has ever seen. This will be a lesson which will never be forgotten, and will stand for all time as a monument to the folly of men who regard their own plans and schemes as superior to God’s. Many Scriptures speak of this great time of trouble as the Day of Jehovah’s vengeance. See Isa. 34:8; Joel. 2:2-11; Zeph. 1:14-18, 3:8-9; Psa. 46:8- 10, etc.

The Scriptures make it clear that this Day of Jehovah is a day of God’s judgment upon mankind socially and nationally—a day of national recompenses. We need to bear in mind the difference between national judgment and individual judgment. The nations are undergoing a judgment period now, in this Day of Jehovah; but the day of individual judgment will be the Millennial Age. The day of vengeance stands naturally related to the benevolent object of its divine permission, which is the overthrow of the entire present order of things, preparatory to the permanent establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, under Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Heb. 1:13 is a quotation from the beautiful 110th Psalm. Christ will be sitting on the right hand of power (place of authority) when He comes in the clouds of heaven, Matt. 26:64, and He will remain on the right hand during the Millennial Age, “for He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

Forever with the Lord.

QUITE a number of the Australian brethren had known Brother and Sister Main of Adelaide, and the passing of our Brother and Sister within a few hours of each other, after devoted lives of service to the Lord and His truth for so many years, has left a deep impression in the hearts and minds of all who knew them. Our Brother Main had been in constant touch by correspondence with us in Melbourne, and ever sought to promote the welfare of the truth cause, and while our dear Brother and Sister Main will be greatly missed, we rejoice to think that they have received the fruition of their hopes in the joys of the Heavenly Kingdom, by the Lord's grace and strength.

It seems fitting that messages from our brethren who knew our Brother and Sister Main so well should be made available to all our friends. We feel sure that the following from Adelaide and Perth will be encouraging to all who are also seeking first the Kingdom of God; meditation upon the victorious lives of the followers of Christ is most stimulating, and to the Lord we render all praise. The message from Adelaide is as follows:

On October 15th Brother Main of Adelaide finished his earthly course, and about twelve hours later, his, beloved wife, Sister Main, also reached the end of the way. Our sympathies go out to the two sons of Brother and Sister Main, also to their sister and sister-in-law. Sister Main had been in ill health for a considerable time, but our Brother Main, although failing in health to a certain degree during the past few months, had been confined to his bed for only about fortnight before his death.

It was good to witness the steadfast faith and earnest zeal of our dear Brother and Sister during their long lifetime in the service of the Lord. They were always alert to pass on the message of "present truth" to any who had the ear to hear. It was about 42 years ago that the message of present truth came to Brother and Sister Main, and during all that long period they zealously and faithfully endeavoured to serve the cause of the truth in Australia, and more especially in Adelaide, S.A.

Brother Main for many years served as an Elder in the Adelaide Class; and did much to assist the brethren and the cause of truth generally from about 1910 to the present time. Our Brother and Sister used their means generously to assist in the work of spreading the knowledge of God's great Plan of Salvation. In recent years Brother Main had taken great interest in the "Frank and Ernest" radio broadcasts, and had assisted materially with financial support which makes this witness to the truth of God's Word available to those who are looking for a message of comfort in these dark days. Brother and Sister Main greatly rejoiced to see the message of the truth of God's Word going out to bless other hearts and heads. They had been very devoted to each other during their long lifetime, and it seemed a fitting termination to their long years of patient service and waiting upon God, that they should be taken "Home" with only a few hours separating their passings, and neither knowing that the other had gone.

We will greatly miss our dear Brother and Sister, but we are comforted with the thought that now that we believe we are living in the time of our Lord's -parousia—"presence,—the blessed assurance of the Revelator has its application, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, for their works follow with them.- Rev. 14:13. 1 Thes. 4:15-17.

It is good to realise the goodness of the Lord in caring for His "little ones" who are enabled to put their trust in Him so implicitly as our dear Brother and Sister Main had learned to do in the school of Christ.

It was very inspiring to our faith to see our dear brethren so full of faith and absolute assurance of the

goodness and faithfulness of God. The care of a sick wife for many years, together with his own failing health and strength did not daunt our dear Brother for a moment. His one thought was to be able to meet with the brethren, to assist them to get a clearer knowledge of God's Word, to encourage and exhort them to faithfulness in the narrow way. We thank God for such faithful servants, and we would seek for grace to help us to follow them in all ways in which we believe they followed our Lord.

From our Brother Nicholson in Perth the following has been received:

The news just received of the passing under the "veil" of our greatly loved and highly esteemed Brother and Sister Main of Adelaide gives evidence of our Heavenly Father's loving care and overruling in all the affairs of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose in Christ. Sometimes He permits very severe trials, but He knows just what pressure each of His jewels can endure, and He will not allow "more than we can bear" in the process of fitting and preparing each for the place in His Kingdom.

Like the patriarch Job our dear Brother and Sister had a long time of hard trial, in the prolonged illness of Sister and then Brother's health failing. Like the patriarch of old they have both been an example of patient, trustful faith in the Lord's wisdom and love and confidence in the glorious hope of "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

It is over forty years that I have known them and I think few lives have equalled theirs in high principles and noble purposes and conscientious dealings in all details of life, and so generous and full hearted devotion in service and sacrifice in the Lord's cause, the present truth and care of the brethren in Christ.

I have been thinking about the happy first meeting with Brother and Sister Main, following the occasion that brought them into contact with the present truth. It was that strict conscientiousness and high principle that have been so evident in all their lives that led Brother Main to write a letter to the daily paper regarding the observance of the Lord's Day—in connection with a controversy that was taking place on the subject. Brother Kaesehagen, seeing Brother Main's letter saw an opportunity of bringing the truth to one who was evidently so earnest and true. He got in touch with them and soon had them reading the "Divine Plan of the Ages." This led to their writing to me, and I was invited to call upon them when next visiting Adelaide. It was a very happy evening that we spent together. Sister Main's sister and her friend were also present. I think it was the 45th Psalm that we studied, seeing the "Queen in gold of Ophir" as the Bride of Messiah, and reference was made to the 24th of Genesis and how it prefigured the selection of the Bride of Christ during the Gospel Age. They all, like so many of us, just realised the beauty of the truth in contrast with the erroneous and gloomy teachings. They could see, like others who receive the "eyesalve," that our God is a God of love and mercy instead of a malignant being with a design of preserving alive in an eternity of woe the great bulk of mankind. The truth sank into good hearts and the feast which the Lord had promised the faithful watchers (Luke 12:37; Rev. 3:20), they rejoiced in, and it led to a great change in their outlook on their lives. Henceforth, they diligently endeavoured to spend and be spent in the service of the truth and the encouragement of those of like precious faith.

Sister Main had been so long looking forward to the great 'change' from mortality to immortality, realising that we are now living in the time (Rev. 14:13) when those passing away need not to sleep in the condition of death, which has 'been the case all down the Gospel Age, ever since Stephen "fell asleep"; but now that we are living in the presence of the Lord, those still remaining on earth (1 Thes. 4:17) are at once "caught away to be together with the Lord," "changed in a moment." How wonderful that "change" must bet—from pain, sickness and troublous conditions in this sin-cursed world, to be with the Lord in His glory; to see Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, that we might be with Him where He is, and be like Him. (1 John 3:1, 2.) We can feel sure that they have the wonderful welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of thy Lord."

Our Brother and Sister have left us a noble example, not only in their patience and confident faith during their long, hard trial at the end of their earthly journey, but in the many ways of sacrifice of the good things of earth, in order to support the service of holding forth the Word of life, the true Gospel, particularly in respect of the broadcasting of the Frank and Ernest Dialogues. The Lord has graciously allowed them to pass away just as they would have wished, within a few hours of each other. The words of David (2 Sam. 1:23) come to my mind—"They were lovely and pleasant in their lives and in their death were not divided."

This is the Way.

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.' " (Isaiah 30:21.)

HOW often in the midst of life's perplexities and trials have weary hearts felt the need of wise direction and counsel. The counsel sought, however, is not always wise; sometimes it is the counsel of the ungodly and sinners; and sometimes that of the immature and inexperienced, and the results of such counsel are unsatisfactory, and often disastrous; and the way pursued in consequence one of trouble and darkness. Such is the way of the world; for it is not in the power of man to direct his own steps. (Jer. 10:23.) But not so is the way of the child of God. He has learned where to seek counsel, and the counsel of wisdom is always ready to come to his aid.

The prophet describes it as a word, a voice, "behind thee." It is not a voice before thee, of some new theology, of Evolution, or Spiritism, or Christian Science, or other human philosophy—but it is the old theology with all its blessed doctrines of hope through Christ our Redeemer, our Lord, our Teacher, our Example, and our Leader. It is the voice of the Lord uttered through His inspired apostles and prophets from two to four thousand years ago. It is to this word of Divine Inspiration, then, that the prophet would direct the attention of all those desiring wise counsel; and in that Word we hear the voice of God, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." If we have come to the forks in the road—to some crisis in our experience—and know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we should stop at once and listen to the voice. Or in other words, we should turn at once to the Word of the Lord; and by pondering its precepts and principles and its illustrations bearing on the perplexing subject, seek to learn the will of the Lord, asking also the leading of His spirit and endeavoring to bring the mind into a loving submissive and truthful attitude. "This is the way, walk ye in it," will be the plain answer to every inquiring heart.

These words of the Prophet were, however, addressed directly to fleshly Israel, though their application to spiritual Israel is none the less forcible. As applied to them, it foretells the return of divine favour to them when the long season of their chastisement and blindness shall be at an end. Then, under the Millennial reign of Christ, the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears unstopped, and the voice of the whole inspired Word then made clear to their understanding, will direct them in the right ways of the Lord; for the books (the law and the prophets and the New Testament Scriptures) shall be opened, and they shall be judged according to their teaching.—Rev. 20:12.

The way then indicated to fleshly Israel and to all the world will be the grand highway of holiness; and the ransomed of the Lord shall go up thereon with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads (Isa. 35:10), and the end of that way will be life and peace—salvation to the uttermost, from sin and death; and complete restitution to human perfection.

While the way of life will be made very clear to Israel and the world in the Age to come, it is made none the less clear now to the children of God who walk by faith and not by sight. It is shown to be (1) a way

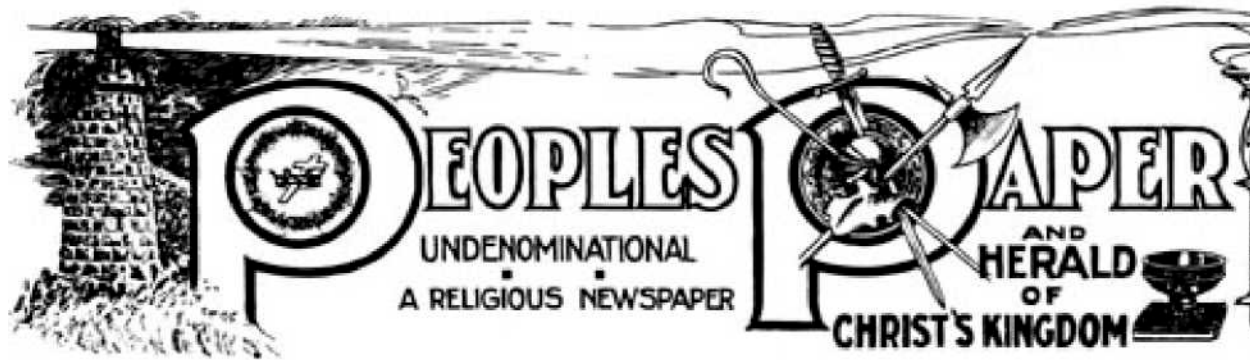
of faith; and those who now walk by faith are the true seed of Abraham (Rom. 4:12-16), to whom pertain the covenant and the exceeding great and precious promises in their largest fulfilment; (2) It is a way of entire consecration to God, even unto death, which implies the burial of one's own will into the will of God—the presenting of self a living sacrifice.

In harmony with these two principles—of faith and consecration—we are taught to walk, in newness of life, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, but circumspectly, and not as fools; as wise, redeeming the time; and not by sight, but by faith.—Rom. 6:4; 8:1; Eph. 4:7, 18; 5:15, 16; 2 Cor. 5:7.

By faith and consecration we have come into a new life as spiritual sons of God, and yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels, and the new life is only in its embryo condition. Hence the necessity of walking after the spiritual instincts of the new nature and keeping down the stronger impulses of the old nature. This is what it is to walk in newness of life, after the spirit and not after the flesh. To walk after the flesh is to pursue its hopes, aims, and ambitions; and since the flesh and the spirit are at war one with the other, it is impossible to maintain the life of both. Therefore, it is written, “If ye (spirit-begotten ones) live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom. 8:13.)

While the Word of the Lord speaks thus on general principles as to the way in which we should walk, we are also bidden to come with all the minor affairs of life, to inquire of these divine oracles. If we know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, we come and find the promise, “Commit thy way unto the Lord, and, He will direct thy steps.” Or, if heavy laden, we find the promise, “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Thus the voice behind brings comfort, peace and rest in the midst of all life's cares and trials, if we walk in obedience to its principles and precepts. “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

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Can the Living Talk with the Dead?

(This article is published by request.)

IN ONE of Melbourne's radio papers the claim was made in recent times that the spirit of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle would speak at a particular spiritualistic seance, arranged by a certain radio announcer. After this seance the same radio paper reported as follows:—"Although direct contact with Sir Arthur was not made, the famous author and spiritualist ,spoke through a lifetime friend, now also deceased."

The above claim, and others of similar nature, no doubt make great impressions on many people, the majority of whom do not consult the Bible to prove the possibility of departed friends being - able to communicate with anyone on earth. In this article the teachings of the Bible are presented on this most important subject—"Can the Living Talk with the Dead?"—and it is hoped that it may solve any difficulties in the minds of any of our readers, as well as confirm the truth on this question in the minds of all who are walking in the steps of our Lord.

It may be asked, What could be the motive in the desire of anyone to communicate with a departed relative or friend? At once we realise it is the heart-desire not to be separated from loved ones; in other words, there is a longing, a yearning for a continuation of those tender ties which rightly bind loved ones together on earth. Thus, we see clearly, that this fellowship with dear relatives and friends was never intended to be broken; in other words, we were never intended to die, and mankind would never have died had there been obedience to a loving Creator by our first parents.

"The wages of sin is death" is the Scriptural declaration throughout the Word of God, but it is the longing and yearning within the human breasts for lasting association with loved ones, which, while right in itself, can lead to the greatest deception possible, when the truths of God's Word are either ignored or misunderstood. And, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that God permits misunderstanding of His Word, or ignorance of its truths, in all who are not sincere enough to really wish to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Possibly we have all met people, who, in their bereavement, are so strongly influenced by the desire to continue in contact with a departed loved one; so absorbed with the desire to receive a message as to the welfare of the one beyond, that they completely isolate themselves from God and His Word. In other words, they want their own will done, they want their own desires fulfilled, irrespective of what God's plan is, and what God has decreed is best for His human family. Satan, of course, is active to take advantage of all who are so minded, and Paul tells us of such that "God shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie," while in this state of mind, "Because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."-2 Thes. 2:10, 11.

Let us now examine the Apostle Paul's wonderful presentation of the subject of death and the future life, found in 1 Corinthians 15.—"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his presence." (1 Cor. 15:12-23.)

What, we ask, are the two outstanding facts Paul presents in the above passage of Scripture? They are, that both Death and the Resurrection are real, are absolutely true. So true is death, says Paul, that if there be no resurrection, then all hope of future life is lost. Does Paul contradict other statements in the Bible? Does he disagree with Christ? No, he does not! Who, then, would set themselves up as authorities and contradict Christ, Paul, and all the true servants of God? There are thousands of preachers who are doing this, by proclaiming the immortality of the soul; in other words, they are declaring that there is no death, when the Scriptures plainly state, "The wages of sin is death."

However, does someone say there are passages in the Bible which seem to indicate that those passed on in death are still living? Yes, we admit that some parts of God's Word, on the surface, seem to so teach; but no one is entitled to form any conclusion, on any subject, on a mere surface reading of the Scriptures. Let us investigate. Turning to Matthew, chapter 17, we read:—"After six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias, talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here, if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Matt. 17:1-4.) At first thought it would appear that Moses and Elias were there with Jesus and the three disciples on the mount, but reading on to verse 9 of this chapter we find the words—"And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." "Tell the vision to no man," and at once it will be seen that the transfiguration on the mount was a picture, or representation, of some important event Jesus wished to impress upon the minds of the three disciples. Turning to verse 28 of the previous chapter, we read our Lord's words—"Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Here, then, is the explanation of the "vision" on the mount. Our Lord presented a picture of the kingdom to the minds of the disciples, Moses and Elijah being made to pass before their mental vision to represent the two phases of the kingdom, while of course these two ancient servants of God were dead in reality, and are still dead until the resurrection day. It will be seen, then, that the passage in Matthew 17 is describing in picture form a very important part of God's plan, just as the Apostle Paul was "caught up to the third heaven" in vision-2 Cor. 12:1-4—and the Apostle John received the wonderful Revelation of Jesus Christ, while he was "in the spirit on the Lord's day."

It is important to note how clearly the Scriptures describe the death condition of the ancient servants of God, as well as those who lived since our Lord's first advent. Of David, the one "after God's own heart" we read—"So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." And again, of Solomon it is recorded—"And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father." (1 Kings 2:10; 11:43.) These are but samples, describing the death of the human race, the word "sleep"

being used to represent the hope of an awakening from the sleep of death in the resurrection morn; which hope God had already purposed in His great Plan of the Ages, long before Christ paid the penalty of death registered against mankind, to effect their liberation in due time.

Now, in Acts, chapter 2, we find a most interesting and informative contrast between Christ and David presented by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost. After describing how the Lord had been taken and by wicked hands had been crucified and slain, Peter declared—"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." How differently, however, does he present the truth concerning David, as follows—"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. For David is not ascended into the heavens. " (Acts 2:24, 29, 34.) No, indeed; David, along with mankind, was in the sleep of death when Peter spoke, but not so our Lord Jesus Christ. And if further confirmation of the condition of death is required, surely the words of Jesus should be fully sufficient—"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even. the Son of man." (John 3:13.) Our Lord spoke these words in prospect of His ascension which took place after He had paid the penalty of death on behalf of fallen humanity.

How important it is to realise, also, that even Christ's resurrection from death was not immediate, when He died on the cross. Our Lord had repeatedly informed His disciples that He would be killed and the third day He would rise again, (Matt. 20:18, 19), and the Apostle Paul makes this matter very plain in the opening verses of his wonderful resurrection chapter to the Corinthians—"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. (1 Cor. 15:3, 4.) (See also Rev. 1:18.)

How clear it is that our Lord was actually dead until the third day after His crucifixion; He knew nothing; He had gone to the Bible hell to pay the death penalty against mankind. Thus, the thief on the cross who had asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom did not go to paradise that same day, inasmuch as Jesus was in the death condition until the third day. However, the thief will be "remembered" when paradise is established on earth in the kingdom age, and the general resurrection takes place at that time. Our Lord's own words are—"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28, 29.) As Paul also declared—"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15.) The just, or those who have done good, will come forth to the heavenly inheritance; while the unjust, or those who have done evil, will be raised up out of death as human beings on earth, "to learn righteousness, when the Lord's judgments are abroad in the earth." (Isa. 26:9. See also Acts 17:31.)

It is helpful also to note the record concerning Stephen, the first Christian martyr, as presented in Acts 7:60—"And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Yes, and Paul's statement to the Thessalonians is in full agreement—"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." (1 Thes. 4:13, 14.) This is a comforting message indeed, to know that those who had passed away in the Lord all down the Gospel Age would be abundantly provided for in the first resurrection, at our Lord's second advent. The Apostle Paul had 'the same hope for himself, as he did not expect to receive his reward when he died; he knew he had to sleep in death until the resurrection morning.—"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:8.)

Therefore, it is absolutely impossible to communicate with departed relatives or friends; the dead are dead; “the dead know not anything.” “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Eccles. 9:5, 10.) The only hope of future life, then, is based upon the resurrection of the dead, and this is a gift of God, through the sacrifice of ☐Christ.—”The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23.)

What shall we say, then, about supposed messages from those beyond the veil of death? There is one passage of Scripture in the Old Testament in particular which has given considerable concern to some people, and which it would be well to examine. It is found in 1 Samuel 28, and records an interview between Saul and the witch of Endor.

In brief, Saul had been forsaken by the Lord and sought information from this woman who was under the influence of evil spirits; this can be proved by a careful reading of the whole passage. This woman, or spiritualistic medium, was deceived by the evil spirits into thinking that she was receiving a message for Saul from the deceased prophet Samuel. Saul was also deceived by the procedure, for of course Samuel was dead, and could not be interviewed. The wicked spirits, having fuller information than humans about events taking place in the life of Saul, gave the witch the message, supposedly from Samuel, which Saul himself expected, in view of his departure from the favor of God. This witch was herself deceived, and thus we have in this incident the basis for all the deceptions today in spiritualistic seances, and other false systems where the evil spirits hold sway.

In Genesis 6 we have the record of some of the heavenly angels taking human form, remaining on earth and marrying the daughters of men, contrary to the will of God. These, at the time of the Flood in Noah’s day, returned to spirit form, and have since been restrained from appearing as human beings. The Apostle Jude writes of these wicked angels as follows:—”The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” (Jude 6.) The Apostle Peter also writes of these fallen angels in 2 Peter 2:4,—”God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to tartaroo (the earth’s atmosphere), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”

These fallen angels work in darkness only, but they deceive all those who go into darkness to obtain their information which is thought to be truth. These wicked angels impersonate the dead, and deceive the witches or mediums as well as those who seek for their messages instead of searching the Word of God for information on any subject. Some people have been known to visit spiritualistic mediums as a means of entertainment, or in a lighthearted manner for some amusement, but such are truly playing with fire. On receiving messages which are found to be true, and which the mediums could not have known without superhuman information, the unsuspecting are often caught in the subtle deceptions and are thoroughly deceived, so that it is only with great difficulty that they could ever free themselves, even if they felt the power holding them was from an evil source. Such is the unhappy condition of a great number of mediums; having given themselves over to the power of the evil spirits, they are under the sway of the devils to such an extent that they feel they must go on and permit their bodies to be used by the unseen powers of evil. Only by the Lord’s power and a determination to resist these fallen angels steadfastly by communion with the Lord in prayer, could anyone be delivered from their domination. How much better it is to shun all association with any systems of men whose teachings support Satan’s lie, “Ye shall not surely die,” in opposition to God’s decree—”Dying thou shalt die,” and “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

How evident it is that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was deceived during his life-time by the fallen angels, and his name is still used to try and impress this error upon all other unsuspecting people who do not take the Bible as their guide in the present life, nor to understand the hope for that life which is to come.

The Apostle Peter explains our Lord's great example to these wicked spirits in prison in 1 Pet. 3:18-20,—
"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit. By which also he preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient ..

. in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." Our Lord preached by His faithfulness in sacrifice for humanity, even the death of the cross, and His wonderful resurrection to the Father's throne would also greatly impress these fallen angels, and possibly assist them to repent and return to God's favor when they have the opportunity in the Kingdom Age. Of this time when the fallen angels will be judged, we read—"Know ye not that we {the saints, with Christ} shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3.)

Further, the Apostle Paul reveals that the faithful saints are also an example to the evil angels, as well as to men, during this Gospel Age. He declares—"For I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." (1 Cor. 4:9.) It is a searching thought to realise that the conduct of God's people, when favorable, could even influence those angels which still seek to deceive mankind and keep them from the truths of God's Word.

And so, it is appropriate for the Lord's people to ask themselves, What kind of a spectacle are we presenting to angels and to men? Are we faithful to the truths of God's Word respecting the condition of the departed, as well as all other subjects? Are we assisting to counteract the erroneous teachings promulgated by fallen angels through deceived agents on earth? We remember the words of Paul—"I was not disobedient to the heavenly -vision"—and while we do not receive visions in the same manner as Paul, nevertheless, we receive heavenly truth as we are worthy and able to partake of it, and we also must be true in our witness, not presenting our own likes or dislikes, but the sure Word of God to all who have ears to hear. (See Rev. 20:4.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

As announced previously the Annual Convention will be held (D.V.) in Melbourne for the four days 25th December to 28th December next, in Masonic Hall, 254- Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends interested in the Bible are welcome. Additional meetings will be held on New Year's Day in the same hall. Programmes are now ready, and further information is obtainable from the Class secretary—Mr. J. Hiam, 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greetings Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

There are five varieties of these cards as follows:—"Just for To-day," "One Here and There," "How Readeest Thou?," "The New Leaf," and "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love." It should be understood that these are not Christmas Cards, but are suitable for general greetings. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid. Samples sent on request.

Tracts.

The article "Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon?—Will Australia Be Involved?" which appeared in October's "Peoples Paper" is now available in tract form. A sample copy of this tract is enclosed with this month's "Peoples Paper" to all readers, and supplies may be obtained for wide distribution. Other tracts also available, such as "Freedom From Fear," "Refrain Thy Voice From Weeping," "Is Communism a Danger to Christianity?" etc.

Seldom can the heart be lonely,
If it seek a lonelier still;
Self-forgetting, seeking only
Empty cups of love to fill.

'Twill not be a fruitless labour
Overcome this ill with good;
Try to understand your neighbour,
And you will be understood.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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The Model Prayer.

ALL OF OUR Lord's recorded prayers are beautiful in their simplicity, trustfulness and unselfishness; but the one usually termed "The Lord's Prayer," given as an example of a proper prayer, is certainly in every way a model, which we do well to follow closely in all our petitions. (Luke 11 :2-4; Matt. 6:9-13.)

Its opening address is full of filial reverence and trust—"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name!" What could be more sweet and childlike? What could be more reverent than this bold approach; direct to the throne of the heavenly grace?

It does not proceed hastily to the lesser -dings of a personal character, but, recognising that God takes knowledge of all of earth's affairs, and has a gracious and sufficient remedy already provided, the model prayer acknowledges this, and thus expresses faith and interest in God's plan as revealed in His Word, saying: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Yes, indeed, it is not only fitting that all who approach

God in prayer should previously have searched to know something of what He has revealed concerning His will and plan, but also that after learning of it they should thus confess faith in God, that His plan, when fully executed, will more than meet all the necessities of our case. This is not a petition that God would bring in His Kingdom before His appointed time, nor an expression of an impatient longing for it, but an expression of hope and trust and patient waiting for that which we know will more than meet all proper expectations, and fulfil all the promises of God's Word. It also signifies our allegiance to the Kingdom and its laws and spirit, and hence implies that so far as we are concerned, we will do all in our power to conform our lives to its precepts even now.

Then, coming to personal desires, it requests only the necessities—the "bread and water," which God assures us shall be sure to all who are truly His. It asks, "Give us this day our daily bread." The request is not for wealth, nor Luxuries, nor overplus, nor dainties and delicacies. It is simply an acknowledgment of God as the great Provider, and of our reliance upon Him and His promises, leaving quantity and quality and everything else to divine wisdom and love, to be ordered for our highest good.

Although our sins have been forgiven, and we have been received into the family of God as sons before we have any right to pray "Our Father," yet we are very humbly to feel that we stand as 'sons' by grace in Christ, and not in merit of our own. We therefore appropriately acknowledge that we are trespassers, daily, who do not and cannot do the will of God perfectly, praying, "Forgive us our trespasses," our shortcomings.

Next we acknowledge a principle of God's justice, that mercy will be extended through Christ only in proportion as we realise the spirit of divine mercy, and are willing to exercise it toward others who come short of perfection in their dealings with us; hence we add, "as we forgive those who trespass against us." This is equivalent to a bargain with God, that we accept His terms of mercy, and will expect none, except as we ourselves exercise it toward others. What a thought! If fully appreciated, how it would influence all of God's sons to be kind and generous toward each other and toward all men in thought as well as in word and deed.—See Matt. 5:24; 6:15 :

"And lead us not into temptation"; or, rather, since chastisements and temptations (or trials) are necessary to our discipline and preparation for the Kingdom (James 1:2-12), we must understand this as the "Emphatic Diaglott" renders it, "Abandon us not to trial." Since the trial of our faith worketh patience, experience and hope (1 Pet. 4:12; Rom. 5:3-5), and is needful for our perfecting in holiness (1 Pet. 1:6, 7),

the Father will not hinder us from having temptations, even though He Himself tempteth no man. (James 1:13.) A man is tempted when he is led astray and enticed by his own selfish, fallen desires; he sins when he yields to those desires. (James 1:14.) But in the hour of trial, temptation, who could come off conqueror without the promised “grace sufficient for every time of need,” which will succour us and not permit us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape? —1 Cor. 10:13.

“But deliver us from evil,” or, as some prefer it, “Deliver us from the Evil One.” The great Adversary is as much on the alert to entrap us through the weaknesses of the flesh as our Lord is ready to deliver us and give us victory. We are not sufficient of ourselves for such a contest against the powers of darkness, and hence have need frequently of this petition to the throne of grace, for as the Apostle declares, “our sufficiency is of God.” —2 Cor. 3:5.

[The remaining sentence with which this prayer is usually closed is spurious—not found in the ancient Greek M.S.S. It would appear to have been added at the time when an earthly exaltation of the Church had led some to believe that the Papal glory was the glory of God's Kingdom.]

New Telephone Number.

The Berean Bible Institute, and Frank and Ernest broadcasts have a new telephone number in Melbourne —WY 3500.

January's 'Peoples Paper.'

It' is expected that a booklet will take the place of January's “Peoples Paper” and this will be posted out with the February number of the “Paper.”

Watch and Pray.

Communion with the Lord in prayer brings:

Increased confidence in the Lord's supervision of our affairs.
Increased faith in all the great and precious promises of His word.
Increased realisation of His leadings, past and present.
Increased love for all the Brethren in Christ.
Increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY; 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. 4.45 p.m.

Gathering at Geelong.

A helpful time was experienced in Geelong, 45 miles from Melbourne, on the afternoon and evening of Saturday, 22nd November, when a number of the Melbourne friends joined the members in Geelong for fellowship around the

Word of God.

A Bible study on Eph. 2:1-7 proved encouraging and instructive as the main features of the high calling were brought out from the Apostle’s helpful presentation in this passage. It was seen that as a result of God’s great mercy those who come in the appointed way, through faith in Christ’s sacrifice, may have the privilege of presenting their justified humanity to God in sacrifice. God’s acceptance of the offering would result in the “quickening,” begetting of the holy spirit, for the heavenly inheritance. All such are then privileged to dwell with Christ in the heavenly places, as they feast upon the spiritual truths which will nourish the new life in preparation for the first resurrection, which will be gained by all who prove faithful unto death in the steps of Christ.

Three addresses added encouragement also, and all present seemed to enjoy the occasion, and gave thanks to the Lord for His blessing upon the gathering. The Love Feast, with appropriate hymns and closing prayer, concluded a profitable day of refreshing on spiritual things.

A Lamp for the Footpath.— (J. R. Miller.)

God's word as a guiding lamp is a lamp unto our feet, not a sun flooding a hemisphere. It is not meant to shine upon miles and miles of road, but in the darkest night it will always show us the one next step; then when we have taken that, carrying the lamp forward, it will show us another step, and thus on till it brings us out into the full, clear sunlight of coming day. It is a lamp, and it is designed to lighten only little steps, one by one. We need to learn well the lesson of patience if we would have God guide us. He does not lead us rapidly. Sometimes we must go very slowly if we wait for Him. Only pace by pace does He take us, and unless we wait we must go in darkness. But if we wait for Him, it will always be light for one step.

By Thy Words.

"There goes a man I envy," said a young man to an older companion. "You envy him? I wonder why," was the reply. "Oh, he is so smart and clever and says such witty things about people." "Yes," said his companion, "he says many clever and cutting things. I have never heard him say anything kind."

How much better it would be to emulate those who, like the Master, give utterance to "gracious words," helpful, comforting and encouraging. How often retorts are made in desire to appear clever, which wound deeply. What pain can be caused by one careless word, and what comfort and pleasure can a kind word fittingly spoken bring to the hearer.

The Babe of Bethlehem Good Tidings to all People.

THE STORY of the birth of Jesus is always refreshing and stimulating to the followers of the Master, no matter how often it is related, though of course this subject comes more particularly before the minds of God's people at this time of the year. Had our Heavenly Father so desired He could have sent our Lord to earth as a fully mature man to pay the sacrifice for the sins of mankind, but apparently God saw some good purpose in Jesus being born as a babe, and spending thirty years in contact with fallen humanity as He grew up to manhood's estate.

When we read that Christ was "touched with the feeling of our (the Christians') infirmities," (Heb. 4:15), during the 31 years of His ministry, following His consecration at thirty years of age, we can understand better how He is our sympathetic and faithful High Priest, able to succor with tender feelings all His dear people who strive to walk in His steps of sacrifice. Likewise, the thirty years of knowledge of sinful humanity, which our Lord gained by close contact with the fallen race, no doubt confirmed His desire to endure all things necessary to redeem such a world of sinners lost and ruined by the fall, in addition to delighting to do His Father's will, and at the same time would more perfectly fit Him to become the Mediator between God and mankind when the great work of restitution commences in the age to come.

There can be no doubt that knowledge gained by experience is the most valuable to all God's creatures, and the length of time during which this valuable knowledge is attained and acted upon is usually a test of fidelity as to the worthiness of the recipients. In our Lord's case we may reason that during the thirty years, from His birth as the babe to the time of His consecration, He would have ample time to meditate upon His great mission to earth, and if ever there entered a thought in His mind to repudiate His contract with His Heavenly Father to redeem mankind by His death, we know there was ample time for it to germinate in those thirty years of waiting. The fact that Jesus so fully delighted to do God's will and entered into complete consecration immediately He attained manhood's estate at thirty years of age,

proves at once that the waiting time on earth confirmed the devotion of our Redeemer to God's plan for Him.

Further, the fact that our Lord did not complete His sacrifice until after 3½ years of "bearing His cross" adds weight to the Apostle's declaration concerning Christ—"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience (proving His obedience) by the things which he suffered." (Heb. 5:8.) During this period in which our Redeemer "poured out His soul unto death" there was ample time again for regret that such an undertaking had been entered upon, had there been the slightest inclination in that direction. The tempter was of course resisted so resolutely at the beginning of Christ's ministry that there was never an opportunity to return with his subtle deceptions, and God's will that our Lord spend a period of time "enduring the cross, despising the shame," revealed the knowledge and wisdom of God that true faithfulness is a quality of character which increases with the passing years, despite the experiences permitted by an all-loving Heavenly Father.

So it is with all God's true servants, even with those whom God used over the centuries prior to our Lord's first advent; they proved their obedience over lengthy periods of devoted service, yet there was freedom of choice, as the Apostle declares—"And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." (Heb. 11:15.) In other words, if Abraham had regretted answering God's call to—"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee," (Gen 12:1), he had full opportunity to return, for God does not coerce any of His servants.

Likewise, the followers of the Master during this Gospel Age, down to our own day, are necessarily tried and proved over quite lengthy periods of time in most cases, just as was our Lord and Forerunner, and God's ancient people. So, as we approach another Christmas season and the opening of another year, we do not do so with any feeling that the Christian way is long and tiresome. Rather do we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for His blessings and privileges in the service of our Master, and take the opportunity of using another Christmas season for witnessing to the angel's message which was proclaimed at the birth of our Lord as the babe of Bethlehem—"Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10.)

What scope of truth does this prophetic message open up for the Lord's people to proclaim to those who have ears to hear; what joy thrills our hearts as we think upon the lowly birth of Jesus, God's Messiah, coming to earth as the helpless babe, spending thirty years away from "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was," and then enduring the further 31 years of "contradiction of sinners against himself," and being "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," because of His delight to co-operate in the Father's plan of "bringing many sons unto glory," and "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." What joy also it is to realise and proclaim that following our Lord's great sacrifice "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2:9.) "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25.) And what a privilege to make known that following the raising up of this "people for God's name" to the heavenly inheritance, that the "good tidings of great joy," of salvation from sin and death, should indeed be to all people—all the families of the earth—during the "times of restitution of all things." It is well to be reminded of the words of our Lord—"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," (Matt. 24:13), and this enduring is not of a passive nature. No, the Lord requires His people to exercise zeal and activity in His service over any length of time it may be His good pleasure to grant. What if the harvest of the Gospel Age has continued longer than some of God's people thought it would twenty, thirty, forty or more years ago? Has not the longer time than expected proved a great blessing in the Lord's vineyard? Truly it has for those rightly exercised by His spirit. Apparently the extra time has been very truly required to find the remaining grains of "wheat" for the heavenly garner, and the members enduring well on earth have had their lives sanctified, and their

characters mellowed and enriched with the passing years.

May the coming Christmas season be a means of blessing to all whose hearts and minds are lifted up to God in praise and thanksgiving for the gift of our Redeemer, our Saviour, Christ the Lord, who came as the babe of Bethlehem so long ago. Yes, “though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became Poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9.) Some of our brethren will be assembling in Conventions over this Christmas period at hand, others will be gathering in their home classes, others are isolated, but wherever God’s people dwell, there also will His spirit dwell, as they seek to serve Him in spirit and in truth, by meditating upon His Word, for their own upbuilding, proclaiming the glad tidings to others, and generally “redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

A Christmas Prayer for You.

I will pray this prayer today for you,
May the love of God abide with you;
Wherever you go, wherever you stay,
May the peace of God bless you today;

And throughout the year that lies ahead
May beautiful flowers of joy be spread,
Through your Christmas-tide and New Year too
May the love of God abide with you.

He who goes about doing God’s will, goes about clothed in God’s beauty.

—Luther.

Question Box.

QUESTION—Can you explain the Saviour's words to Nicodemus,—''Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'' (John 3:5.)

ANSWER—It is evident that the Lord was referring to the heavenly phase of the kingdom. The Jewish nation was a consecrated nation, a covenanted people. They were all baptised into Moses in the sea, and in the cloud when they left Egypt. God accepted them in Moses, the mediator of their Law Covenant, at Mount Sinai; but, at the time Jesus was speaking, they had forgotten their covenant; some were openly living as publicans and sinners, and many others were self-righteous hypocrites. John's ministry, therefore, was repentance and baptism for remission of sins—a return to God and to a recognition of the covenant made; the baptism signifying the repentance and reformation of heart and life. Nicodemus was a Jew, and no Jew could become a follower of the Lord Jesus and enter into the Kingdom until first he had experienced this reformation and had been baptised, "born of water." In addition to this there must be the begetting of the spirit, and then in the resurrection, the birth to the spirit nature—"born of the spirit." Only those who experience this complete reformation of heart and mind, and who are "changed" in the resurrection, will ever enter into the heavenly phase of the kingdom of God.

New Address for Perth Meetings.

The secretary of the Perth Bible Class has advised that a new meeting hall has been procured for regular Sunday meetings at 3 p.m., and 5.45 p.m. as follows—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Street, Perth. All interested in the study of the Bible will be very welcome.

If none were sick, and none were sad,
What service could we render?
I think, if we were always glad,
We scarcely could be tender.

Did our beloved never need
Our patient ministration,
Earth would grow cold, and miss indeed
Its sweetest consolation.

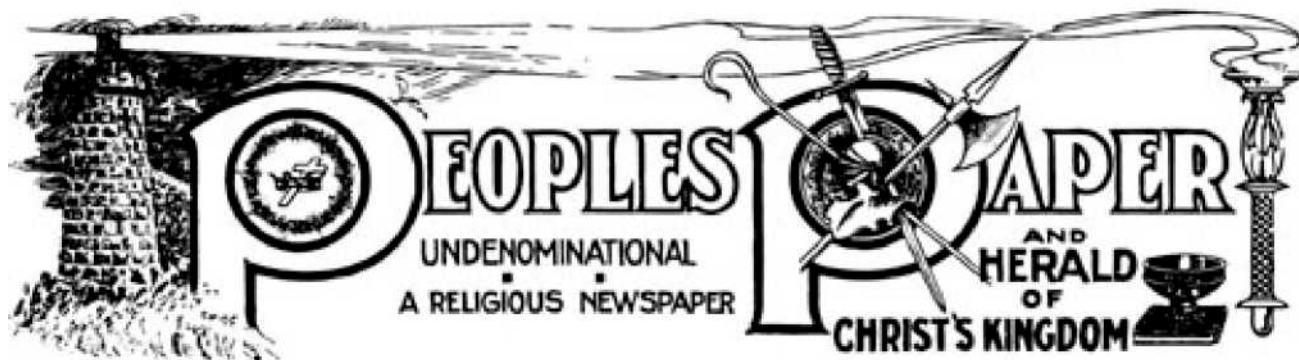
If sorrow never claimed our heart,
And every wish were granted,
Patience would die, and hope depart
Life would be disenchanted.

—Beaumont & Fletcher.

So adorn the doctrine, that those may be won by the life who will not be won by the word.

—F. R. Havergal.

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The Epistle of Christ.

CONVENTION ADDRESS.

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart.” (2 Cor. 3:3.)

THE writings of the Apostle Paul are rich with quotations and illustrations from the Old Testament Scriptures, thus furnishing us with the most valuable inspired comments and explanations as to the meaning of the types and prophecies which God has given for the edification of His people “on whom the ends of the ages have come.” (1 Cor. 10:11, Diag.)

Our text is a fine example of how the inspired Apostle presents type and antitype, and makes a practical application of the lesson to the mission of the church in this age. Note his reference to the tables of the law, given by God to Moses, and of the suggested antitype, the “epistle of Christ” written in the hearts of the consecrated followers of the Master.

Those tables of the law constituted the basis of the old Law Covenant; hence, we get the unmistakable thought that God, through His spirit, is now preparing His church to be associated with Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, in the administration of its laws. Thus, also, do we see that the New Covenant has not yet been inaugurated, for the reason that the preparatory work therefore has not yet been completed. How valuable, then, are these words of the apostle, in helping us to see the harmonious arrangements of God’s covenants, in His divine plan for human reconciliation.

In Exodus 24:12, we are told that the tables of the law were given to Moses in order that he might teach the people. Such is the mediatorial relationship of the entire Christ to the New Covenant which is to be inaugurated with Israel and through Israel with the whole world at the beginning of the thousand-year period. In 2 Cor. 3:6, the Apostle tells us that we are made “able ministers of the New Covenant.” Moses was a servant of the old Law Covenant. Indeed he served that Covenant even while it was being prepared. So we are now serving the New Covenant, in the sense that we are participants in the work of preparing it, getting ready to minister it to the people. The fact that faithful Christians of the Gospel Age are thus shown to be servants of the Covenant indicates clearly that they are not to be among those to be blessed by that Covenant.

In 2 Cor. 5:18, 19, the Apostle indicates that our ministry of the Covenant is one of reconciliation. Indeed, the great work of the Christ during the next age will be to reconcile the world to God. But those who are to be judged worthy of participating in that future glorious work of reconciliation must themselves first be reconciled to God, and be prepared as the epistle of Christ to administer the laws of that New Covenant. We are admonished to walk honestly as in the day; that is, we are to live now as though the righteous laws of the Kingdom were already in force. Even so, while the New Covenant is as yet merely in the course of preparation, its law, which will then be in force, should even now become a part of our being. It is upon this basis that the “epistle of Christ”, the antitypical tables of stone, are now being written, not with ink, “but with the spirit of the living God.”

The Apostle adds a further word of explanation by saying that these “epistles of Christ” are “ministered by us”—by the apostles, and by all • the church, as we build each other up in the most holy faith. True, this epistle is being written “by the spirit of the living God,” yet that spirit, during this age, operates through the truth, and each consecrated follower of the Master is authorized by the spirit to be a communicator of the truth—a minister of God and of His spirit. Yes, it is as we “speak the truth in love” that we grow up unto Him in all things. (Eph. 4:15; 5:18, 19,)

Thus we have brought home to us, in still another way, the fact that the work of the church in this age is not to convert or reconcile the world to God, but to make herself ready for participating with Christ in that blessed future work of the Kingdom. But, in carrying on this present work of the ministry, we are to be energetic in proclaiming the truth; for in God's plan He has arranged that, through such faithfulness in witnessing, all the ministers of the New Covenant will be found and prepared for their future work.

Inasmuch as the Apostle makes it clear that the tables of stone on which was written the Law in Moses' day are illustrative of the "epistle of Christ" being written in the hearts of God's people during this Gospel Age, it is interesting to note some of the circumstances in connection with the preparation of that typical "epistle" — the great Law of Sinai. An account of this is given us in Exodus 34:4-7; please read.

Typical and Antitypical Features.

The original tables of the law were destroyed by Moses on account of the sin of Israel in turning away from God and worshipping the golden calf. This reminds us that the original covenant relationship that existed between God and man was destroyed because of man's sin; also that the Law Covenant was broken because of sin—"which My covenant they brake," the Lord tells us. (Jer. 31:32.) Thus it would seem that the second two tables of stone on which God wrote His law would very fittingly represent the law of the New Covenant; or, to be more exact, the method by which that law would reach the people; and in our text Paul shows that this will be through the church, as the "epistle of Christ".

Moses hewed those stones and took them up unto Mount Sinai, and there God wrote His law on them. So the "epistle of Christ" is hewn or called out from the world, by Christ. After His resurrection from the dead, He ascended to the Father's presence and there "appeared for us". Thus, He bore His followers before the Father, and throughout this Gospel Age these have been seated together in "heavenly places in Christ Jesus"—not on literal Mount Sinai, but by faith on Mount Zion. (Eph. 2:6.) It was while Moses, bearing the tables of stone, was with the Lord in the cloud that God's law was written on those tables; so, it is while the prospective joint-heirs of Christ are, throughout the age, dwelling with Him in heavenly places and thus by faith in the presence of God, that the law of God, the law of the New Covenant, is written in their hearts and they are thus prepared to administer that law as co-judges with Christ in the Mediatorial Kingdom yet future.

And how wonderful was the experience of Moses in connection with the preparation of these typical tables of the law. God talked to Israel's leader and told him of His own glorious attributes. So in the antitype, God talked to Christ—who "bath in these last days spoken unto us"—that same message of His glory for our benefit. And thus it is that while seated with Christ in heavenly places we hear the voice of God, through the glorious truth of His plan, and thereby learn of His glory in order that His attributes may be written in our hearts.

The object of the Mediatorial reign of The Christ is that the world of mankind may be brought back into harmony with God and restored to His image and likeness. Thus it is necessary that the law of that New Covenant, as it will be presented to the people by those who now are constituted the "epistle of Christ," reflect the glorious attributes of Jehovah's character in order that the people, through obedience to that law, may learn to know and serve God acceptably. Indeed, the Lord tells us that this is to be the happy result of the making of that New Covenant—"for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jer. 31:34.)

God's Plan in Review.

What a wonderful vision of God's glorious character was given to Moses at the time those typical tables of the law were prepared—"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

And, brethren, through Christ, and by means of the spirit of truth, God speaks to us now; and in that glorious message of truth, we see reflected all the various qualities of the Divine character that were briefly stated to Moses. Indeed, the import of the divine-plan message is that through it we may learn to know God, receive the impress of His character in our hearts, and thereby be prepared to be co-workers with Him, as the "epistle of Christ," in causing the knowledge of His glory to fill the whole earth "as the waters cover the sea."—Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

Let us note the qualities of God's character as they were stated to Moses on Mount Sinai,—"Merciful and gracious." How wonderfully the divine plan reveals to us the mercy and graciousness, or grace, of God! And how absolutely void of these characteristics is the demon god of the dark-age creeds! Here, again, is brought forcibly to our attention the vital importance of the truth in the Christian life; for it is by the truth, not error, that we are set apart to the divine

service. Yes, God is merciful and full of grace. We see this manifested in the fact that while His justice condemned our first parents to death because of their disobedience; and through them the whole world lost life, yet He was not content to let it go that way forever; so His mercy and grace and love “contrived a way to save rebellious man.”

And “longsuffering.” Oh, how longsuffering our Heavenly Father has been! For nearly 6000 years He has witnessed the rebellion and sin of His earthly creatures; yet He still loves them, and still plans to bless them. And He is also longsuffering toward His saints, who because of their fleshly imperfections often fall far short of the goal in their efforts to do His will. How glad we are for the many promises of His longsuffering attitude toward us! We could not truly know and appreciate our Heavenly Father’s longsuffering toward us and toward the world in any other way except through an understanding of the divine plan.

“Abundant in goodness.” Yes, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16.) What an abundance of goodness we thus see manifested in the One who is so loving, that it is said of Him that “he is love.” Not only does the divine plan reveal this abundant love and goodness of our Heavenly Father in the gift of His Son to be man’s Redeemer, but it shows, also, a still further manifestation of His love in the wonderful arrangement He has made whereby the merit accruing from His great gift may become available for the actual blessing of the world. Think of the love that is revealed in His plan to select 144,000 representatives from among the world of mankind to sit with Christ on the board of mediation which is to reconcile the world to God during the Kingdom period. And how could we see this vision of God’s love except through the divine plan? (John 17 :20-23.)

And He is abundant in “truth” also. The thought of the word truth, in this instance, is probably equity or justice.

Yes, God is just, even as He is loving, and that is the reason we can depend upon Him. This thought is amplified in the further statement made to Moses; namely, “keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and yet, will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.” A wonderful balance of the divine attributes of Love and Justice is furnished us in these words. Yes, God is love and merciful, yet at the same time, just. It was His justice that condemned the race to death because of sin; and it is only through the divine plan that we can understand how it is possible for Him to continue being just in this matter, and yet be the “justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:26.) Thank God for this glorious truth which has so clearly revealed the divine character to us! Yes, it is the truth that reveals why God has permitted evil; how His justice has operated; how His love is manifested; how His wisdom planned it all; and how His Almighty power guarantees the accomplishment of His loving, just and wise designs.

The Vision is Important.

And how important is this vision of truth to us who are now being prepared as the “epistle of Christ.” We must know God in order to be like Him and put our trust in Him. If God were not just, for example, how could we depend upon Him? This seems to be the import of the information given to Moses, that God would by no means clear the guilty.

God wanted Moses to understand, and He wants us to understand—indeed, through the divine plan, has already made us to understand—that while He is abundant in mercy, longsuffering and kind, yet that the wages of sin is death, and that those found guilty must suffer that penalty, and that through the law of heredity, the penalty has passed on down through the centuries, affecting the succeeding generations.

That’s the way God’s justice was operating in Moses’ day, yet His love and His wisdom were all the while planning for a future blessing for the people in that the original penalty of death was to be set aside by another. But even when the Adamic condemnation is set aside, still God’s justice will operate; and it will still be true that He will by no means “clear the guilty.” Then, however, each one will be dealt with individually. No longer will it be a case of the father eating the sour grape of sin, and his children’s teeth being set on edge; but every one shall die for his own iniquity. See Jer. 31:29, 30, and note that this is descriptive of God’s method of dealing with the people under the New Covenant, as shown in verses 31-34.

Thus we are learning to know God, not only as a God of love, but also as a dependable God, a God who makes promises and keeps them, who has established a penalty for sin, and inflicts it. In fact, every attribute of His glorious character is being more and more apparent to us as we continue to look into and study His divine plan for human salvation. And as the brightness of the vision increases, the beauties of God’s character and law should become more and more indelibly stamped and imbedded in our hearts.

The Sealing Work.

The great message of truth in the type was spoken directly to Moses while he had the tables of stone with him on Sinai. In the antitype this is also true. We receive the message through Christ, as it is passed on from one to another of His faithful followers. (See Heb. 1:1, 2; 2:3.) Thus it is that by our faithfulness in disseminating the truth and manifesting its spirit, we are helping to write the “epistle of Christ”—helping to impress the seal of His character as it is displayed in His plan, upon the hearts of the consecrated ones. Paul says that this “epistle of Christ” is being written by the spirit of God; and, as the spirit of God is writing this message of life and love on His willing and obedient servants, its grandeur, harmony and beauty is also being transmitted through them to yet others—their lives thus reflecting the truth of the Divine Plan.

Now let us note briefly the final conclusion which the inspired apostle reaches with respect to those said to be the “epistle of Christ” and the purpose for which this epistle is now being written. Throughout the third, fourth and fifth chapters of 2 Corinthians he discusses various details of God’s plan for human reconciliation, calling our attention to type and antitype—with an occasional parenthetical suggestion not so directly related to his main theme. He reminds us of the present ministry of suffering in which the church participates, preparatory to the glory that shall follow, as typified by the glory on Moses’ countenance as he came down from Sinai. He tells us of the ministry of reconciliation that has been given to us, as servants of the New Covenant, and that as such servants we are co-workers with Christ and with God.

And then, in the second verse of the sixth chapter he reaches the final point of his lesson and quotes his proof text from the Old Testament. He admonishes us not to receive in vain this great favour of being a co-worker with God, and assures us of divine grace and help to carry on, if we will but do our part. “For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted,” he quotes from Isaiah, and then adds, “Now is the accepted time.” Turning back to Isaiah 49:8-10 from which Paul quotes, we find a wonderful prophecy of the New Covenant and the restitution blessings it will bring to the people.

We quote: “Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time (which Paul shows is this Gospel Age) have I heard thee (Paul applies this to the church) and in, a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages: that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them.”

What a glorious blessing is thus coming to the world, when those who are the “epistle of Christ” are given “for a covenant of the people.” In the type, Moses came down from Mount Sinai bringing with him the tables of stone upon which was written the law which formed the basis of that typical covenant; and here the Lord is telling us—and Paul has explained it for us—that the joint-heirs of Christ, in whose hearts has been written the unchangeable law of God, the law of the New Covenant, will be presented as “a covenant of the people.” Or, to put it in another way: Just as the typical tables of the law were given to Moses in order that he might teach the people, so these antitypical tables, the “epistle of Christ,” are to be used throughout the Millennial Age as the instrumentalities through whom Christ, their Head, will instruct the world in the law of the New Covenant. Thus they are indeed given “for a covenant of the people.”

No wonder Paul declares that the whole creation is waiting “for the manifestation of the sons of God.” No wonder, he says, that we are being “baptised for the dead.” No wonder we are promised a share in the glory of The Christ. No wonder we are said to be “ministers of reconciliation.” Paul gives us a further beautiful thought in this connection, in Romans 11:26,27, saying, “And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them (Jer. 31:31-34), when I shall take away their sins.” Moses came out of Sinai and established the typical covenant and here the Apostle is telling us that the greater than Moses shall “come out of Zion,” and establish the antitypical covenant. Moses brought with him the tables of the law, and Christ will bring with Him, as His joint-heirs, all those who are His “epistle,” to be given as a “covenant of the people,” and through this glorious mediatorial arrangement, ungodliness will be turned away from Jacob and from the world—they will be taught to know the Lord and to be like Him. Isa. 54:13.

So completely and universally will these who are the “epistle of Christ” proclaim and teach the knowledge of God and of His law throughout the thousand years during which the New Covenant is being made with the people, that when the work is complete there will be no further need of teachers or epistles of any kind; for, says the prophet:

“They shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jer. 31:34.)

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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While it is our intention that these colons be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used. either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue,

Convention News.

THE FOUR-DAY Annual Convention, arranged by the brethren in Melbourne and held over the recent Christmas period, proved a most helpful season of Christian fellowship and refreshing from the truths of God's Word brought forward throughout these assemblies. The Lord very truly blessed the gatherings, and we lift up our hearts in thankfulness to Him for the favors received during this special occasion of His people dwelling together in spirit and in truth.

The average attendance throughout the Convention was very good, being larger than for a number of years, and it seemed that all who came together in expectation of a feast of good things were not in the least disappointed, but were abundantly supplied with nourishment for the spiritual life.

It was a great pleasure for the friends in Melbourne to welcome a nice number of visiting, brethren from South Australia, Canberra, Tasmania and parts of Victoria, and these dear brethren contributed considerably in making the Convention the success it proved to be, by the Lord's providence.

Bible Studies and a Question Meeting occupied the attention of the assemblies with much profit on the passages of Scripture--Psalm 45:6-11; Mark 13:14-20; Heb. 13:10-16; Isa. 52:7 and Rom. 10:15. At each of these studies the truths brought out were both timely and edifying for these last days of the harvest of the Gospel Age, and the hours spent were well repaid with enlightenment and encouragement for the Christian way.

The visiting and local brethren addressed the gatherings on a wide variety of Bible subjects, to the benefit and enjoyment of all present. The selected topics were as follows:—"True Christian Happiness;" "Comparing Two Arks;" "Separated" "The Fruits and Gifts of the Holy, Spirit;" "Deliverance;" "A Lively Hope;" "The Epistle of Christ;" "Does the Christmas. Message of Glad Tidings Include Divine Healing?"; "It is no Secret what God can do;" "Sanctification" and "The Effectual Working of the Body of Christ."

Fellowship Meetings of a more informal nature gave opportunity for personal testimony to the Lord's goodness and blessing over the year past in particular, and were stimulating to all present to look forward with confidence for the days ahead in the earthly pilgrimage. Praise to the Lord was also well provided for at various meetings, and the particular session "Hymns We Love and Why" was a helpful contribution of a devotional nature.

Messages of Greeting were received at the Convention from brethren in all the Australian states, and were much appreciated, and these gave evidence of the fellowship of kindred minds who could not be present in person, but were present in spirit. A message from the Convention with the Christian love of all present was selected to be sent to the brethren generally, and is contained in tine Scripture Heb. 13:13-16.

The usual Love Feast at which all the brethren wish each other God's blessing with a handshake and partaking of the love token while singing "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christi an love," was the concluding session for the very helpful 1952 Melbourne Convention. The closing hymn "God Be With You" and prayer of thankfulness and

supplication on behalf of all God's people terminated this season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

(Some Notes on the above Convention have been prepared by one of the brethren; these are now available, and may be obtained free from the office of the Institute, upon application.)

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their four-day Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) from Good Friday, 3rd April to Easter Monday, 6th April, in the Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they invite visitors from other parts to join them for these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further information will appear in next month's "Paper" and may also be obtained from the Secretary—Mrs. H. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

Baptism Service.

It is expected that a Baptism Service will be held in Adelaide during the Easter Convention gatherings. Any Christian friends desiring to symbolize their consecration to the Lord are invited to contact the Convention secretary in good time, at the address given in Convention notice.

January's "Peoples Paper."

The booklet "Christian Baptism" is taking the place of last month's issue of "Peoples Paper" and is being posted out with this month's number. Additional copies of this booklet, with a stiff paper cover, may be obtained at 6d. each.

He Cometh with Clouds.

"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. 1:7.

THIS Scripture is generally quoted as a proof that our Lord Jesus at His second coming will be visible to the whole human family; that they will all have great mourning when they see Him; that it will be a sad day for them—especially for the Jews. Our thought respecting the passage, in the light of other Scriptures, is different from this. In the first place, the Lord Himself said, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye shall see me." Only the Lord's faithful followers were to see Him. The Apostle Paul explains that Jesus' followers will see Him because they are to be changed in the first resurrection, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." The Scriptures clearly indicate that our Lord's present condition is the heavenly, the spirit condition, not only as high a condition as before He came into the world, but still higher.

The Lord prayed to the Father that He would glorify Him with the glory that He had with Him before He came into the world—"before the world was." The Father assured Him that He had glorified Him and would glorify Him again. (John 17:5; 12:28 Vatican M.S.). The Scriptures also assure us that our Lord in His glorified condition is far above angels, principalities and powers. (Phil. 2:9, 10). When He was a man, He was "a little lower than the angels." (Heb. 2:6-9.) The Scriptures declare that the Lord is now the express image of the Father's person (Heb. 1:3), and also declare of Him, "Whom no man hath seen nor can see."

Another Scripture tells us that the coming of Christ will be for the blessing of the world. The very object of His coming will be for the lifting up of the poor and fallen race. St. Peter tells us that there will be "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of ALL His holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:20, 21.

How shall we harmonise this last statement with that of our text, which says that He shall come with clouds; that every eye shall see Him; and that all mankind "shall wail because of Him"? The answer is that in harmony with other Scriptures the coming with clouds would signify the coming in a period of trouble—the word "Clouds" being used to signify trouble—in the dark day. He is coming in clouds, in that the time in which He will first manifest Himself to the world will be a very dark day to the world—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," and, we are told, never shall be again. (Matt. 24:21.) That will be a dark, cloudy day.

In that day, ultimately all eyes shall be opened; and all mankind shall see Him with the eyes of their understanding—see Him in the sense that we see Him now, and have knowledge of Him and of the Father. A blind man sees in the same sense. He says, "I see now"—meaning that he sees with his intellectual sight. It is far better to see with the intellect than with the natural sight.

Darkness now covers the earth. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not." (2 Cor. 4:4.) There are a great many blinded minds at the present time. They do not know the object of Christ's coming. They do not have the Scriptural teaching as to why He comes. But their blinded eyes shall be opened. Every human being shall come to an understanding of the fact that the Lord's kingdom is for the blessing of "all the families of the earth" according to God's promise made to Abraham and all the prophets after his day.

The Jews will come to recognise Him. The Apostle Paul says, “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved” (Rom. 11:25, 26) from their blindness, from their ignorance, from their misunderstanding at His presentation of Himself at His first advent. Another Scripture says that when they see Him, recognise the “sign of the Son of Man in the heavens, then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Matt. 24:30.) The Prophet says that those that “pierced Him” shall mourn for Him as a man mourns for his only son. (Zech. 12:10.) Thus they will appreciate Christ, and their eyes will be the first eyes that will be opened. But at that same time, when their eyes begin to see out of obscurity, there will not be anything that they can see with the natural sight.

There is first of all a parousia, or presence, of Christ, which is known only to His Church, His Bride Class. The culmination of His work in the parousia will be the gathering of the Church to Himself in the first resurrection. The Scriptures go on to say that He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance.

The “clouds of heaven” well represent the confusion in general. The world for a time is in ignorance of His presence, but gradually they will come to know that they are in the time of trouble, the day of wrath, in which this age is to close. Then they will mourn. The whole world will be in mourning. If the world has mourned in the past, much more shall we expect it to do so when the trouble will be general. In the midst of that trouble, they will gradually learn of the grace of God. Human selfishness, they will find, has been so over-ruled as to lead up to the glorious kingdom of Messiah, through which are to come all the blessings which God has promised.

The Invisible Record.

“The most trying ordeal to which a singer can be subjected is that of singing into the phonograph,” is the emphatic opinion of one of the greatest lady singers of the day.

“You cannot realise,” she said, “just how one feels when standing before that little instrument, knowing all the time you are singing that the least inaccuracy of inflexion, the slightest variation from the true note, the tiniest discord, is going to be recorded and afterwards reproduced perhaps a thousand times. I would rather sing before the most critical audience a dozen times than before that little instrument once; and other artists have told me the same.”

How carefully we should choose our words if we could only realise that every word we speak is recorded. St. Paul realised this, and uttered many warnings on the subject.

“Sunday Circle.”

Passover Memorial, 1953,

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Sunday. 29th March. The appropriate time to celebrate the Memorial of our Lord’s death will therefore be after sundown on the Sunday evening above-mentioned.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Applications should be made early, preferably by early in March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne—Sunday, 29th March, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street. Richmond. (Further information, phone in Melbourne—WY 3500.)

Adelaide.—Sunday, 29th March. at 7 p.m.. at Builders’ and Contractors’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.
Sydney.—Saturday, 29th March, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right side of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the Station.)

Perth.—Sunday, 29th March, at 5.45, at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets. Perth.

*Grant us Holy Saviour Thus to follow Thee,
And the great example Of Thy purity:
So our lives shall praise Thee Better than our song,
Thine they are forever And to Thee belong.*

They had been with Jesus.

HOW MUCH is told in the few words respecting Peter and John, and what their opponents thought of them, in the expression, “Now, when they saw the boldness (courage) of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13.).

One of the remarkable things connected with the “present truth” is its effect upon those who receive it—its transforming effect, its renewing effect. As the Lord foreknew and foretold, the Gospel message has not specially appealed to the rich, the great, or the learned. These feel themselves above the Master’s teachings, and are comparatively satisfied with their conditions. They are led to believe that God would give them a preference any day over the ignorant, the stupid, the ignoble. Thus they do not so much And so deeply feel their need of spiritual healing from the Good Physician.

The Gospel message takes hold chiefly upon those less favoured in the present life. And this is true as well of the special features of present truth as of the general features of the Gospel message. In every case, however, the marked effect of the Gospel of Christ is manifested where it is received into a good and honest heart. It lifts up. It gives courage instead of fear. It gives hope instead of despondency. It gives an aim and object in life, instead of brutish stupidity. It cultivates the will and manifests itself in the intelligent expression of the eye, in the alertness of the step, the increased deftness of the hand, and loosing of the tongue to speak of the Lord and His grace.

Our enemies take note of all these things, and frequently marvel at the intelligence on every subject of those who for a little time have been students of the Divine Plan of the Ages. We are glad of this yet there is a danger here. If the spirit of self-satisfaction, or pride of knowledge of the Scriptures, or of ability to present the Divine Plan, be cultivated, it may mean spiritual injury.

It is well that with us, as with the Apostles, our adversaries should take note of our courage; that we have the courage of our convictions; that we fear the Lord only, and that our highest aim is to deliver forth the good tidings of great joy to all who have the hearing ear. Here, however, we wish to call attention more particularly to the importance of the second feature mentioned in the Scripture quoted, namely, that they took knowledge of them that had been with Jesus; that they were His disciples, learners in His school. ‘This, truly, is the important thing for us—to learn of Jesus, to become like Him.

It is right that we should give due weight to doctrinal knowledge of the Divine character and plan, as set forth in the Divine Word; but while emphasising this, and contending for its absolute necessity to growth in grace, we feel the necessity of continually urging upon the Lord’s followers those features of the Master’s teaching, which constitute more particularly His spirit, His disposition. The sum of these is called Love. As of our Heavenly Father it is declared that “God is love,” so love also is the special characteristic of our Redeemer, who was the image, the very reflection, of the Father.

The analysis of love, as given by the Apostle, may be understood to be an analysis of the Divine character as exemplified in our Lord Jesus—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. And since all His followers are invited to become disciples, or learners, under Him as their teacher, it follows that all who learn of Him will gradually attain to these same elements of His character.

How could we better proclaim our relationship to Him? How could we better recommend to others the School of Christ? How could we better show forth the praises of our Master than by living out His example, representing His character before men? Is not this the significance of His injunction, “Let your light so shine before men that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father, which is in heaven”? It is proper indeed, that we let our doctrines shine out before men, but it is specially important that we let the character of Christ shine out. It is specially important that the doctrines and the character shall correspond, and co-attest each other.

We remember our Lord’s words, “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” This was the new commandment that we should love one another as He has loved us—with a pure unselfish love, which thinketh no evil, vaunteth not itself, is not easily offended, and seeketh not its own, selfishly—the love which lays down time, energy and even life itself, for the brethren.

We may never become entirely satisfactory to ourselves in thought, word and deed while in the flesh; and we may never, therefore, be entirely satisfactory to others; but we can, we should, we must, and, by the grace of God, let us each resolve that we will, attain to all of this, so far as our hearts are concerned. Nothing short of this will be satisfactory to our Lord, to whom we are “betrothed” as members of the chaste, virgin church. If we fail to come up to this reasonable, possible standard, we will fail to make our calling and election sure to a place in the Bride company. But if we do these things, if at heart we are at this standard, and are daily seeking to live it to the best of our ability, the heavenly Bridegroom will rejoice to own us as members of His elect. Oh, how much depends upon our learning this lesson! “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

The Touch of the Master’s Hand.

‘Twas battered, scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste his time on the old violin
But held it up with a smile.

What am I bidden, good people,’ he cried.
‘Who’ll start the bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar! now two, only two;
Two dollars, and who’ll make it three?

Three dollars once, three dollars twice;
Going for three?’ But no!
From the room far back a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow.

Then wiping the dust from the old violin
And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As sweet as an angel sings.

“The music ceased, and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, ‘What am I bid for the old violin?’
And he held it up with the bow.

‘A thousand dollars, and who’ll make it two,
Two thousand, and who’ll make it three?
Three thousand once, three thousand twice;
And going and gone,’ said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
‘We don’t quite understand
What changed its worth?’ Swift came the reply,

‘The touch of a master’s hand.
“And many a man with life out of tune
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd

Much like the old violin.
A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game, and he travels on.
He is going once, and going twice,

He’s going and almost gone.
But the Master comes and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul, and the change that’s wrought
By the touch of the Master’s hand.”

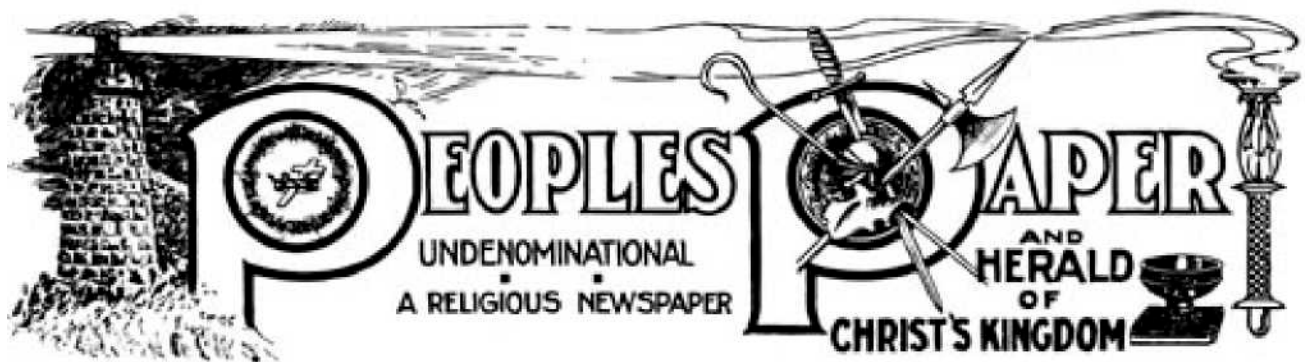
—Selected.

There will be about her who has accepted Christ, and taken His yoke,
An inborn grace that nothing lacks,
Of culture or appliance,
The warmth of genial courtesy,
The calm of self-reliance,
because the most beautiful, least obtrusive,
and most perfect grace, courtesy,
and self-reliance are found among those
who daily sit with Mary at the Master's feet.

—M.E.S.

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The Memorial Supper.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh which is called the Passover.” Such is the sacred narrative announcing the last Passover Supper of which our Lord partook. Once more we have the Passover with us. It is in some respects the most hallowed occasion of the year, observed by disciples of Christ as a Memorial and celebration of their Master’s sacrificial death, and of their participation with Him in that death in hope of the glory to follow.

While the Jews still apparently think more of the Passover week than of the Passover lamb, the spiritual Israelites on the contrary and in harmony with the example of our Lord and the Apostles have special respect for the lamb, which typified the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” and under whose blood of sprinkling we, who now believe, namely the “Church of the Firstborn,” are passed over or spared in advance of the world.

It is again the great question of atonement, redemption, and deliverance, that comes before us as we gather at the table of the Lord. The Passover lamb reveals primarily the Divine method of dealing with sin, of satisfying the claims of Justice against our race. Typically this was the great question on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, namely, how can God exempt from judgment, and receive into His favor, those whom His holiness condemns? To this most solemn question, there was but one answer that would satisfy the demands of the God of holiness, and that was the blood of the lamb of His own providing. “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” This settled the all-important question. It was one of life or death, of deliverance or judgment. The blood-sprinkled door-post was a perfect answer to all the claims of holiness, and to all the need of the congregation.

Israel was now at peace with God, a sheltered, saved, and happy people, though still in Egypt, the land of death and judgment. God was now pledged to deliver Israel—precious type of the perfect security of all who are trusting in the blood of Christ. They were securely and peacefully feeding on the roasted lamb, when “at midnight, the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.” (Exod. 12:29, 30.) “But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord hath put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” (Exod. 11:7.)

Observing in the type the slain lamb, its blood sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels of the home, and the flesh eaten with bitter herbs, we apply this in the antitype and see Christ as the real Lamb, see that His blood sprinkled upon our hearts cleanses them from a consciousness of evil and gives us an assurance of our being passed over, of our being spared. of our being granted life through His blood. This sprinkling represents our justification by faith; and the subsequent eating of the lamb with bitter herbs finds its place in the antitype in our consecration, in the bitter experiences and trials which the Lord provides for us and which help to wean our affections from earthly things and increases the appetite and encourages us to partake more and more abundantly of the Lamb. All who believe the testimony. all who trust in the precious blood, are passed over: and more than this, are expecting a great deliverance of all who love God. who desire to do Him reverence and service. As many as thus believe. realise themselves pilgrims and strangers under present conditions, looking for a better country, even the heavenly Canaan. All this was represented in typical Israel, for while eating the lamb on that night of the Passover they stood staff in hand, girded for a journey. Likewise the Lord’s faithful today have no continuing city, but set their affections on things above—the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God.

Apparently it was just when the regular Jewish Passover Supper was ended that our Lord instituted the Memorial, as it is recorded—"When the hour was come they sat down to eat the Passover." And Jesus said unto the disciples, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." Doubtless He longed to have them understand how it would begin to be fulfilled a little later on in that very day by the slaying of the real Lamb.

Probably one reason why He specially desired to eat this Passover with them was that He there designed breaking the truth of its significance to them, to the extent that they could receive it; for, "As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is My body." "This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me." "And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Drink ye all of it; This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you." We cannot doubt that the design of the Master was to call their minds from the typical lamb to Himself, the Antitype, and to show them that it would be no longer proper to observe a feature of the Law which He was about to fulfil. And the bread and wine were to be to them, thereafter, elements which, as a remembrancer of Him, would take the place of the typical lamb. Thus considered there is force in the words, "This do in remembrance of me"—no longer kill a literal lamb in remembrance of a typical deliverance, but instead, use the bread and wine, representative of My flesh and life, the basis of the real deliverance, the real passing over. Hence, let as many as receive Me and My words henceforth—"Do this in remembrance of Me."

Taking our Lord's words in their simple obvious sense, how beautiful is their lesson. Unleavened. (pure) bread henceforth would at this Memorial represent our Lord, the Bread from heaven, of which we may eat and have everlasting life. But this "bread" must be "broken" in order to be appropriated. And so we see that it was necessary not only for our Lord to come from heaven as the "Bread," but necessary also that He be broken in death—sacrificed for our sins—ere we could appropriate His merit and enjoy everlasting life.

The "fruit of the vine" was also introduced as an important part of this Memorial of our Lord's loving sacrifice. He explained that it represented His blood—"The blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins." What a reminder this is of the ransom-price necessary and secured on behalf of the sins of the world. The broken bread taught a part of the lesson, the "cup" taught the remainder of it.

The Lord's disciples must, by faith, partake of, "appropriate," both the "bread" and the "cup," or they cannot be one with Him. More than this: the Apostle shows that there is another subsequent view of this Memorial. We who thus eat and drink—who thus partake of our Saviour's merits—are reckoned in with Him as His "members," as His "Body," being broken and our lives sacrificed in His service, under His direction are counted as a part of His sacrifice. The Apostle's words are: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common union) of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the common union of the Body of Christ? For we, being many are one loaf, and one Body, because we are all partakers of that one loaf (Christ)."

The drinking of the Lord's Cup by the Church represents our participation in the sufferings of Christ in the present time. None shall be a member of the Body of the great Mediator of the New Covenant unless he comes in now under the proper terms. The drinking of the blood, then, is the sharing of the Cup. For if we drink not of His Cup, neither shall we share with Him in His glory. He said, "Drink ye all of it." All must drink, and the entire Cup must be drained during this Age.

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. We see that our beloved Lord drank of the bitter Cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember that He gave the Cup to us, that we shall all drink of it. "If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with Him." "We shall participate in the inauguration of the New Dispensation, and in dispensing its blessings."

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of His death, the Master said, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that Day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom." Our Lord was here contrasting the two great Days already referred to—the Day of suffering and the Day of glory. This Gospel Age has been the Day of suffering: the Millennial Age will be the Day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the Day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of wine is produced at the cost of the life of the grape. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are to lay down our lives in the Divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as humans and to become new creatures. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of His Cup, The cup of wine—the juice of the grape—represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this literal cup. To us it symbolises our Saviour's sufferings and death, and our own participation with Him in these sufferings. But wine also

represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So, in the sense in which the Lord used the words, “fruit of the vine,” it represents the joys of the Kingdom.

After the institution of the Memorial Jesus went out into the Mount of Olives in company with the eleven. It is believed that the passage was made at midnight across the Kedron and up the slopes of Olivet into the garden of Gethsemane. It seems that the Saviour realised that He was entering this place for the purpose of fighting a great battle that was to win for Him the victory of Calvary; for out of this agony Jesus stepped calm and strong for the final hour, and herein is a great lesson for His followers: We must win’ our battles before we come to them, in secret prayer and gathered strength.

We observe that the Master realised that His hour of betrayal and fierce temptation was close at hand; He first comforted, counselled, and prayed for and with His disciples, and then His next strong impulse was to seek a solitary place for prayer and communion with God that He might find grace to help in this: time of sore need. He wanted to see full and clear the light of His Father’s face before He stepped into the final darkness. He sought to fall into perfect submission to the will of God and feel the assuring, sustaining power of His omnipotence; He knew full well that He could then bear the cross. And dear friends, have not all true followers of Christ realised that prayer is the highest preparation for every duty and burden? It quiets the soul and clears the vision so that the path of truth and duty can be seen. In entering any Gethsemane let us enter through the gate of prayer, and then we can endure the agony and may be able to come out calm and strong.

Leaving all but Peter, James and John at the entrance of the Garden, as a sort of outer guard against the sudden intrusion of His betrayer upon His last hour of prayer, He advanced with the three—the three in whose ardent natures He seemed to find the most active and consoling sympathy—and with an earnest appeal to them to watch and pray, He left them and went about a stone’s throw beyond.

All realise that sympathy has a wonderful power to lighten burdens. Solitary suffering is doubly hard to bear. It gives: us a sense of unsupported and forsaken loneliness that kills all courage and fills us with despair. The presence of a friend rallies our energies and inspires us with new life. We may reasonably suppose that it was: the simple presence of those chosen disciples that Jesus wanted, not their talk. “I here was nothing they could say to Him that would help Him; but their watchful waiting near by would help Him. The best sympathy is not that which is most talkative and fussy. The silent presence, the sympathetic tear, the thoughtful, helpful act, these go deeper. There are chambers of sorrow in which voluble speech is an impertinence and silence is soothing to the soul.

Under the trees of Olivet, the Master had a good chance to think over the sequence of events that were to culminate on Calvary. The grass was cool and sweet to Him; the air was balmy and mild. The heavens of that night with all their gleaming brilliance betokened the love-light of His Heavenly Father which seemed as though it were bestowing a silent blessing upon His head. It was a time when lovers walk about in the joy of youth; but He, the greatest lover of all time—the lover of God and righteousness and truth walked alone, for the disciples had been left behind. And there, in that mighty temple of nature, Jesus had the final conflict of His earthly career. Knowing what was coming, He prayed, “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” (Matt. 26:39, 42.)

How much depended upon the Lord’s fortitude in that awful hour, awaiting the certain arrival of His betrayer and His persecutors maddened with hate and full of the energy of Satan. Oh, how the destinies of the world and of Himself seemed to tremble in the balances! Even the perfect human nature was not equal to such an emergency without Divine aid, therefore it was that He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save Him from death,—by a resurrection. The necessary comfort was provided, as foretold by the prophet Isaiah, “Behold My servant whom I uphold, Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth . . . I, the Lord, have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee (from falling or failure) and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles . . . He shall not fail nor be discouraged.”

Then, though the cup might not pass from Him, His prayer was heard and a special ministry from God strengthened Him. Just how, we know not, but probably by refreshing His mind with the precious promises and prophetic pictures of the coming glory, which none of His disciples had sufficiently comprehended to thus comfort Him in this hour when the gloom of thick darkness settled down upon His soul. It was Jehovah’s hand upholding Him, according to His promise. that He might not fail nor be discouraged.

The result of that blessed ministry was a reinforced courage which commands the deepest admiration. With His eye of faith upon the glorious victory of truth and righteousness, when He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied—satisfied with the eternal joy and blessedness of a redeemed world, with the welcome and wealth of the Father’s blessing, and the love and gratitude of every loyal creature in heaven and in earth—yes, comforted and encouraged thus with a realising sense of the rewards of faith and faithful endurance to the end, He could now calmly and even

courageously, go forth to meet the foe. Yes, this was the victory by which He overcame, even His faith, and so we also are to overcome.

He had passed beyond the need of His disciples' help. His victory was won. The cross was already as good as behind Him. With calm courage that feared no evil, with masterful faith that scattered the darkness of Calvary, He said, "Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand." Mark His calm, dignified fortitude, as He addresses Judas and the Roman soldiers, and its effect upon them. They were so overpowered with the grandeur and nobility of this wonderful man that they could not have taken Him had He not voluntarily placed Himself in their hand. Notice, too, His kind consideration for the bewildered and weary disciples, and His loving excuse for them, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak," and His request to the Roman soldiers at the time of His arrest that they might be permitted to go their way, that so they might escape sharing in His persecutions. So through all the trial and mocking, and finally the crucifixion, His courage and solicitude for the welfare of others never failed.

Let the curtain go down on Calvary, on the darkness of the reeling crosses, on the death of God's beloved Son, the great antitypical passover Lamb. Let it go down on the weeping women, on the disciples, on the Roman soldiers and on the cruel Pharisees and scribes. Then let it rise on the glorious morning of His resurrection, when a mighty angel had rolled away the stone from the tomb, and said to those who came to embalm the body, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

How the Christian feeds on these events—the death and resurrection of Jesus! They are the very essence of life and power at the present time, just as they have been for nearly two thousand years. The feast that God has provided through His Son is to be eaten with unleavened bread—the bread of pure truth—and with bitter herbs of persecution. This feast has continued throughout the Gospel Age.

"Let a man examine himself" says the Apostle; let him see to it that in partaking of the emblems he realises them as the ransom-price of his life and privileges; and furthermore that he by partaking of them is pledging himself to share in the sufferings of Christ and to be broken for others. Through lack of proper appreciation of this Memorial, which symbolises not only our justification, but also our consecration to share in the sufferings and death of Christ, the Apostle says, "Many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep." The truth of this remark is evident; a failure to appreciate and a losing sight of the truths represented in this Supper, are the cause of the weak, sickly, and sleeping condition of many in the Church. Nothing so fully awakens and strengthens the saints as a clear appreciation of the atoning work of our Lord and their share with Him in His sufferings and sacrifice in behalf of humanity. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." These words are not to be taken in the sense of a discouragement by any sincere follower of the Master, but rather in the sense of impressing the solemnity and depth of meaning that should always be associated with the partaking of the emblems. Far from discouraging any who desire to walk in the Master's footsteps His own words are sufficient—"Come unto Me . . . Take my yoke upon you, for My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Let us also at this time take warning as well as encouragement, not only from our dear Lord's life of sacrifice, but also from the lives of the Apostles who were with Him for the greater part of His earthly sojourn. We might particularly think of three; in the first place how sad is the case of Judas; we all know the terrible result of the secret, selfish desire of the natural heart which allowed Satan to fully enter, as exhibited finally in the betrayal of his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that with a kiss. We may be sure that the details of Judas' act in this way, being recorded by the four Evangelists, is so arranged as a lasting lesson for all the Lord's people. Oh, how we each need to keep our hearts with great diligence, to preserve our first love for the Lord, for if our hearts are right and we make mistakes, which we are all prone to do, we shall soon be restored to the Lord's favor and find grace and strength to be on guard against any weaknesses in the future. Such was the case with Peter; his heart was right, and after the acknowledgment of his denial of His Master and receiving the necessary admonitions, we find that he was recovered and re-established in the Lord's favor and confidence. The recording of Peter's denials and subsequent forgiveness of the Lord has undoubtedly been a very great help to many Christians who have been overtaken in a fault, and then sought the Lord's forgiveness with the result that, as with Peter, they have realised much strengthening of character, with greater determination to serve the Lord faithfully in all the days ahead.

Then we think of loving John, the one with whom the Lord seemed to have most fellowship glorious victory of truth and righteousness, when He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied — satisfied with the eternal joy and blessedness of a redeemed world, with the welcome and wealth of the Father's blessing, and the love and gratitude of every loyal creature in heaven and in earth—yes, comforted and encouraged thus with a realising sense of the rewards of faith and faithful endurance to the end, He could now calmly and even courageously, go forth to meet the foe. Yes, this was the victory by which He overcame, even His faith, and so we also are to overcome.

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"Let a man examine himself" says the Apostle; let him see to it that in partaking of the emblems he realises them as the ransom-price of his life and privileges; and furthermore that he by partaking of them is pledging himself to share in the sufferings of Christ and to be broken for others.

Through lack of proper appreciation of this Memorial, which symbolises not only our justification, but also our consecration to share in the sufferings and death of Christ, the Apostle says, "Many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep." The truth of this remark is evident; a failure to appreciate and a losing sight of the truths represented in this Supper, are the cause of the weak, sickly, and sleeping condition of many in the Church. Nothing so fully awakens and strengthens the saints as a clear appreciation of the atoning work of our Lord and their share with Him in His sufferings and sacrifice in behalf of humanity. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." These words are not to be taken in the sense of a discouragement by any sincere follower of the Master, but rather in the sense of impressing the solemnity and depth of meaning that should always be associated with the partaking of the emblems. Far from discouraging any who desire to walk in the Master's footsteps His own words are sufficient "Come unto Me . . . Take my yoke upon you, for My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Let us also at this time take warning as well as encouragement, not only from our dear Lord's life of sacrifice, but also from the lives of the Apostles who were with Him for the greater part of His earthly sojourn. We might particularly think of three; in the first place how sad is the case of Judas; we all know the terrible result of the secret, selfish desire of the natural heart which allowed Satan to fully enter, as exhibited finally in the betrayal of his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that with a kiss. We may be sure that the details of Judas' act in this way, being recorded by the four Evangelists, is so arranged as a lasting lesson for all the Lord's people. Oh, how we each need to keep our hearts with great diligence, to preserve our first love for the Lord, for if our hearts are right and we make mistakes, which we are all prone to do, we shall soon be restored to the Lord's favor and find grace and strength to be on guard against any weaknesses in the future. Such was the case with Peter; his heart was right, and after the acknowledgment of his denial of His Master and receiving the necessary admonitions, we find that he was recovered and re-established in the Lord's favor and confidence. The recording of Peter's denials and subsequent forgiveness of the Lord has undoubtedly been a very great help to many Christians who have been overtaken in a fault, and then sought the Lord's forgiveness with the result that, as with Peter, they have realised much strengthening of character, with greater determination to serve the Lord faithfully in all the days ahead.

Then we think of loving John, the one with whom the Lord seemed to have most fellowship of the twelve; he was ever alongside his Master, even to following him to the judgment hall, and also to Calvary's hill, and where from the cross his Lord commended the caring of His earthly mother to his charge. Oh, that we might be more like loving John, tender-hearted, affectionate, and fully devoted to our Lord, willing, yes cheerfully rendering our all so fully, so completely to Him, to whom we belong, since we have covenanted to follow in His steps, and then willing to be used in the interests of His people and cause as He may direct.

"Let us keep the feast," then, in both senses, (1) Appropriating and feasting on the great work done for us by our Redeemer and the riches of grace granted us through Him and (2) Appreciating our privilege of joint-sacrifice with our Redeemer—laying down our lives in His service, for the brethren, and thus "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Left behind, not because our Lord could not suffer enough for all, nor because His sufferings

were not sufficient for all, but because He wished to have us with Him to share His nature and His glory, and only by suffering with Him and as His members could we be allowed to share His glory, honor and immortality.

The hour is late—the end is drawing nigh—
As we gather here,

Brethren beloved, to share this' holy feast,
We know the time is near

When all His loved ones shall be gathered home
Our tears all wiped away,

And all the shadows that oppress us here
Shall yield to perfect day.

Then with rejoicing let us now partake;
Our journey's almost o'er;

The light is breaking o'er the heav'nly hills!
Our King is at the door.

Passover Memorial, 1953,

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 29th March. The appropriate time to celebrate the Memorial of our Lord's death will therefore be after sundown on the Sunday evening above-mentioned.

Friends desiring supplies of the unleavened bread and wine may obtain these from this office. Applications should be made early, preferably by early in March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne—Sunday, 29th March, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. (Further information, phone in Melbourne—WY 3500.)

Adelaide.—Sunday, 29th March, at 7 p.m., at Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Sunday, 29th March, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right side of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the Station.)

Perth.—Sunday, 29th March, at 5.45, at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets, Perth.

When Ye Fast.

“When ye fast be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance.”—Matt. 6 :1 6.

IN OUR TEXT our Lord is not expressing any I disapprobation of fasting: quite to the contrary; He is endorsing it as a propriety. Undoubtedly it is better for the health to fast somewhat at times rather than to eat to satisfaction.

The Master’s comment, according to the context, seems to be based upon the improper conduct of the Pharisees. The fasting was supposed to be good not only for physical health, but also for mental and spiritual health. The Pharisees, professing to be very holy, made manifest their holiness by fasting, subordinating the flesh that they might be spiritually strengthened.

Our Lord does not dispute the propriety of such a course, but it was the wrong spirit that He condemned. For when the Pharisees fasted, many of them did it to be seen of men, in order to seem holy and given over to spiritual things. Hence our Lord’s suggestion that when His disciples fast they should not be as the hypocrites, whose fasting and long faces were to show men their piety. In the same connection our Lord proceeds to say that when His disciples fast they should do the very reverse; that they should anoint their heads and be as cheerful as possible.

We can see the philosophy of this course. If their fasting had brought them nearer to the Heavenly Father it should have made them more gracious and luminous. It should have had a happifying effect, which would have shown itself in the countenance. The thing reprimanded, then, was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who assumed a sadness of countenance to be seen of men. They delighted to have people say, “What a holy man! He has fasted so much! He is always thinking about holy things and, in order to do this, he is even denying himself the necessities of life. He is a very holy man!”

The followers of the Lord are to practise such fasting as will be seen of the Lord and not of men. The Father, who knows the heart, will appreciate our efforts to draw near to Him and will grant our desire. But these things should be hidden to the outside world and known only to God; and the joy of the Lord should be manifest in the countenance.

Our Lord’s frequent reference to the Pharisees, no doubt, was in part owing to the fact that the Pharisees were a very large and influential class; and in part because their name signified that they were the “holy people.” Hence, when our Lord was teaching special obedience to God, the question in the minds of the people would be, “Is He not a Pharisee, and do not the Pharisees teach all these things?”

So it became necessary for our Lord Jesus to show wherein some of these things that the Pharisees practised were not proofs of their special nearness to God, and that they were not leaders to holiness, but that it was very evident that many of the Pharisees were hypocritical. Their holiness had become a mere form; it had degenerated into a custom—as the Scriptures say, a “Drawing near to the Lord with their lips, while their hearts were far from Him,” and thinking merely of the general attitude they had toward the world, the people in general.

We remember that there were some very noble Pharisees—Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, who buried our Lord, and St. Paul, who tells us that he was a Pharisee. But evidently the greater part of them had made broad their phylacteries and were more anxious in respect of what men would think of them than what the Lord would think of them. Perhaps some of the hypocrisies of the Pharisees have been practised since by some in the Monastic Order, where they wished to show their special separation from the world by the wearing of a peculiar garb, by a special cut of the hair, by seclusion, etc. There is danger along this line in the observance of the Lenten season by some of the Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans. But it may not be hypocritical with all.

In many respects it would be a very good thing for all the Lord’s people to follow the Lenten custom of fasting, doing so with as little outward demonstration as possible, practising it as unto the Lord, without considering it a thing to be mentioned, without attracting attention, but merely as a privilege. The Lenten season comes at a time when abstemiousness in food seems particularly appropriate.

We have in mind the fact that the Lenten season represents the forty-day period of our Lord’s experiences just preceding the crucifixion. We might enter sympathetically into this matter and think of the trying experiences that were upon the Master when He knew that He was drawing near to the time of His death. As we try to think of Him it will enable us better to realize what a privilege it is to endure hardship as good soldiers for the sake of His Message.

Fasting is specially commendable to the Lord’s people at times when they find themselves lacking in spirituality and exposed to severe temptations from the world, the flesh and the Devil; for, by impoverishing the physical force and vitality, it may assist the full-blooded and impulsive to self-control in every direction. We may believe that a majority

of Christians would be helped by occasional fasting—by a very plain diet, if not total abstinence, for a season. But fastings to be seen and known of men, or to be esteemed in our own minds as marks of piety on our part, would be injurious indeed and would lead to spiritual pride and hypocrisy, which would far outweigh any advantage to us in the way of self-restraint.

Baptism Services, Adelaide and Melbourne.

It is expected that a Baptism Service will be held in Adelaide during the Easter Convention gatherings. Any Christian friends desiring to symbolize their consecration to the Lord are invited to contact the Convention secretary in good time, at the address given in Convention notice.

A Baptism Service will also be held in Melbourne (D.V.) before Easter. Anyone wishing to symbolize their consecration to God should contact this office at Ermington Place, Kew, without delay.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their four-day Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) from Good Friday, 3rd April to Easter Monday, 6th April, in the Builders' and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they invite visitors from other parts to join them for these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further information will appear in next month's "Paper" and may also be obtained from the Secretary—Mrs. H. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

New Address for Perth Meetings.

The secretary of the Perth Bible Class has advised that a new meeting hall has been procured for regular Sunday meetings at 3 p.m., and 5.45 p.m. as follows—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Street, Perth. All interested in the study of the Bible will be very welcome.

Trust.

"God guide you in the darkness and the light
Of days unknown,

And make the path that lies before you bright
With all the joy and peace He gives His own—
The joy which is the strength of those who wait Beside His feet,

And find—though earth be dark and desolate
Each cross is crowned with compensation sweet.

And learn in brighter hours that still the heart
May look above,

And find in His own life a better part;
A perfect happiness; a perfect love.

A peace which only comes to those who lie
At rest and still

While all the changeful earth life passes by—
Within His Holy and unerring will"

—Selected.

Love in True Service.

“Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” —1 Cor. 13:3.

THE APOSTLE has been discussing the gifts of the holy spirit. In chapter 12 he has shown that the Lord gave one or more miraculous gifts to each one of the early Church who accepted the Gospel Message and became a follower of Christ. These gifts were for two purposes; for the benefit of the person himself, and also for a testimony to outsiders. The Gospel Message was new, and some effective and convincing methods were necessary to the starting of the infant Church. After pointing out these various gifts and intimating that the gift of public teaching, oratory, was the most valuable, St. Paul says, “And yet I show unto you a more excellent way.” He then assures them that the fruits of the spirit are far more important; and that Love is the most valuable fruit, without which all gifts, all zeal, would be valueless.

There are earnest people today who greatly lament that the Church of our times does not have the gifts possessed by the early Church. They feel sure that the absence of these gifts of the spirit at present denotes a great lack of faith and faithfulness among God’s people. But these seem not to have noticed that the Apostle Paul assured the Church of his day that these gifts would pass away. Hear him: “Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge (miraculous knowledge or ability to understand) , it shall vanish away . . . And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.’ (Vs. 8, 13.) We see that these miraculous gifts passed away gradually. They were conferred only by the Apostles, and hence after the death of the Apostles and of those upon whom the Apostles had laid their hands in conferring the gifts, no others could receive them. The possession of one or more of these gifts, however, did not signify acceptance in the Kingdom of Heaven. A man might have some of those miraculous gifts at that time, and still be a castaway.

To whatever extent the Christian cultivates faith, hope, and love, to that extent he is cultivating that which will be eternal. Among these three Love stands first. We shall exercise Faith in that we shall never lose confidence in the Lord and His goodness and faithfulness, or in one another; we shall continue to have hope in that we shall always be looking forward to glories to come; but Faith and Hope will not be necessary in the same sense as now. Love, however, will never fail in any sense or degree, but will only enlarge and deepen. “Love never faileth”; it is a characteristic of God Himself, and every perfect being will be an embodiment of this glorious quality. Those possessing the Divine nature will have it to the fullest degree, in its highest attainment.

It is in connection with this contrast between the gifts and fruits of the spirit that the Apostle uses the language of the text under consideration. Who would give all his goods to feed the poor but from love? We reply, There might be less worthy motives for so doing, as the Apostle intimates. If there be no love, it profiteth nothing. If there be much love, it profiteth much. If there be a little love, it profiteth a little. We believe that the most of those who give to the poor have some love. We believe that many of the benefactions of today are prompted by love. To whatever extent an act of benevolence is thus prompted it will bring a blessing. To whatever extent it is prompted by selfishness and a desire for vainglory it will bring no blessing. This is true either of the Church or of the world.

The giving of the goods to feed the poor might be done with a view to popularity or to selfish advancement. The Pharisees made a great show of their holiness; but love was not the mainspring of their actions. Our Lord said that they had their reward—which was the praise of men. If a politician running for an office were to give his goods to feed the poor and those poor voted for him at the polls, he would have his reward. Why should he have two rewards? He got his votes, and that was his object in his distributions. But the reward which the Lord gives is both a present and a future one.

As to private charities, there are public provisions made today which to a large extent make private donations to the poor unnecessary and often unwise. But there is another way to feed the poor which is still more important. We may feed the spiritually hungry, and may assist in clothing the spiritually naked. So we may spend our money and give our goods to feed the poor in the very best way possible, though the feeding and clothing of the body may not be ignored when necessary. But even this spiritual ‘feeding and clothing would not be acceptable to the Lord unless we do it from genuine love for Him and His and all men. To whatever extent any Christian gives to the Lord’s cause for outward show or because he thinks it may be expected, of him, or from any motive save that of love for the Lord, to that extent he would receive no reward. If it is done from love it will be rewarded in heaven; and it “profiteth” also in his character development for the kingdom.

It is the spirit of that life to which we should attain. It is not by saying Christ’s words, or by doing Christ’s acts, but it is by breathing His spirit that we become like Him.

—F. W. Robertson.

Convention item from 1911.

The following item was recorded during a Convention Tour in 1911 amongst the truth friends in U.S.A.—”At one of these meetings, by request, we had a service for the consecration of children. A number of parents formally presented their children in consecration to the Lord. We made clear to all that there is no Scriptural command governing this matter. The basis of our innovation is the fact that the Jews in general were accustomed to consecrate their male children to the Lord by circumcision, and the parents of Samuel the Prophet made consecration of him to the Divine service.

“We reminded the friends that when certain parents brought their children to Jesus, He said, ‘Permit little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such like is the Kingdom.’ That is to say, those acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs of Messiah’s Kingdom will all be childlike, simple, trustful, obedient children of God.

“We suggested further that as the children grow to years of discernment, it may be helpful to them to know that their parents had thus devoted them to God and His service of righteousness. We recalled our own experience, that when about seven years of age our mother told us, ‘Charles, I want you to know that I gave you to the Lord, as Samuel’s mother gave him. It is my hope and prayer that in God’s providence you may become a minister of the Gospel.’ We recall the impression made upon us, and our reply at the time: ‘Ma, I think that when I grow up I shall prefer to be a missionary to the poor heathen. The people here have many preachers,- have many churches, while the poor heathen have few.’

“Our mother made no remark, but as we look at the matter now, her prayer is being fulfilled in our present opportunity for ministering to the ‘household- of faith,’ and our own proposition to help the heathen will also have realization in the blessed Messianic Kingdom. About fifteen children were consecrated, by prayer, laying on of the hand and the invocation of Divine blessing. We made clear that none should think of this matter as an obligation, merely as an opportunity for such as desire to avail themselves of it.”

The Value of Shadows.

We all love the sunshine, but the Arabs have a proverb, “All sunshine makes a desert ;” and it is a matter of common observation that the graces of Christian living are more often apparent in the cases of those who have passed through great tribulation. God desires to get as rich crops as possible from the soil of our natures. There are certain plants of the Christian life, such as meekness, gentleness, kindness, humility, which cannot come to perfection if the sun of prosperity always shines.

“My dear,” said an old Scots lady, “if you marry a child of the Devil you may expect to have some trouble with your father-in-law !”—J.M.L.

The Best Wine Till Last.

(John 2:10.)

When from life’s feast the glory has departed,
And weariness creeps on,
When on thy lips the bread has turned to ashes—
And all the wine is gone.
Then fill the jars once more though but with water,
And fill them to the brim ;
And to the waiting guests about thy table—
Pour out the best—for Him.
His power only awaits for thy small effort,
To aid His mighty touch,
Transmuting thy poor gift to His rich vintage.
Making thy little much.
So shalt thou know again the joy of service
That thou hadst thought was past,
And find the Master of the Feast has given
The best wine at the last.

—A. J. Flint.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.” —Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

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“Do the Dead Know Anything”—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24-page booklet. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for 2/-, posted.

“When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinching heart,

Then, Lord, I shall fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.
When the praise of heaven I hear,
Grand as anthems on the ear,

Loud as many waters’ noise.
Sweet as harps’ melodious voice,
Then, Lord, I shall fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.”

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. I 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 N. ge 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 N. ., 4.45 p.m.



Volume XXXVI. No. 4 MELBOURNE, APRIL, 1953

Does the Bible Teach Divine Healing for Today?

THIS subject has been brought before the minds of thinking people, particularly in recent times, because of the prevalence of claims that it is a mark of Christian growth and favour from the Lord to receive what is declared to be the outpouring of the holy spirit of God in the last days, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel which was quoted by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost.

In reviewing Peter's quotation in Acts 2:16-18, it is evident to careful students of God's Word that verse 18—"And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy"-- commenced to have its fulfilment on the day of Pentecost, whereas verse 17 will be fulfilled in the Kingdom Age, when God's spirit will be truly "poured out upon all flesh," but not before. There are various passages in the Bible where verses are out of sequence in order of fulfilment, and if this matter is overlooked in this passage Acts 2, it is very misleading.

The period when God's spirit has been poured out upon His servants and handmaidens only, is this Gospel Age, beginning on the day of Pentecost. It is recorded in John 7:39, while Jesus was still carrying on His ministry, that "the holy spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." When our Lord ascended to the Father, however, the acceptance of His sacrifice was shown by the outpouring of the spirit on the waiting disciples at Pentecost upon God's servants and handmaidens, who were worthy of His blessing. This was the second great outpouring from the Heavenly Father, the first being upon our Lord at the time of His baptism, 3% years prior to His death at Calvary. (See Matt. 3:16, 17.)

Having received the spirit in its fulness from the Father (without measure, John 3:34), Jesus engaged in certain miracles at particular times, as wisdom indicated, to demonstrate the power of, God for the benefit of those who would be His true disciples. Being natural people they needed outward signs to convince them that Jesus was truly the Messiah, the Christ of God; at least, God graciously arranged the matter that way, in accord with His good pleasure.

It is evident that our Lord Jesus performed at least 36 miracles during His ministry; maybe He performed more which are not recorded, but even one hundred or more miracles would not be a great number for one having the power of God at His disposal for 3?, years. Of the miracles Jesus did perform, about 22 were healings, at least three were miracles of raising the dead, and the remainder were of various kinds. It is evident, then, that our Lord's mission was not directed toward relieving the physically sick of Israel in particular; only a comparatively few, really, were healed by Him, as examples of His power, to show that He was the sent One of God, and also to manifest forth, beforehand, His coming power in the Kingdom Age. This is indicated by the statement in John 2:11, when Jesus turned the water into wine. It reads—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."

The fact that outward demonstrations by miracles were not to be taken as chief indications of God's favour, even at Jesus' First Advent, is evident by our Lord's words to the seventy disciples, recorded in Luke 10:17, 20, as follows:—"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them . . . Notwithstanding in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Passing on to the time when the disciples of Jesus received the gifts of the spirit, as well as the begetting of the holy spirit, on the day of Pentecost, the account of that wonderful outpouring "on God's servants and handmaidens" is given in Acts 2. The record states—"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind. . . And they were all filled with the

holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? . . . We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” (Acts 2:1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11.)

We can well understand the reasonableness and necessity for the “tongues” at that time, as numerous people of different languages were present (Acts 2:9-11), and the result of the proclaiming of the message of the truth in the various languages is shown in verse 41 of this same chapter—”And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Then, those with the varied languages would return to their own countries and proclaim the same message of glad tidings to their own people who had ears to hear: this was God’s means of spreading the gospel message that it may, throughout the Gospel Age, be a witness to all nations; to take out of all nations a people for His name.

Thus was the Church established in its infancy by the outpouring of God’s holy spirit, by outward signs for those who were then “babes”, and also by the begetting of the holy spirit for the development of these young in the faith; that they may grow up into Christ and become mature in character.

As time progressed with the establishment of the various churches in the Apostles’ day, does it seem strange that in all the spiritual epistles of the Apostles we find no reference to the outward signs or gifts of the holy spirit? Surely, if the gifts of healing or speaking with tongues were to be an evidence of God’s favour and blessing, we should expect the Apostles to make this very plain in all their epistles. But what do we find? Take the richly spiritual letters to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, to the Hebrews, and we find no reference is made by Paul to the “gifts” of the spirit. Why the omission? And why did Peter in his two epistles, and John in his three epistles never mention the “gifts” of healing? And why did not Jesus mention the “gifts” of the spirit in His wonderful Revelation to John?

The answer is given in Paul’s epistle to the Corinthians, the letter in which the Apostle especially mentions both the gifts and fruits of the holy spirit. In 1 Cor. 3 we read—”And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal . . . and walk as men.” (Verses 1-3.) Again, in chapter 4, Paul states—”For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us, and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you . . . We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised, etc. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.” (Verses 7, 8, 10-14.)

The above quotations reveal the mind of a considerable portion of the church at Corinth; they desired outward show, “reigning as kings”, making a fair show in the flesh, etc. Then, in chapter 12 of this epistle, Paul shows the diversities of gifts from the same spirit of God, and while rightly used in the early church the “gifts” could be a blessing and lead on to the higher spiritual development, this was not the case with the Corinthian church as a whole. They were more interested in making an outward show with the tongues, healings, etc. In the closing verses of chapter 12 Paul shows the various gifts, and concludes—”Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.”—More excellent, more to be desired, than even the best gifts. (Verse 31.)

The more excellent way is presented in chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians—”Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels . . . Though I have the gift of prophecy, etc., and have not love (the fruit of the spirit within) , I am nothing.” Then, in verse 8, Paul declares—”Love never faileth: but whether there be (gifts of) prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be (gifts of) tongues, they shall cease; whether there be (gifts of) knowledge, they shall vanish away.”

A helpful indication as to the manner in which these various gifts of the spirit did fail, cease and vanish away, in the early period of the Gospel Age, is furnished by a Scriptural passage in Acts 8, where it is recorded—”Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the holy spirit; (for as yet it was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the holy spirit. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the holy

spirit (gifts) were given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the holy spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.” (Acts 8:5, 6, 13-20.)

The important lesson from the above account is the fact that while Philip was engaged in a valuable ministry of preaching the gospel, and performing miracles to impress the truths of God, he was unable to convey the “gifts of the spirit” to others, even though he had the gifts himself. It required the sending of two apostles (Peter and John) to Samaria, and they were used of God to pass on the “gifts” to others. Thus, as Philip could not convey these gifts (this power being invested only in the twelve apostles), it necessarily follows that when the apostles fell asleep in death, the gifts did fail, cease and vanish away, as Paul declared. However, God’s work by means of the gifts had been accomplished, and they were no longer required for His work of the ministry.

Again, when referring to the gifts of the spirit, Paul declared—“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man (in Christ), I put away childish things.” (1 Cor. 13:11.)

Thus did the Apostle seek to lift the minds of the Corinthian brethren above the condition of babes, that they may develop the fruits of the spirit, and become mature followers of Christ. And of course the epistles of the Apostles were becoming available for the churches when Paul wrote those words, as also the Gospels, in addition to the Old Testament Scriptures, so that the Apostle could say, “All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.)

Of course there are claims that there are apostles of the Lord alive to-day, just as there were false declarations of the same nature towards the close of the first century of the church’s history. In the message in Revelation 2:2, to the church of Ephesus, we read—“And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.” Likewise, to-day, any claims to being apostles would be equally false, as there have been no more than the twelve apostles appointed by the Lord, Paul taking the place of Judas, as God never at any time recognised the appointment of Matthias which was made by the apostles themselves without any instructions from the Lord. Indeed, the apostles were told “to wait for the promise of the Father,” to be “endued with power from on high” (Acts 1:4; Luke 24:49), but instead they got busy electing another apostle as they thought, which was absolutely ignored by the Lord. So to-day, some religious systems take upon themselves the task of appointing “apostles”, so it is little wonder that they are misled by all manner of deceptions from the Adversary.

The Apostle revealed the deceptions of the evil one, when he declared there were “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” (2 Cor. 11:13-15.) It may be asked how Satan could be transformed into an angel of light. Our Lord stated in John 8:44 that the devil “was a murderer from the beginning”—from the time he brought the death sentence upon mankind. Now, however, Satan would adopt the opposite procedure; he would be as an angel of light; he would heal, he would do many wonderful works—he would start a counterfeit of the gifts of Pentecost—to captivate the desires of those who like show, outward signs. instead of the indwelling of God’s holy spirit. And Paul declares that to all who are captivated by the so-called “ministers of righteousness”, to satisfy their own desires, “God shall send a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” (2 Thes. 2:10-11.)

It may be asked: What about the statement by James, in chapter 5:14-16? There we read—“Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” The careful student of the Scriptures, examining these verses, also the context of this chapter of James, will readily determine that the Apostle is referring to sin-sickness and not to physical sickness at all. He is explaining the condition of one who has departed from the spirit of the Lord, being overcome to a considerable extent by the spirit of the Adversary, and felt unable to approach the Lord effectively. Hence, the advice—“Call for the elders”—to pray with and for him, to encourage such an one back into harmony with the Lord, by gaining full forgiveness of sins. The Lord grants forgiveness, but graciously permits other members in Christ to assist the erring one back into harmony with Himself; thus it is—“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

Paul, himself, when suffering “a thorn in the flesh” did not receive healing from the Lord, and surely if any one of Christ’s followers should receive healing by a miracle it would have been Paul. However, the reply to Paul was—“My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” • And the Apostle’s response —“Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me”—is the true example for all followers of the Master. (2 Cor. 12:7-9.) Again, Paul’s advice to Timothy, in 1 -rim. 5:23—“Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine’ often infirmities”—shows that the Apostle did not heal any of the Lord’s followers, just as Jesus did not heal any of His spiritual followers.

Instead of, expecting to be healed miraculously of bodily ills, the Lord’s people realise that the bearing of fleshly weaknesses in all patience and meekness is a means of great blessing in promoting the growth of the fruits of the spirit.

And of course these true followers of the Master have “presented their bodies a living sacrifice” (Rom. 12:1)

, and would never expect the Lord to use miraculous power to keep them healthy; rather, they are on the altar of sacrifice, and after using reasonable, natural means to keep their bodies well, commit their whole course into the

Lord’s hands, while active in His service. Just as Jesus would not use the heavenly-given powers to satisfy His hunger by “commanding the stones to be bread” (Matt. 4:1-4) , so all the followers of Christ must resolutely resist any suggestions by the same deceiver that they can have their bodily ills cured by power from on high.

It may be very appealing to the natural mind to receive promises of bodily healings, but our Lord declared—”If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?” (Matt. 12:26.) The fact is, that Satan’s kingdom is about to be fully overthrown, and he is divided against himself now by appearing “as an angel of light”, to cure the very evils he brought about by deceiving our first parents and bringing the death sentence and all the dying processes upon the human race. Our Lord warned about the deceptions of our very day when He declared— ”There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.’ (Matt. 24:24.)

The time when bodily weaknesses and imperfections are to be removed by the Lord is not yet; but during the Kingdom Age this will be the great work on behalf of mankind in general. Then, the overcoming saints will be associated with Christ in delivering mankind from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. 8:21.) To prove over-comers the Lord’s people must continue “to walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7), and this will mean constant vigilance against the wiles of the evil one, especially those suggestions which promise present, fleshly advantages, which, if accepted, would mean a violation of the consecration vows to be dead with Christ, if so be that we may live with Him.

“A Cup of Cold Water.”

“The Lord of the Harvest walked forth one day,
Where the fields were white with the ripening wheat,
Where those He had sent in the early morn
Were reaping the grain in the noonday heat.

He had chosen a place for every one,
And bidden them work till the day was done.
“Apart from the others, with troubled voice,
Spake one who had gathered no golden grain :

‘The Master bath given no work to me,
And my coming hither hath been in vain ;
The reapers with gladness and song will come,
But no sheaves will be mine in the harvest home.’

“He heard the complaint, and He called her name:
‘Dear child, why standest thou idle here?
Go fill the cup from the hillside stream,
And bring it to those who are toiling near;

I will bless thy labour, and it shall be
Kept in remembrance as done for Me.’
“ ‘Twas a little service, but grateful hearts
Thanked God for the water so cold and clear:

And some who were fainting with thirst and heat,
Went forth with new strength to the work so dear;
And many a weary soul looked up,
Revived and cheered by the little cup.’

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue,

The Great Multitude of Rev. 7:9-17.

A THOUGHT has been expressed that these are human beings restored to perfection, but this view would not harmonise with the setting of this passage, nor with the Scriptures as a whole.

It would seem that the Revelation which John received was particularly in regard to matters concerning the history of the Church—the events of the Gospel Age leading to the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

The Lord had indicated in His parables, that the great system of error—the Roman Catholic Church—would develop; that truth would be so polluted and that tares (imitation Christians) would become more plentiful than the wheat (true Christians). In this Revelation given to John symbols are given, which the developments of the age would lead the earnest student to comprehend as the fulfilment of these signs.

Until Christ came, and, by His death and Resurrection, became “worthy to open the Book” (which, until then, the Father had “kept in His own power,”) no one but the Heavenly Father knew what was to take place during the Gospel Age. The mystery was represented as a Book sealed with sewn seals.

As these seals were one by one opened, John saw the visions recorded, and these symbolised certain features of the Gospel Age. The first six seals deal only with features between Pentecost and the second coming of Christ; but the seventh seal gives a full view from the first advent and the death of Our Lord, “as the Lamb slain,” to the time when all the willing and obedient will have been brought up the highway of holiness and presented perfect to God.

It will be noticed that the matters contained in Rev. 7, including the seeing of this great multitude, are observed by John after the breaking of the sixth seal, and therefore as there is no earthly promise held out for any during this Gospel Age—the calling of the present time being to a heavenly inheritance—this “great multitude,” before the heavenly throne, must be heavenly, i.e., spirit beings. The Apostle definitely says, “we are called in one hope of our calling.”

No one is called to be of this Great Multitude; all who come into Christ are called to be “joint-heirs with Him.” “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” If we have received of His spirit, then “the spirit beareth witness that we are children of God, and if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.” (Rom, 8:9, 16, 17.)

However, whilst many are called, few are chosen (for the elect) ; many fail to make their calling and election sure. They allow the things of earth to attract and hold them back, and so they receive tribulation, hard experiences, to help them to give themselves entirely to the accomplishing of the Divine will. Paul says, regarding such an one, that he was handed over to Satan (to get experiences) , so that the fleshly mind might be destroyed, “that the spirit (life) might be saved so as by fire.” These would, while losing the great reward, yet be saved and ultimately gain the victory; but, instead of being on the throne as “joint-heirs with Christ,” would be servants before the throne, probably of similar nature to the angels.

As no one is called to be of the Great Company there is no very definitely plain Scripture statement concerning the class. There are, however, several Scriptures that seem to show that there would be those to serve before the throne. For instance, in the beautiful picture of the selection of the Bride of Christ in Genesis 24, Rebecca, who signified the Bride, had her nurse, who was also brought across the same desert to the same place as her mistress and served her in the new home. In Psalm 45, too, the Bride or Queen in gold of Ophir had “the virgins her companions that followed her.”

There are no hopes of an earthly nature held out to believers of the Gospel Age—the promises are all spiritual. The justified human nature has been presented as a living sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1.) The human nature having been placed on the altar must be consumed and cannot be reclaimed; and it would indeed be a sad thing if there was no provision for all those, who, though at heart loyal to God and loving righteousness, had been overtaken by the good things of earth and hindered by the adversaries — the world, the flesh, and the devil—from being counted overcomers to sit with Christ in His throne.

Paul speaks of such a class in 1 Cor. 3:12-15. They continued faithfully on the foundation, Jesus Christ—trusting in His shed blood for their peace with God and hope of heaven; but their works have been faulty. They have not embroidered their garments (Psalm 45), or in other words, have not zealously prepared themselves by attaining the predestined character (Rom. 8:29) — “conformed to the image of God’s dear Son.” Though their works are unacceptable, and they fail to gain the prize of the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” they are saved so as by fire,— fiery trials, great tribulations are permitted so as to assist them to let go the things of earth and overcome those things that hinder. They have “palms” of victory, though are not “crowned”; they serve before the rainbow circled throne instead of “sitting with Christ in His throne, even as He overcame and is set down with His Father in His throne.” (Rev. 3:21.)

The Lord is My Shepherd.

The Prophet David wrote the 23rd Psalm concerning himself; but in his words there is still deeper signification, namely, that Jehovah is the Shepherd of the anti-typical David—The Christ, of which Jesus is the Head and the Church His Body.

In proportion as any are in an attitude of mind in harmony with the Lord they are out of harmony with their present environment, in which the great Adversary is seeking their destruction, under conditions unfavourable for their spiritual development as the Lord’s “sheep.” Foxes, wolves, lions and even cattle have means of defence and offence; but the sheep has practically none. It seems to have no judgment: therefore the sheep is dependent on the shepherd. In other words, it is out of its environment if away from the shepherd. God provided for man’s protection, but by reason of sin the race got into the wilds and became exposed to various difficulties which otherwise would not have been man’s lot.

Those who are the “sheep” will come back into harmony with the Lord. As represented in our text, the Church class comes back in the present time. We all recognise, as the days go by, how necessary is the Divine care. As we come to see the Divine Plan, we see that “all who are of this fold,” all those who will come into harmony with God, will have this care; and that eventually there shall be one Shepherd and one flock.

Our Lord Jesus is the representative of the Father. Humanity, as the Lord’s sheep, went astray. All of Adam’s posterity are now astray. The Great Shepherd sent His Son for the lost sheep. He is seeking them and will ultimately find all who belong to this true flock. He is, therefore, in the highest sense of the word, the Bishop, or Shepherd of our souls, the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep.

To be His sons and daughters is a dignity and blessedness before which all earthly honours and all worldly good disappear.—Charles Hodge.

Brotherly Love.

LOVE of the brethren does not mean merely love for a faction, or clique, or for some of the brethren who have natural qualities which we admire. It means love for all who have consecrated themselves to the Lord, and are seeking to walk in His steps.

It means that if some have peculiarities of natural development and disposition, which are discordant to our ideas and sentiments, nevertheless, we will love and cherish them, and cheerfully serve them, because they are trusting in the Lord, and have been accepted of Him.

We henceforth know them, not after the flesh, with its peculiarities and knots and twists, but after the new nature, as “new creatures.” It means, also, that each of us in proportion, as we discover our own natural crooks and twists, which are contrary to the law of love, will seek to get rid of these imperfections of the flesh as rapidly as possible, and to make them as little obtrusive and offensive to others as possible.

From this standpoint, love will not be forever noting the defects of the various members of the body of Christ, nor holding them up to ridicule of others; but each will be, so far as possible, fully as anxious to cover the defects of others as to cover his own defects; and to sympathise with others in their conflicts with their besetments; as he sympathises with himself, and desires that the Lord shall sympathise with him in his own conflict with his own imperfections. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ (the disposition of Christ, love), he is none of His.” (Rom. 8:9.)

The object of the present call of the Church is to select not those who are perfect, but those who desire and will seek to become copies of God’s dear Son, “conformed to the image of His Son.” That image is love itself, for as God is love, so Christ’s character is love, the express image of the Father. This is the mould into which we are to be fashioned. But God will not impress us into this mould; He will not force upon us these lines of character; rather, the only influences which He exerts to this end are the “exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might’ become partakers of the Divine nature,’ and impress upon ourselves the Divine character of love, and thus escape the corruption that is in the world through selfishness. We are to keep ourselves in the love of God while He causes the pressure of all things to deeply engrave it upon us. (Jude 21.)

The matter is left open to us. We can either avail ourselves of these promises, and permit them to mould and fashion us according to the copy, little by little, daily and hourly, in thought, in word and deed, or we can resist their proper influence, and we can hold the truth in unrighteousness. Those who take the latter course are purchasing for themselves thereby bitter disappointment; for such are not of the kind to whom the Lord will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.” The degree of our devotion to the Lord, therefore, will be indicated in the degree of our love for Him and His; and the degree of our love and devotion will be manifested by our activity in conquering self and selfishness in all its ramifications throughout the affairs of life, and bringing all our thoughts and talents, great or small, into active service, prompted by love to God and to His people. Such will appreciate the statements of the Apostle when he said, “We (who have received the begetting of the holy spirit of our Master, the spirit of love, and who have grown to some extent in the knowledge of Him) ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Cheerful Obedience

“I wish I could obey God as well as my little dog obeys me,” said a young lad, looking affectionately at his shaggy friend. “He always looks so pleased to obey, and I don’t.”

Implicit obedience is our first duty to God, and one for which nothing else will compensate. The farmer must obey God’s natural laws of the season if he would win a harvest; and we must all obey God’s spiritual laws if we would reap happiness here and hereafter.

A Swarm of Bees Without Stings.

B hopeful, B cheerful, B happy, B kind,

B busy of body, B honest of mind;

B earnest, B truthful, B firm and B fair,

Of all miss B haviour B sure to B ware.

B think ere you stumble, of what may B fall,

B true to yourself, and B faithful to all:

B brave to B ware of the sins that B set,

B sure that one sin will another B get.

B just and B generous, B honest, B wise,

B mindful of time and B sure that it flies;

B prudent, B liberal, of order B fond,

Buy less than you need B fore buying B yond.

B careful, but yet B the first to B stow,

B temperate, B steadfast, to anger B slow:

B thoughtful, B thankful whatever B tide,

B just and B joyful and B cleanly B side.

B pleasant, B patient, B gentle to all,

B best if you can, but B humble with all;

B prompt and B dutiful and still B polite,

B reverent, B quiet, B sure and B right.

B calm, B retiring, B ne'er led astray,

B grateful, B cautious of those who B tray:

B tender, B loving, B good and B nign,

B loved thou shalt B, and all else shalt B thine. —Selected,

“ALL THE BUILDING FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER.”

I have been immensely struck with the words, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.” Now a pillar stands on the foundation and on nothing else; it has no other support, it does not even lean against another pillar; but because it stands thus straight and upright, it is the means of support to other parts of the building. I have long been praying that God would fulfil this promise to me.—F. R. Havergal.

Correspondence.

Dear Brother—It was a pleasure to have yours of last month, also the “P.P.” and reports of the Convention. It is nice to see that the Church in Melbourne is gathering up so well and the Convention is getting more like to the times gone by in numbers, and the addresses are splendid. I read the one “The Epistle of Christ” and think it is beautiful: others I have still to read.

It is also so good to hear something of those I have not met and of their earnestness and good fellowship . . . With Christian regards to you and to all. Yours in Christian fellowship.

Dear Brother—Warm Christian greetings in the precious name of Jesus.

I am enclosing cheque for to pay my subscription for the “Peoples Paper” and the balance, dear brother, please use to help on the precious truth. The Convention address, “The Epistle of Christ” in the February number is very good; truly we receive the message through Christ as it is passed on from one to another of His faithful followers.

If it will be convenient we would like you to forward, in due time for the Memorial, unleavened bread and wine for six to partake of.

The Frank and Ernest talks come over 2KY very good on Sunday mornings; I have been able to get ever so many to listen-in to them. Do you ever hear from Brother —; if so, please give him my Christian love and accept same yourself. I remain, your Brother in Christ.

Secretary, B.B. Institute, Dear Brother--I came into the Truth in 1914, and was very happy with the dear consecrated friends at -- where we lived. Then we lived in until Judge Rutherford changed the teachings, and which were by no means according to the Scriptures. He became an absolute dictator, and worse, until he died; I could not continue with the Society, so left completely and have never gone back. There were many more of those who knew the Truth and left when I did, and since; you know about where they have got to now, and going further away from the Truth.

We came to — and settled down here. My wife, Sister — passed to her glorious reward since then—faithful to the end. We had a few loyal ones to the Truth here, but most have been changed. There were very few left: I am very isolated, but the Lord is more precious to me now than ever . . .

It gave me great joy to receive from Sister here, three of the “Peoples Papers”, June, September, and December, 1952, also to hear Frank and Ernest Talks; it all rings beautiful and clear to me, as I have been studying Brother Russell’s books all along. I have them all, as well as the Reprints, Convention Reports, Question Book and numerous others. I can see you are carrying on much where he left off, so will be delighted when I receive the list ordered on the attached sheet. You will find enclosed Money Order; I don’t know how it will work out for freight and all, but if not enough, please let me know. Could you include in the year’s subscription for “Peoples Paper” the February issue, if not too late . . . When your next Convention in Melbourne? I may (D.V.) be down there at the end of this year.

Will be anxiously waiting on arrival of books, etc. I have prayed to the Lord for years and can see He is answering my prayers. Frank and Ernest Talks are doing wonders; hope same will continue. May the Master bless ,you abundantly, and all the dear friends. Yours in His service.

Dear Brother—Just a note; I feel that I must write and tell you just how much I am appreciating your Talks on Sunday mornings. It is grand to hear the glorious Truth broadcast, and surely it must bring comfort and help to some who will glorify God in the day of their visitation, when they remember such good works. (I Pet. 2:1 2.)

When one does not get much fellowship it is lovely to hear the Truth, spoken so beautifully clear and convincing. I do indeed enjoy reading, but how great has been the comfort and help to me to hear your little Dialogue each Sunday. With Christian love; Your Sister, by His grace.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have quite enjoyed the reading of the literature you have sent me; it is really inspiring and it does help one to understand the Scriptures more fully. The Bible is a different book to me. I am trying to serve God, but it is very hard when your family is not with you and they doubt the truth of the Bible.

That little book you sent me, “God and Reason”, is wonderful and has been very inspiring to me. I wonder if you could send me any more of them, I would like the book on the meaning of the parables, if possible, and any literature that will be interesting concerning the Scriptures. Thanking you in anticipation. Your Sister in Christ.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Just a few lines to thank you for the literature you forwarded on to me; it is a wonderful way to explain the Bible—everything is made clear. You see, although I go to our church here, we never hear anything explained to us, and we really come away empty; that is the feeling I always have . . . It just seems as if people are waiting for someone to satisfy their longing, and nearly every one you speak to will tell you they are waiting for something. We cannot get it in our churches and I know I am going to learn a lot by having and hearing your Dialogues. Thank you for sending them to me, and if you have any to spare at any time, I would be happy to have them.

Could you forward me one copy of “Our Lords Great Prophecy”; “The Plan of God—in Brief”; “The Lord is My Shepherd”; and “Peace Desired—War Continues”. These will give me a feast of reading. Enclosed 10/-; anything over, use as you like. Thanking you once again. Yours sincerely.

P.S.—Will you have a paper on “Should All Christians Observe the Lord’s Supper—How Often Should It Be Celebrated?” I would much like to have it, as it is a subject I’ve often thought about.

(A paper on the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is gladly supplied free to all, upon request. —B.B. Institute.)

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Will you please send me a copy of the discussion last Sunday, also a copy of the booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave.- Thank you for your very interesting talks and the spiritual knowledge which they impart. May God richly bless your work. Yours in the Lord.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—I listen to your Sunday morning broadcasts with much interest and am greatly helped by your discussions and answers to questions concerning God’s Word of truth.

I would be pleased to receive your booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave”, also a copy of the last Sunday morning’s broadcast I thank you and trust that the Lord will give you strength in your work for Him.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. go 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. go 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. go 4.45 p.m.



Volume XXXVI. No. 5 MELBOURNE, MAY, 1953

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CONVENTION ADDRESS.

THIS is a very momentous, timely and important topic. By way of introduction, let us read Matt. 24:37-39. "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming (presence) of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming (presence) of the Son of man be."

It was during the days of Noah—"in the days of Noah"—that they were doing these things. So, during the days of the presence of the Son of Man, not before His presence or after, shall similar things be done. While Noah was present, building his ark, certain things were going on, and while our Lord is present, other things, to-day are going on. We want to prove to you from the Word that similar conditions exist to-day as then. There is a tremendous similarity, but there are, shall we say, hindrances or obstructions to our belief. We may become downcast because certain things are happening. But the same things were happening back there, and Noah went on with his job.

We are given the exhortation to watch. The watching was to be progressively enlightened. To-day we have a particularly significant message, we believe, for the Lord's people. Watch, therefore. Be alert. Be on guard.

Let us read Luke 17:26-30. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." That takes us a little further down the stream of time during the Lord's presence, to the culmination of this present age. We believe these days are also numbered, as Noah's were. 1 Pet. 3:20 reads, "When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." And Gen. 6:3,—"The Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. ' Jehovah intimated to Noah in some way that the end of the age was approaching, and the days were numbered. Noah had 120 years in which to build the ark. So he set to work. He was preaching by his work for 120 years. We think there is a similarity here.

But they got used to those warnings. The same sort of thing went on from day to day, and the old cry went up, "All things continue the same since the fathers fell asleep." But they do not. God's clock is ticking on, and the end of this age is in sight. We know how quickly things can happen in these days; it takes two days to bring to culmination now what used to take a decade. "Who shall stand?"

Let us compare events to-day with what happened in Noah's day. We read that there were giants in the earth in those days. So there are now; great companies and corporations that get bigger every year, and they destroy and trample under foot all mankind. "Wickedness shall increase more and more." So mankind will be really worthy of the stripes of purification that will come.

Noah was "a just man, and perfect in his generation." He was the only perfect Adamic stock, with his family, at that time. The others had become corrupt by intermarriage which was not approved by God. The whole earth was filled with violence. Pick up any paper you like, and you will find that our earth is reeking with violence.

Directions were given to Noah to build the ark, that he might escape the deluge to come. We are given instructions that we may escape the fiery time of trouble about to strike; we believe it is already lit, and progressing tremendously in this earth to-day.

Let us look at Gen. 7:16. They all went into this ark. Noah was given seven days' notice to go into the ark, and at the end of the seventh day something was done. Noah and his family and livestock went in,—”And the Lord shut him in.” You will find that is very significant to-day. Yes, the Lord shuts the door. He is in charge of that door, and however much we would like to open it to our friends and loved ones, it is absolutely impossible. We have to stand and watch, and cannot do anything about it. It is particularly important for us to note that. I remember one elderly Sister who used to say she was glad she was not in charge of this door. It is a good thing the Lord is in charge. Other fine people with whom we come in contact do not enjoy these precious truths as we would like them to. Why? Because the Lord has shut the door. Why? Because of unbelief. We cannot open that door; it is impossible. It behoves us to be on the right side of that door, for the sake of those on the outside.

Noah's preaching was, shall we say, a harvest work. The harvest is the end of the age. There is also a harvest work at the end of this age. The wheat is being gathered, and the tares too, for burning. We know there won't be a deluge, but there will be a different kind of ending to this age. But there are the two harvests.

The days at the end of Noah's age were really a picture of our days. Think for a moment of the international scene. Look at humanity as a whole. It is no secret that there is a cold war on. It needs but a match to make it very hot. Some days ago, one of the leading papers asked a question: was there ever total peace on this earth? Was there ever an investigation into the question whether there was total peace on the face of the earth? The answer was that there had been an inquiry, and this inquiry went back 2044 years. Of course, a lot of nations did not keep their records. But there never was total peace.

You will find that where there is corruption there is violence. Look at events all over the world; there is corruption and violence on every hand. We think these things prove the presence of the Lord for the deliverance of His people at this time. Deliverance from what? Ignorance and superstition. So it behoves us to be particularly alert. There is a great fiery time of trouble to come. Paul says there is a time of trouble coming to try every man's work. But this trouble is going to do other work, not only destructive work, that mankind may have something more in the age to come. We hope the lesson will need no repetition.

The various circumstances which arise combine to bring out the worst and the best in man. Take, for instance, a war. It degrades man, it brings out the animal, the inhuman things. On the other hand, it brings out the human sympathies and compassions, and the best that is in man. But we are all more or less, all of us, creatures of circumstance. No one is exempt. Pilate wanted to release our Lord, but was caught in his own net. The Jews turned on him. So with men to-day, they will also be caught in their own net. There can be no in-between position. The windows of heaven to-day are open. They are dropping enlightenment. Trouble is the result of enlightenment. In the time of the end “knowledge shall be increased.” Men to-day have the audacity to think and to say, “We are wiser and more noble and greater in so many ways than our forebears were.” But these things have been the result of the Lord's doing. Men to-day are not better for the increase of knowledge. They are worse for it, and are no better than their forebears.

What were they doing in Noah's day? A few things are noted here for us. They were eating and drinking. Jesus says to us, “Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat and what ye shall drink, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.” Well, you know that some people think of nothing else but what they are going to eat and drink.

That is their god. Their stomach is their god. But we are not to be like that.

Noah was preaching. We are to preach, and our preaching is similar. They would say to Noah, “Why are you building the ark?” Rain had not fallen until then, and at first what curiosity would be seen amongst the people. But they became used to it. The eating and drinking became more important.

Then they were marrying. This is a very important event in anyone's life. It is important. These things are not evil in themselves. Building was spoken of. But Noah was building. The social round was very absorbing. Every energy is bent to attain to the circles of the elite, and thus be at the top rung of the social ladder. They thought the ark to be so stupid. Then the merchants of the city were buying and selling. It is the same thing with the stock exchange today. Greed and selfishness eat like a canker into the hearts of men. Do not think that this is confined to one class.

‘The housewife is just as much responsible, too, if she tries to bargain-hunt. That becomes a mania. Labour, wages and conditions, all come under the same heading as buying and selling. Man sells his labour. These things are very absorbing; so much so that they exclude any consideration as to the building of the ark.

Yes, they were also planting. Agriculture, horticulture, and so on, it does not matter whether it is for a livelihood, or a hobby, or for prize-money. Some people think of nothing but their prize dahlias. They were also building in Noah's day. This is a very constructive job. Much building is going on to-day. New homes, parks, roads, hydroelectric schemes, hospitals. It may even be new churches. And yet, it absolutely excludes any thought for the ark which is being built. They have more to do. These things are not evil in themselves. Noah was busy building. We, too, want to be busy building—building the modern ark.

The more important things were excluded in Noah's day until the day he entered into the ark, and then it was too late. To-day, too, these things are in evidence. They told Noah that things were going on just the same as they always did. They said the same thing to Lot. And now, too, things will seem to be going on just as usual until the last member has entered the ark. Don't think you will see some spectacular phenomenon which will astound you. That will not happen. Things will go on right to the very end, as they have always gone. We have to eat and drink, buy and sell. But watch out that they do not exclude us from admiring the building of the ark, and playing our proper part at this time.

"Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto them that are without it is spoken in parables." The real is taken for the unreal, and the unreal replaces the actual. The literal is taken symbolically, and symbols are expressed as realities. This is well expressed in 2 Pet. 3:3-14.

With most people, their own desires, their own extravagances, eating, drinking, marrying, exclude everything else. They are walking after their own lusts, giving no thought to anything else. "Where is the promise of his presence," they say, "for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." But Peter says they are willingly ignorant of certain aspects of the Word of God. Things are not the same, say what they will. In one sense they are, but in a deep sense they are not.

He goes on to show how the Lord will come as a thief in the night. But you don't wait for the thief to come when he is there. Our message is different to all others. The Lord is present. There won't be anything different to what you already have except the progressive enlightenment of your faith, and that also makes our message different to others. The Lord has been present for some time. He will continue to be present, and things will go on just the same, until the very day, just as it was in the days of Noah. Until the day the last member passes beyond the veil, things will go on just the same. It will come as a thief in the night.

You might ask, what is involved, that we may escape the corruption that is in the world through lust? What can we do to get out of this mess, and to help people? There is much you can do. It is very simple, yet it is so hard. Its simplicity makes it hard. It was simple for Noah to take the instructions given to him and get about the work. It was also difficult. Everybody scoffed at him. It is difficult for us, too. It is not our message; it is the Word of the Lord that we give. We believe our message is absolutely true. It is not ours, it is part of the harvest message. Faith; grace; prayer; study; fellowship; fellowship arising out of study; works of love; sacrifice—these things are involved. It will be too much for the majority, as it was in Noah's day. Yet it is too little, for us, because so much is involved. Our little all is not too much.

We cannot hope to establish these truths and make everyone believe them. God will open the door and shut it. The quicker we learn to appreciate it, the more we will see how significant is our part. Our part is tremendously important, because on it hangs a great work, a work of such magnitude we will yet be astounded. It is easy. simple, yet hard and impossible, according as we are spiritually-minded.

What can we do? Nothing else but what our Lord did. Bear witness to the truth. Our Lord did not attempt to convert Pilate; He brought a good confession before him. So it seems impossible for us to establish these truths in the hearts of any. But we can bear witness to them. We do not go out and condemn everything that does not conform to our way of expression. We are sympathetic. Why? Because we believe they have missed out on the chief blessings. They are fine, zealous people in their own way. Yet they cannot see these things.

It is a progressive development, like the building of the ark. We have to take the instructions as they come. First, how to build, the foundation and the superstructure. Then, the time when it must be completed. Noah's ark stood completed, yet the end did not come. There was a certain period of waiting. "Having done all, stand." There will come a time when you cannot do anything else. But, "they also serve who only stand and wait." In Noah's case the period of waiting was for seven days after the ark was completed. That may have a significance, we do not know.

Having got so far upon this walk, let us not look back. Let the salt still preserve. You know the story of the destruction of Sodom, and how the Lord proposed to destroy the righteous with the unrighteous. Abraham thought he could find fifty righteous men there. But there were not; nor were there 45, 40, 20, 10. Abraham was absolutely ashamed. He was ashamed to ask such a favour for the sake of such a few. But, for the sake of others it behoves us to hold our faith. "Hold back the winds, until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads." But there is not much time left. Let us put it to good account. It is easy to perceive that these corrupt and ungodly things have full sway. When they hold the

complete reins of earth's government, it is easy to see what is going to happen. You do not need to stretch your imagination. They are going to unleash tremendous forces of energy upon this world. But it is salt that is doing the preserving. When it is no longer there, there will be a great destruction. After Noah's ark had served its purpose, there was a rainbow. It was a sign of a new covenant. After Christ's ark has served its purpose, there will be a New Covenant too, and it will be for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"The servant of the Lord must not strive." "The secret of the Lord is with those that serve him." "When they shall say, Peace and safety, sudden destruction cometh upon them." In some way or other the nations of the earth will come to the point when they say, We have fixed everything up; security is ours. But sudden destruction is about to descend upon them all.

So then, Christ's ark is going to do a better work, and serve a better and bigger purpose than Noah's did. The New Covenant will be inaugurated. It will operate for man's uplift and salvation, and that will include all the families of the earth.

We can see these things from the Lord's viewpoint. There is no need to be alarmed. It is not for us to be fearful. We have been warned about these things. But many people are alarmed. They think Christianity is going down because the churches have not converted the world.

But Christianity has never been tried. It is the nominal Christianity that is going down. What is coming to pass will be for the benefit of all mankind, and we think that time is not far distant. So it behoves every one of us to compare the Arks and see the great similarity. We believe that, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days, during the presence, of the Son of man.

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Custom and formality draw many to the ordinary places of worship: but how few there are that come on purpose to meet with God in His worship, and to find His power in strengthening their weak faith. —M'Cheyne.

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Convention News from Adelaide.

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide was again a very happy and blessed occasion. True to His promise our Lord's presence and blessing upon our gatherings was much in evidence, and we do thank the Giver of all good, for the help and grace and spiritual blessings provided.

It was a pleasure to welcome to our gatherings a goodly number of friends from Victoria, and also a Sister from Queensland. We feel that the meeting together of the Lord's people in Convention is a means of grace, and is a privilege we cannot afford to miss. Two or three of our members were hindered through sickness from being present, and for these our prayers would be for the Lord's blessing and grace to uphold them in every time of need.

After appropriate words of welcome and hymns of praise, and prayer for God's blessing upon our gatherings, our thoughts were occupied in a Bible study on Eph. 2:1-10, which was most helpful. Other studies on the following days were taken from Isa. 51 :1-8 ; Heb. 2:1-9 ; and Psa. 116:7-16. Each of these studies proved helpful and interesting.

The Praise and Testimony and Fellowship Meetings were helpful because they gave us opportunity of collective praise to God, and provided occasion to exhort and encourage one another in the narrow way.

Various of the brethren spoke to us in short addresses which were also very helpful. The topics for the addresses being as follows—"The Power of Prayer"; "Our Lord Jesus Christ"; "The Twofold Object of Gospel Preaching"; "This One Thing I Do"; "Thankfulness"; "The Value of Experience"; "The Risen Christ—Will He Appear as a Man at His Second Advent?"; "Washings"; and "Be Clothed with Humility."

During the Convention a Baptism Service was held at which one of our dear Sisters symbolized in the waters of baptism her full consecration to be dead with Christ. We were reminded again of the step we have taken, and rejoiced with our Sister in her obedience to the Master's call to follow in

His steps of self-denial and abasement now, and in -the hope of being with our Lord in His grand future work for mankind.

The Question Meeting was another helpful feature on our program; and we felt it was a most profitable and spiritually uplifting Convention. The time passed all too quickly until at the Love Feast we bade each other good-bye with the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds," and "God be with you till we meet again."

During the Convention messages of greeting and good-will were received from many brethren in other states and South Australia, and these were much appreciated. The assembly decided to send as a greeting to the brethren and churches the words of the Apostle Paul, as found in Heb. 2:1, and 2 Cor. 13:11. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.

Fear Not.

Isaiah 43:1-7.

"Listen, for the Lord hath spoken !
'Fear thou not,' saith He!
When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee.
'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee ;
All my sheep I know ;
When thou passeth through the rivers,
They shall not overflow.,
'Fear not : by thy name I called thee—
Mine thy heart hath learned ;
When thou walkest through the fire.
Thou shalt not be burned.
'Thou art mine ! oh, therefore, fear not;
Mine forever now ;
And the flame shall never kindle On thy sealed brow.
'Thou art precious, therefore fear not ;
Precious unto Me I have made thee for My glory,
I have loved thee.

--F. R. Havergal.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

New Address for Perth Meetings.

The secretary of the Perth Bible Class has advised that a new meeting hall has been procured for regular Sunday meetings at 3 p.m., and 5.45 p.m. as follows—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Street, Perth. All interested in the study of, the Bible will be very welcome.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled together on the evening of April 29th to observe the Memorial of Christ's death. The attendance was very good, and the Lord's blessing was fully realised by all present. Two elderly members who were unable to attend were served with the emblems in their homes, and also appreciated the privilege of the "remembrance," in harmony with the request of our dear Redeemer.

Some previous studies on the last hours of our Lord's life on earth, including the important subject of the institution of the Memorial, from Matthew 26, helped to refresh the minds and hearts of the brethren for the observance on its anniversary.

During the Service, hymns 18, 437, 2 and 414 (B. S. Hymnal) were sung, and the Scripture passages in Mark 14:12-

46; John 18:12-40; 19:1-30 were read and appreciated. Thoughts were then presented showing the Jewish Passover lamb as a type of the "Lamb of God," and just as deliverance came for Israel in Egyptian bondage by the protection of the blood of the literal lamb, likewise full deliverance comes to all who now value the protection of the blood of Christ, and enter into full consecration on the basis of justification by faith in the Redeemer.

Prayers were offered on behalf of the dear members in every place who were likewise observing the Lord's Supper, and following special blessing upon the unleavened bread, and the fruit of the vine, the emblems were partaken of with thanksgiving to God for the gift of Jesus as our Passover Lamb, and also for the privilege of walking in His steps of sacrifice, in hope of the glory of the Kingdom.

Geelong, Vic.

On the evening of March the 29th the Lord again provided a room in this center where the friends assembled together "to do this in remembrance of Him," as our Lord requested so long ago. Two previous studies in 1 Cor. 11:23-34 were the means of rich blessing to those who could get along, and by the Lord's grace helped to prepare our hearts and minds to come to the Lord's table in a worthy manner.

Our service opened with hymn 437 (B. S. Hymnal), then prayer and Scripture reading in Matt. 26:17-31, 36-46; 27:33-50, which was followed by hymn 166. Opportunity was then taken to preface the usual address with a brief summary of the thoughts derived from the studies on the previous Sundays, for the benefit of those members who had missed them. Immediately following the address, the emblems were partaken of, and hymn 399 closed the little observance.

Our numbers were greater this year and it 'was the rich, true fellowship so manifest in the humble desires to obey and follow the Master that brought the blessing from above, realised and thankfully acknowledged.

Adelaide.

The Memorial of our Saviour's death was observed by the Adelaide Class on Sunday evening March 29th. For two Sunday afternoons previous to the Memorial we had considered the chapter in Vol. 6 on the "Passover of the New Creation." As the years go by the deep and solemn significance of the Memorial seems to be more fully impressed upon our hearts and minds.

Hymns were sung appropriate to the occasion, and portions of Scripture explaining the significance of our Lord's great sacrifice were read. Then, after earnest prayers for the blessing of God upon each one present, and for the Israel of God in every place we partook of the emblems with grateful hearts, and with appreciation of the privilege afforded us not only of believing in Jesus, but also.. of being permitted to share in His sufferings at the present time, and looking forward to the privilege of sharing in His future grand work of blessing all the families of the earth.

Perth. -

On the 29th of March, a small company of brethren met in an upper room to commemorate our Lord's death. We realised that brethren throughout the world were doing the same, in remembrance of Him.

The speaker nicely set forth matters which culminated in the death of our Lord on Calvary's Hill. We saw again how our Lord instituted a very simple Memorial, known as the "Lord's Supper," and how our Lord's body and blood were well represented in "unleavened bread" and "fruit of the vine,"—the one needing to be broken and the other shed or poured out.

We acknowledge again how worthy was the Lamb that was slain, and realised how great a sacrifice it was on our behalf. By partaking of the emblems we affirmed the fact that we need to live on the Bread from heaven, and be freed from guilt by His precious blood. Furthermore, we are prepared to follow the Master and do as He did; to be broken with Him, and share in His "cup"; thus to have real communion, that we may die with Him in sacrifice and later live and reign with Him.

A small company also gathered at Fremantle to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Tasmania.

One Brother and three Sisters assembled on the evening of March the 29th to remember again our Lord's broken body and shed blood as our Passover Lamb; also to dedicate ourselves afresh to suffer with Him by partaking of His broken body and His cup.

We had all been refreshing our minds for some time, and when we came together it was more or less to compare notes and for resolutions to strive to make the year before us the best yet.

The article on the Memorial Supper in March "Peoples Paper" had been read and seemed to be appreciated by all.

Canberra.

On Sunday the 29th of March, a small group of the friends gathered together for the purpose of celebrating the Memorial of our Lord's sacrificial death.

The absence of dear ones who were present on previous occasions prompted thoughts of the fact that "Here we have no continuing city." However, the accumulative evidence of events portends that the time fast approaches when the "new wine" will be drunk in the Kingdom by the faithful. Surely such a thought arouses love and sympathy for the fellow members of the Body as we await the end of the narrow way.

Sydney.

We held our Memorial Service at Strathfield when 15 friends partook of the emblems. Reading the Exodus account in chapter 12:1-14, we find that this, in type, brought to light all the main features of the Lord's Memorial, and which symbolize the true Church's common-union, her oneness and participation with and in Christ by the addition of the symbol of bitter herbs with the roast lamb.

From the hour when our dear Lord broke the bread and shared the wine with His disciples, in the humble upper- room, apart from the world, the history of the true Church began. They were in Christ, as we are privileged to be now.

Glenbrook, N.S.W.

Once again, under God's guidance and blessing, we had the privilege of partaking of the Memorial Supper; eight were present, and in prayer we asked God's blessing to rest upon all the dear Israel of God, for we realised that we were all being drawn together by the invisible bands of God's great and mighty love.

Truly as we put our trust in the Lord we can feel that our Lord's prayer on our behalf in John 17:20 is resting upon us at this present time, so we can praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Queensland.

Once again, under the Lord's guidance and blessing, 11 of the dear ones assembled to partake of the Memorial Supper. It was a time of very great refreshment and blessing to all present, those who had been long in the narrow way, and especially those who had more recently made their consecration to walk in the footsteps of our dear Redeemer.

The usual lovely hymns were sung, and the inspiring words repeated on the loaf and the cup were especially appreciated by some new friends.

Baptism Service.

IT was a joy for the Melbourne friends to attend a Baptism Service on Saturday afternoon, the 28th of March, when two of our friends symbolized their consecration to be dead with Christ, in the waters of baptism. We were sorry that another member from a distance was not able to be present to take the same symbol on that occasion.

It is always refreshing to find others who come to a full hearted appreciation of the sacrifice of Christ, and accepting Him as their personal Saviour, realise that their faith in Him is a means of justification in the sight of God, as expressed so clearly by the Apostle Paul—"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1) It is from this condition of justification that sincere believers are invited to take the further step of full consecration, as shown by the same Apostle—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, (justified brethren) by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.)

Having accepted the invitation to present oneself to God in full consecration, such a follower of the Master could rightly take the symbol of water immersion, and indeed, should delight to do so, as our two dear members did on the happy occasion recently. Thus, it is seen, that the real baptism is death baptism—baptism into Christ's death (Rom.

6:3) ,—and the immersion in water is the fitting symbol which follows, and indicates what has already taken place in the heart of the consecrated follower of the Master.

How beautifully did the Psalmist portray the attitude of the saints of this Gospel Age, when he wrote—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (daily dying) of his saints." (Psa. 116:12-15.)

The Carpenter's Shop.

TN a carpenter's shop the tools are overheard to I discuss in a critical spirit the greater or less importance of the tasks for which they are respectively fitted.

Dr. Gimlet, a philosopher of a penetrative mind, had been speaking in terms of depreciation of the work of Brother Plane. He continued, I know he is very active, even fussy, and to look at the shavings flying about you really would think that he was doing great things, but I notice his work is all on the surface, whereupon the Rev. Heavy Hammer reminded Dr. Gimlet that although his powers of penetration were indisputably great his influence was confined to a very narrow circle. This remark provoked a quick retort from a sharp pointed nail, who said that Mr. Hammer's preaching was far too controversial; he is never happy unless he is having a knock at somebody. Brother Chisel was roused by this criticism of his friend, and declared that only those who were closely associated with Brother Hammer could duly appreciate his strength and perseverance. He and I have been colleagues more than once, and to his powerful influence I ascribe whatever good I have been able to do. Then a horseshoe that happened to be lying on the workshop floor said, I should have derived little benefit from all Mr. Hammer's vigorous preaching had it not been for the zealous labours of another of his colleagues; I refer to Brother Bellows. It was, as I listened to him, that the fire began to glow in my heart; it seems to me that warmth is the great essential.

As the discussion proceeded, Professor Whetstone, who was busily engaged in sharpening young axes, had been observed to pause in his work. His voice was now heard, "Do not be offended when, in spite of all the confident statements first made, I maintain that neither energy nor fire, nor both together, are sufficient; the tool must have a fine polish and a keen edge if it is to do efficient service." This was too much for Brother Screw, who spoke with a strong provincial accent, which betrayed his want of culture. I know that I have precious little polish, and I also know that I should object to any of old Whetstone's grinding; my motto is: Lay hold whenever you have a chance, and when once you lay hold never let go. Two close friends are heard conversing in an undertone. Their names are Rule and Square. The latter now ventured to remark that in their estimation all who had previously spoken had the capacity for doing excellent service, if only they would submit to Method and Span. Brother Rule and I have observed with regret that harm is continually being done by those people who will not work within regular line. Why, replied Brother Hammer,

the only rule that I ever had is "Hit hard," and I've driven many a nail home. But he forgot that even he was guided by a Higher hand.

At this moment the carpenter's son entered the workshop. In his presence all sounds of strife are hushed. He is making the model of a Temple. Skilfully he takes hold of now, Hammer, then Plane or Gimlet or Screw, the one giving place to the other as the progress of the work required, and each finding his special reward as the building grew in beauty and in strength.

(Parable adapted from the German by Professor Tasker.)

Question Box.

Question.—In Matt. 6:7, our Lord tells us, “When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” The Apostle Paul, writing to the Church (Col. 4:2), exhorts that they “continue in prayer”; again we read of the widow who was heard for her importunity. (Luke 18:2-5.) Is this a suggestion that we should importune? How could we importune without repetition?

Answer.—We are to recognise a distinct difference between the “vain repetitions” of the heathen, which our Lord condemned, and the “continuing instant in prayer,” “in everything giving thanks,” in “praying and not fainting,” acts which our Lord and the Apostles enjoined. (Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1, etc.) This difference the Lord illustrated in the case of the woman who came to a judge repeatedly, asking that he avenge her of her enemy. Although the judge was not a man who would act justly, yet he did her justice on account of her persistence. In commenting upon her course, our Lord said that if an unjust judge be moved on account of importunity to do justice, how much more a just judge!

The thought illustrated in the parable is that of a person who cries to the Lord that injustice is being done—as with the Church at the present time. We all realize that we are suffering injustice. We cry, “O Lord, deliver us! deliver us from the Adversary!” Will God never deliver the Church? For nineteen hundred years the Church has been praying thus; and God has not answered this prayer. Will He never answer? Our Lord intimates that we should not lose faith. We are to have full confidence in His promises. Injustice will not forever continue. The time will come, we are told, when Satan shall be bound and deceive the people no more.—Rev. 20:2, 3.

Therefore we do right to pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” week after week, year after year, century after century. To grow faint or grow weary in prayer would not be right. The proper course is to believe that God will fulfil what He has promised; and that all will come out in harmony with His will.

On another occasion our Lord gave a parable wherein one asked his neighbor for food and was refused. (Luke 11:5-8.) He asked again. Finally the neighbor gave it to him on account of his importunity, on account of his patiently persisting. This parable, also, emphasizes the thought of importunate prayer. God has the blessing, and not only is able to give it, but has promised to do so. The delay in granting the request is because His due time has not come. Hence we are not to give up nor to become weary, but to be constant in our prayers.

This is all very different, however, from the “vain repetitions” which our Lord condemned. But we do not think that our Lord desires us to use repetition in our prayers. Some people use the words, “Our Father,” or “Our God,” or “Heavenly Father” more frequently than would seem to be good form—even using them in every fourth or fifth sentence. Their prayer would sound better on earth if they did not use these repetitions; though, no doubt, the repetitions would be understood in Heaven; for these people seem to be as earnest as others.

Sometimes, after worship and prayer, the one called upon to ask the blessing at table practically repeats the prayer. This course would imply that the person had forgotten that the general blessings had been asked in that prayer, and that he should be asking a blessing on the meal. To ask a blessing on the meal is not to pray in the ordinary sense of the word. Whoever “asks the blessing” should ask something in connection with the food and not attempt to pray for neighbors, relatives, etc.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greetings Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

There are eight varieties of these cards as follows:—

“Just for To-day,” “One Here and There,” “How Readest Thou?,” “The New Leaf,” “The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,” “Drop a Pebble in the Water,” “The Touch of the Master’s Hand,” and “My Bible and I,” These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid. Samples sent on request.

Hitherto and Henceforth.

“Hitherto the Lord hath blessed us.”—Jos. 17:14.

Hitherto the Lord hath blessed us,
Guiding all the way;

Henceforth let us trust Him fully,
Trust Him all the day.

Hitherto the Lord hath loved us,
Caring for His own;

Henceforth let us love Him better,
Live for Him alone.

Hitherto the Lord hath blessed us,
Crowning all our days;

Henceforth let us live to bless Him,
Live to Show His praise,

—F.H.R.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 IL., 8.15 a.m.

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Perth, SKY, 227 H., 4.45 p.m.



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Wisdom, The Principal Thing

WISDOM is the principal thing;" "With all thy getting get understanding," thus wrote the wise man, Solomon, and so we all agree: wisdom is necessary at the very beginning of any matter that would result favorably. Wisdom is craved by the whole world of mankind, and the majority, even while going in divers directions, would claim to be seeking to walk in wisdom's ways. How important, then, that we discriminate as between the true wisdom and that which is frequently misnamed wisdom. which is really folly!

One of the first lessons of life to be learned is, that our own judgments are unsafe, and even those who are least unbalanced by the fall are liable to make the mistake of seeking wisdom in a wrong direction—leaning to their own understanding (Prov. 3:5.) Those, therefore, who would take the wisest course should promptly admit their own unwisdom and seek for divine direction, divine wisdom. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not" (James 1:5).

But alas, how few are disposed to accept the wisdom that cometh from above! The majority have so large a degree of selfishness that they seem, indeed, to make miserable failures out of the best opportunities of their lives, before they realise that they lack wisdom and need guidance by the great Teacher. Hence, as the Lord declares, only the humble, only the "poor in spirit," are in the way that leads to eternal life and the kingdom—because only these will seek for and obey the heavenly wisdom from the great Counsellor. This class alone is in the condition to be taught of God: and concerning all who shall attain to the fulness of divine favor it is written, "They shall all be taught of God."

For the humble, then, God has provided true wisdom in Christ. His words, no less than His example, show us that we are sinners and that "no man cometh unto the Father" except by Him. He tells us of the Father's pity, and of the redemption provided through His own blood, and of our privilege to accept of divine grace unto full forgiveness and reconciliation, and of our need of the heavenly wisdom for every step of the journey, if we would walk the narrow way, which leads to the glory of the kingdom and life everlasting; and all who accept this "call" accept the great Advocate's instruction and guidance, as the very essence of divine wisdom, With varying degrees of promptness and after varying degrees of wandering from this good Shepherd, and being sought and found by Him, the faithful eventually reach the position where they put no confidence in themselves and their own wisdom, but all confidence in the wisdom of Him whom God hath appointed to be our wisdom—"who of God is made unto us wisdom." When this degree of progress has been attained, a measure of rest and contentment takes possession of the true sheep, which permits them to look up to God with confidence in every matter and at every time especially in seasons of distress and grief and trial. They learn not to trust to their own wisdom any longer; but to trust implicitly to the wisdom and goodness of the great Shepherd.

But not for a considerable time is such a development of confidence in the Lord's wisdom attained: meantime they have many battles and contentions against the wiles of Satan, who would tempt them to use their own wisdom, or the wisdom of other men, and to doubt the results of following the divine wisdom and its programme. On every hand, the flesh assisted by the devil, offers inducements and seductions to follow its way and to cease to follow in the Lord's way. In business affairs, in church affairs, in home and family affairs, the temptation is continually advanced that we should choose our own way, follow our own preferences and thereby reap larger and better results. It is only after considerable experience, and frequently after many failures, that the "pilgrim" for the heavenly country learns to trust no wisdom but that which cometh down from above and is in accordance with the Divine Word. Describing the attitude of the true Children of God, abiding in Christ as branches in the vine, the Apostle says:— "He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mysteries of His will" (Eph. 1:8).

“We also pray for you and desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:9, 10).

Let your hearts be “knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2, 3).

Notwithstanding the fact that those who accept Christ are the “meek,” “the poor in spirit,” and lower than the average standard along the lines of worldly wisdom and power and wealth, yet, nevertheless, the acceptance by these of Christ as their wisdom makes them really wiser than others;—not only in respect of the greater riches which they are laying up in heaven, but also wiser in respect of the most ordinary affairs of this present life. This is not because they miraculously receive new brains or a better and more orderly arrangement of the brains they have, but because submitting their judgments on every subject to the will of the Lord, and walking according to His directions in every matter and in every particular, they have His wisdom, His spirit, to guide them. Hence, although their own minds are imperfect and unbalanced as much or more than the average of the race, the Apostle is able to say of such, “God hath given us the spirit of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

The spirit of a sound mind enables its possessors to view things more correctly than they would be able to view them of themselves; for instance, it cautions us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but according to the measure of the Lord’s spirit possessed. Yet while cautioning us to be very humble, it guards us against being fearful, men-pleasers, flatterers. While constraining us to be peace-lovers and peace-makers, and kind, and forgiving, and generous, without maliciousness or vindictiveness, it nevertheless cautions us to be firm respecting principles of righteousness and truth. We may and should gladly yield our own preferences to those of others, for the sake of serving others or doing them good, yet we must never do so at the expense of the truth and principle. We should never say, let us do evil that good may result, let us yield some principles for the sake of harmony and the good of the cause. Alas, this seems to have been the difficulty with some of God’s people through the Ages. The fear of man, that bringeth a snare, has interfered with the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom. All Spiritual Israelites should learn, should fix it in their hearts, that while moderation and a disposition to be obliging and helpful and considerate of the wishes of others are prominent elements of Christian grace and to be cultivated, nevertheless the principles of the divine law are never to be infringed, nor even compromised for the sake of blessing others.

We are to remember that when great emergencies arise God is superior to every one of them, and they can never be understood as His voice commanding us to violate the principles of righteousness, nor to compromise respecting the truth — the foundation doctrines of Christian faith and hope, and the truths of this harvest period of the Age. We are to do our duty in harmony with His law as kindly, as gently, as wisely as possible, and leave all the results to Him—the Almighty. Whatever others may do, however others may think or compromise, let us take the Apostle’s standpoint and say, “We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth” (2 Con 13:8).

In the family, love is to be the rule, blended with mercy and justice, kindness and generosity; nevertheless, the rod is not to be spared if its use be necessary to the proper training of the child. And the Christian father is not only to be “kind and gentle toward all,” but is to “rule his own family well, having his own children in proper subjection.” Thus, we might multiply the various counsels of the heavenly wisdom, as it enters into the lives of those who are fully devoted to the Lord and gives them wisdom and grace for the affairs of life far beyond any that they would have had without it.

After exhorting us that “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,” the Apostle James (1:5) says, “Who among you is a wise man and endued with knowledge? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have strife in your hearts, glory not (to think yourselves led of the Lord and guided by His true wisdom), and lie not against the truth. This wisdom (which in selfishness seeks its own gratification and advancement, envying others and striving selfishly for its own advancement) descendeth not from above but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make for peace” (James 3:13-18).

Let us remember well this analysis of the wisdom that comes from above.

First, it is pure, guiltless, sincere, honorable, open above board: it cometh to the light, loveth the light, it is not of the darkness, nor of sin, it is utterly opposed to secret whisperings, back bitings and all slanderous and underhanded works and ways. It takes the Lord at His word, receiving the pure word of wisdom into a good and honest heart. It is honest: it does not deceive itself into believing that self-will is the Lord’s will.

Secondly, it is peaceable: that is to say, so far as is possible and consistent with honesty and purity it is peaceable.

It loves and desires peace, harmony, unity; but since peace is not first, but purity first, therefore it can only be fully at peace and fully in harmony with that which is pure and honest and good.

Thirdly, it is gentle—it is not rude, coarse, rough, and has no sympathy with such a spirit and such methods. It is not only of God, but God-like. Nevertheless, its gentleness follows its purity and peaceableness: those who receive this wisdom are not first or primarily gentle, and therefore peaceable and pure, but they are primarily pure, sanctified with the truth, and therefore are peaceable, and therefore are gentle, and therefore are easy to be entreated. But they can only be easily entreated in harmony with purity, peace and gentleness: they cannot be easily entreated to assist in any evil working of bearing false witness or scandalmongers, or slandering, or evil-speaking, nor into any of the works of the flesh and the devil.

Fourthly, it is full of mercy and good fruits: it rejoices in mercy, because that is a part of its very self; mercy and all the good fruits of the spirit of the Lord are sure to proceed from the heart in which rules the spirit of love, honesty, purity, peaceableness and gentleness. But this mercy, while taking hold upon the ignorant and the unintentional evildoers with sympathy and help, cannot have the slightest sympathy or affiliation with wilful wrong-doers, because the spirit of wisdom is not first mercy, but first purity; hence, the mercy of the spirit of wisdom can only exercise itself upon the unintentional wrong-doers, or the ignorant wrong-doers.

Fifth, without partiality (which would signify injustice) : the purity and peace, gentleness, mercy and good fruits of the spirit of wisdom, lead us to be no respecters of persons except as character shall demonstrate real value: the outward features, the natural man, the color of his skin, etc., are ignored by the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom that cometh from above. It is impartial and loves that which is pure, good, peaceable, gentle, true, wherever found and under whatever circumstances it exhibits itself.

Sixth, it is without hypocrisy. This heavenly wisdom is so pure, so peaceable, so gentle, and so merciful toward all that are worthy of consideration or notice, that there is no necessity for hypocrisy where it controls. And it is bound to be out of harmony, out of sympathy and out of fellowship with all that is sinful; and in fellowship and in sympathy with all that is pure or that is making for purity and peace and gentleness—so that it has no room for hypocrisy.

Let us, dear brethren, as children of God, more and more fully accept Christ as our wisdom, for all of the affairs of life—little as well as great. temporal as well as spiritual. Let us seek to be more and more filled with the spirit of true wisdom that cometh from above, whose ultimate teaching is holiness to the Lord.

Increase Our Faith,

“Lord, increase our faith,” Luke 17:5,

Increase our faith, beloved Lord,
For Thou alone canst give
The faith that takes Thee at Thy Word,
The faith by which we live.

Increase our faith! So weak are we,
That we both may and must
Commit our very faith to Thee,
Entrust to Thee our trust.

Increase our faith, for there is yet
Much land to be possessed;
And by no other strength we get
Our heritage of rest.

Increase our faith ! On this broad shield
All fiery darts be caught ;
We must be victors in the field
Where Thou for us hast fought.

Increase our faith that we may claim
Each starry promise sure,
And always triumph in Thy name.
And to the end endure.

Increase our faith, O Lord, we pray,
That we may not depart
From Thy commands, but all obey
With free and loyal heart.

Increase our faith—increase it still—
From heavenward hour to hour,
And in us gloriously fulfil
The work of faith with power.

Increase our faith that never dim
Or trembling it may be,
Crowned with the ‘perfect peace’ of Him
Whose mind is stayed on Thee.

Increase our faith, for Thou hast prayed
That it should never fail;
Our steadfast anchorage is made
With Thee within the veil.

Increase our faith that unto Thee
More fruit may still abound;
That it may grow exceedingly,
And to Thy praise be found.

Increase our faith, O Saviour dear,
By Thy sweet sovereign grace,
Till, changing faith for vision clear,
We see Thee face to face! —F.R.H.

As children that resemble their fathers, as they grow up in years they grow the liker to them; thus the children of God do increase in their resemblance, and are daily more and more renewed after His image. --Leighton.

Priestcraft Opposed to Liberty

SOME people, upon learning that it is the custom among us to celebrate the Memorial of our Lord's death in little groups, or even alone when there are no others who appreciate and desire to commemorate it, have expressed astonishment, and pronounced such doings sacrilegious—declaring that only the “clergy” have the right to administer to themselves, or others, the emblems of our Lord's broken body, and shed blood.

We reply that the entire expression of our Master's will, and the only authority upon the subject is found in the New Testament, and there we find no restriction, no limitation, except such as every true Christian can answer to—faith in the precious blood of Christ, and consecration to the Redeemer's will and work.

The entire theory and arrangement marked by the terms “clergy” and “laity” is of Papal origin, and was arranged with the special object of binding and blinding God's children by taking from them the very liberty wherewith Christ made them free. Our Lord made no restriction as to who should serve it, or give thanks for it, but intimated that all were to be ready to serve and in honour to prefer one another.

His simple expressions were: “Eat ye all of it,” and “drink ye all of it.” Neither did the Apostles place any restrictions on the matter, nor say that when the clergy may please to prepare, and bless and distribute, the laity may eat of the Lord's supper. What restrictions did they place, if any? Like the Lord, they placed none, but advised that “a man examine himself” as to his worthiness to partake of the emblems. (Car. 11:28). It was not the “clergy” who were to examine, and determine who might partake, but each one whom the Son had made free was to use his own freedom, and examine himself before God, and in the light of God's Word.

The Apostles knew nothing about “clergy” and “laity,” and those words do not occur in the Holy Scriptures; they were a part of Papacy's invention for keeping the masses subject to the priests. The Apostle Peter, whom they falsely style the first pope, contradicts all such popish ideas by declaring that the entire Church, including the very humblest one united by faith in Christ the Head, constitute together God's Royal Priesthood, God's holy nation, God's peculiar people—I Pet. 2:9.

As a part of the scheme of the Papal priesthood for their own exaltation as a special or “clerical class,” it was assumed without the slightest warrant of Scripture (1) that there was a special or clerical class; (2) that only such were authorised to teach, preach, baptise, bury the dead, read the Scriptures, or arrange for a celebration of the Lord's Supper. The evident design was to fasten with the cords of priestcraft, and superstition the infant a few days old (for the baptism of believers was changed to sprinkling of infants). and to keep those tightly drawn until the last spark of life expired, and then the theory of masses and prayers for the dead was not only to get money, but also to teach that the priestly cords extended beyond the present life beyond the grave, and that the eternal blessedness or misery of every being was at their disposal. Can we wonder that our ignorant priest-ridden fathers of the dark ages feared the priests and regarded them as being of a different nature to themselves.

One of the strongest of these superstitious cords was the one connected with the Lord's Supper. This cord was doubled and twisted several times and made very strong and sacred, under the claim that literal bread and wine had to have a miracle performed upon them, so as to change them into the actual body and blood of the Lord Jesus; for it was and is yet claimed by Papacy that in their Mass Christ is re-created by the priest, and then killed or sacrificed afresh each time the Mass is celebrated for those special persons or sins for which the Mass is performed. The doctrine of the Trinity added to the homage paid to the priesthood, for it was said, and with reason, that if the priest can create Christ out of bread and wine (by merely pronouncing a few Latin words over it), he must, if Christ be God the Father, be considered able to create the great Creator of the universe by virtue of the special power and authority of office conferred upon him. No wonder the people, the “laity,” worshipped the “clergy,” and revered and obeyed them as if they were God. But the people were not hereby lifted up and blessed; for nothing but the Truth sanctifies, and the Truth makes free, and is in opposition to bondage.

The great Reformation of the sixteenth century made a wonderful and blessed change in many respects, not only with those who became Protestants against these enslavements of priestcraft, but also in that, those still fully enslaved were thereafter less tightly bounden.

But even those who thought they had gotten free had been only partially released. Some of the cords were snapped asunder at once, but others were replaced by smaller or less noticeable cords, which nevertheless are very strong upon. Protestants. They still retained the words “clergy” and “laity,” and although robbed of much of their power, those words still imply a wide gulf between two classes of sheep in the great Shepherd's fold.

Hindrance to Bible study was a cord that was snapped promptly, but some Protestants still seek to restrain- that liberty by implying that only the clergy, are competent to explain the meaning of the Bible. The Protestant clergy still seek to gain the inference that none but the clergy are commissioned to preach, but they rarely express themselves plainly upon the subject, knowing that the Bible recognises no such special "rights as they wish the common people to infer. So, too; generally by inference and custom they give the impression that baptism and burying of the dead belong to them. And while Protestants wholly reject the Papal doctrine of the Mass, and With it the thought that Christ is recreated by the officiating minister Or priest, so as to be sacrificed afresh, yet they carry with them a portion of shadow of the error. They have a feeling that in sortie way which they cannot explain, and for some reason not given in the Bible, it would be sacrilege for anyone not of the "clergy" class to path the emblems of the Redeemer's body and blood. Well, priestcraft is surely in danger where- ever the Word of God is clearly understood, and we are trying to help God's benighted children out of the blindness and bondage put upon them by Satan, and to help them into the light and liberty wherewith the Son makes free.

Question Box.

Question.—Please explain: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be Wise in his Own conceit." Prov.26:4, 5.

Answer.—When talking, to any one who speaks foolishly, do not talk foolishly in return. You dishonor ,yourself. In the second case: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in 'is own conceit, would signify that you do him a service if you show him the folly of his position, thereby kindly helping him to a proper attitude of mind.

Question. Is there, or will there be more than one Archangel?

Answer.—To speak of Archangels (plural) would be contrary to the Scriptures. The word archangel signifies highest angel, the prefix arch meaning the Saint as chief; for instance, the chief of the fire department. In the twelfth chapter of

Daniel we read (vs. 1) , "And at that time shall Michael [the Archangel] stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people." In the Hebrew the name Michael Signifies One who as God, or like God. That One who is "like God," we understand to be the great Messiah, the Lord Jesus Himself. "Michael will stand up"—that is, Messiah will stand up, "Who standeth for the children of thy people"—that is, e will stand up for Israel. But He will also stand up for the Church, which is His Body, and for all who are in harmony with God, and all who will be in harmony with God. This will include all mankind during the Millennial Age. "In due time" they may 'be released from the bondage of corruption and death, and brought into full harmony with God.

Question.—May we have a concise statement which shows the difference between "Ransom" and "Sin-Offering"?

Answer.—The word "Ransom" signifies "corresponding price," and indicates One feature of the Divine arrangement for man's, recovery. As by a man sin entered into the world, so the recovery would be by a man's redemptive work. Cor.15:21, 22.

The term "Sin-Offering" is used to represent the method of Operation by which this Ransom price will be used for the recovery of mankind. It shows the actual, application of ,the Ransom price on behalf of mankind (first for the household of faith, and later for the world at large), in securing their release from condemnation and in permitting in the Kingdom Age, the glorious New Covenant arrangement to go into effect.

The Ransom price has nothing whatever to do With the method by which' that price Will be applied. When our Lord Jesus died, He laid down a sufficient price, but the application of that price is not yet completed. The grand outcome of the redemptive work will be seen in the end of the Millennial Age, when as .a result of the application of the Ransom price there will be Christ and the Bride on the divine plane, the "Great Company" on the spirit plane, the "Ancient Worthies" in their perfected condition and the whole world of mankind restored to the perfection lost in Eden.

The Effectual Working of the Body of Christ.

(1 Cor. 12:14-27) (Convention Address)

IT IS always a pleasure to behold anything working well. In the line of machinery the first question may be, How does it work? Once in motion, and set at the task for which it was made, men will soon express an opinion as to whether it is a good or poor machine. One is often amazed in this machine age at the many intricate parts of modern inventions and the ease with which modern youth seems to understand them.

But what a little part, not working smoothly, can hinder the effective 'operation of a giant machine; it may even stop the whole works. How often do farmers suffer the exasperation and inconvenience of endeavouring to do a task with an inefficient machine; one that is not working well, because some part is not doing its work properly. The causes of breakdowns are legion, but generally it is because something foreign gets into the works, or because oil is lacking. Oil is very necessary to keep out grit, nullify friction, and keep a machine running sweetly.

In the passage in Corinthians we clearly see that the apostle is using the human body to illustrate the members of the

Body of Christ. It has been recorded of a man who was a declared atheist and who resisted all reasonings, advanced to prove that there must be a supreme Being or Creator, that his career in life required him to make a deep study of the anatomy of the human body, and he became convinced that there must be a God who could create such a marvellous thing, and later he became a converted man.

Truly the human body is a wonder—fitly joined and united, by means of every assisting joint, according to the proportionate energy of each single part.” (Diaglott.) Paul reflected upon the marvellousness of the human body too; thus the lessons he teaches from it.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the human body is the manner in which it is controlled by the head, the brain. Suppose when you were riding a bicycle down the street your attention was momentarily diverted from the oncoming traffic. Suddenly you look before you again, and, as they do nowadays, a fast moving car has come like a bolt from the blue, and is right upon you. An accident cannot be averted; but yes, you twist your machine and it is just avoided, really miraculously, it seems. Do you know, that in that split second of time the warning of danger went first to the head, and from there, came the direction to twist your handles so quickly out of the way. The head, the brain, can direct the other members of the body—the eyes, hands, feet, etc.,—so quickly, that they appear to synchronize. One has concisely remarked—”the head in the human frame conveys vital influences, vigor, motion, etc., to every part of the body.”

And Christ is the head of the Church; what a beautiful illustration. The first thing we notice about the Body of Christ is that it is to grow, be developed, by the closest attachment to the Head, even Christ. Read Eph. 4:15 and emphasize the first two words of verse 16—”from whom.” We see, then, the necessity for growing up into, and holding fast the Head, Christ. With the human body the union is actual, but with the spiritual Body of Christ it has to be cultivated, the functioning of the natural body being used as an illustration. If every member of the Body of Christ looks to the Head for directions at all times, it will enrich not only the personal experience of each individual member, but that of the Church as a whole.

Then we have all the members of the human body playing their part in the effectual working of the whole, each being adapted for the needed tasks or actions. If we want to see where we are going, the ear is no good to us; the eye is there for the need. If we want to run, the legs and feet serve most. If we want to dig, build, or write, the arms and hands are set in the body for the purpose, and it becomes incongruous to try and use members for that for which they are not suited. We cannot write with our feet, nor hear with our nose, yet all the members work together in glorious harmony to perform the needs of the body. Tendons, nerves, -muscles, bones, etc., secure the limbs to the body and make easy, graceful motion possible; truly the human body is “fitly joined together and compacted through every joint of supply.” Nothing is useless, every part has its place, all are employed and contribute something to the health and beauty of the whole. So numerous are the blood vessels that you cannot perforate the skin anywhere without piercing one; so minute are the nerves that the prick of a pin brings discomfort or pain.

These are all lessons for us as members of the Body of Christ. The public expounder, the private teacher, the Greek scholar, the writer, the sick bed helper; etc., all have their part to play for the general benefit of all. No member is useless; no matter how obscure individuals may seem, they can contribute something to the harmony and vigor of the whole. And every member must keep his or her place, just as every bone, muscle, nerve, etc., should in the human body. If all do not keep their places in the human body we get deformity and disorders, and the same applies to the church, the Body of Christ.

In this connection our minds are particularly directed to the erring practice of some who elect sisters as women preachers in their meetings. Such procedure must fail to bring spiritual profit, either to preacher or congregation, for it

is forbidden by God, through the Apostle. The Word of God must be final and our time is not profitably spent trying to surmise why sisters are debarred from this work. God has other work for the sisters to do, and numerous mention is made in both Old and New Testaments of women who served God acceptably. Sometimes there is nothing more than the mention of a name. (Read 2 Tim. 1:4, 5.) One wonders how much of Timothy's preparation for the great work God had for him to do was accomplished by his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice.

Again, we read in Phil. 4:2, 3, "I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to be of one mind, as sisters in Christ. Yes and I beg you also, my true yokefellow, to help these women, for they shared my toil in connection with the gospel . . . whose names are recorded in the book of life." (Weymouth.) We have nothing authentic by which we can know just who these women were, or in what particular way they helped Paul in connection with the gospel. We know it would not be by public preaching, but wherever the service, it was so true and sincere, that Paul had no doubt about their names being written in the book of life. We note also, that the two sisters had some tests through differences of some kind; it being especially needful for the Apostle to exhort them to overcome, and be of one mind. Yes, there are many opportunities for sisters to render service to the Lord. No one can as effectively train a child for good, as a true mother. Sisters have talent and tact, in a private way, for commending the truth to others at times, which brothers do not always possess.

We know that many sisters must often feel that the daily round and common task is rather a hum-drum existence; lunches must be cut daily for the children, others' meals to prepare, and numerous attention to other needs. Perhaps there is a husband, or a grown up son, or daughter, or other relative who does not understand the truth, and you are required to manifest an interest in their plans and endeavour to understand their point of 'View, and try to help them, though the heart is aching with a longing to discuss the words of life, in verity. In common with all the saints, you realise your citizenship is in heaven and wish you were not SO tied to all these dull earthly things; that you could serve the Lord more conspicuously. Maybe Timothy's, mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, also had thoughts, like that at times. The Apostle Paul had doubtless been he-lid often by their hospitality and he had noticed their, good qualities, and was full of hope regarding this young- man; Timothy, who had been trained at- their hands. These few lines of a hymn serve nicely as a little prayer

(I ask Thee for)

A mind to blend with outward life,
Still keeping at Thy side ;
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

The smallest parts of the human body minister nourishment to the other parts, How important are the numerous blood vessels, and the pores of the skin are so numerous that a .grain of sand will cover hundreds of them. One authority says there would be two million in the human body. We are told further that the absorbents that take up and convey the digested food to the veins would run into millions, yet none of them are useless, All have a work to do, according to the measure of their strength, and each is suited to its task of contributing to the general welfare of the body, and are able to work on for years without exhaustion if suitable food is supplied.

If these little things fail to .perform their office the result is langour and disease, even death. And so in the Church, the obscurest member by failing to do its part tends to destroy the healthful action of the whole. How truly the Apostle expresses it in 1 Cor. 12:22—"Nay much more those members of the body that seem to be more feeble are necessary."

God has tempered the body together that there should be no schism or division in it, but that all the members should have the same care one for the other. The healthy human body is a united, harmonious whole, and nothing less does God desire of the Church which He is preparing and nourishing as the Bride of Christ, for His beloved Son. The Weymouth rendering of Eph. 4:2 is good counsel—"With patience sustaining each other lovingly,"—for there is real danger of discord amongst the Lord's people. There are many different tastes and habits, much variety of intellect and feeling, and temperaments differ. Perhaps one who is refined in nature feels shocked at the uncouth manner of another; but if the one who is thought to be uncouth shows evidence that the Lord is imparting a knowledge of the truth to ,him, that must be the end of all contention, for the Lord does not reveal His truth to those who are not worthy. It behoves us to receive each other warmly.

Those parts of the human body that perform the greater visible works, the arms, legs, feet, hands that do things, and the mouth that speaks, are no more important than the members that are covered and not seen—the heart, lungs, etc. Just so, the vitality of the Church is sustained by numbers of unseen workers, each filling their place and helping to keep the life blood of God's holy spirit pulsating through all the body by their prayers and attention to small things.

Read 1 Cor. 12:23. This would seem to refer to the. need of clothing certain portions of the body, .not 'only for the sake of decency, but because certain portions need the protection and warmth which clothing provides. As verse 24 shows, other parts of the body do not need this, but to the portion that does need it, we give more abundant honor in the sense

of making it an object of our greater care and attention in providing the necessary clothing.

What a lovely lesson for the Church. Not all are richly talented, not all are well educated, not all can express themselves eloquently, and some are weaker in faith, etc., than others. It is the duty and privilege of the Church, as a whole, not to expose the lack of any along these lines, but to endeavour to shield or cover such: to use, manifest the covering clothing of Christian love that gives protection and engenders warmth to needy ones.

Our comely parts have no need along this line. No, the able Brother will more readily receive the help and approbation and love of the fellow members, and it is right to give such, if it is for his work's sake. But we must not forget those of lesser ability who may have one talent only and not ten talents with which to serve the Lord. All the members should have the same care one for the other.

Sometimes unity is not realised as fully as it should be; little petty jealousies enter the mind, and in proportion as they are allowed to remain, they bear upon counsels and thinking, and cause friction and hinder the smoothness of true unity. Like the machine mentioned earlier, when grit gets into a part it must be cleaned out and kept well oiled, or it will cause trouble. How can we clean out the grit of evil thoughts and surmisings, etc? Resist the devil and he will flee from you, and be not ignorant of his devices. Be alert, for he walketh about continually seeking whom he may devour. Pour in plenty of oil; there is nothing like it to keep out grit and reduce friction. If you were working a machine you could use one of many brands, nearly all are good; but in matters of the Church, the members use only one —the oil of the holy spirit. If you cannot get on with a member of an ecclesia and Satan uses tempting thoughts, try using more oil. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly; let it flow in till it fills you up. It will remove the grit of feelings of animosity, etc., that promote divisions and cause disunity.

Referring again to the human body; sometimes a part becomes infected and diseased and may require medical treatment. Nowadays injections are used freely to remedy ills, but no one likes the nasty sensation of the prick of the needle. Though it -be one member only that requires treatment, a poisoned hand, arm, foot, the whole body bears the pain, and is sensitive to the curative treatment. Our feelings, as members of the body of Christ, should be just as sensitive one for the other. And remember, the doctor, or nurse who has to give you that nasty injection does not like giving it to you any more than you like receiving it; but they realise that they have to hurt you slightly in order to do you good and combat disease. So in the Church, when advice or rebuke is necessary, let the one giving it do so in humbleness of mind and with fervent loving desire for the others benefit; and the one receiving it, let him receive it graciously and without resentment and thus be profited.

We heard of some who wended their way home after a meeting at which an elder had thought it good to point out certain conduct which was not, in line with true Christian profession. One of the company resented the rebuke and

endeavoured to persuade the others that, the elder was at fault and should not have so spoken, and sought to influence them to break attendance at future meetings. But another spoke up and with a smile said, "Oh, I think we deserved it, don't you?" and by quiet, unassuming conduct, helped the others to be profited.

Let us all seek to be profited by correction, daily growing more and more in Christ-likeness into the image of God's dear Son. We grow up into Him, the Head, through the effective working of each member of the Body. Beloved let us labor to that end, and love one another fervently, for such love is of God.

As Moments Pass the Kingdom Nears.

Men may sorrow in distress,
Sin-cursed, blind and weary,

Death may rule supreme to-day-
All things may look dreary:

Make haste, O time: speed on ye years!
As moments pass, the Kingdom nears.

Saints may “groan within” and suffer
Outward shame distress, defeat:

Trouble may test faith and patience
Fiery trials, “furnace heat”:

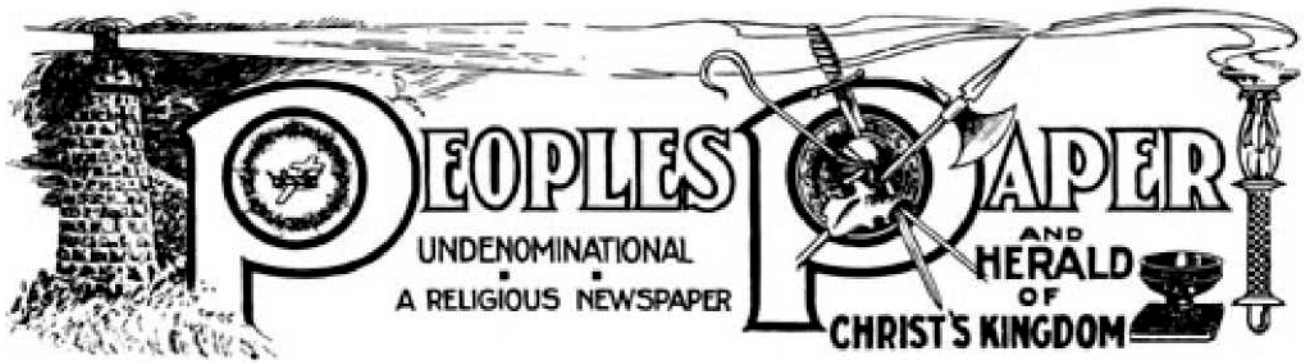
But stop your sighing, dry your tears:
As moments pass, the Kingdom nears

Men for earth and saints for Heaven;
God’s decree will surely stand.

Shout for joy, give God the glory!
Safe deliverance is at hand.

Ah, no more doubtings, no more fears.
As moments pass, the Kingdom nears.

—J. G. Kuehn.



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The Risen Christ Will He Appear as a Man at His Second Advent?

(This Article is Published by Request.)

THE resurrection of Christ from the dead is surely one of the most wonderful events recorded in Holy Writ, and coupled with that in great importance is the second advent of our Lord, especially the manner of His return.

Casting our minds back to the days of our Lord's first advent, and reviewing the Scriptural accounts, we at once realise the great consternation that filled the hearts of Christ's followers when they beheld their Lord put to death on the cross. It would seem to them that all their cherished hopes, joys and prospects of the Kingdom were forever lost. But in a matter of hours—with the passing of the Jewish sabbath day, and the coming of the first day of the week—the outlook was changed absolutely for those dear disciples of the Master. Instead of gloom, sadness and despondency, came surprise, amazement, and finally joy, thankfulness, rejoicing and praise, that their Lord, whom they had seen crucified, was now risen from the dead!

In one of the records we read—"In the end of the sabbath, toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you." (Matt. 28:1-7.)

From the Scriptures we learn that it was forty days after our Lord's resurrection that He ascended to heaven; it being understood, of course, that He was in spirit form during this period, and yet He appeared to His disciples quite a number of times before ascending above. An examination of some of these appearances of the risen Lord is most helpful, for if we can grasp the main lesson in Christ revealing Himself to His disciples on a few short occasions, and yet being invisible for the remainder of the time during the forty days prior to His ascension, it will assist in the understanding of the manner of His second advent.

The record of the first appearance of Christ after His resurrection is found in John 20. Some of the disciples had visited the sepulchre where Jesus' body had been laid, and finding His body was gone returned to their homes. Then from verse 11 we read—"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I, know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master." The significant point about this appearance of Jesus was that Mary thought He was the gardener until the Lord spoke her name, "Mary," as He had done during the period of His ministry and association with the dear sisters at Bethany.

Then, in Luke 24, we find that when Jesus joined the two disciples on the way to Emmaus and conversed with them about the momentous happenings in Jerusalem, they thought He was "a stranger" until, being invited into their home, we read—"As he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them; and their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight." (Verses 30, 31.) The act of blessing and breaking the

bread by the Lord, in the familiar way with which the disciples were acquainted during their associations with Him, was the means of revealing His identity to these two followers of Christ. And to their amazement, no doubt, immediately the identity of Christ was established, He vanished out of their sight.

The same evening of the day in which our Lord appeared to Mary, and to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, we

find that Jesus again revealed Himself to the company of disciples in an extraordinary manner. We read—:’When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” Then a week later exactly the same thing happened. (See John 20:19, 26.)

The truth we gain from these descriptions of our Lord’s appearances is, that the body in which He revealed Himself at various times during the forty days prior to His ascension was not His resurrection body, but rather an assumed body of flesh for the purpose of convincing His disciples that He was really risen from the dead. Does this surprise us—to suggest that our Lord assumed a human body each time He wished to appear to His disciples. Well, it is very evident that a body of flesh and blood could not enter the rooms with the doors shut, neither could the Lord disappear at will if He was raised a fleshly body. Besides, we read in I Pet. 3:18, that Christ was “put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) spirit.” And inasmuch as spirit beings (angels) appeared as men in previous times to Abraham (Gen. 18) , to Lot (Gen. 19), and to others of God’s servants, was it anything more wonderful for the risen Lord to also appear in human form, as occasion required, prior to His ascension to heaven? Surely not!

The last appearance of Christ, at the time of His ascension to heaven, is most important. It is found in Acts 1:9- 11—”And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” This was Christ’s last appearance in a human body, assumed for the purpose of showing Himself to His disciples only. But once He had ascended to the Heavenly Father, never again did He materialize in human form, and we have His words in John 14:19, which is a very definite statement, as follows—”Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye (shall) see me; because I live, ye shall live also.”

How, then, shall we harmonize these words, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more,” with the statement already quoted from Acts 1—”This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven”? What was the manner of His going; was it not quietly, unknown to the world, and a cloud received Him out of sight? So, in like manner He would come again—without outward show, known only to His disciples, “as a thief in the night,” and in troublous times, pictured by the cloud.

Reviewing again the statement in John 14:19 we find that the disciples could entertain the hope of seeing the Lord after His ascension, but not the world of mankind, the reason being, of course, because the followers of Christ are to be raised spirit beings and will inherit the heavenly kingdom with Christ. This is shown so clearly in John 13:36—”Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.” Thus it is, that the faithful disciples of the Master are to be changed in the resurrection, to be like Christ, for “we shall see him as he is,” in resurrection glory (1 John 3:2), not as He was, when on earth in the flesh. (See also 2 Cor. 5:16; Col. 3:5, Rev. 3:21.)

It may be asked how the words of Rev. 1:7 could be understood in view of the definite statement by Jesus that the world would see Him no more, for this verse in Revelation reads—”Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” In explanation, it can be stated that to “see” a thing does not always imply that it will be observed with literal eyes; for instance, Jesus had been resurrected to heavenly glory for some years when Paul said, “We see Jesus.” (Heb. 2:9.) What the Apostle meant was, we discern that Jesus tasted death for every man, in the great Plan that God has provided for the recovery of the human family. So, in Rev. 1:7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall discern him,” as the Deliverer, in due time. Yes, the Lord will be revealed in the clouds (symbolical of troubles encircling the earth; see Ps. 97:2), and all mankind will have their mental eyes open to the fact that Christ has taken over earth’s rulership, including “they also which pierced him,” for they shall be resurrected then, and will look back upon the crucifixion of Christ with shame, and see that He really was the Messiah. Then, when they acknowledge Him in repentance, they may receive the blessings of the Kingdom on earth, along with “all kindreds of the earth,” who accept Him in that judgment day of a thousand years.

Another passage in Zech. 14:4 reads—”And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives,”—and some are inclined to say that this surely would indicate that the Lord will come to earth as a man at the second advent. Examining the context, however, it will be seen that the prophet is referring to Jehovah, and not the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 3 reads—””hen shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations (which shall come against Israel in the Holy Land), as when he fought in the day of battle (in olden times) ; and his (Jehovah’s) feet shall stand upon the

Mount of Olives.” In Isa. 66:1 it is stated—”Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool”—and in Isa. 60:13 we read—”I will make the place of my feet glorious,” indicating that “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” (Hab. 2:14.)

Then, someone may say, it is not very important whether we understand this matter of the manner of Christ’s return or not. But is it not important? What did Jesus have to say about this matter? In Matt. 24:23-27 we read His words—”Then (in the last days of the Gospel Age), if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ; or there; believe it not.

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if ‘they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the bright shining cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the presence of the Son of man be.” We see, then, that our Lord placed great importance on a clear understanding of the manner of His second advent. It would not be Scriptural for anyone to say, Our Lord will be in the heavenly glory with His Church, but He may also reveal Himself

as a man to the world. No, said our Lord, “Believe it not” if anyone suggests that he could be here or there; that He is in the desert, “go not forth”: that He is in the secret chambers, “believe it not”. His second presence will ultimately be made known to all mankind like the rising sun—shining out of the east, even unto the west.

Our Lord revealed who would represent Him in the earthly phase of the Kingdom, when He said—”There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you (false prophets and teachers) yourselves thrust out. And they (all mankind) shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 13:28, 29.) In Isa. 1:26 we read God’s promise—”I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning; afterwards thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.” Just as Jesus represented the Father when He was on earth (John 14:10), so the ancient prophets will represent Christ, and reveal and administer His laws to all mankind, as “princes in all the earth,” in the Kingdom age. (Psa. 45:16). (See also Mic. 4:1, 2.)

Let us ever remember the words of Jesus—”The world seeth me no more; but ye (true disciples, who shall inherit the heavenly kingdom) shall see me; because I live, ye shall live also.” “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (Rev. 3:21.)

“Upon Thy Word I rest,
So strong, so sure:
So full of comfort blest,
So sweet, so pure.
Thy Word that changeth not, that faileth never!
My King, I rest upon Thy Word forever.”
—FR.H.

Copies of the Notes on the last Adelaide Easter Convention are still available for those who have not yet obtained a copy. Applications may be sent to the office of the Institute.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6; post paid.

Collins’ Clear-Type Bible.—A supply of these Bibles is available. Dark. clear type, references, self-pronouncing, with Concordance. Strong binding: a very good everyday Bible. Price, 21/- post paid.

Other Bibles, good leather binding, 5/6, etc.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 12/7/6. plus freight

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to

"Peoples Paper" is overdue,

The Work of the Institute.

ONCE again, at the close of the year's work of the Berean Bible Institute, it is a pleasure to acknowledge that the Lord's blessing has been experienced in connection with all efforts to serve the cause of His truth in co-operation with our brethren throughout Australia and overseas. In expressing thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for His favours bestowed, appreciation of the loving and voluntary efforts of all dear friends who have gladly joined in the service of the Lord is also recorded again at this time.

It will be understood that the work of the year past has been of a nature similar to, previous years. We are not claiming any "great works", but each feature of service has continued steadily, and from reports to hand it is evident that the message of truth has been of real blessing and encouragement to our brethren and a number of new friends. The publication of our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" has continued as a means of regular contact with our Australian and overseas brethren and other interested friends. It has been encouraging to know of the wide appreciation of the contents of our journal which contains articles contributed by a number of brethren in various parts. This assistance to the pages of the "Peoples Paper" is a good help in proclaiming the Kingdom message, including the harvest truths for these closing days of the Gospel Age.

Printing costs have continued at a high level, and a deficiency in meeting the expenses of publishing the "Peoples Paper" has been met from the General Tract Fund, as in former years. However, the usual free use of the monthly "Paper", to all newly interested friends, provides a good service in the Lord's cause. Sample copies of the "Peoples Paper" are gladly provided free to all who can use them to advantage, and extra subscriptions from new friends, or sent in by our brethren are of good assistance in the work. Further voluntary help in checking proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching of the "Papers" so gladly and regularly by some of our friends is also greatly appreciated.

Supplies of books and booklets have been despatched throughout this land and overseas throughout the year, and two new tracts on "Armageddon" and "Freedom from Fear", have been circulated to some good extent by our brethren. Other friends who would like to engage in this work should apply for a supply of tracts for passing out wherever there is a hearing ear. Kingdom Cards are also available for the same purpose, especially outside the range of the radio stations. The Consolation Cards, for mailing to the bereaved, have also been used by some Classes and individuals and this is also a good witness for the truth to those in sorrow.

A number of Public Lectures throughout the year brought encouragement, as good attention was given by all who attended, and this means of witnessing to the Bible truths is surely appropriate whenever the opportunities are available. Newly interested friends are encouraged by the lectures to appreciate God's Plan of the Ages, and to study the Bible for themselves, and then attend the regular Class studies. While it is true that "God gives the increase", it is also true that God prompts His servants to proclaim the message of truth in the harvest fields, so that all the "wheat" may be found and gathered into the garner in these last days of the age.

It was a great pleasure to pay a visit to the brethren in Western Australia during the year, in response to their kind invitation, when the home gatherings, Class studies and public meetings were blessed of the Lord. The hospitality shown by the brethren there manifested the spirit of service, and the continual round of fellowship was most refreshing; the Lord no doubt accepted all as done unto Himself. It was a joy also to spend a weekend of fellowship with the brethren in Adelaide on the return journey.

The financial side of the work is shown in the General Tract Fund Account (apart from the radio) , and the loving and generous support, all voluntarily contributed, by those who wish to have some part in the service of the truth, has covered all expenses, by the Lord's providence, and a credit is carried into the new year for the work in the cause of truth, by the Lord's grace.

Each year, as we look back, it is realised that we are another milestone nearer to the Kingdom, and thus we have one less of service this side of the vail. This is a solemn thought, for now that we are living in the last days of the harvest of the age, the time for the "sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads," must be short indeed. (Rev. 7:1-3.) This calls for renewed efforts by all true servants of the Lord, in harmony with the words of Jesus—"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give

his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:26-28.) While service in the Lord's harvest field does not, in itself, guarantee anyone an entrance into the Kingdom of Christ, those who shall be counted worthy of that glorious inheritance will have gladly served the cause of truth, even unto death, in addition to having their own hearts sanctified by the same message and the indwelling of God's holy spirit. Would our dear brethren join in prayer for God's blessing and guidance upon the work that may yet be our privilege to engage in with other servants in the Lord's vineyard.

ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.)
General Tract Fund.

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"Therefore, beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as

The Radio Work.

OVER the past year the radio work has continued steadily, with further encouragement from the various areas over which the witness of the truth has gone forth, and we thank the Lord for His blessing upon this branch of the harvest work also, which has been our privilege to engage in, along with our brethren generally.

It is now just over twelve months since these radio sessions were commenced in Brisbane, over station 4KQ, and it has been a great pleasure especially to find some dear friends in that area who had known the Lord's truth for years, and had become somewhat isolated. Thus, it is felt that the Lord has particularly used the radio sessions to encourage His people, and unite them together in fellowship on the only true basis of His truth.

New responses are also coming in from all the stations used, and it is a joy to find the few, from the many enquiries, who really love the truth and desire to make it their own, and we pray the Lord's blessing upon all in this condition of heart.

The Lord knows those who are His for this Gospel Age calling, and we rejoice that He is giving the increase in those who are worthy of His blessing in these days.

Stations 3GL Geelong and 2KY Sydney are serving very well; the message from these two centres continues to reach new friends, and is also appreciated by our brethren. Lectures are announced particularly over 3GL, and in this way additional use is made of this means of finding those especially who are mourning in Zion, as well as all others who have ears to hear the message of the Kingdom. The friends in Perth have also continued with the radio witness from 6KY/NA, and a number of country friends particularly look forward to these sessions in Western Australia, as well as this witness being sounded for the benefit of those to whom the truth alone appeals.

The printed copies of the broadcasts are still offered over the air to all interested listeners, and considerable quantities have been distributed throughout the year. It has not been possible to supply these copies so liberally with the "Peoples Paper" in recent months, but to all who make definite request for the copies of the Dialogues it is hoped to continue the supply.

From the Radio Fund it will be seen that the expense for the radio witness is considerable, but the voluntary support to this work on the part of our brethren generally, by the Lord's overruling providence, has enabled all expenses to be covered, and a helpful balance to be carried forward into the new year. The sacrifices made by the Lord's people, in any feature of the harvest work, are no doubt precious in the sight of our Heavenly Father. Those who have a talent of any kind may surely use it, whether it be by encouraging people to listen to the radio sessions, passing out tracts or otherwise assisting the cause of truth, and especially praying for God's blessing and guidance upon the work in these last days, and will undoubtedly be compensated themselves of the Lord, from whom all blessings flow.

Radio Fund.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/'52 .	1,64 4	5	3
„ Donations	695	1	9
	£759	7	0
By Radio Stations 3GL Geelong, Sydney, 4KQ Brisbane	2KY 1 608	0	3
Additional recordings for 3GL, 4KQ, 6KY	50	10	0
„ Printing Quantities of Dialogues	22	10	0
„ Travel and Sundries	8	10	0
„ Bank Charges	1	10	0
• Credit Balance, 1/5/53	68	6	9
	£759	7	0

Rest in Christ.

(This Article is Contributed.)

NOTHING that happens in the world happens by chance; God is a God of order. Everything is arranged upon definite principles, and never at random. The world is governed by law; character is governed by law; happiness is governed by law; the Christian experiences are governed by law. Men, forgetting this, expect rest, joy, peace and faith to drop into their lives from the air, like snow and rain. But of course they do not, otherwise they would not be controlled by natural laws. Rain and snow do drop from the air, but not without being the effect of former causes. Equally so are rest, peace and joy; they too are the effect of former causes. Storms, winds and calms are not accidents, but are brought about by former circumstances. Rest and peace are but calms in man's inward nature and arise through causes as definite and as inevitable.

We must realise thoroughly that it is a methodical, not accidental world. If a housewife turns out a good cake, it is the result of a sound recipe, carefully applied. She cannot mix the ingredients and cook them for the correct time without producing the result. It is not she who has made the cake; it is nature. She brings related things together, sets causes at work, and these causes bring about the result. So it is in the making of Christian experiences. Certain lines are followed, certain effects are the result, but the result can never take place without the previous cause. Now, what we have to do is to firmly grasp this principle of cause and effect in the spiritual world. Let us apply this principle to the Christian experience of rest.

Restlessness has a cause, and of course rest must necessarily have the same. If it were a chance world we would not expect this, but being a methodical world, it cannot be otherwise. Rest, physical rest, moral rest, spiritual rest, has a cause as certainly as restlessness. The Christian life is proof against expecting to secure spiritual effects without the use of causes. Christ gave answer to this principle by asking, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

Did Jesus tell us, for example, how rest might be obtained? The answer is that He did. Christ said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." Rest, apparently, was a favour to be bestowed; men had but to come to Him. But Christ qualifies the statement in the next sentence. We know, of course, that one could no more give away rest than he could give away pleasure; all that we do is to arrange a set of circumstances in such a way as to cause pleasure. Of course there is a sense in which a great personality imparts an abiding peace and trust upon all who come within its influence.

But it is not this we are thinking about.

When Christ said He would give men rest, He meant simply that He would put them in the way of it; in other words, He would give them the recipe for it. But He would not make it for them; for one thing it was not in His plan to make it for them, and it would be much better if men should make it for themselves. This seems obvious from the wording of the second sentence—"Learn of me, and ye shall find rest."

Rest is not a thing that can be given, but a thing to be acquired. It is not found in a happy hour, but slowly as one finds knowledge and truth. A soul has to be prepared for it. Like a fine fruit, it will grow in one climate and not in another. Christ clearly defines the nature of this slow process when He says we are to achieve rest by learning. "Learn of me," He says, "and ye shall find rest to your souls." Note the connection between these two words—"learn" and "rest." How many of us have ever associated them, ever thought that rest was a thing to be learned? The last thing most of us would have thought would be to associate rest with work. What must we work at? What is that which, if learned, will give us rest? Christ answers, meekness and lowliness. "Learn of me, He says, for I am meek and lowly in heart." Now, these two things are not chosen at random. To these accomplishments, in a special way, rest is attached. Learn these, and in short you have already found rest; these are direct causes of rest, they produce it at once. And if we think for a moment we will see how this is so.

What are the chief causes of unrest? If we know ourselves we will answer pride, selfishness, ambition. As we look back upon the past years of man's life, is it not true that its unhappiness has chiefly come from the many almost trivial disappointments which the intercourse of life has brought him. Great trials come at lengthened intervals and we rise to meet them, but it is the petty friction of our everyday life with one another, the jar of business, or of work, the discord of the domestic circle, the collapse of our ambition, the crossing of our will, the taking down of our conceit, which makes inward peace impossible. Wounded vanity, then disappointed hopes, unsatisfied selfishness, these are the old universal sources of man's unrest.

Now, it is obvious why Christ pointed out, as the two chief objects for attainment, the exact opposite of these. To meekness and lowliness these things simply do not exist; they cure unrest by making it impossible. These remedies do not trifle with the minor symptoms; they strike at removing causes. The ceaseless unrest of a self-centred life can be removed at once by learning meekness and lowliness of heart. He who learns them is forever proof against it. No fever can attack a perfectly sound body; no fever of unrest can disturb a soul which has breathed the air or learns the ways of

Christ. Men sigh for the wings of a dove that they may fly away and be at rest, but flying away will not help us.

It is a known fact that water rests only when it gets to the lowest place. Hence, let us be lowly. The man who has no opinion of himself can never be hurt if others do not acknowledge him, so let us be meek. The lowly man and the meek man are really above all other men, and above all other things. They dominate the world because they do not care for it. The miser does not possess wealth; wealth possesses him. But the meek possess it. "The meek," said Christ, "inherit the earth." They do not buy it; they do not conquer it; but they inherit it.

There are people who go about the world looking for slights, and they are necessarily miserable, for they find them at every turn, especially, the imaginary ones. The fact is, they have never learned to live; few men know how to live. We grow up at random, carrying into mature life the merely animal methods and motives which we had as little children, and it does not occur to us that all this must be changed, that life is the finest of the fine arts; that it has to be learned with lifelong patience. Yet, this is what Christianity is for; to teach men the art of life, and the course of study lies in Christ's statement—Learn of me.

Christ's invitation to the weary and heavy-laden is a call to begin life over again, upon a new principle—upon His own principle. Watch My ways of doing things, He says; follow Me; take life as I take it; be meek and lowly and you will find rest. Christ's life outwardly was one of the most troubled that was ever lived, but the inner life was calm and restful. Misfortune could not reach Him; He had no fortune. Food, raiment, money, fountain-heads of half the world's weariness, He did not care for; they played no part in His life; He took no thought for them. It was impossible to affect Him by lowering His reputation; He already had made Himself of no reputation. He was dumb before insult; when He was reviled, He reviled not again. In fact there was nothing that the world could do to Him that could ruffle the surface of His spirit. It is only when we see what it was in Him, that we can know what the word "rest" means.

Two painters each painted a picture to illustrate his conception of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among the far-off mountains. The second painted a thundering waterfall with a fragile tree bending over the flow; at the fork of a branch a robin sat on its nest. The first was only stagnation; the second was rest. For in rest there are always two elements, silence and disturbance, creation and destruction, fearlessness and fearfulness. Thus it was in Christ. He came, He said, to give men life, true life. As the Revised Version has it—"that is life indeed."

Formal Prayer.

"I often say my prayers;
But do I always pray?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the words I say?

I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone;

For words without the heart
The Lord will never hear,
Nor will He to those lips attend,
Whose prayers are not sincere."

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greetings Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

There are eight varieties of these cards as follows:--

"Just for To-day," "One Here and There," "How Readest Thou?," "The New Leaf," "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love," "Drop a Pebble in the Water," "The Touch of the Master's Hand," and "My Bible and I." These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid. Samples sent on request.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

If the King is indeed near of kin to us, the royal likeness will be recognisable.—F. R. Havergal.

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—My daughter received some literature from you. We have been feasting on it, going over and over it, and both of us are thrilled with the knowledge in it. It is not twelve months since I became really acquainted with the Bible, although always desirous of being able to understand it, having been reared in a faith that did not encourage Bible study. Now, I am so interested I want to know all about you. I see you are undenominational—that pleased me and captured my interest. I see also you do not say “you must join us for salvation.”

All I read fitted very well with my own conception of the Bible, except the second advent. I don't understand your ideas; of course I am “shaky” on many things. I have been waiting for our Loved One to lead; how I hope He has guided me; I feel He has. As I said, your literature thrilled me. I will not be able to send any money to-day, as I am out of town, but I notice you have free literature; I don't want it for nothing; I know what costs are these days. But I am hoping you will send me something to keep me going. I would like “God and Reason.”

Please enrol me for the “Peoples Paper” and I will send a year's subscription. When possible I listen to the broadcasts but have heard only a few. Mr. and Mrs. told us about you. Have you anything dealing with baptism? I also want your literature on, who is eligible to partake of the communion? Please send as soon as possible, for I am patiently, or perhaps impatiently waiting. Thanking you in anticipation; Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I find pleasure in listening to your session on Sunday mornings. I do quite a lot of searching the Scriptures in my own way, also with help from those seeming most reasonable, quite apart from churches of course. Your questions and answers have mostly the same meaning as I find the Bible tells us. There is one question which is greatly differed in by quite a lot, of good people—regarding the return of our Lord to earth, in flesh and blood, or spiritual. I would be pleased to be enlightened on this matter, according to the Bible of course. My way of seeing it is spiritual return, but I like getting others' views. Thanking you, and wishing you all blessings. Yours truly.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly forward me, at your earliest convenience, copies of the lectures which are so ably broadcast. As a school pupil, and a person really getting to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ,

I praise God for giving me the privilege of listening to the programme, when possible, because I find it so easy to understand, and so full of parts of the Bible which I haven't as yet had time to study.

I would very much like to be put on the writing list, if there is one. Could you particularly give me a copy of the programme broadcasted on the 2nd of this month, about Christ's second advent. Yours in Christ.

Dear Sirs—I just wish to drop a line to tell you how much I enjoy your broadcast on station 2KY Sydney, Sunday morning. This session gives you hope and comfort for to-morrow. I would ask you if it is possible to get a copy of your broadcasts, and could you put me on the mailing list, so that I can receive regular copies of your broadcasts? I should be very pleased to hear from you at an early date. I remain; yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—It is a pleasure to listen to your broadcasts, and from many we learn things whenever would have thought of otherwise. A few weeks ago your discussion was on the subject “The Keys of Hell”. This was always a puzzling subject to me, and I would appreciate it if you would send me a copy of this discussion and the corresponding book you spoke of, “Hope Beyond the Grave.” With many thanks; Yours in Christ.

Dear Sirs—I have been listening to your session which is heard over 6KY of a Sunday afternoon. I am very interested in your last Sunday's discussion which I would like to know more about. Would you please send at your convenience a

copy of last Sunday's discussion and booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave." Do not the Scriptures say when a person dies he is conscious? And if a person is not saved, will that person have everlasting torment in hell, or will his punishment be everlasting death? Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

(Literature on "Where are the Dead?" etc., is gladly supplied free to all who make application for same.B.B. Institute.)

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Many thanks for forwarding the literature so promptly; I have been feasting on it. I have known peace of mind since reading your books and pamphlets. However, there is much for me to learn and understand. Would you send me six copies of "God's Plan in Brief,"—a wonderful book. Our home is being wonderfully blessed; at last my husband is interested in Bible study and also friends who I did not ever expect to share my good news with are showing a keen interest. Last week we had a Bible discussion with about 20 present at my home. It was a trial and how marvellously it worked; all present are keen for another meeting. We are all "babes" in the Word, and any suggestions from you would be welcome; such as, how to study the Bible. Have you got Bibles for sale; if so; could I have a price list.

I am enclosing £2 — £1 for my subscription to "Peoples Paper" and the literature already received. The second 41 is for six books ordered and any books I may receive. I still do not understand the second advent. Will it eventually be personal, or only spiritual? Have you anything to enlighten me? Thanking you sincerely.

(The booklet "The Manner of Christ's Return and Appearing" is recommended as a study respecting the Lord's return, also a careful study of the front article in this issue of "Peoples Paper,"—B.B. Institute.)

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. pg 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ., 4.45 p.m.



Volume XXXVI. No. 8 MELBOURNE, AUGUST, 1953

Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

Christ's Return. His Revealing and Manifestation.

“And He shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.”—Acts 3:20, 21.

THE little band of believers who had followed the Lord in His service of love and sacrifice during the three and a half years of His earthly ministry, were about to be sorely tried. How great had been their expectations! The mighty power of God had been wonderfully demonstrated in the works of mercy accomplished by the Master, as also by His words of wisdom and grace. There could be no question but that He was the Messiah, and Philip confidently informed Nathaniel, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets did write.” “Come and see.” Peter also boldly declared, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” How plaintive was the statement of Cleopas as he and another disciple were joined on the way to Emmaus by the Master disguised as a stranger. After having mentioned the terrible tragedy that had been enacted by the rulers of the people in slaying their Lord, he adds, “but we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel.”

We then remember how their hearts burned within them as He, Who spake as never man spake, in words of grace explained to them from Moses and all the prophets, how just what had happened was only fulfilling that “which was written.” That it was necessary before Christ should enter His glory and Kingdom and commence the great work of delivering Israel and all the world from the oppression, not only of Rome, but of Satan and sin and its consequences, that He should first suffer. The first step in regard to the liberation of Israel and the world was to pay the price of sin.

The penalty of death was against humanity as a whole. Justice had condemned the race to death on account of one man's transgression. Adam represented the earthly family. It was in mercy that all were included in the transgression, so that in justice all could be included in the redemption wrought by one man Christ Jesus. This is clearly stated in Romans 5:11-19, and again in that beautiful chapter on the Resurrection — 1 Cor. 15:21, 22. “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Unless there could be a resurrection from the dead, then all the glorious promises of Messiah's Kingdom could avail nothing for the great majority of the human family. Millions of heathens and millions of children have died and never heard of God's great plan for blessing mankind, never heard of the only name whereby they could come to God and have salvation. Had not Christ undertaken to pay the price of sin, the death sentence could never have been lifted, and there could never have been any hope of a life to come, there could never have been any Resurrection at all. How necessary, then, was the great sacrificial work of our Redeemer at His first advent. The whole matter of His second presence in Kingdom glory, to “bless all the families of the earth” in accordance with the great Abrahamic promise, depended on it.

Not only on the way to Emmaus did the Lord point the disciples forward to the fulfilment of all the glorious prophecies of the Old Testament, but we read Acts 1:3, “To whom also He showed himself after his passion by many infallible proofs being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” They also enquired of Him, “Wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel,”

It had been a matter very much hidden in the scriptures of the Law and the prophets, that Messiah must first suffer, and thus make satisfaction for sin. Peter in his first epistle, chapter .1, tells us that the prophets did not understand their own utterances concerning the sufferings of Christ, but realised that the message was not unto themselves but was intended for those coming later—the church, the spiritual seed of Abraham. It was, then, not surprising that the disciples of our Lord should have such happy expectations regarding His presence. Not understanding the veiled utterances respecting the suffering they were more attracted by the beautiful expressions about the “King that should reign in righteousness.” “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.” “But with righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.” “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea,” and “in that day shall there be a root out of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.” “In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it.” “And the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths .. and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.- “And they shall sit every man under his own vine and fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.” (Isaiah 32:1; 9:7; 11:4-10; 25:6-9; and Micah 4:1-5.)

“I Will Come Again.”

John 14:3—”If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also.”

Nothing, then, can be more plainly stated than that our Lord Jesus is to come again and accomplish a great work for which the first advent was but the necessary preparation. The hope of Christ’s return and kingdom has ever been the great stimulus to the Church in all her trials and sufferings.

The Gospel Age is the Age of faith, not that faith is a characteristic of mankind during this time, but that God is dealing only with such as have faith, and that faith in Christ’s death is the means of justification and acceptance with God, in contrast with the Law Dispensation when perfect works were required, and also contrasting with the next Age, when under the New Covenant every man will be judged according to his works. (Rev. 20 :12, 13.) During this Age of Faith, God is selecting a certain class which will, when the Christ character has been formed in each, become the Bride of Christ, and “will sit down in his throne even as he overcame and is set down with the Father in his throne.- (Rev. 3:21.)

In one sense the Lord has ever been with His people according to His promise, “Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.” In the same way He is represented in Revelation as walking amidst the candlesticks”. This was evidently the thought indicated by His words, “I will not leave you comfortless, I will pray the Father and he will send you another comforter even the spirit of the truth.” (John 14:16-18.)

He would be with the Church in all her suffering. No member would be without His sympathy and gracious aid, His advocacy with the Father, and comfort of the holy spirit. Yet He is represented as being retained in the heavens -until the times of restitution of all things.”

At His first advent He came to His own, the Jewish people, who represented God’s Kingdom in the earth ; He offered Himself as their King, and was rejected. “His own received him not.” They then failed to secure the privilege of becoming solely the Church class; the Kingdom of Heaven class. “The Law and the prophets were until John, since then the Kingdom of Heaven is preached.” (Luke 16:16.) They rejected the “chief corner stone.” They were the wicked husbandmen who slew the Son and Heir. Therefore, Jesus said “the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matt. 21:33-43.)

Peter refers to the rejection of the chief corner stone, and speaks of the Church, which is being selected from all nations, as being the nation of God. “Which before were not a people but are now the people of God.- (1 Peter 2:6- 10.)

Not until this Church class is complete will the Jews as a nation see that they crucified the Lord of Glory. Not until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in—the number, of God’s elect completed —will blindness be removed from Israel, and they shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Matt. 23 :39 ; Rom. 11 :25, 27.)

James so concisely summarises the matter in Acts 15:14-17, -God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out a people for his name, and to this agree the words of the prophets as it is written, After this I will return and build again the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.”

This, too, is in accord with the Apostle’s statement in Rom. 8:19-22. “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.” In other words, waiting until the Church is complete and shines forth “as the sun in the Kingdom,” for the blessing of all the willing and obedient of mankind, “All the families of the earth.”

The first and second advents are then closely related in that the purpose of the second coming could not be undertaken until the justice of God’s throne had been met by the payment of the penalty for sin to redeem mankind.

It will be readily seen how necessary it was that our Saviour should become a man—not a sinful man, though born of a woman yet not of Adamic stock, but separate from sin, spotless, undefiled—in order that He might offer Himself as a perfect man, in the place of Adam, and thus allow the sinner to go free. “He gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time, % so that “as all in Adam die, so all in Christ might be made alive again.”

Thus it was that Christ came in the body of humiliation for the suffering of death, but the object at the second advent is so very different that He will not again appear in the flesh, of which He said, “My flesh I give for the life of the world,” but we look for Him the second time “in power and great glory,” “in the express image of the Father’s person.” He was “put to death flesh, but raised spirit,” and comes to take control of earth, to bind Satan, the present “prince of this world,” and to reign in his stead,—to stamp out evil and ultimately all evil doers, to bring in righteousness and peace, and make this earth a paradise, filled with the glory of the knowledge of the Lord.

The Apostle in Heb. 9:14-28 uses the typical high priest and the two sacrifices of atonement as illustrative of the first and second comings of Christ. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and appeared in the presence of God for us. “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin (without a sin offering) unto salvation. That will be, as in the type, where all Israel awaited the appearing of the High Priest, coming out of the Holy the second time; when Moses and Aaron then lifted up their hands and blessed the people.” (Lev. 9:22, 23.) After the great time of trouble has swept over the earth, the people will have learned the sad lesson that no human government is capable of ruling in righteousness, nor able to bring peace and order in the earth. The desire of all nations will be the kingdom, which Christ will establish. Just as Israel awaited the second appearance of the High Priest Aaron who came forth and blessed them, so mankind is spoken of by Paul (Rom. 8:19-22) as the whole creation, groaning and travailing together in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God—the Church—the joint heirs with Christ in His Kingdom—who are to sit with Him in His throne. (Rev. 3:21.)

He Comes To Reign.

At the second coming of Christ, then, there will be a great change of government. Satan and the fallen angels will be bound, they who have so long been ruling in the hearts of the disobedient, and enticing into sin and wickedness, deceiving millions in the many false religions and thousands in such cults as Theosophy, Christian Science and Spiritism, through witches and mediums. Instead of all this baneful influence there will be a new and happy influence towards righteousness, godliness, kindness and peace; because Christ and His saints will have taken control of the world, and the purpose is to raise the fallen, lift up’ the oppressed, relieve the afflicted, and encourage all to walk up the highway of holiness, and to gain the reward of eternal life.

When we see that the purpose of Christ’s return and kingdom is so very different from that of His first advent, we can see that He will not need to come again in a body of humiliation, but as He Himself has said, “In power and great glory, and all the holy angels with him.” He has no need to again change His nature and become flesh. His mighty work can the better be accomplished in His power and might, as the glorious spirit being, “in the express image of the Father’s person.” (Heb. 1:3, 4.)

Let us enquire as to what will be the first work of our Lord on His return. Will He at once begin His millennial reign, or is there not some preparatory work to be done?

Parable Of The Young Nobleman.

Perhaps the Parable of the Young Nobleman in Luke 19:11-27 will be helpful to consider at this point. The reason stated for this parable being given is, “Because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear,” and

“Because they were nigh to Jerusalem.” They were looking for a literal, human king and earthly kingdom, with Jerusalem as the capital of all the earth.

Our Lord had already informed them that the Kingdom (Luke 17:20) cometh not with outward show or with observation. His hearers were but naturally minded men. The holy spirit had not yet been given, and so they could not think of anything but an earthly Messiah, with an earthly throne and earthly armies going forth to conquer and thus establish His Kingdom in all the earth. How differently does the matter appear when we receive the spiritual mind, and compare scripture with scripture, for though Jerusalem is again to be restored, and Israel according to the flesh is to return to God’s favour, and will be the earthly representative of the Messianic Kingdom, yet the real kingdom class, Christ and His saints, His joint-heirs, will be spiritual. They will have much more power and control of earth’s affairs as spiritual beings than could be the case if they were in human form.

This parable of the young nobleman was given to help those who had ears to hear, to realise that there was much to be done before their expectations of seeing Jerusalem again a joy in the earth could be accomplished. Our Lord was represented by the young nobleman.

He would need to be absent for some time (the whole Gospel Age). He would then return with full authority to set up the Kingdom. It also shows that even on His return He will first deal with His servants. The ten servants were each given a pound with which to trade, and on His return the Lord first requires of these an account. The pound appears to refer to justification, which comes to every Christian believer, and by putting this to the banker, or, in other words, by presenting our justified selves as living sacrifices to God, we receive the begetting of God’s holy spirit, and thereby start in the Christian race, and endeavour to produce the fruits of the holy spirit.

There appear to be four classes here dealt with by the Lord.

- (1) The one who had gained ten pounds would appear to represent those who had faithfully used their privileges and opportunities, and had developed the perfect character—the likeness of Christ, and so received the abundant entrance into the Kingdom, “Have thou authority over ten cities.”
- (2) The one who gained only five pounds may represent the great multitude who seem to, gain a second prize and serve before the throne. (Rev. 7:9.)
- (3) The one who did no trading but simply handed back the pound would seem to be those who came so far as to see the justification by faith through the precious blood of Christ, but they do not go on to consecration, they did not go to the bank with their pound at all. They have never taken the step of offering their purchased lives to God. They are those “who seek to save their lives and so lose them.” They are those who “receive the grace of God in vain.” The pound is taken from them; they are not punished otherwise and will no doubt be judged with the world in the next Age.
- (4) There are those who were rebellious and wilfully rejected the Lord’s provision for them, and turned against the King. “We will not have this man to rule over us.” These were slain, and would probably represent those who sin the sin unto death.

All this work or judgment among Christians is shown to be at the return of Christ to take the Kingdom, yet prior to His taking control of earth. So there would be some time during which Christ would be present among His people, yet unknown to the world.

(To be continued.)

God Worketh in You.

“Not yet thou knowest what I do
Within thine own weak breast;

To mould thee to My image true,
And fit thee for My rest;

But yield thee to My loving skill,
The veiled work of grace,

From day to day progressing still,
It is not thine to trace.”

“Yet walk by faith and not by sight
Fast clinging to My hand ;

Content to feel My love and might
Not yet to understand.

A little while thy course pursue,
Till grace to glory grow ;

Then what I am and what I do
Hereafter thou shalt know.”

—F. R. Havergal.

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If we would resemble Him in the Eternal Paradise, we must first pass an hour with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

—Archer Butler.

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Shaking the Heavens.

WHILE there is undoubtedly a general shaking of the religious systems that has been in progress for many years, there is just as certainly a general testing of those who have learned the present truth. "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire.- It is evidently possible to build upon the true foundation, Jesus Christ, wood, hay, and stubble: wrong teachings and wrong methods, but only if our faith structure be the gold, silver and precious stones, will it stand the fire (1 Cor. 3:10-14).

Some are apt to think that we take too narrow a view in respect of our privilege of knowledge of the present truth. They perceive that there are many good people still associated with the churches of Christendom, and seem to long after old fellowship and so be willing to compromise the truth.

It would seem that many forget the joy which the present truth brought them; also the responsibility of holding forth the Word of Life, and preserving the pureness of doctrine.

When we heard the "knock" (Rev. 3:20) of our Lord's presence, how glad we were; when we tasted of the feast to which He invited us (Luke 12:37), how sweet it was. No wonder we are admonished to "buy the truth and sell it not." The church of God is to be the pillar and ground of the truth, the preserver of the light. What kind of a light keeper would he be who did not keep the lens clear, so that the light should shine in all its power and beauty to guide the mariner on the ocean and guard from dangerous reefs?

There are, no doubt, many good people still bound in church associations, and even in such delusions as Christian Science or Theosophy, etc. There were many good living Pharisees in our Lord's day connected with the Synagogues, but those who clung to the "old bottles" could not enjoy the "new wine." The "wheat" had to come away or else be burned up with the "chaff."

Those who prefer to remain with Christendom, comprising (the Laodicean spirit) truth and principle, are to be taken as partaking in her sins and to receive of her plagues (Rev. 18:4) .

It is not for us to judge who is who, or to decide whether or not there are true Christians here or there. If we have heard the call to "come out of her my people," we should come out and stay out,—"Be ye separate." If the Lord says "come out,- it means that He is out, and we wish to be where He is—though "despised and rejected.- If He has "spued out Christendom" (Rev. 3:16) , which, we may say, daily shows evidence of having been "cast off," are we going to be like Lot's wife, looking back and longing for old associations. No, let us flee to the mountain (kingdom) , for He who is with us, is able to direct us and care for us "though all the world forsake."

Some who have "let slip the things we have heard,- have been busy spreading errors, and besides having reached the position of those who say, "the Lord delayeth His coming"—denying the parousia or presence of Christ, prior to His manifestation—they teach that He is to come again in human form, to be visible to all the world, though Jesus said, "The world seeth me no more. - They also deny that there is any personal devil, and teach the anti-ransom and anti-Christian theory of Universalism. This condition seems to illustrate the statement, "If the light that is in thee becomes

darkness, how great is that darkness.

While some let slip the things we have received, the truth remains as clear and beautiful as ever. One cannot add anything to the Divine Plan to make it any better, or take anything from it to make it more beautiful.

The circumstances of our day portend the coming climax. Soon the number of God's elect will be complete. The Bride will be made ready, the wise virgins will have entered the feast chamber and the door will be shut. The question is, shall we be inside, or outside among these who had no reserve of "oil"; whose light had gone out—to whom the light of truth respecting the Bridegroom's coming had dimmed.

Let us realise our responsibility of preserving the present truth in its purity and beauty, in all wisdom, gentleness, patience and sympathy, seeking to assist all who may be feeling after the "old paths."

"Be still my heart, these foolish fears,
These constant grumbles, and these tears,
All cast dishonour on thy Lord,
And contradict His gracious word,

Brought safely by His hand thus far,
He'll pilot thee across the bar.
How can you want, if He provide,
Or lose the way with such a Guide?"

The Value of Experience.

(Convention Address)

"Blessed is the man that endureth trial." (James 1:12.)

EXPERIENCE is a trial, or series of trials, or experiments; an active effort, or attempt to do, or prove something. Experience is the result of trial or observation; it is knowledge and wisdom acquired by suffering or enjoyment.

Men generally are experimenting; the Creator has permitted them to attempt a way of living which is not in harmony with His knowledge and wisdom, or His righteous principles. Their method and way of life, in the social and religious world are, even to themselves, very unsatisfactory and vain; but they hope, nevertheless, that the United Nations or perhaps One World Government will establish the desired peace, harmony, security and goodwill among all nations.

The result of these experiences is accumulating suffering, disorders, tribulations and fear on a gigantic scale; these added experiences are necessary for the ultimate good of mankind. They will be valuable in the age to come, as it is written—"Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed." (Ezek. 16:61-63.) The one important lesson will be impressed, namely, that God and His righteous will shall be exalted in the earth, and His name sanctified in the eyes of all nations. That is why experience is necessary for the disobedient; they will be brought to the condition where they will appreciate goodwill, righteousness, justice, truth and peace, and despise their former ways.

Although we, as Christians, have chosen to acquire heavenly wisdom and righteousness, we too gain much of this by experience, by trials, by an endeavour to do or put to the proof, or test. But we often learn the hard way and find that our own knowledge and wisdom, our own way, does not produce the best results; and so we learn to appreciate the words of the hymn more deeply:

Keep thou my way, O Lord;
My self I cannot guide;
Nor dare I trust my falt'ring steps
One moment from Thy side.
"I cannot live aright,
Save as I'm close to Thee;
My heart would fail without Thine aid;
Choose Thou my way for me.-

We have found those words true, have we not? Once we had a way or law unto ourselves, but this became a schoolmaster to lead us to a higher standard, a higher knowledge and wisdom—to Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Col. 2:3.) An old Christian lady put to proof the many promises to those who put

their trust in the Lord, and through this experience she could write alongside each promise in the Bible the word “Tested”.

By choosing our own way, and by unbelief, we gain experiences which show us our folly and often leads to sufferings and disappointments. A lesson can be drawn from the consecrated nation of Israel. They had the Lord as their King, Provider and Director, but because of their selfish ways and desire to imitate the godless nations around them they brought upon themselves many sorrows, troubles and punishments. They had rejected the Lord as their King and wanted a human king; this increased their troubles and discord among them.

This is often repeated amongst the Lord’s people during this Gospel Age. Some, by rejecting the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, and His’ instructions and guidance, desiring instead a human leader, have brought along much distress, discord trials and errors in doctrine and practice from which the consecrated have had to separate from time to time.

Another set of experiences arises from within ourselves. We need to know ourselves. The Apostle James says,

“Every man is tried when he is drawn away of his own desires and enticed; then when desire is conceived (in the mind) , it bringeth forth sin (transgression) ; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” (James 1:14-16.)

This would be second death to those who sin wilfully after being enlightened and begotten of the holy spirit. We are exhorted to put off the old man with its deeds, and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. (Col. 3:5-14.)

The opposite of unbelief is faith. The exercise of faith leads to joy and hope; it imparts strength, fortifies endurance—it overcomes. “This is the (cause of) victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4.)

Many and varied are the experiences gained by faith, and if we would triumph and endure to the end in the experiences the Lord permits we must ever keep in mind the purpose of these trials. The Apostle Peter reminds us “that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 1:7.) And again, James 1:12 reads— “Blessed is the man that endures trials, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”

The present trial state, and experiences associated with it, is often spoken of in the Scriptures as “the cup of the Lord,- or “the cup of salvation,”—”I will take the cup of salvation.” (Psa. 116:13.) The Lord said—”Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of.” (Matt. 20:22.) And when He was tried to the uttermost, He said:

”If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” (Matt. 26:39.)

The very nature of Christian principles and active living draws opposition from unbelievers. If it does not, then we might well take stock of ourselves—are we letting our light shine? This gives us large and varied experiences which in turn develop strong characters who desire to know and rightly divide the word of Truth; this again teaches us how we ought to answer every man.

Our rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God enables us to glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. (Rom.:2-4.1 This, you will agree, is a high spiritual development of character which adds no shame, for the great hope we entertain sanctifies us; it sets us apart from the great body of professing Christians. They will think you peculiar and will not seek your company, but are often ready to watch and criticise your conduct or word, and if possible to reduce you to their own level. This they cannot do if our prayer is sincere—Lord, place my feet on higher ground.

However, if you find yourself much like other people, then take heed. Quite likely we are acting from the world’s standpoint, and not from the Divine standpoint in which the truth has placed us. Perhaps we are (maybe unconsciously) courting the friendship of outside friends or relatives who do not appreciate Present Truth, and our own relationship to the truth and to those begotten of the truth is gradually lost sight of, and all friends soon become our friends. Consequently, the light received is put under a bushel, and we adjust ourselves to the friendship of the world, forgetting our mission—building up the saints. But the Lord is faithful; He will give the right kind of experiences, and we will benefit if we desire to see and understand the purpose of Christian living. If we do not, then valuable opportunities and precious lessons are wasted upon us.

Let every occasion be a great occasion, let Present Truth be present every day; let Truth become permanently fixed in our hearts. You know, by our use or neglect of Present Truth you and I are being measured for a higher or lower place.

Present Truth is valuable; it is not given merely because we are right down in the end of the age, but to counteract present errors and enable the Lord's people to stand in this evil day, and to discern the signs of the times. What or where would we be without it? We would lack understanding of Christian experiences, and be barren of any definite hope, floating hither and thither in the ocean of humanity like a jelly fish without backbone or sense of direction.

We must develop a character in harmony with our Lord's—gentle, persevering, strong, and yet kind and firm. We are to let His light shine; He understood His mission and the purpose of living and dying. He, too, needed experience chiefly through suffering. It is written—"He learnt obedience by the things which he suffered; being made perfect." (Heb. 5:8, 9.) We, too, surely need experience; by nature we were more or less sons of disobedience inheriting a fleshly mind—contrary to the will of God, dead in trespasses and sins. We were like the block of marble—in the rough. The Sculptor can see an angel in that stone, and sets to work to get him out. Many are the blows, much chiselling, rubbing and polishing, much care and skill in the final touches are needed to make perfection. This block of marble becomes a masterpiece of art, of general admiration, displaying the skill and workmanship of the Great Sculptor—we are His workmanship. This lesson is taught beautifully in one of our hymns God's hand that saves, though kind, seems rough :

His methods sometimes rude;
Frail, shrinking nature cries, -Enough!"
Yet proves the Lord is good.
The temple stones God now prepares,
Oft cry, 'You hurt me sore' :
The Sculptor seeks their perfectness,
And trims them more and more
Until, by dint of strokes and blows.
The shapeless mass appears
Symmetric, polished, beautiful,
To stand th' eternal years.

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." (Psa. 48:2.) "He hath chosen us in him . . . that we should be holy and without blame before him (that we should exist in front of Him) . In love having previously marked us out for sonship, through Christ Jesus for himself." "That in the ages to come he might -show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Eph.1:4, 5; 2:7.)

The work is an experience, and we are glad it is in the hands of One who knows His work, who loves and who cares. We should think kindly, too, of the tools He may use. Our part is to leave it to Him — to be resigned to His providences. The tools are in His hands, under His control.

Then, again, we need to beware of self-made experiences which come from not hearkening to the Lord's Word of counsel. For instance—"Suffer not as a busybody in other men's matters." (1 Pet. 4:15.) Or perhaps from an unwillingness to humble ourselves and correct an error, or through wrong notions fellowship with those of like faith is interrupted and loss of spirituality is certain to follow. This is an unfavourable experience, for along with this often comes self-delusion, and a failure to discern who are our brethren. We need a proper estimate of those whom the Lord has called.

We need to classify experiences, and this takes time and wisdom; we want to take note of favourable ones and avoid those that are unfavourable. Is our spiritual life becoming lean and weak, or strong and vigorous in the course of experience?

This is an important element in order to develop strong characters, like the green fruit on the tree which needs various climatic conditions, rain and sunshine: eventually the ripe, luscious fruit is matured and parts easily from the stem. Let us also go on to perfection-- "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:4.)

Blessed Assurances

Do you need a counsellor to direct your paths? “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.- (Psa. 73:24.)

Do you want a friend? “There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.- (Prov. 18:24.)

Are you discouraged? -Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.- (Psa. 31:24.)

Have you been wronged? “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.” (Matt. 5:44.)

Do you suffer for well-doing? “But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” (1 Pet. 2:20.)

Are you heavy laden? “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.- (Matt. 11:28.)

Are you ignorant? “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him.” (James 1:5.)

Are you tempted to do wrong? “If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” (Prov. 1:10.)

Do you hunger after righteousness? “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6.)

Are you fearful? “O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.” (Psa. 115:9.)

Do you want sympathy? -”Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence him.” (Psa. 103:13.)

The White Stone.

“To him that overcometh will I give . . . a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it.” —Rev 2:17.

IN ancient times the Greeks and the Romans had a custom of noting and perpetuating friendship by means of a white stone. This stone was divided into halves, and each person inscribed his name on the flat surface, after which the parts of the stone were exchanged. The production of either half was sufficient to ensure friendly aid, even from the descendants of those who first divided the stone. A similar custom was sometimes observed by a king, who would break a white stone into two parts, one of which he would retain and the other part give to a special ambassador.

That part could be sent to the king at any time and would ensure aid. Thus the divided stone became a mark of identification.

Rev. 2.17 seems to refer to this ancient custom. The white stone signifies a precious token of the Lord's love, and the new name written in the stone suggests the Bridegroom's name. The statement indicates a special acquaintance with the great King of kings, secret between Himself and the individual. The overcomers are not to be recognised merely as a class—the Bride class—but each will have the personal favour of the Lord. Of this no one will know save himself and the King. There is an individual and personal relationship between the Lord and the overcomers, who may be said to receive the mark of identification—the antitypical white stone—now, in this life.

This mark is the sealing of the holy spirit by which the Lord identifies the overcomers. While this is said to be a part of the final reward of the Church, yet from the very beginning of our experience we have this personal acquaintance with the Lord. The full seal of the holy spirit will be given in the resurrection, when we receive the new body. Then we shall have the complete knowledge of the name by which we shall be known to the Lord and He to us forever.

It is nothing for a man to hold up his head in a calm; but to maintain his post when all others have quitted theirs, and there to stand upright when other men are beaten down—this is praiseworthy—Seneca.



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This One Thing I Do.

(Phil. 3:13. See verses 7-16.) (Convention Address)

HUMAN experiences, as well as the Divine Word, attest the importance of concentrating energy upon some one thing if we would achieve the best results.

It was Jesus who said, "No man can serve two masters." "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." It was the Apostle James who said, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

To-day the keenest business men of the world are endorsing this teaching of Scripture by applying the principle to their business. In the making of machinery and other things it is found expedient to subdivide the work, so that each man may do a certain part only and thus become more proficient. This one thing he does and thus becomes more proficient in it. To attain the utmost success in any walk of life it is found necessary to focus attention on some object or purpose. No man can serve two masters.

If this be true as regards earthly things, how much emphasis it places upon the words of Jesus and the Apostles as relating to spiritual things. And not only their words but their lives attest the principle. The words of Paul,— "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" have only an empty sound until we thoughtfully consider what things he had left behind, and what was now the aim or prize for which he was running. And since we are exhorted to follow his example in the race, it may be well for each of us to examine ourselves to see how like, or unlike, our course is that of Paul's.

Looking back we find that Paul had superior advantages and prospects as a man. He had "much learning," having been educated under one of the best teachers of that day, "Gamaliel." Education was more rare then than now, and more costly. Consequently, the opportunities and influences of educated men were proportionately greater.

Paul, as a member of the Sanhedrim, and a "master in Israel," occupied a place of great influence and dignity among his fellow countrymen. Add to these honours the fact that by birth he inherited "Roman citizenship," we find a man with brighter prospects than one in ten thousand of his countrymen for gaining a place of pre-eminent distinction, either in the State government, or in the Jewish Church.

Whether or not Paul also inherited wealth we are not informed, but it is reasonable to suppose so. But, summing up all these possessions, the ambitions which they pointed out, Paul turned his back on them all when his eye caught sight of the heavenly prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. He counted them all but as dross when compared to the true jewel. It is when reviewing this course of action that he uses the words of our text.

"Whatever things were gain to me, these I have on account of the Anointed One, esteemed as a loss. But then, indeed, I esteem all things to be a loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of the Anointed Jesus my Lord; on whose account I suffered the loss of all things and consider them to be vile refuse, so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in him, . . . to know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship (sharing) of his sufferings, being conformed to his death. Not that I have already received it, or have been already perfected, but I pursue, if indeed, I may lay hold on that for which I was laid hold on by Christ. Brethren, I do not reckon myself to have attained it, but one thing I do—even forgetting the things behind and stretching forth towards the things before, I press along the line towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. As many, therefore, as are perfect should be of this mind,

and if in any (other) thing you think differently, God will also reveal this to you.” (Phil. 3:7-15. Diaglott.)

Though Paul had sacrificed so much, there is no evidence that he ever regretted it, or desired to have those things back. On the contrary his ambitions seem to have been such that he could have wished that his possessions and hopes had been yet larger, in order that his sacrifice might have thus been the greater. In his case there was no “looking back” like Lot’s wife, but a forgetting of those things which he had sacrificed. He thus avoided a temptation common to many today, who, though they have left very little, comparatively, continually look back at it and recount to themselves how much they have suffered and lost, thus hindering a completion of the sacrifice and race begun. Let us take a lesson from this, and forget, too, the things behind—forget our old hopes and earthly aims and ambitions—and fill our minds only with those aims and hopes which are before, laid up, in reservation for us.

But what was the one thing that Paul did? We are apt to forget that Paul and the other Apostles were men much like ourselves. And though the common affairs of life are scarcely mentioned, but only the more public ministrations, nevertheless all of these entered into their life experiences much as with us. Remembering this will enable us the better to appreciate their examples. Hence, we answer that the one thing which Paul was doing was not preaching, nor writing, nor singing hymns, nor travelling, but the one thing he did was, as Jesus expressed it—doing the will of God. It was in harmony with this will of God that Paul travelled, preached, made tents, was persecuted, imprisoned, etc.; and it was necessary, as Paul knew, to lay aside and forget all the aims and masters in order to render acceptable service to Him who declared, “No man can serve two masters.”

Looked at thus, if we would be acceptable to our Master and win the prize of our high calling, we must determine also—“This one thing I do.” Did we once have an ambition for wealth and luxury? We must forget that, as one of the things that were, but are not. Were we ambitious for fame, worldly honour or office? Let all these fade away in the light of the greater honour and glories now before us in prospect, for which we are now running and striving—“A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” This is the one thing to be sought now, and all our doings must be with reference to it if we would win it. To divide our attention would be to lose it.

Perhaps many of us may feel that we are so placed that the larger part of our time is taken up in labouring for the meat that perisheth. We may find that we have not very much time to devote to the service of the Gospel. However, let us remind ourselves that Paul made tents for a living—“laboured working with his hands.” Now, was not Paul as truly in the service of God while making tents as while preaching? Was he not as really doing the one thing? The fact that we have less time, and doubtless less talent to spend in declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, does not change the matter. God knows the circumstances and necessities of each one of the called ones, and He declares it to be His will that we care for those whom His providence has placed under our care. Hence in this caring for them, you are doing His will who declares,—“If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own household he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.” (1 Tim. 5:8.)

But, on the other hand, let us see that our attention to earthly things is limited by necessity. There is danger that our necessities be too liberally considered thus tending to cultivate pride, vainglory, and desire for the things of earth: and to hold us back and hinder us in our race. There is always danger lest the needful affairs of this life develop into matters of aim and object which would interfere and conflict with the one aim before us.

In a word, then, whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God. If we find certain food to incapacitate us and interfere with—this one thing we do—then we should deny ourselves that food. Can we glorify our Father more by great plainness of dress, or great plainness of speech? Then that alone and not our convenience or will, but His will be done. This is doing the same thing and seeking the same prize in the same way as did Paul. This, too, is what Jesus means when He said, “Seek ye first (chiefly) the kingdom of God.”

Let us keep the great example of our Lord ever clear before our minds. Let us not be side-tracked, or moved away from the hope of the Gospel. Christ said it was His meat to do the will of His Father. Let us also fully appreciate the example of the great Apostle Paul, and seek to follow him as he followed Christ in single-hearted purpose. Paul had one great aim and purpose of life; he did not attempt to mingle the service of Christ with the attainment of earthly good things, wealth, name, fame etc. He did not seek for honour here and the crown of glory hereafter, but he had one object in view, one aim, one great purpose of soul. To this singleness of purpose he owed his extraordinary attainments as a servant of Christ. A man will accomplish little who allows his mind to be distracted by a multiplicity of objects.

A Christian will accomplish nothing who has not a single great aim and purpose of soul. That purpose should be to do the will of our heavenly Father—to bend our wills to His, to deny self, to take up our cross daily to follow Christ in meekness and humility, and seeking to cultivate in our hearts the blessed fruitage of His spirit.

Let us, then, strive to so live that we may be able to say that there is one great object which we always have in view,

and that we mean to avoid everything which would interfere with that.

It will be noticed in Paul's argument as stated in Phil. 3:15, that he concludes that as many as are standing complete in Christ, should have "this mind" to seek the one thing—the prize before and to forget those behind. And when he adds, "And if in anything you think differently, God will reveal even this unto you,- it seems that he meant to have us understand that wherever this entire consecration to the will of God exists, based on the ransom, as expressed in verse 9, such consecrated ones are in the right way; and though they might, perhaps, have minor errors, it would only be a matter of time when they would come to appreciate the truth. Let those who claim to stand complete in Christ Jesus, be thus minded, and thus, in all we do press along the line, keeping in view only the on him and the prize of our high calling.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 17/12/6.

My Heart's Desire.

Give me, dear Lord, a heart that's true and clean,
That I might never do an action mean.

Give me, O Lord, a very humble mind
That I might never speak a word unkind.

And hands that ever willing to be used
In any way my Lord and Master choose;

And feet that's ever quick Thy messages to speed
To those who for Thy love and mercy plead.

Give me grace to tell Thy wondrous plan
That Thou hast purposed, Lord, for fallen man,

That I may faithfully to them relate
How Thou wilt save them from their lost estate:

And as they plead Thy love and mercy, Lord,
For Jesus' sake Thou wilt to them accord

Thy perfect peace that they may do Thy will,
And all Thy works of grace in them fulfil.

—Matilda Cole, Cardiff.

“The General Assembly of the Church of the First-borns.”

Heb. 12:22, 23.

THE Church of the First-borns” is not to be confounded with the Church of the First Resurrection. The word first, in the phrase First Resurrection signifies better, superior. The • First Resurrection includes only the Lord and “the Church, which is His Body”; in other words, the Bride Class. But in this glorified Church of the First-borns are included all those who are born of the spirit. Those who are to be of the spirit nature will be those who have been developed throughout the Gospel Age—before God’s favour goes to the world. This Church of the Firstborns includes all who come into covenant relationship with God before the New Covenant is put into force. Some will have part (an inferior part, however, to that of the Church) with the great “High Priest of our Profession” in instituting the New Covenant. They will all have some share with Him in dispensing the blessings of the New Covenant to all the families of the earth—to Israel first, and then to all nations.

This Church of the First-borns is prophetically pictured in the Old Testament in connection with the passover. In that night when all the first-born of Egypt were slain, all of the first-born of Israel were passed over. These escaped because of the blood on the lintels of their houses and because of their partaking of the lamb within. We know that afterward all of the first-born of Israel were exchanged for the one tribe of Levi; and that this tribe was separated or divided into two parts—one a priestly class and the other a servant class. The former were called Priests; the latter Levites; though, of course, all were Levites. These two classes were types of the Church of the Gospel Age.

“But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; to the General Assembly of the Church of the First-borns.” (Heb. 12:22, 23.) More properly we understand this to signify that we have approached—this is that to which we are coming—it is in sight. Some have already reached it. Our Lord has reached the goal. And some others of the First-borns have also reached their goal; and some of us have not yet reached it. But this is what we are approaching. We shall all have come into power and into our place in the Divine Plan, at the close of this Gospel Age. Thereupon will culminate the “time of trouble” with which this Age will end, typified by the trembling of the mountain of Sinai. Then, in the same connection, we read that we are approaching an innumerable company of angels.

The Apostle seems to be here setting before us the glories of the future. Not only shall we see our heavenly Father and our heavenly Lord, and be ushered into the Assembly of the Church of the First-borns, but we shall be ushered into the presence of an innumerable company of angels. These are the angels who encamp around about those that fear the Lord and deliver them. (Psa. 34:7.) They are sent to be ministers for those who shall be heirs of salvation. (Heb. 1:14.) They have been with us here overseeing our interests; and it will be part of our joy on the spirit-plane to make their acquaintance. If the Apostle had neglected to mention these, we would think it strange; for he is enumerating the things to which we are approaching.

Thus we see that the Church of the First-borns includes the “Great Company” of the Levites as well as the smaller company of the Priests. As the Levites had no inheritance in the land, so not only the “Little Flock” but also the “Great Company,” the servant class, the companions of the Bride, have no share in the earthly inheritance, but will have a share in the heavenly inheritance.

A Lesson from the Trees.

Some young people were discussing life, and the question was asked: “Which season of life is the most happy?”

Being unable to agree on the subject, they referred the question to their grandfather, a veteran of over eighty.

“You see that grove of trees before the house,” he said. “When the spring comes and the buds are breaking on the trees, I think—How beautiful is spring! And when the summer comes and covers the trees with foliage, and the birds sing in the branches, I think—How beautiful is summer! When autumn loads them with golden fruit, I think—How beautiful is autumn! And when it is winter, and there is neither foliage nor fruit, then I look up, and through the leafless branches, as I could not do so until now, I see the stars shine.

If we are living as God would have us, we will be happy through all the seasons of life.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Christ's Return. His Revealing and Manifestation..

(Continued from August issue.)

“IF ANY MAN HEAR MY VOICE”

Luke 12:35:48.

“Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning, and be ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord when he shall return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately.”

THE thought appears to be that the Lord be present and knocking, and that some might not be sufficiently alert to hear the “knock,” while those who were in the right attitude and waiting for Him would more quickly recognise the Lord’s presence. Then there is the promise of verse 37, “Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you, he will gird himself and make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them.”

This is surely a wonderful promise, and also clearly indicates that the Lord will be present among His people prior to His taking control of earth’s affairs. Not only will the world be unaware of His presence, but many of His own people will evidently be too much taken up with other things, soothed to spiritual drowsiness by worldly attractions, or social matters, or even social uplift, temperance or religious work, and thus fail to recognise His presence, and fail to enter the marriage feast, fail to sit down at the table to eat the meat specially provided by the Lord for the watchers. We find similar language in Rev. 3:20, addressed to the Laodicean Church: “Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.”

Verse 45 seems clearly to indicate a class which will refuse to believe that the Lord is present, and who will begin to smite those who are rejoicing in the fact, and are enjoying the feast which the Lord promised to prepare, a feast of truths, new and old, out of the storehouse—the Word of God. So that here, again, we notice the solemn fact that the first work at the Lord’s return is a separating work among professing Christians, “Judgment must begin at the House of God.”

This separating work is termed the “harvest,” and the Lord gave the Parable of the Tares sown in the wheat field to illustrate the matter. (Matt. 13:24-30.)

This parable covers the whole Gospel Age. The “good seed” is the Word of God, the true Gospel of grace in Christ. The enemy that sowed the tares is the Devil, who has sought to becloud the truth and to pervert it by presenting error, right from the beginning. His crafty work is seen in all the false religions of heathendom, as well as in Christendom. The great anti-Christian Roman Catholic Church is surely his masterpiece—so wonderful a counterfeit of the true Church that millions have been deceived. The tares, sown among the wheat, have developed so that the wheat field has become a tare field. The terrible falling into error and development of tares could be seen even in the Apostles’ days, but to the enquiry as to whether the tares should be separated or pulled up,” the reply is: No, do not do any separating work until the Harvest time--the Harvest is the end of the Age.” Then the Lord would be present to direct the work, and would have the tares bound in bundles for the burning. Thus the wheat would be separated from these bundles and gathered out of the field into the barn.

This is all to be accomplished by the present Lord, in preparation for the setting up of the Kingdom. The Kingdom will not commence its thousand years’ reign of glory and blessing until the wheat is all garnered—that is, until the Church, the members in Christ, are all gathered home to reign with Him. The reign will not begin until the tares have gone into the fire, nor until Satan, the present prince, is dethroned and bound.

The question now is as to just where are we in regard to these important matters?

“Watchman, tell me does the morning
Of fair Zion’s glory dawn?
Have the signs that mark its coming
Yet upon thy pathway shone.
Pilgrim, yes; arise, look round thee!
Light is breaking in the skies;
Gird thy Bridal robes around thee,
Morning dawns, arise; arise!”

While we have the prophecies of Daniel, the 1260, 1290, 1335 and the 2300 days, pointing to the years 1798, 1828, 1874 and 1846 respectively, yet none of these prophecies just clearly state that the Lord would be present again. They speak of the ending of Papal power and the cleansing of the sanctuary, and “Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the end of the 1335 days.” The Lord has left us rather to judge by the signs, the conditions about us, and the work going on among Christians, as to where we are in respect of His coming. The matter then may be discerned by those who search, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,” and as for those who neglect the Word of God, neglect to watch, and do not trim their lamps—the Word of God which is a lamp to our feet, a guide to our pathway—they will surely be left in ignorance of these important developments in connection with the Lord’s presence and the deliverance of the Church.

The Lord has stated that when the Son of Man returns there will be similar conditions to those which existed in Noah’s day, prior to the Flood. There were about 120 years during which Noah preached and warned of the coming catastrophe—the deluge—and during which time the people scoffed and went their own way eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, and knew not until the flood came. (Luke 17:26-27.)

“As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man, they did eat, they drank, they married wives, and they were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.” “Likewise also in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the days of the Son of Man.” (Luke:17:27-30.)

St. Paul also speaks of the same time, saying, “This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5.)

The Lord, after speaking of the signs of His presence, warns against the possibility of that day coming upon us unawares. “Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:34-36.)

The Ten Virgins Parable.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins indicates that there will be two classes even among those interested in the Lord’s return. Some have trimmed their lamps and have oil in their vessels, and are thus able to appreciate the presence of Christ, while others seem to lack the spiritual perception through lack of oil in their vessels, the holy spirit in their hearts, and so fail to enter the Bridal Chamber, and are not recognised by the Bridegroom.

It would seem probable that the outworking of this Parable of the Ten Virgins has been in course of fulfilment ever since the ending of Daniel’s 1290 days. It was somewhere about 1825 that the advent movement had its beginning, and the message went throughout Christendom, “Prepare to meet the Bridegroom.”

Mr. Miller and others prominent in this movement had concluded that Christ would return about 1844, which they understood was the end of Daniel’s 2300 days (years). (Daniel 8:14.)

A great disappointment occurred at that time, for those whose minds were exercised on the subject had not grasped the correct thought of the manner of the Lord’s return. They looked for Him to appear again in human form, visible to the human eye. They had not noticed the intent of the Lord’s own words (Luke 17:20-24.), “The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation,” Neither shall they say, “Lo here, or lo there! For behold the Kingdom of God is (or will be) among you.” Even this disappointment of 1844 seemed to be intimated in the Word,—And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it; and they shall say to you: see here or see there, go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning that lighteneth out of one part under heaven and shineth unto the other part under heaven (the sunshine out of the east unto the west), so shall also the Son of Man be in his day.” It is quite evidently a mistake to think of this lightening as the lightning flash. It is foolish to think that the Lord’s second presence would be but a flash as of lightning. He is represented elsewhere as the “Sun of righteousness that shall arise with healing in His wings.” (Mal. 4:2).

That surely means that He will not be seen by the natural eye, though every eye of faith will see Him, and appreciate the light of the knowledge of the Lord, which shall cover the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, and feel the

warmth of His love and the healing influences of those rays of sunshine from His glorious presence. We may recall the incident of Paul's conversion, and how the Lord appeared to him in the way, and His appearance was above the brightness of the sun at noonday, and could not be looked upon. Paul was blinded. Then, too, we remember how highly the Lord was exalted after His resurrection. Paul declares that he saw Christ "as one born (in resurrection) before the time." He saw Him as He will be when He comes as a glorious spirit being, in the "express image of the Father's person" "whom no man hath seen nor can see."

There is not one word in connection with the Lord's coming again to indicate that He would once more change His nature and again become flesh, but on the contrary, He declared (Matt. 24:30), "There shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." And again (Luke 9:26), "He shall come in His own glory, and in His

Father's, and of the holy angels." And Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father and with His angels." It would be but reasonable that, if the Son of Man should return in human form visible to men, the angels also would be in similar form, and thus also be seen of men. We remember again that it was in order that Christ might pay the price of sin by giving "His flesh (His humanity) for the life of the world," that He had become flesh, that He had been "made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that He might by the grace of God taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.) Having accomplished the great sacrifice, He comes again, not in the body of humiliation, but in power and glory, in the "express image of the Father's person."

The apostle John did not even know what He would be like, but he knew that He would come "as He is." He would not change His condition or nature, but those who will see Him must be changed to be like Him. (1 John 3:2.)

There are scriptures which, if taken literally, might appear to teach to the contrary of the Master's words, "Henceforth the world seeth me no more," but if we patiently examine these passages we believe it will be seen that they are figurative or symbolic, and when their real meaning is discerned they will be found beautifully harmonising with the plain statement of our Lord, and with the Apostle Paul who said, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh; henceforth know we Him (so) no more."

We have, for instance, the statement that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night; and yet again we read that He will descend with a "shout," and the "voice of the Archangel" and the "trump of God." All these take place at the presence of the Lord, yet only those who are earnestly waiting, watching and listening will hear the shout, the voice, the trump, or the "knock." Others shall be unaware of His having come. Rev. 3:3 (Diaglott). -Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard and observed it, and reform. If therefore thou shouldst not watch, I may have come as a thief, and thou mayst by no means know at what hour I may have come on thee." All these symbols refer to the message of truth, a proclamation of His presence, etc.

Daniel 12:1 shows that the Lord would be present, "shall stand up" prior to the "Time of Trouble." Rev. 11:15-18 shows that the nations will be angry, and like those in Noah's day, unaware of the presence. 1 Thes. 4:16 shows, too, that Christ will be present when the shout, voice and trump sound forth, and Matt. 24:31 tells the purpose of the sounding of the trumpet to be the accomplishing of the harvest work, to -gather together his elect from the four winds of heaven." That is, the gathering of the saints out of all the bundles of error and sectarianism, into the light and liberty of the truth as it is in Jesus.

We still have for further consideration the Lord's parables, "The Tares" and the "Ten Virgins," as indicating the work of gathering the saints out of all the systems of error during the second presence of Christ; and it will be noticed that in neither parable does the separation begin before the Lord has come.

All ten virgins were pure ones, they were Christians, they were interested in the Lord's return, they had all gone out to meet Him. That does not mean that they had gone to any particular place to meet the Lord, but they had their minds exercised in the study of the Bible; they were watching. They, no doubt, represent those who in Miller's day and since have been "looking for His coming." There are two classes mentioned, wise and foolish, and evidently such trials or tests which the Lord permitted, through the misunderstanding of truth in 1844, and many others since that time, are for the very purpose of separating the wise from the foolish. Some get discouraged through these tests, and lose heart and become drowsy, and some seem also to have excitable dreams, and are led away by vain fancies and imaginations. What light they started out with flickers and dies, and they have no oil in their vessels, they are short of the holy spirit in their hearts to "guide them into all truth, and teach them things to come." Ultimately they appear to secure oil for their lamps, but too late to enter the marriage chamber. The door had been closed, the elect had been completed, the Bride had made herself ready and entered the joys of her Lord.

It is not for us to try and discern to which class anyone may belong, but it is the part of wisdom for us each to examine

our hearts and see that we have “oil in our vessels.” We may gain a good deal of intellectual knowledge and discern something of the trend of events so that we may be expectant, even go out to meet the Bridegroom, and yet be sadly short of the holy spirit. It is not sufficient that we have been begotten of the spirit; we are leaky vessels, and need continual refilling.

This is the principal work we have to do; without it we shall be failures. If we have the holy spirit in our hearts, the Word of God, being prayerfully studied, will surely shine clearer and clearer, and reveal the presence of the Bridegroom. Not only so, but the fruits of God’s holy spirit in our hearts will be manifest in our lives, in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. (Gal. 5:22-23.) Or as Peter (2 Pet. 1:5-11) puts it, “Add to your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. . . . If ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Why He Knocketh.

“When he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately.”—Luke 12:36.

From the Parable of the Young Nobleman, also that of the Wedding Garment (Matt. 22), and from Luke 12:37-48 and other Scriptures, it would appear to be manifest that the Lord would be present, judging among His people and otherwise preparing for the establishment of His Kingdom, while yet unknown to the world. He would bring to a conclusion the work of the Gospel Age, separating the “wheat from the tares,” and finally gathering the perfect body of Christ, the full number of His elect, the fact of His presence being known only to those watching and listening for His “knock.” It is to such that He has promised to “gird himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”

This feast is a spiritual one, and indicates that the Lord “will bring forth things new and old” out of the storehouse. And the promise is that those watchers who are themselves refreshed by the truths specially revealed by the Lord when He has returned, are to be engaged in the service of providing these “things new and old” out of the storehouse, to all who are faithfully watching, to such as have ears to hear. And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.”—Luke 12:42-44.

This spiritual feast appears to be what was indicated by the 1335 days of Daniel—“Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days.” —Daniel 12:12.

In this 12th chapter of Daniel, three periods are particularly mentioned—1260 days (time, times and a half), 1290 days, and 1335—which are to be counted from the setting up of the desolating abomination, and the taking away of the continual sacrifice. This event would appear to be about 539 A.D., when both items mentioned in Daniel 1 2:11 became facts. Papacy assumed civil control, and the mass was instituted, as though the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, offered “once for all,” was not completely satisfactory and all availing. These three periods appear to terminate respectively 1795-99, 1825-29, and 1874. The 1260 days or years reaching to 1795-1799 marked the time when the Papal power, which had so long trodden down the saints of the Most High, was broken, and the Pope was taken prisoner by Napoleon and carried to France. Thus the saints of God were relieved from Papal persecutions. With the greater liberty, the truth of God’s Word began to shine, Bible Societies sprang into existence, and the work of cleansing the sanctuary went forward. The great Reformation under Zwingli, Ecolampadius, Melancthon and Luther had started the cleansing by rebuking the abuses and errors of Rome. Wesley had followed in preaching faith and true holiness. Sanctification was his chief theme. By 1825 there was the Campbellite or Church of Christ movement, also the Millerite movement, which awakened the Christian world to great expectations regarding the Lord’s return. A clear understanding of the doctrine of the ransom seems to have been attained, and a class has ever since 1846 been separated from the nominal churches.

It would seem to be about 1825-29 that the preaching respecting the Lord’s return drew together those who “loved His appearing.” It was as though the Parable of the Ten Virgins there had the commencement of its fulfilment, as already stated.

Ever since that time God’s watching people have been permitted to have experiences which have proved and tested their faith, and evidently divided class from class. The great “shout” or proclamation which was promised has been accomplishing its purpose, and calling out those who “have ears to hear” to go forth to meet the Bridegroom. Then even among those who are represented as ten virgins there have been experiences which have no doubt been the means of demonstrating to which class each watcher belongs, the “five wise” or the “five foolish” virgins. The whole ten

virgins represent Christians—pure ones—justified, cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. Not only are all Christians, but all are interested in the Lord's return. They desire to meet Him and have some knowledge about His coming, yet there is a difference among them; five are wise, having not only a knowledge of God's Word, "the lamp to our feet," but they have a good supply of oil in their hearts and minds; these could readily adjust their minds and hearts to an appreciation of events and recognise the "signs of His presence," and so enter into the joys of the near approach of the Kingdom and enjoy the feast which the Lord had promised to prepare for those whom He would find faithfully watching.

The five foolish lack the supply of oil in their vessels, are short of the holy spirit in their hearts, and, therefore, have not the appreciation of events or a Scriptural understanding of the signs of the Lord's presence, and, therefore, fail to enter into the feast. The first test of the Harvest time soon came. Mr. Miller had predicted the second presence in 1844, and expected the Lord to come with "outward show" and to be seen by all. It was evidently expected that our Lord would appear with a human body instead of as He had said, "the Son of Man cometh not with outward show," but "in power and great glory, and all the holy angels with Him." They had overlooked the fact that Jesus was "put to death flesh, but quickened spirit," that "flesh and blood (human nature) cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," that "though we have known Christ (says the Apostle) after the flesh, henceforth know we Him no more," and that even the apostle John was ignorant of what our Lord was like in the glorified condition. "We know not what we shall be like, but we know that, when he shall appear we shall be like him, and see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.) So the Christians of this Millerite movement suffered a great disappointment, which began the operation under the Lord's providence of separating the two classes of virgins. This was the commencement of the Harvest work, beginning first among the Lord's own consecrated people.

(To be continued.)

One Day at a Time.

One day at a time, with its failures and fears,
With its hurts and mistakes, with its weakness and tears,
With its portion of pain and its burden of care ;
One day at a time we must meet and must bear.

One day at a time to be patient and strong,
To be calm under trial and sweet under wrong ;
Then its toiling shall pass and its sorrow shall cease :
It shall darken and die, and the night shall bring peace.

One day at a time—but the day is so long,
And the heart is not brave and the soul is not strong.
O Thou pitiful Christ, be Thou near all the way ;
Give courage and patience and strength for the day.

Why should we look forward or back with dismay ?
Our needs, as our mercies, are but for the day.
One day at a time and the day is His day;
He hath numbered its hours, though they haste or delay.

His grace is sufficient, we walk not alone;
As the day, so the strength that He giveth His own. —Selected.

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Christ's Return- His Revealing and Manifestation.

(Continued from Last Month's Issue.)

THERE were evidently similar testings in our Lord's earthly sojourn, which was during the Harvest time of the Jewish Age. It was the message that a new Age was about to open, and that Messiah has come, which at once separated the "Israelites indeed" from the nominal system. Then, as our Lord began to speak of the way of the Cross, of taking up the Cross and denying oneself, some withdrew ; and when He talked of giving His flesh for the life of the world, it caused a stumbling to some. Then a question arose about whether Christ could come out of Galilee. "Hath not the Scriptures said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was, and so there was a division among the people because of him." (John 7:41-43.) "Some said, He is a good man, and others say, but he deceiveth the people." (John 7:12.)

On another occasion when He spoke about "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood bath eternal life," etc., we read that many therefore of His disciples when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it." And "from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him," (John 6:61-66.)

Thus it was that there were such truths sent out and such conditions permitted as would separate the wheat from the chaff. While the wheat was gathered into the Gospel Gamer, the chaff was tied more tightly, in sectarian bundles, ready to be burned at the conclusion of the Harvest time, in the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70.

In the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Matt. 13:24-30) , the Lord indicated that there would be a similar Harvest time at the end of this Gospel Age. He says, "Let both grow together until the harvest" (elsewhere He explains "the harvest is the end of the Age") . "And in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Present Day Harvest Experiences.

Ever since the Millerite movement there have been just such experiences and proclamations of truths which have separated those who "have ears to hear" any news of the Bridegroom's coming, and who "love his appearing and kingdom." Strong truths have been permitted to come to God's people, and discussions and disputings have done their work. Sometimes it has been trivial personalities which have led astray. Sometimes differences on matter of order, or on truths which are not vital have turned some away, and what light they possessed has become darkened and their spirit has become bitter and, finally, they have seemed to lose the faith and hope, and the light that was in them has become darkness. Very generally the difference of thought is not so much the cause of separations as the wrong spirit that is engendered in the discussions. Thus the lack of oil in the vessel is indicated. Sometimes it may be that more important truths have caused divisions, and sometimes error has been made to look like truth. "Light has been put for darkness, and darkness for light."

The Lord foretold that there would be such delusions and sections, saying, "Many false prophets (teachers) shall arise and deceive many" (Matt. 24:4, 5, 11, and 24) . "In so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." The whole matter depends upon our having "oil in the vessels," i.e., the holy spirit in our hearts and earnestly seeking the guidance of God's Word, which is the lamp to our feet.

We would note that all this Harvest work is to take place after the Lord of the Harvest has arrived and also before the last phase of the great time of trouble, when "The fire of the Lord's jealousy shall devour the whole earth" (Zeph. 3:8-

9) , in which the bundles of tares are to be destroyed. The indication also is that, prior to this final burning up, the “elect” shall have been gathered Home to be with the Lord in the heavens.

Another parable found in Matt. 22:1-14 seems to take in the whole Gospel Age from the time the Gospel feast was prepared. John introduced the Bridegroom (John 3:29), who had come to purchase His bride. The feast was spread, the fatlings, the antitype of the bullock (Lev. 16) and other types were slain; then the feast was ready.

The invitation was first to the leaders of Israel; few came, then the invitation was extended finally to all nations.

Then the King comes in, the Lord returns, and the first thing He does is to inspect the guests. All who have entered the guest chamber have accepted the wedding garment, and therefore the Lord’s query, “How cattiest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?” This denotes that some even after being justified by faith and entering the Christian way, would, through one cause or another, lose faith, and trust in their own “filthy rags” as righteousness. They become agnostics, and are cast out of the Gospel favour and go into outer darkness.

Thus it would appear that the Scriptures indicate a progressiveness respecting the second advent of Christ. There is first the winding up of the work of the Gospel Age, preparatory to the opening up of the Kingdom Age. The Church must be all complete, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then those that remain are to complete their course and be caught away at the moment of death, to be with the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. 4:17.) The present “prince of the power of the air” will be dethroned and bound, along with all his evil spirits, the wicked angels who have been operating in Spiritism. Spiritism will not be able to operate when the Kingdom of Christ is established.

So long as Satan’s power in the earth abounds, so long as the evil spirits which have been operating with him since Noah’s day can deceive humanity by impersonating departed friends, through mediums, called witches in olden days, in the seances and by other means in Christendom, and by medicine men, Devil priests, etc., in heathen lands, we may know that Christ’s kingdom has not been set up. Probably the cessation of these evil practices by the “angels that left their own habitation” (Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4), will be one of the first evidences that Christ has taken to Himself His great power and commenced His reign on the earth.

The Bible teaching respecting the second presence of Christ and the work which He will first perform at His return has been somewhat hidden through a poor translation of the Greek word “parousia” in the New Testament.

The Word “Parousia”.

The word occurs in the following texts, and in each case it should be properly translated “presence,” not “coming”:

Matt. 24:3—“What shall be the sign of thy presence?” “

Matt. 24:27, 37, 39--So shall also the ‘presence’ of the Son of Man be.”

1 Cor. 15:23--“They that are Christ’s at his ‘presence.’ “

1 Thess. 2:19—“What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, presented before our Lord Jesus Christ at his ‘presence’.-

1 Thess. 3:13 -That He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father at the ‘presence’ of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thess. 4:15—“We which are alive and remain unto the ‘presence’ of the Lord, shall not precede them which are asleep.”

1 Thess. 5:23—“Be preserved blameless unto the ‘presence’ of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thess. 2:1—“Now we beseech you, brethren, by (respecting) the ‘presence’ of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering unto him.”

2 Thess. 2:8 (see Rev. Ver.) --“Then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation (epiphania) of his ‘presence’.”

James 5:7—“Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the ‘presence’ of the Lord.-

Jas. 5:8 “Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts for the ‘presence’ of the Lord draweth nigh.”

2 Pet. 3:3, 4—”There shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His ‘presence’?”

The word “parousia” is twice properly translated “presence” in 2 Cor. 10:10 and Phil. 2:12. These two instances clearly demonstrate that the word “parousia” has the same meaning as is correctly translated by our English word “presence.” Some have suggested that “parousia” means “arrival” or “drawing near,” but how absurd it would be to say that Paul’s “bodily arrival is weak” or to say “beloved as ye have always obeyed, not as at my arrival only but now much more in my absence.

It should be evident to any unbiassed mind that the general meaning of the word is presence, and when so translated we find there is a harmony and clearness in the New Testament teaching concerning the Lord’s second presence.

Epiphania.

Another Greek word used in connection with our Lord’s second presence is “epiphania,” which signifies “brightness” or “manifestation.” It is rendered “appearing” and “brightness” as in the following instances:-

1 Tim. 6:14—”Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable until the ‘appearing’ of our Lord.”

2 Tim. 4:1—I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His ‘appearing’ and Kingdom.”

2 Tim. 4:8—There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them that love his ‘appearing’.”

Titus 2:13—”Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious ‘appearing’ of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

2 Thess. 2:8--Then shall the wicked one be exposed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the ‘brightness’ (epiphania or bright shining) of his presence.-

Apokalupsis.

The Greek words apokalupsis and apokalupto, which are also used in respect of the coming of the Lord, signify uncovering or unveiling (as of something previously present but hidden). Apokalupsis is rendered “revealed,” “revelation,” “appearing,” “coming” and “manifestation” in the following texts which refer to the Lord’s second presence, power and glory, as these shall be made known—uncovered or revealed to the world.

2 Thess. 1:7, 8--The Lord Jesus shall be ‘revealed’ from heaven. . .”

Rom. 8:19—For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the ‘manifestation’ of the sons of God.”

Luke 17:29-30—Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is ‘revealed’.” That is to say, that as soon as the Church has all been taken to be with the Lord, the Son of Man will be revealed to the world in the fiery time of trouble, as the Judge of mankind, who had already been present for some time dealing with His Church, sealing and gathering His elect from the four corners of the earth.

Other texts where this word occurs are:--Rom. 8:18 ; 1 Pet. 4:13; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; 1 Cor. 3:13; 1 Cor. 1:7; (trans. “coming”) ; 1 Pet. 1:7; and 1 Pet. 1:13. “Hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the ‘revelation’ of Jesus Christ.”

Thus it seems that the Lord first comes as a thief, and is unknown to the world or even to most Christians. He makes His presence gradually known to the watchers, and those hear His “knock.” Gradually His presence is more and more revealed, and finally there will be the manifestation, the demonstration of His presence in the fiery judgment, in which the present world systems, religious, social and political, will be consumed in preparation for the bringing in of the better day of righteousness and peace under the Kingdom for which we have so long prayed, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.-

(To be continued.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Brethren in Melbourne wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) from Friday, 25th December, to Monday, 28th December, with further meetings on New Year's Day. 'These gatherings will be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and an invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these assemblies in the Lord's name. Further information may be obtained from the secretary — Mr. J. B. Hiam, 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in • the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

Deeply rooted, Lord in Thee,
Now and ever let me be;

Let my roots still deeper grow 'Neath the surface far below.

Thus, while founded on the Rock,
I need fear no tempest's shock;
I would be built up in Thee—
Hither rise—till God I see.

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Provoking One Another.

"Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day drawing on." — Heb. 10:24, 25.

THE word "provoke" signifies to arouse or incite, or stimulate to activity. It is generally used in an evil sense, but is applicable, as in our text, to describe an incitement to good works, good thoughts, etc. The tendency of fallen human nature is toward things that are mean, selfish, grovelling, and the natural bent is to incite or provoke to encourage similarly mean and unworthy thoughts, actions and words in others, and it has become a proverb that "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Everyone of experience knows this general tendency of evil to beget evil, and to corrupt and to pollute what is nobler and purer than itself; hence we have the Scriptural pronouncement, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Those who neglect this counsel need not be surprised if they are continually falling into temptation, and if the influence upon their own lives results in a measure at least of ungodliness and sin, and disfellowship from those things which are noble and true and pure.

But the "New Creature in Christ Jesus" is one in whom the transforming influences of the Lord's spirit have already begun — one who has a new heart, a new will, a new disposition. With such, "old things have passed away and all things have become new," they have been begotten again, i.e., re-begotten, to new hopes, new wishes, new ideas of propriety. Instead of the earthly wisdom and way, with its "bitter envying and strife," which "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish," they have now the wisdom that is from above, and a heart (a disposition) to appreciate and pursue its counsels, which are, first purity, then peaceableness, gentleness, meekness, mercy, good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the disposition of this class, in proportion to their attainment of this heavenly wisdom and new nature will be to "provoke" or incite or encourage one another, and all with whom they come in contact, to similar goodness of thought and word and act, in harmony with the heavenly wisdom which is guiding their own course.

This is laid down in the Scriptures as an unvarying rule: “A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water and a good fountain cannot send forth brackish water.” A thistle cannot bear grapes, and a grape-vine cannot bear thistles.

It is the Master Himself who says: “By their fruits ye shall know them.” If, therefore, we desire to prove ourselves, and to judge respecting our progress in mortifying (putting to death) the old nature, and our growth in the new nature, we will judge ourselves by this standard, answering to ourselves the question: Is my own spirit (disposition) one which delights in sin in its various forms (not necessarily in its grosser forms of murder, theft, etc., but in its more refined forms, falsity, envy, strife, vainglory, slander, evil-speaking, evil surmises, etc.) , or is my delight increasingly in righteousness, truth, goodness, gentleness, meekness, patience, love? If the former, we are yet, either wholly or partially, in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity, and have need to go at once to the Great Physician, and to submit ourselves to His radical treatment — the cutting off of sin, the mortifying of such fleshly desires, etc. If the latter be our condition of heart, we have cause for rejoicing, yet no cause for pride or boastfulness; for we can say no more than that we only have done our duty, having merely learned, and that imperfectly, the lessons set before us by our great Teacher.

The Apostle is addressing the Church, the consecrated New Creatures in Christ Jesus. This is shown in the text, for he classes himself with these, using the word “us”; it is also shown by the context. He calls the attention of the consecrated to the influence which goes out from each to each, and the consequent importance that the influence shall always be stimulating, or provocative of that which is good. No doubt the Apostle found in his day, as we find now, that many who are consecrated at heart fail to see clearly how this consecration should associate itself with and mark itself upon our every act and word.

We are not to be reckless of each other’s interests. In our contact with each other, whether a, personal contact or a contact by mail, we are to “consider one another.” We are to consider what would be helps, and what would be hindrances, what would be encouragements, and what would be stumbling blocks; and we are to do all in our power to assist one another to run with patience the race for the heavenly prize. If we are truly consecrated to the Lord, we can do nothing “against the truth, but (every effort must be) for the truth” (2 Cor. 13:8) . What a burning and shining light every Christian would be if his every act were considered and shaped for the benefit of those with whom he comes in contact! What a blessing it would be in the home. What a blessing it would be in the church. This brotherly consideration is what the Apostle is urging upon us: “Consider one another to provoke (incite, encourage), to love and to good works.” Avoid every word and every act, so far as possible, that might incite to hatred, envy, strife, bitterness (and bad works corresponding to these feelings) all of which are “of the flesh and of the devil.” The Apostle links this advice with the exhortation to forget not the assembling of ourselves together, as the Lord’s people. None of us is so strong in the new nature that he can disregard the fellowship of kindred minds. But even if we did feel sufficiently strong for ourselves, the spirit of love in us should so control that we would delight to meet with “the brethren” for their sakes, if we ourselves received no benefit therefrom. But we are more or less like coals of fire, which, if separated, will tend to cool rapidly, but which, if brought together, will tend to increase in fervency the entire mass. Our Lord has encouraged His people to seek each other’s fellowship for companionship in the study of His Word, and in prayer, pronouncing special blessings upon the meeting of His people together, even if so few as only two or three.

The Apostle intimates that, as “the Day” draws near, there will be the more need for the observance of this instruction respecting the fellowship and communion of the Lord’s people with each other. And experience proves that the constant rush and bustle of worldly activities and pressure of business to keep abreast of the times, brings with it a danger of the Lord’s people being choked with the cares of this life, or with the deceitfulness of riches, or the seeking of riches. We need a counteracting influence to offset this increasing influence of the world and its affairs upon us; and this counteracting influence is to be sought and to be found by the Lord’s people among themselves —communing one with the other, and with the Lord, and exhorting and encouraging one another to steadfastness along the lines of instruction laid down in His Word. The Lord warned His church of the necessity for watchfulness and prayer “that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36). We hear, too, the Apostle’s exhortation, as he looked down prophetically to our day, saying, “Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in exalted positions” (Eph. 6:13, 14) .

It is “as we see the day drawing on” that we are to be the more diligent in assembling ourselves with those of like precious faith; the more earnest in exhorting and provoking to love, and to good works, and thus to assist one another in putting on “the whole armour of God”—the graces of character, meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, faith, truth, hope—that with these as the Divine panoply or armour, protecting us from the assaults of the adversary in this day, we may be able to stand. The clear intimation is that, unless we have on this armour we will be unable to stand. And this armour includes more than mere head knowledge, represented by the helmet; it includes, be it noted,

the entire breast-plate of righteousness, purity of heart, and it includes the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, and the sandals of consecration.

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God’s Perfect Peace.

“Like a river glorious is God’s perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.

Perfect ; yet it floweth fuller every day ;
Perfect ; yet it groweth deeper all the way.

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand :

Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there,

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest.
Finding, as He. promised, perfect peace and rest,

“Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love,

We may trust Him solely. all for us to do ;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.”

Be Clothed with Humility.

(1 Pet. 5:5.) (Convention Address)

TO all who have the spirit of Christ, the holy spirit, pride is a hateful thing and humility is beautiful to behold. Christians alone can recognise themselves at anywhere near their face value, and we are prone to err also, as we well know.

As for the natural man he is a lover of himself--Each man to himself most tightly clings, For self he toils, of self he sings."

God is not in the thoughts of a proud man, and his selfish way is often well rewarded in this "present evil world." (Psa. 10:4; 73:5, 6.)

Pride caused Lucifer to adopt a way contrary to the will of the Most High, and unrenewed man has ever followed in his way. Note the youth blossoming into young manhood, his pride in his physical strength; and the young maiden into young womanhood, glorying in her beauty of form and feature. We learn better later, and often wish we could arrest youth in their foolish course and awaken them more quickly to a proper sense of values. God and His Word teaches us that we have nothing in which to be proud. "Pride of life is not of the Father.- (1 John 2:16.)

Experience is a great teacher; apart from the spiritual life, even the daily round and common task provides many humbling experiences. Years ago we were trying to interest a man in the truth message; over a period of time not much progress was apparent; perhaps through lack of experience we pressed the matter unduly and sometimes exasperated him. One day a serious breakdown happened to our motor truck on a public highway, and this man being a mechanic his services were solicited. His quiet remark as he arrived at the scene 'Well, after all we are all dependent one upon the other, are we not?'"—is well remembered. As much as to say—Here is one occasion when more than a knowledge of the gospel is needed. At that time good was received from the experience.

The more we learn about God's great plan and His requirements of us, the humbler we grow. It removes all desire to seek first place in Class meetings or Conventions, or pre-eminence anywhere. Thinking of brethren known over the years and who impressed as being true Christians, and now passed on from us, they all seemed to have, in their eventide of life, the prominent characteristic of humility. One Brother in particular comes to mind: in company with another Brother a visit was paid to his lodgings. It was a few months only before he was called Home, but we were not to know that then, though it was clear that he would be no great time longer amongst us. Certain matters were discussed and something of the strain that must have been upon the old Brother's mind' was apparent. Before leaving there was a request for prayer, and, as the three of us knelt, there is a vivid recollection of the way the elderly Brother dropped to his knees and prostrated himself upon the bed—an attitude of complete surrender, as though deeply imploring the Lord for special guidance and help. Though doubtless quite unknown to him, he preached a more impressive sermon than a thousand words could ever have done, for here, apparently, was, one with whom the Lord had so dealt until Christ-likeness had been formed in him. The Lord will use all such, humbled beneath His mighty hand, both now and when the day of His kingdom arrives.

In various places in the Scripture characteristics are spoken of in terms of clothing. In Isa. 59:17, speaking of the correction that the Lord meted out to backsliding Israel, it is stated—"He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing." The vengeance was corrective and was not directed against individuals, but against the wickedness in which the people were indulging and which separated them from God.

"Be clothed with humility" clothing is that which is seen by others. We have often heard the saying—"clothes make the man"—the implication being that it is according to how a person is dressed as to what impression is made upon the onlooker.

A Christian has much dressing to do of another kind. He is to put on the armour of God—gird his loins with truth, put on the breastplate of righteousness shoe his feet with the gospel of peace, take the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit. (Eph. 6:1317.) Humility is essential in this work, being quite the opposite spirit to that which prompts those who gird this world's armour on and use its swords and spears. Those using the world's armour most, increase in pride and arrogance.

.A Sunday School Anniversary is called to mind; this took place some years ago, before getting free of Babylon. A high church dignitary officiated for the special occasion, and during the service he came out of the closed-in pulpit to the raised dais prepared for the children to sit upon, where all the splendour of array of gaiters, silver buckles and patent leather shoes, etc., could be seen by all present. In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus tells us about hypocrites who,

in their preaching, almsgiving, etc., sought really the praise and glory of men, and He said of them, “Verily, they have their reward,” That is, they seek these things, and in receiving them, find their measure of content; their minds are so small that they do not perceive how vain and miserable is such reward. But Jesus adds much more in His sermon. He warns us lest we be carried away with similar practises: the heart is desperately wicked, who can know it?

When we consider soberly we realise that by nature we are all fallen and degraded by sin, and come far short of perfection along every line. The very fact that we can see a failing in another can give rise to a feeling of pride in our own heart that may eventually land us in a fall. (Prov. 16:18.) Pride is manifested in varying degrees. We need not have a haughty bearing to be proud. One has pointed out that stubbornness or determination to have things done our own way is often traceable to pride; likewise touchiness, the tendency to be easily offended. The Christian should watch to resist pride in its every form, whether as envy, evil speaking, stubbornness, touchiness, self-assurance, know-all attitude, ambition, a proud look, or even a proud tone of voice.

One has said--“Whoever starts out fighting the sins of others before he has made a vigorous campaign against his own weaknesses and errors is making a mistake.” We need sympathy and humility to assist others, and we need to have been humbled in some of our own battles with self in order to have a clear appreciation of our own personal inability to overcome, - and the continual need of application to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace sufficient.

We are reminded of Moses, of whom it was said that he was the meekest man in all the earth. He served the Lord faithfully for forty years and then made a mistake through pride and self-assurance. Once, the Lord delivered the people by commanding Moses to strike a rock so that water gushed out to supply their need. The next time a similar need arose, the Lord told Moses to speak to the rock and water would flow out: but Moses, momentarily flushed with self-importance, smote the rock twice and said—“Must we fetch you forth water.- (Num. 20:7-12.) That little bit of pride, after forty years faithful service, cost Moses the privilege of leading Israel into the promised land.

Saul was another very humble Old Testament character when first called to be made king over Israel, but later progressively degenerated through pride. Samuel, as the servant of the Lord, reminded Saul,—“When thou wast little in thine own sight, thou wast made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king.” (1 Sam. 15:17.) Success turned his head. Let us take heed. The Lord often leads humble-minded people to more prominent positions in His service; let us watch carefully and prayerfully that the reaction does not prove unfavourable.

Years ago, before grasping present truth in its beauty, we call to mind delighting in Psa. 84:10, —“I would rather be a doorkeeper (margin—sit at the threshold) in the house of my Lord than dwell in the tents of wickedness.” Love for the Lord at that time was very sincere, but His Word was so vast and our understanding of it so meagre that it was felt a good understanding of it could not be gained, but to be a doorkeeper would be a very happy position. But over the years it has pleased the Lord to give increasing knowledge of His Word, and bring us slowly but surely to the rich fare of Present Truth. It is realised now that the Lord is not calling us to a position of doorkeeper, but to a place with Christ in the throne of His Kingdom. Once, the lack of knowledge of God and His plan helped to keep us humble; perhaps you have had the same experience. Now, the unfoldings of present truth are so wonderful, and by it we are lifted so far above the horizon of men in their poor outlook for the present day, that we are prone too often to forget how we came by these things. “Who made thee to differ from another, and what halt thou that thou didst not receive?” the Apostle Paul asked some who were lifted up with pride in his day. (1 Cor. 4:7.) It is a good thing to address these words to ourselves quite often as a help to keep us humble.

We live in the days of the Laodicean church, which the spirit of the Lord reproves for its lukewarmness, its indifference and its pride.—“I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.” (Rev. 3:17.) Spiritual pride causes spiritual blindness; it can so veil and cloak itself that we do not recognise it in ourselves. We are so sure that we have the wisdom of God, and are standing for principle, etc., that we feel indignant if any suggest that we are self-righteous or proud.

Whatever of pride we have overcome, and whatever of humility and love we have attained, let us guard with prayerful watchfulness, for our wily foe ever seeks to cause us to relinquish our hold and spoil our best endeavours. Like Paul, “Let us press down (as to hold) upon the mark (already attained) toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”; (Phil. 3:14, literal rendering) , so that we do not let these things slip—glide away from us. (Heb. 2:1.)

I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or fond desire
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.

Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God, my conscience make,
Awake my soul when sin is nigh.
And keep it still awake.

If to the right or left I stray,
That moment, Lord, reprove :
And let Thy goodness chase away
All hindrance to Thy love.

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My Soul Be On Thy Guard

WHILE as the Apostle predicted, “perilous times” are upon us, in which some in the church will “stumble,” and some “fall.” And when “the love of many shall wax cold” let us not forget that it is “he that endureth (faithfully) to ‘the end (of his trial)’, the same shall be saved.” Remember the Apostle’s advice, to take trials and oppositions and misrepresentations cheerfully, joyously, patiently, knowing that, so endured, they will “work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” But, as the Apostle adds, to secure such blessed results from trials, persecutions, and oppositions, we must remember to “look not at the things that are seen (earthly things and prospects), but at things that are unseen (the heavenly and eternal things) ‘We are to endure -as seeing Him who is invisible.’” Greater is He that is with us than all that be against us. (Heb. 11:27; 1 John 4.4-8.) “Who is he that will harm you (really) if ye be followers of that which is good?” (Read 1 Pet. 3:13 - 16 : Rom. 8 :3 1 -3 9.) The opposition of evil can work only good to “the elect,” those who are called according to God’s purpose. To all who are of the true Zion the promise is, “No weapon that is formed against you shall, prosper.”

When that noble servant of God, John Wesley, was zealous in opposing Satan, and preaching a full consecration to God, he provoked Satan’s enmity, and the latter found mouthpieces amongst ambitious and zealous “false brethren,- who spread abroad vile rumours from time to time, not only assailing his teachings, but even his moral character.

His plan was to make no defence. He argued that if he should engage in personal disputes it would be just what Satan would want—a hindrance to his work. Finally, however, when a most malicious rumour reflecting on his moral character was started by some prominent persons, and the entire work seemed likely to be greatly injured by it, his brother Charles and some others came to him and said, “John, you must answer this charge or your reputation is gone.”

John replied in substance thus: “No; I will keep right along with my work. When I consecrated myself to the Lord,

I gave Him my reputation as well as all else that I possess. The Lord is at the helm! Our Lord Jesus, by His faithfulness, ‘made Himself of no reputation,’ and was crucified as a blasphemer and between outlaws, yet He opened not His mouth. No, I will make no defence. A certain class, evil at heart, would believe the evil reports regardless of my denials; and those thus alienated will no doubt, as in the early church, go ‘out from us because they were not of us.’ The Lord knoweth them that are His, and will keep His own: and none shall pluck them out of His hand. Besides the Lord may see that some are thinking of me, rather than of Him and His message which I seek to declare.

Christian Way Ended.

On September the 4th our elderly Sister Fairbrother of Melbourne finished the Christian way after many years of appreciating and rejoicing in the truths of God's Word.

Forty years ago our dear Sister Fairbrother had lost her husband in death, and it seemed as though the Lord made up this loss by granting her, within a few years from that time, a knowledge and appreciation of the truth in all its beauty. Being isolated in the country for some years prevented association with the brethren, but whenever possible our elderly Sister delighted to fellowship with others of like mind.

In recent years physical frailty increased, but through it all our dear Sister was ever cheerful and bright, and while extreme weakness was apparent, it was a blessing that there was no great suffering. On the day prior to her death, before the severe turn which finally exhausted the earthly body, our dear Sister Fairbrother remarked to her daughter - "Wouldn't it be wonderful if I went Home this afternoon." Thus was she looking forward to the wonderful inheritance which the Lord has in reservation for those who love Him supremely.

Sincere sympathy is extended to the bereaved in the passing of a loved mother and grandmother, and a knowledge of God's gracious plan of salvation is a great comfort no doubt at such times. We trust for our dear Sister the abundant entrance into the heavenly Kingdom, by the Lord's grace. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Patience.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ,, 4.45 p.m.

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How Great is Thy Goodness.

(Address—Contributed.)

“O how great is Thy goodness which Thou. hast prepared for those that fear Thee.”—(Psa. 31:19-24.)

IT seems that there are expressions in the Psalms to meet every experience of the Christian: whether he be passing through the deep waters of affliction, or feasting on the joys of the Lord's bountiful table with its cup running over; whether in trial or oppression through failure, or exulting in the victory of faith: whether feeling oppressed through contamination with evil, beset with foes of the world, the flesh, or the devil, or rejoicing in forgiveness and restoration. It is by experiences as these that we are to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and when we realise that all the circumstances and conditions which the Lord permits to come to us reveal His love, His way of working in us, to make us fit to be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom, then we can feel with the Psalmist -- O how great is Thy goodness.”

It is by experiences of the Lord's overruling in our lives, since we entered the narrow way as consecrated followers of our Lord; that is, to spend our lives endeavouring to do not our own will or desires, that we can appreciate the words recorded of Christ—“Lo, in the volume of the book it is written, I come to do Thy will, O God.” No doubt all who have been long in the way can look back and see how the Heavenly Father's kind hand has guided, provided, protected, and hindered us taking wrong steps, and overruling and perhaps preventing harmful consequences; thus, true to the promise, He has made all things work together for good for us. It is when we thus trace the tender leadings and patient longsuffering of our God with all our failures, that we feel He has been as James 5:7 says, respecting “the husbandman waiting for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it.” He has been gradually leading step by step, helping us to overcome our failings and to produce the fruits of the spirit—to become more like Christ. Realising this, then we can enter into the spirit of the Psalmist—“O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast prepared for them that fear Thee.”

If all mankind knew of the goodness of God, then absolute fools only would refrain from rejoicing that the Great Creator who has all power and controls the universe, is so kind, so just, so wise. When all the world learn and know God, then all will indeed rejoice and offer true worship, “for all nations shall come and worship before Thee.”—Rev. 15:4.

We know that there was a wonderful preparation made for mankind even before our first parents were created. While the Edenic Paradise was lost through disobedience, we are reminded of its restoration in the parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matt. 25, picturing the mediatorial reign of Christ. The reward of the righteous is-- “Come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” That is a wonderful thing promised to all the willing and obedient of mankind at the end of the Messianic Kingdom. Even all who will enjoy that great restitution — paradise restored — will be able to sing. “O how great is Thy goodness.”

However, these Psalms were written more particularly in respect of the Christ—Messiah—and it is those only who have been called of God to be members in the Messiah Class that can enter fully into the spirit of the Psalmist, and claim the exceeding great and precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ. These are they to whom the Psalm seems to refer; these of the high calling of God in Christ who are to inherit the wonderful promises, being made partakers of the divine nature. These are they to whom our Lord promised that He would come again and receive them unto Himself, that where He is there they should be also. These are they of whom it is written, “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” As the rich promises of God in Christ are

appreciated by faith, these “Stand all astonished with wonder and gaze on the ocean of love,” and exclaim, -O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast prepared for them that fear Thee.”

Then, beyond all this wondrous provision for the members of this Messiah Class and the privilege of being used as joint-heirs with Christ in His kingdom—”To sit with him in his throne, even as he overcame and is set down with his Father in his throne.”—there is the glorious prospect of rolling back the Jordan stream of death, restraining all the forces of evil, and establishing the rule of righteousness and bringing peace and joy to the human race, not only for those on earth at the time of the establishment of the Messiah’s reign, but for all who have lived and gone down into death. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,” and the whole earth will be a paradise. That is what was promised to the dying thief; he will be there and will join in the song, “O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast prepared for them that fear Thee.” Ha, along with the rest of mankind, will be gradually led up the highway of holiness until all shall learn of the goodness of God and join in the chorus of Rev. 5:13—’And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever.”

It will be a glorious thing to be one with Christ in bringing about such a happy consummation of all earth’s sorrows, so that there will be no more curse; the earth freed from all pests (no longer cursed for man’s sake) will yield its increase without the toil and sweat of the present time: there shall be no more death and God shall wipe the tears from off all faces. Well may we exclaim in the words of 1 John 3:1, 2--Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God . . . and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” “O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast prepared for them that fear Thee.”

Them That Fear Thee.

- (1) What does it mean to fear the Lord? Do those who fear the Lord never go short of anything?
- (2) Certainly the theologians of the dark ages, and some even of the present time, have done all they could to make people afraid of God, but God does not desire us to be in dread of Him, but rather that we love Him and reverently appreciate His greatness, His wisdom, justice, love and power, and heartily seek to do His will and service. There is such a lack of godly fear in this our day. There is so much callousness disrespect—in regard to both religious and secular forms and authorities, that it is not surprising to find so little knowledge of God and so little wisdom in both religious and worldly concerns, for the very beginning of wisdom is the reverence of the Lord.

Canon Berry, speaking in Edinburgh some time ago said--”Human ingenuity seems bankrupt, everywhere is perplexity and despair. At every point questions confront us which seem to be like Sphinx’s riddles and as destructive to those who give wrong answers. We seem to be gripped by forces and tendencies too fast for our understanding or control, and in face of them we are paralysed and helpless.” Such is the result of man’s waywardness and lack of reverence for the Lord, his Creator.

Even among those who know something of present truth, there has been lack of reverence for the things of God and a consequent confusion and lack of wisdom. Probably we may have noticed at times when a Class has been studying along certain lines of Christian conduct that there have been evidences that the lessons have not sunk very deeply into the heart. With a proper reverence for the Lord and His Word would we not be more anxious to apply the lessons to our conduct? How forceful are the words of James, that we receive with meekness the engrafted Word and that we be doers of the Word and not hearers only . . . (James 1:21-27.) So often as certain lessons seem to be emphasised we may be apt to think—that is just what ought to do Brother So-and-so, or Sister So-and-so good, if ‘they would only take that lesson. And that may be quite true, but it is possible that while we are so thinking, we have not been examining ourselves and are missing the lesson that would do us good.

A proper reverence for God will lead to a meditation upon His instructions, so that we may bring our every thought, word and act into harmony with His will. The more we learn to apply the Word, the more we learn of the beauty of the Lord’s will, the more heartily shall we be able to realise “How great is Thy goodness to them that fear Thee.” Those that fear Him are those who appreciate the drawing of the Lord, being brought to the Son so that by faith in His great sacrifice to pay the price of sin, they may be justified from the condemnation of death under which we are born. Then they hear the invitation to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God, that they may follow in the steps of Christ. They are then begotten of the holy spirit and can begin to understand the Divine purpose and glorious hope in Christ. So it is that we read—”No one cometh unto the Son except the Father draw him,” and again, as Jesus said, “No man cometh unto the Father except by me.” No one could get this far without reverence for the Lord.

There is no dread in this fear of the Lord. No, -we love God because He first loved us, and sent His son to be the

propitiation for our sins,” and “perfect love casteth out fear.” There is, however, an appreciation of the Lord’s greatness, His holiness, His wisdom and goodness, and our own unworthiness of all His kind care; whose eye is upon us; whose wing of love is over us; whose almighty power overshadows us; who guides us by His counsel and who supplies all our needs out of His riches in glory, as we again read from the Psalm (84:11, 12) , “The Lord is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” And again, “O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”

“My spirit on Thy care
Blest Saviour I recline;
Thou wilt not leave me in despair,
For Thou art Love Divine.”

(2) But do we not sometimes see the Lord’s people in want? Yes, indeed. During this Gospel Age, when the Body of the Messiah is being selected, some of the saintliest of the Lord’s people have suffered great privations and persecutions. Some have felt the pangs of hunger and poverty, and have passed through times of deepest distress. From a worldly standpoint they have gone short of many good things. Even the Apostle Paul speaks of what he went through. - Five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods. Thrice I suffered shipwreck; once was I stoned ... In hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, etc.” (2 Cor. 11:24-27.) Such experiences are necessary for our training for the great work of the kingdom age. They are good things in developing a character like Christ’s, perfected through sufferings and touched with a feeling for the poor groaning creation that is to be blessed at the “manifestation of these sons of God.”

If it were that all Christians were miraculously provided with all the good things of the earth and protected from all the ills that come to humanity, then no doubt the whole world would have become Christians. It is in the next age that the righteous will flourish as a palm tree; at the present time, while Satan is the “prince of this world,” we see “the wicked prosper as a green bay tree.”

The Church is being selected under the reign of evil, and the great adversary is permitted to put stumbling blocks and trials in our way, so that, like the Master, we may prove our loyalty to God under the hard conditions and trying circumstances. Character is not developed without hardship, and unless we are transformed into the image of God’s dear Son, we shall fail to be a member of the great Messianic body. We see, then, that it would not be a good thing for us to be spared from trials, sorrows, difficulties, disciplines, etc. Such things, after all, are but for a moment and are but light afflictions compared to the weight of eternal glory that is to be revealed in us, if we endure to the end.

It is the way the Lord is working in us, to bring us fully to will and to do His good pleasure. We may be sure that He will not allow any trial more than we, by His grace, will be able to bear, and that some way or other He will make all things work together for good. “Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him”; “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you”; “No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

While we pray, -Give us day by day our daily bread,” we know that it is not the rich nor the comfortably off that the Lord generally calls, but rather the poor of this world, rich in faith. Yet there is no want to them that fear Him. Those who reverence the Lord and whose times are in His hands can rest in His good providences. While like the Apostle we seek to earn sufficient for our own needs and maybe to assist others, yet, like him, we should count all earthly things as not worthy to be compared with the heavenly riches. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that love Him.” While the Lord is dealing with us to mould our hearts and minds—our dispositions to be like Christ, we know that He feels for us when we are passing through the deep waters, or in the hard places. Sometimes we may get experiences which we think we do not need; we cannot see what good they are to us.

“The temple stones God now prepares,
Oft cry, ‘You hurt me sore’ ;
The Sculptor seeks their perfectness,
And trims them more and more.
“Frail, shrinking nature cries, ‘Enough!’
Yet proves the Lord is good.

Sometimes it seems as in Isa. 54:7, 8 ”For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.” Also Isa. 49:15, 16—”Can a woman forget her babe? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” So, it is not only in the wonderful promises of future heavenly bliss, but even in the wilderness journey we are guided, protected, provided for and sustained by the promised grace and the fulness of the Divine

promises, just as Rebekah was carried across the desert on the ten camels led by Eliezer, forsaking her own people and the old home; so the Church has been journeying across the desert of the Gospel Age on the promises. As Rebekah saw Isaac in the field at the end of the journey, so now we perceive the great Bridegroom has come to claim His Bride — the second presence of Christ is fulfilled.

Each member in Christ has the care of the Heavenly Father,—’ ‘The Father himself loveth you.- See also Matt. 10:28-30. The Psalmist says, “He bath showed me His marvellous kindness in a fenced city.” As the walls are round about Jerusalem, so the angel of the Lord encampeth around His people. Jerusalem is a figure of the Church, “The New Jerusalem, the city of the great King.”

Men have sought to put fences about themselves and so formed sects and divisions and claimed only those in their fences are saved. They thus enslave the people by a spirit of fear; so various sects and parties have been formed through a reverence for a leader, instead of reverence for the Lord. We want to be content with the fenced city which the Lord has provided for our protection. It was because of lack of reverence for the Lord, and instead a reverence for man that the great falling away from the faith into the Papal Church occurred in the early centuries of this age, and the same thing happened on a smaller scale when control of the W.T. Society was seized and a great falling away ‘from the faith occurred. We are exhorted by the Apostle to love our elders, and esteem them highly for their work’s sake, but we must keep ourselves from idols, and not allow anyone to dominate our faith or to circumvent our liberty of conscience. “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not brought again into bondage.”

When we realise that the Almighty ‘shelters us under His wing; that “the Father himself loves us,” and that as members in Christ we can claim the wonderful promises of guidance, protection and providence, as well as the exceeding great and precious promises of future inheritance, then truly we can exclaim with David, who was a type of the Church, -O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast prepared for them that fear Thee.”

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

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“Thou Preparest a Table”

Psalms 23:5.

WHEN the Lord prepares a table we may be sure of several things. First, that it will be clean : secondly, that it will be good ; thirdly, that it will be orderly, bountiful, and beautiful. And wherever we find the truth thus carefully set before the household of faith—whether by the press, the pen, or the platform—there we may be sure the spirit of the Lord has been at work directing and superintending the matter. The Prophet Isaiah (chap. 28:8) , referring to the tables of popular theology, now spread before the masses of nominal Christians, graphically described their present condition when he said : “For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.- For centuries past they have been feeding on the miserable husks of tradition until now a reaction has set in, and they are vomiting forth the abominable stuff, and their tables are full of filthiness.

Then again, there are many more tables being spread with new traditions, and human speculations to which those are promptly invited who turn away in disgust from the old polluted tables. In all of this the great adversary of the Church is diligently and faithfully at work with all his accustomed craft and cunning, using with great effect the press, the radio and the platform, the most potent agencies for reaching the people.

It is an increasingly popular idea among religious journalists that such a journal should be a medium, merely for the expression of all shades of human opinion upon all matters of divine revelation, and that each individual should abstract from them all what he conceives to be true and reject the rest. But this is precisely what the readers, and often the editors, too, of such journals are unable to do, and the general confusion is only increased unto greater blindness and denser darkness, and thus the purpose of the adversary is accomplished.

There is a deep responsibility to God, which every man assumes, whether he realises it or not when he becomes a public teacher. Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5:19.

No table is fit for the household of faith to be summoned to that has not been spread by careful hands, fully submitted, and obedient to the great Head of the house, whose directions are found in His Word. God says (Hab. 2:2) to some of whom He has granted a measure of ability to serve the household, and who (verse 1) are watching (studying His Word) to know what He would have them communicate — write the vision (what you have seen of the divine truth) , and make it plain upon tables. That is, set it out in an orderly, systematic manner, that he may run that readeth it—that he may, run for the prize. Observe that it is not every man that is called to make the truth plain, but that some of the class specified are called to do so for the benefit of all the rest. In the Scriptures there are many surface truths which all may see and appreciate, but the systematic ordering of the divine plan, much of which was purposely hidden, and obscurely expressed, and the bringing out of its wonderful details, was left for an appointed time. When the appointed time has come, and the faithful watcher is led to see the systematic harmony of divine truth—not to guess at it, or to surmise about it, but to see it so plainly that he can clearly, logically and scripturally demonstrate it to others—then it becomes the privilege of such a one to make plain to others what the Lord has made plain to him. And such an one may consider his ability in this direction (together with a possible opportunity, and a strong love for the saints, which longs to bless them with a fuller knowledge of God, and to exhort and stimulate them to greater faithfulness) , as the Lord’s call to him to make it plain.

But such should remember that the commission is to “make it plain,” not to make it obscure. And if a man has no truth to make plain, but is only seeking the truth, he makes a great mistake in launching out his crude and inharmonious ideas for the confusion of other minds. Such an one should maintain the proper attitude of a disciple, a learner, until he does see clearly, -and is thus fitted to become a teacher of others. If he be a faithful student, studying to show himself a workman approved unto God, ere long he may enjoy the privilege of declaring the truth to others, and be greatly blessed in so doing.

None of the consecrated should be in haste to rush into print with crude, undefined ideas, and thus become stumbling blocks in the way of many others. Be content to spread before other hungry saints the truth you have received, and proved to your thorough satisfaction, but keep your table clean; do not make up for the deficiency of knowledge by spreading out a host of idle speculations. Better is a pure morsel from a clean table than great abundance under other conditions. By and by to this morsel another morsel will be added, and in due time the wealth of divine bounty will be realised.

The Praise Belongs to Him.

I know if I am chosen to joint-heirship with my Lord,
To reign with Him in glory, to receive that great reward ;
If after all my weaknesses a crown for me he'll claim,
I know that choice will surely bring great glory to Gods name.

If I had been more worthy, and my stumblings had been few,
When men gave God the glory, they'd have praised my virtue, too ;
If I'd ne'er lost a battle, or had never missed the mark,
As they talked about His goodness, mine, also, they'd remark.

But my being so deficient, in thought and word and deed,
Means He'll get all the glory—He deserves it all, indeed.
When they see this weak mortal raised to such immortal heights,
What praise will rise to Him who in such nothingness delights

I know that when my Saviour did return to Heaven above,
And was crowned with wondrous glory, it did prove His Father's love;
But thinking of Christ's merit and His sinless life of grace,
'Twas no wonder that Jehovah chose Him for such a place.

With me it is so different ; I have not one thing to plead.
That I should be more honored than another bruised reed ;
And truly there's no reason to give me a mite of praise ;
To Him belongs all glory for the joys which crown my days.

If you knew all my failings, and my blemishes so vile,
And saw the loving patience my Father shows the while,
'Twould amaze you beyond measure to think He could or would
Make me an 'able servant who should do His people good.

But if to Him such praise is due because of what I am—
Because of such a weakling He has made a stronger man,
Then what will be His glory when He's raised me higher still,
And crowned me with His choicest on the top of Zion's Hill ?

That all these years of striving find me so imperfect still,
Does not speak much to my credit nor give a happy thrill ;
Where I appear as worthy 'tis because His grace is there.
And in the praise and glory I deserve no part, no share.

I hate my faults and failings, and I fight them day by day,
But from self with all its weaknesses I cannot get away ;
Despite this fact. He uses me--bevond is still more grace—
And hosts will tell His glory—His who found poor me a place.

BENJAMIN H. BARTON.

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Christ's Return-His Revealing and Manifestation.

(Continued from Last Month's Issue.)

THERE are some Scriptures which are used to teach contrary to what has been stated in these articles in the previous three issues of this paper, but which we believe will be found to be in harmony therewith when carefully examined.

For instance, Acts 1:11, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The apostle Peter (1 Pet. 3:18) informs us plainly that our Lord was "put to death flesh, but quickened spirit," which is in harmony with Paul's statement—"sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body." So then, our Lord at His ascension was no longer human, but spirit, and after His ascension was exalted to the Divine nature "in the express image of the Father." He had, on a few occasions after His resurrection, assumed the human form so as to be seen by and to converse with the disciples, who were to be witnesses to the fact of His resurrection. Acts 1:9 reads, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight." The eleventh verse does not promise that anyone will see our Lord return; it simply says that He will come again in like manner as He went. The cloud that received Him, then, may symbolise the same thing that the Lord indicated when He said, "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:30.) That is, that clouds, in symbolic scriptural language, indicate trouble, distress or calamities, and Daniel informs us (Dan. 12:1) that when Michael (Christ) stands up, there is to be the greatest time of trouble ever experienced. The evangelist Luke, quoting the same words as Matt. 24:30, adds, Luke 21:27, 28, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption (or deliverance) draweth nigh." If it were, as some think, that our Lord will suddenly appear sitting on a cloud, there would be no waiting for the deliverance soon to be, for, according to their understanding, they would be instantly caught away to be with the Lord. The meaning seems clearly to be that the clouds of trouble encircle the earth, and the watchers are able to discern, in the severe experiences of the world, that it is the sign "of the presence of the Son of man," who has come and has taken control of the world. He will command "Peace, be still" (Psalm 46) and then cause "righteousness and truth to spring out of the earth." Mankind shall ultimately discern the Son of Man in the clouds in the same way that we can discern Satan in all the wickedness now in the world and in all the false religions of our day. It is in this way that ultimately "every eye shall see (discern) him." (Rev. 1:7.)

Earth's New Ruler.

Satan has long been "The prince of this world," "The prince of the power of the air," "The god of this world who now worketh in the children of disobedience." (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2.) He has been permitted thus to reign and bring experiences to mankind so that they may learn what it is to be disobedient to God's laws. Christ comes to bind Satan, and to take the Kingdom instead. He will deliver mankind from bondage to Satan, sin and death. As no one sees Satan, who is a spiritual being, so the world will not see the new Ruler, who has distinctly said, "The world seeth me no more.- (John 14:19.) The Church will see Him, for they are to be changed to be "like Him," spirit beings. It is when we see matters in this light that the Scriptures become so much clearer and truths respecting our Lord's second presence open up.

In the 24th of Matthew we have in symbolic language a history of the Gospel Age, terminating with the second presence of Christ. The same history, with more detail, is given in the Book of Revelation, also in symbols. The disciples, being impressed by the Lord's doings and sayings respecting the Temple a few days before His death, asked Him, Matt. 24:3, "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy presence (Greek, parousia) and of the end of the world (Age) ."

Verses 4-14 seem to be a brief synopsis of the Gospel Age, from that time down to the end. It is an outline of prophecy which has been very clearly fulfilled, as history reveals, What deceptions there have been in connection with the Christian religion. What great claims have been made to great authority, even to being Christ. What wars and unrest, what famines, pestilences, scourges, and the people of God have been martyred and tortured. Nation has risen against nation.

Verse 14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.- The Gospel is the good news of Christ's Kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth. It has now been preached in every land, to every nation and almost every dialect, so that we are surely living in the "time of the end."

Verses 15-22 appear to be so worded that they answer that portion of the question relating to the typical temple and Jerusalem and gave instructions to such as had "ears to hear," which saved many lives when the city was taken by Titus' army. Josephus points out that. The fall of the city seemed imminent about A.D. 68, but for some reason the

Roman Army was recalled, and so Christians made good their escape. Only two years later the city fell amidst the greatest slaughter that had ever been up to that time. That, however, was only a partial fulfilment of the prophecy which is to be fulfilled on a larger scale at the end of this Age, in the destruction of the great systems of Christendom.

Verses 23-27 speak of the presence of Christ, and show that He will not appear again as a man, that they could say "He is in the desert," or that He is in some secret room. If anyone should tell us that He is here or there, that He can be located anywhere, then we are not to believe them. The presence will be everywhere, just like the sunshine that comes from the east unto the west. The word "lightning," used in the Authorised Version, allows of a wrong thought, and has misled many to think that the Lord will come like "lightning," which stays not for a moment. The Greek word means "bright shining," and is so translated in Luke 11:36. It is used in Revelation for lightnings, but it undoubtedly here refers to the "bright shining" of the Sun of Righteousness. It is a beautiful illustration of the presence of Christ. Those awake and watching may see the glories of the rising sun for some time, even before it rises above the horizon. How it dispels the gloom and darkness, just as the Sun of Righteousness arising will disperse the dark night of sin and sorrow, of superstition and error, and bring healing in its wings. (Mal. 4:2.)

Thus the Lord would guard us from the many deceptions which were to be, and undoubtedly are, prevalent in this our day. The question of the disciples was: "What shall be the sign of Thy 'parousia,' presence?" not a sign of His arrival and departure, like the lightning. The Lord adds, "So shall the presence of the Son of man be." Lightning has no presence: it is simply a flash and gone.

Verse 28 indicates that there is to be a feast, just as eagles or carrions feed upon flesh; so those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and truth will be found where the food is (see also Luke 12:37; Rev. 3:20).

Verses 29-31 seem to refer to the tribulation of God's people during the dark days of Papal persecution and martyrdom foretold by Daniel 7:25. This great desolating power received its deadly wound by Napoleon. Its power to "tread down the saints" was broken in 1799. There have been the literal demonstrations, in the literal heavens in the notable dark days of 19th May, 1780 (sun darkened), and in the wonderful showers of falling stars of 13th

November, 1833, as though to draw attention to the more important fulfilment of this prophecy in the fact that the Gospel light has been darkened by false teachings, such as Evolution, Higher Criticism, etc., and that the clear shining of the writings of the apostles, the twelve stars, has been beclouded by destructive heresies. Then the powers of the heavens (the religious systems) shall be shaken. There has been a general disintegrating process at work throughout Christendom. When we see such processes at work, we may take that as a sign of His presence. This is in line with our Lord's parable, "Let both (wheat and tares) grow together until the harvest" (the end of the Age), when He would send His messengers to gather the tares in bundles to burn them, and to garner the wheat. The trumpet would refer to the proclamation of truth by which the separation would take place. Then will come the great time of trouble, "all the tribes of earth shall mourn."

Verses 32-35 give another sign, this one on earth. The separating of the wheat from the tares is a work in the "heavens," the religious world. The sign of the fig tree budding is of the earth, and refers to the nation of Israel, which has come into Divine favour; surely Israel's hopes are budding again. When we see all these things, know that it is near. That is, the generation seeing all these signs of Christ's presence shall not pass until the great trouble has occurred, and the Kingdom of righteousness and peace has been established.

Verses 36-39. These verses clearly indicate that just as Noah was a preacher of righteousness for 120 years before the Flood, so Christ would be present for some time before the great calamity which is to destroy the world systems of this evil day. Noah preached and warned, but they went on with their own selfish pursuits, regardless of the message. They "knew not."

2 Pet. 3:3-7, 10, 12, 13 foretell similar conditions; and are not these conditions with us today? Luke 17:26-30 also mentions the conditions in Sodom and Gomorrah, and they also refused the message in the days of Lot, and both Matthew and Luke state that "as it was in the days of Noah" and "in the days of Lot," so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man. Thus the Scriptures clearly declare that Christ would be present for some time prior to the great calamity, although only the watchers would know of His presence. All others, as in the time of Noah and Lot, are not to know.

It is important thing is to watch, for no one should know the day nor the hour of the Lord's arrival, nor of the actual time when the great time of trouble will overwhelm the world.

The Lord did not inform the disciples so that the Church might fix dates for future events. In answer to the query, "when shall these things be?" He simply has given the signs of His presence and told us to -watch," so that we may

discern His presence when He has come. Then we may enter the feast of spiritual things which He has promised to His waiting people, and will be one by one called away to be with the Lord “in the air.”

Before He will set up His Kingdom He will gather His elect from the four winds of heaven. Then the saints are to share the glorious work of that Kingdom of peace. Satan, however, must first be bound, and the Church are to have something to do in thin connection, for the promise is, “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” Then, the time of trouble over, the Prince of Peace shall reign from shore to shore, and the prayer will be answered, “Thy Kingdom come: Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” (Rev. 21:1-4.)

Following this highly figurative statement of prophecy in answer to the disciple’s question respecting His second presence, the Lord gives three illustrative parables which indicate progressive conditions and work that will occupy Him on His return.

The “Ten Virgins” parable , shows the proper attitude of the watching Christians and how some will fail.

The Parable of the —Talents” shows how the Lord will have a work to do among Christians, in winding up the affairs of the Gospel Age, completing the number of God’s elect.

The Parable of “The Sheep and the Goats” then follows, showing the work of the Kingdom Age, when the Church, with Christ, are to judge the world during that thousand years’ reign (1 Cor. 6:2). Matt. 25:31 very distinctly informs us that the parable is applicable to that time. “Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate one from another.”

For nearly 1900 years God has been judging and selecting the Church, for the “High calling in Christ Jesus.” During that thousand years’ reign of Christ the whole world will have the advantage of the judgments of the Lord, and Isaiah 26:9 states that “when Thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Psalm 22:27, 28.)

Those rightly exercised by the favourable conditions of that time of blessing (Psalm 72; Isaiah 35) will develop hearts of love and care for their fellows, but others of the goat nature will not respond, but will think only of their own selfish ease and pleasure.

The righteous do kindness by nature without thinking of it, the unrighteous never think of doing kindness that will involve any cost or sacrifice. Eternal life is only designed for such as become righteous, such as are restored to “the image and likeness of God,” lost by the first Adam, but restored to all the willing and obedient by the Second Adam. Time and space would fail to tell of the blessings of that glorious Kingdom of Christ. No wonder the angels sang “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill towards men,” and said, “Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”

The righteous receive eternal life and enter into the Kingdom “prepared for them from the foundation of the world”—Paradise—the earthly home. The wicked will be cut off for ever. They have been redeemed from the Adamic sentence of death by the Cross of Christ, but will again incur the death penalty—the second death from which there is no redemption. It will be an everlasting punishment. The Greek word signifies a “cutting off” as a branch is lopped off a tree. There is no life for humanity apart from Christ, who, “by the grace of God tasted death for every man.” (Concluded.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Brethren in Melbourne wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) from Friday, 25th December, to Monday, 28th December, with further meetings on New Year’s Day. These gatherings will be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and an invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these assemblies in the Lord’s name. Further information may be obtained from the secretary — Mr. J. B. Hiam. 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E. 12, Victoria.

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The Life of Jesus.

THE more we think of it the more marvellous it seems that the Gospel narratives record so many particulars of our dear Redeemer's ministry — miracles, teachings, etc. — yet never once descend to the discussion of commonplace events, nor of our Lord's sayings or doings other than those directly connected with His ministry. This is one of the strongest internal evidences that these books were written under divine supervision. Experience with the writings of men in all ages will assure all that it would be almost impossible for four men to write biographies of one person, such as these four Gospels are, without entering into social features and events. Our Lord's mother is barely mentioned, and this only where her life touched particularly with that of Jesus. Her husband, Joseph, was probably dead at the time our Lord's ministry began, yet no mention is made of this fact either.

Respecting our Lord's life, previous to His consecration at thirty years of age, we know scarcely anything. The four Gospels merely bring to our attention His miraculous birth, Herod's, jealous fury, and the escape of the child before the massacre of the innocents, followed by the incident which occurred in His twelfth year, and the declaration that He increased in wisdom and stature and favour with God and man. How brief the record, yet how suggestive! It would have been no part of the Gospel to have explained the details of His life as a boy, as a young man, etc. It might, indeed, have satisfied the curiosity of some to have told us whether He was a farmer or a fisherman or a carpenter, matters about which people seem inclined to dispute. Undoubtedly the Lord's way in this matter was the better one. Our minds are more drawn to the important features of the Lord's work by reason of the brevity of the sketch given us of His earthly life and interest.

The important thing for us to know is simply stated, namely that He was the beginning of the creation of God—the first born of every creature; that in His pre-existent condition He had glory with the Father before the world was, and was the Father's instrument in the creation of angels, principalities and powers and men, everything that was made (John 1) . The necessary particulars are also given us respecting the transference of this great spirit being to earthly human conditions—that He might become man and redeem man, the world; that He might be born under the Law and thus redeem those who were under the Law, the Jews. Let us then thank God heartily for the simplicity of the narrative, and for the fact that no item necessary for our comfort and peace and joy has been omitted therefrom, and that no needless items pertaining merely to earthly things have been permitted to intrude themselves and thus to dim in any measure the glorious record of the great love wherewith the Father loved us and the great redemption effected thereby.

We see that the boy Jesus, although miraculously begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but by the holy spirit, was permitted to grow after the ordinary manner, gradually getting stronger physically and mentally, being filled more and more with wisdom, and giving evidence that God's favour was upon Him. Quite probably Joseph; His foster father, was a carpenter, and if so, the boy Jesus unquestionably, like other boys, would have more or less association in the carpenter shop, its tools, etc. It has been wondered by some that our Lord never referred to carpenter tools or work in any of His teachings or parables, and this has been urged as an objection to the thought the He was reared in contact with such work and tools. It matters not so far as we can see. Our Lord addressed, not classes, but the masses; and quite probably the majority of the people at the time knew little about the carpenter's trade, tools, etc., even less than in our day. Hence, it was not necessary or appropriate that our Lord should use as figures and parables that which would not be common to the experience of all or nearly all of His hearers.

In Luke 2:41 Joseph is evidently referred to as one of His parents. This is not in conflict, however, with the previous statements of the same writer, to the effect that Jesus was begotten, not by Joseph, but by the holy spirit (Luke 1:30-35)

We would consider it proper enough to-day that any child should speak of his foster father or stepfather as father without explaining the particulars of the relationship, and likewise it would be proper for the friends to speak of both father and mother as the parents of the child, as in this verse under consideration, and previous verses (verse 27).

The narrative passes over the twelve years of Jesus' earthly life to tell us of the incident of His tarrying behind after having been with His parents at the Passover Feast. The religious Jews from all parts of the country went to Jerusalem upon these feast occasions according to the direction of the Law, and naturally close relatives travelled in each other's company. Thus it was that in the large concourse returning from Jerusalem after the feast a whole day elapsed before the boy Jesus was missed by those who properly had guardianship over Him. Although admonished by the angel Gabriel that Jesus would in due time be greatly honoured of God, and that He was born differently from others of the human family, nevertheless neither Mary nor Joseph seemed to have caught any considerable view of the greatness of the one whom they called their son Jesus. The prophecies spoken respecting Him, like all the prophecies of olden times, were more or less vague, and could not be comprehended except by the aid of the holy spirit, which had not yet been given. His mother, Mary, however, we are told, kept all these things pondering in her heart, wondering what would be the consummation—little dreaming, we may be sure, how great her son must ultimately be made, according to the divine arrangement.

The story of the boy of twelve amongst the Doctors of the Law, discussing the various types of the Law, what these probably signified, and what would be expected to be their antitypes, furnish us a very interesting picture, especially when we remember that the one who was asking the questions was the one who ultimately would give correct answers to those questions in His own experiences. We are not to assume that this precocious boy of twelve was unduly bold or forward: we are not to presume that He undertook to teach the Doctors of the Law. He was not yet anointed to preach, and was, therefore, not yet qualified. The narrative is that He was found hearing the doctors and asking them questions, and not attempting to teach them. There is a good suggestion here—especially for such as are not permitted to teach, by reason of sex or insufficient years—namely, that even a child can ask questions, and in asking may suggest wonderful and powerful answers.

We may reasonably assume that Jesus had previously, after the manner of the Jewish boys, attended the synagogue worship at His home, and that hearing there the Law and the prophets, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, read Sabbath after Sabbath, and having a perfect memory and an active mind, because not blemished by sin and the fall, the various questions of the Law and the various declarations of the prophets would greatly interest Him—especially as He realised that He had left the Father and had come into the world to do a redemptive work.

The Doctors of the Law doubtless remarked that they had never had such pointed questions asked them respecting the Law and the prophets, even by wise men of their day and by each other; hence they evidently noticed the precocity of this boy. As He asked questions, which apparently showed that some of their interpretations were faulty and inconsistent, they in turn considered it not beneath themselves to ply the boy with questions, and according to verse 47 of this same chapter 2 of Luke, they got their questions answered in such a manner as amazed them. Nevertheless, we are to remember that our Lord Jesus could not Himself have understood the full meaning of the Law shadows and the prophecies at that time—nor until after His anointing with the holy spirit (1 Cor. 2:14). This little item gives us a suggestion respecting the ability of mind that would belong to a perfect boy. It gives us a suggestion respecting what we may expect of the ancient worthies, also the world of mankind, when they shall be resurrected and brought to human perfection.

It was natural enough that after missing the boy for four days His mother should upbraid Him somewhat, and, taking Jesus' answer in its simplicity, we must suppose that He had been so absorbed with the opportunities and studies that the time had passed without him appreciating the trouble and inconvenience He was causing to others.

“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?” must have seemed strange enough even from so remarkable a boy. His parents did not fully comprehend the meaning of the words, but Mary set these apart with the other peculiar things to treasure up, hoping ultimately to see something that would fully justify the words, as she did afterwards see. After making this protest, respecting His desire to be engaged in the Heavenly Father's mission, studying His Word and teachings, and realising that His sentiments were not understood or appreciated, and that really He was still properly under subjection to His parents, Jesus said no more, but quietly went with them to Nazareth and doubtless to His accustomed vocation.

Our Lord could not begin His ministry because He was under the Law and bound by its every restriction. We note, however, His promptness to engage in His Heavenly Father's business at the very earliest moment, as we read, “Now when Jesus began to be about thirty years of age He came to Jordan to be baptized.” We who are not under the restraints of the Law Covenant but, on the contrary, are under grace, are not thus limited as to the time we may present our bodies living sacrifices upon the Lord's altar to be used in His service; hence we rejoice the more if we can find

that at an early date we can give our hearts and our all to Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

It was not the babe of Bethlehem that was to bless the world, nor the boy of Nazareth, nor the young man of Capernaum, but it was to be a full grown man, a mature one, whose sacrifice would offset the sin of Adam, redeem him and his posterity and satisfy the demands of divine justice against the condemned race. So, then, while interested in everything pertaining to the divine character and plan, while interested to know how Jesus grew in stature and in wisdom, as He approached the maturity of manhood at thirty years, while interested to know about His miraculous birth, our chief interest in all these things is that they establish our faith in Him as the man Christ Jesus—that He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and, therefore, able to make the atonement sacrifice—to give His own life a ransom, a corresponding price for the life of Adam, and thus for the life of the whole race of Adam, in his loins at the time of his transgression and thus sharers with him in his condemnation.

We do well, therefore, to dwell less upon the birth and infancy of Jesus and more and more to grasp the precious themes set before us in the Gospel, of which the cross is the great point or centre of interest. Similarly we regard all the followers of the Lord—not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. True, it is good to know of some that even before their consecration and baptism of the spirit were noble minded, virtuous and irreproachable, and there is a measure of regret when we hear of some who had a contrary disposition to this; nevertheless, our interest centres around the fact that they did turn from sin, did become the Lord's followers and that they have been begotten of His holy spirit. In this we rejoice. Thus we know each other according to the spirit as New Creatures in the Lord, and thus we know our Lord as the New Creature, as the Apostle suggests, "Though we have known

Christ after the flesh, henceforth, know we Him so no more." Our special interest centres in our Lord from the moment of His anointing of the spirit until He completed the work there begun three and one-half years later on the cross, crying, "It is finished." Our interest still holds beyond that point in the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and the evidence given us that the begetting of the spirit at His baptism became the birth of the spirit at His resurrection, and that He was thus the first born from the dead, born of the spirit to spirit conditions. Then our hope is to follow in His steps and thus realise the promise that if we suffer with Him we shall also be glorified together and share His kingdom and His nature in glory.

Baptism Service in Melbourne.

A Baptism Service in Melbourne has been arranged for Saturday afternoon, December 12th (D.V.) and any friends desiring to symbolize their consecration to the Lord are invited to contact the office of the Institute as soon as possible.

Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper."

The articles on "Christ's Return" which appeared in the last four issues of "Peoples Paper" are being produced in booklet form, as there has been favorable comment on the thoughts presented. Thinking all our readers would be glad of the assembled articles, this booklet is to take the place of January's issue of the "Peoples Paper" and will be posted out to all subscribers with this issue. Friends on the free list may also receive a copy of this booklet on application. Extra copies of the booklet may be procured at each, post paid.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue

Kingdom Parables.

MANY of us in the past have overlooked the fact that nearly all of the teachings of the Redeemer appertain to the Kingdom—His Messianic Kingdom. Some of us indeed had gotten the unscriptural thought that Messiah's Kingdom would consist merely of a sovereignty in the hearts of His followers -and in the present life.

Now we see the real import and connection of the Great Teacher's numerous utterances on this subject. As He taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," He meant that we should have in mind God's glorious promise that eventually, through Messiah's Kingdom, ignorance, sin and death will all be overthrown, and the willing and obedient of mankind will be released from these until "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" to the glory of God.

Our Lord meant that we should connect this Kingdom with the great promise made to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The Master's teachings and the Message which He commissioned us to give in His name is the Gospel of the Kingdom—the Message of coming glory, and the Message that now God is selecting a "little flock" to be the spiritual Seed of Abraham, joint-heirs with Jesus in the Throne of that Kingdom. Paul refers to this in Galatians 3:29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise."

A number of Jesus' parables refer to the Kingdom class of the present time rather than to the Kingdom in its fully developed state during the thousand years of His glory. All of God's consecrated people, begotten of the holy spirit during this Age—since Pentecost—constitute together the Kingdom class, the Kingdom in embryo—unfinished, undeveloped, incomplete. Some of these embryo members of the Kingdom may yet fail to make their calling and election sure, and they may become "castaways" as respects the glory and honour to which they have been called.

In Mark 4:26-29 we have the illustration that God's Kingdom in its present embryotic condition is of slow, gradual, methodical development, covering the entire period of this Gospel Age. It is like seed cast into the ground, which brings its maturity after many days and varied experiences—when it is finally harvested. Jesus and the Apostles did the seed sowing, not only for their own day but for the whole wheat class developed throughout this Age. And as Jesus explained in another parable, "The Harvest is the end of the Age." The gathering for the heavenly garner will be accomplished by the First Resurrection.

Like A Mustard Seed.—Mark 4:30-32.

The different parables do not view the embryo Kingdom from the same standpoint. It is because it may be viewed from such a variety of angles that so many parables are given to us. Just so we might take various photographs of a building. One might show the eastern side, another the western, another the front elevation, another the floor-plan, and another show it with its scaffolding. Or; if a concrete building, the frame work might be pictured, inside of which the concrete is cast.

The parable of the mustard seed appears to represent the Kingdom from the viewpoint of the world -- as the nominal church, developed from the original little seed of the true Gospel. From that little seed we have a great institution to-day with many denominational branches. But alas! its thrifty development has invited into its branches the fowls of the air, which the Lord elsewhere describes as representing the Wicked One and his angels—Satan and his representatives—who of course should have no place in the Church; and they would have no place in it if the Church were loyal and zealous enough to proclaim only the true Gospel and the narrow way of self-denial.

Indeed, it is the neglect to preach this Gospel of the "narrow way" that has brought such prosperity to nominal Christianity and made it a desirable place for the fowls of the air—Satan and his deluded ones—to lodge in its branches, to be the real life of Ecclesiasticism. "This seems to be the same picture which the same Great Teacher gives us in Revelation 18:2. There we read that the nominal systems are represented symbolically as Babylon; and there we read, "She hath become the hold of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

The word "cage" would seem to imply that these unclean birds are considered very desirable and are held on to by nominal Christianity—probably because regarded as being amongst their best paying members and because of having the most attractions.

The Parable - Of The Leaven.—Matt. 13:33.

Throughout the Scriptures leaven is used as the symbol of sin. Thus when Jesus in His purity was to be symbolized as the “bread from heaven,” the Jews were directed to use unleavened bread. Again, at their annual Passover season, the Jews were directed to cleanse their houses of leaven, to burn it up, to destroy it. Here again leaven was a symbol of sin, corruption. St. Paul, commenting on this, writes to the Church, “Purge out, therefore, the old leaven [sin, malice, hatred, strife, etc.] , that you may be a new lump”—that you may be, with Christ, the one unleavened loaf. It is of this Loaf that he declares, “For we, being many, are One Loaf, and one Body; for we are all partakers of that One Loaf.”--1 Cor. 10:1 7.

It is true that in one of the official sacrifices bread was to be baked with leaven; but this, we believe, was for the very purpose of symbolizing or representing us, the Church, and the fact that we were by nature sinners, children of wrath, even as others, and that the baking would arrest the corrupting influences of the leaven, and this baking represented symbolically the experiences through which the Church must pass in order that sinful and corrupting tendencies might be completely destroyed in us.

In this parable our Lord represents a woman mixing leaven with a family baking of meal, with the result that the whole mass was leavened. Consequently, if any of the family desired pure, unleavened bread, it would be unobtainable, because the leaven pervaded the entire baking. What does this represent? We reply that in Scriptural symbolism a woman represents an ecclesiastical system. The woman in the parable represents a system organized and in power at an early date, and possessed of the pure meal—the pure food provided by the Lord for the household of faith.

The woman mixed leaven, error, false doctrine, with all the meal, with all the food supplied. Not a particle of it was left uncontaminated. The result has been indigestion. The Word of God, originally pure, is no longer accepted. The leaven, or fermentation, has spread so that to-day the entire mass of theological doctrine is putrid and offensive to all Christian people of all denominations.

The parable was a prophecy of what has occurred. It is time all true Christians were hearkening back from the creeds of the Dark Ages to the Words of Jesus, the Apostles and the Prophets, to the teachings of the Bible, as being the unadulterated Word of God, which alone “is able to make us wise unto salvation,” and by which alone “the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work.”-2 Tim. 3:15-17.

Lord, Teach Us to Pray.

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”—Luke 11:9.

WHY did the disciples ask the Lord to teach them how to pray? Were not the Jews a praying people, and were not the prayers of the righteous acceptable to God from the beginning or the world? Yes, the Jews were a praying people, and their prayers, when devout and sincere, and in harmony with the expressed will of God, were acceptable, and were answered. So also were the prayers of others before the Jewish age began. Adam communed with God in Eden until sin separated him from God, and he was cast out of Paradise. After he had sinned, he heard and promptly recognised the voice of God as he and Eve walked in the cool of the day. They feared the voice then because they had sinned, but their prompt recognition of it indicated that it was familiar to them, and that often before they delighted to hear it.

The first act of God's mercy, after the penalty had been pronounced, and the promise had been given of a coming deliverer—“the seed of the woman”—was to clothe each of the penitent pair with a garment of skins, provided by a sacrifice, which prefigured the sacrificed “lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” We confidently say the penitent pair, because had they been rebellious and defiant, instead of penitent, God could not have dealt thus mercifully and kindly with them. He would not have forced them to wear the typical robe, nor have rewarded them with the hope of a future deliverance. Evidently they still had faith in God, and repented that they had hearkened to the voice of the tempter, and forfeited the divine favour by disobedience, and they were anxious to find some way of return to that favour, since God, in His mercy, had given them a ray of hope which lifted them out of the slough of despair, and they desired, if possible, to have some recognition, some way of access to God, to reassure their hearts from time to time that they were not cast off for ever. Such reassurance of hope for the race was given in the institution of the typical sacrifices, which began in the clothing of Adam and Eve in the skin of the sacrificed animal, the robe thus provided typifying the imputed righteousness of the sacrificed Lamb of God, Christ Jesus.

So we find those descendants of Adam who had respect to the will and promise of God offering to God acceptable, typical sacrifices in harmony with His arrangement, thereby expressing both their faith in the promise and their desire for full harmony and communion. Thus Abel and Seth and all the godly ancients sacrificed, and through these typical sacrifices they approached God, they walked with God, and had the evidence in their own hearts that they pleased God; as it is written —“By faith Abel offered .. sacrifice .. by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. By faith, Enoch . . . before his translation, had this testimony, that he pleased God. By faith, Noah .. became heir of the righteousness, which is by faith.”—Heb. 11:5-8.

Thus there was a typical justification and way of access to God open to faithful individuals long before the law of Moses instituted the typical national sacrifices, which brought that people, as a nation, near to God, and secured a measure of His temporal favour to them, which, in turn, were also typical of the greater favours to come by and by, when the typical sacrifices should give place to the antitypical sacrifice, the real sin-offering which takes away the sin of the world, which the blood of bulls and goats could only prefigure, but could never accomplish.

With the typical adoption by God of Abraham's family and the institution by the law of Moses of the typical national sacrifices, the privilege of approach to God through these, and of communion with Him, was systematically taught by the law and the prophets., Consequently, in the nation of Israel we have multiplied instances of earnest and believing prayer; and instances, too, thank God, of the gracious hearing and answering of their prayers. And not only so, but some of the believing Gentiles, seeing what God had wrought in Israel, believed on Him, and also caught the spirit of prayer, and though unjustified even typically by the typical sacrifices, their prayers were heard, and God kept them in remembrance until the time appointed for His favour to turn to the Gentiles.

Of this class were Cornelius and his friends (Acts 10) . Of Cornelius it is said that he was a “devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.” And when the time arrived, when, consistently with His plan, God could answer the prayers of Cornelius, He did so, saying, “Cornelius . . . thy prayers and thine alms are coming up for a memorial before God”; and shortly after the great blessing came in abundant measure. Praise the Lord! “A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench.” Wherever there is a humble, contrite, faithful heart, God's love takes cognisance of it, and in His own good time and way confers His blessing. If their prayers cannot be immediately answered, they are not forgotten, but are kept as memorials until the right time comes for their answer.

Therefore, it was not because the disciples had never been taught to pray to God that they inquired of Jesus as to the acceptable way; but, perceiving His intimate communion with God, and that God always promptly heard and answered Him, they evidently felt that there must be something in His manner of approach to God which secured such prompt recognition and answers, and they would know the secret of His power. The secret of His power with God was in the

fact of His full and complete harmony with the will of God, and this likewise is the secret of power among all of God's people. True, we, being imperfect, cannot say as He did, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29); but, realising our imperfection, we can come with humble confessions of our shortcomings, and with faith in His love and mercy to be exercised toward us in His own appointed way. And then we are acceptable in the beloved One.

Jesus taught us how to pray, by a simple illustration which shows (1) the proper reverential attitude of the believer towards God—"Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name"; (2) a full acquiescence in, and perfect accord with, the Will of God for the blessing of the whole world through the coming Kingdom of Christ, which is also a recognition of the preparatory redemption work by His sacrificial death--"Thy Kingdom come"; (3) the earnest desire that the Will of God may be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven; (4) an expression of our dependence upon God for the supply of our daily needs, with an acknowledgment that we do not need luxuries, but will be content with the "bread and water" assured through the Prophet. This may also be considered a petition for the bread of life for our spiritual sustenance—"Give us this day our daily bread"; (5) request for forgiveness of sins in His own appointed way (through Christ) , at the same time impressing upon ourselves the necessity for exercising toward others the same spirit of forgiveness, and stating that we have thus forgiven all our debtors--"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy"; (6) earnest desire for His assistance in the hour of temptation or trial, that we may not be overcome by it, and thus led to sin, and thus brought under the power of the evil one—"Abandon us not in temptation (or trial)", but deliver us from evil." This implies a determination to resist sin, as well as a leaning upon God for assistance. Such must be the attitude of the soul in every approach toward God in prayer.

Verses 5-13 in Luke 11 are blessed assurances of our Heavenly Father's love and solicitude for us, which should fill our hearts with the deepest gratitude and responsive love, and which should strengthen our faith and our earnest desire to come often to His footstool and tarry long in His presence, assured that if we come in the frame of mind indicated by our blessed Lord we shall never be turned away empty; "for everyone that asketh (thus) receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." And the thing received will be neither harmful nor useless. It will not be a stone for bread, nor a serpent for a fish, nor a scorpion for an egg, but it will be something good and wholesome, for the Lord "knows how to give good gifts unto his children." Christian, we need not tell you this; you have proved it well. And yet—praise the Lord! — we have not exhausted His bountiful grace. —Still there's more to follow." "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"; "ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." The thing we need most, for which our Father is most pleased to have us seek and pray, is the spirit of His holiness. "If ye . . . give gifts unto your children, how much more shall he give the holy spirit to them that ask him."—Verse 13.

Members Finish the Earthly Way.

In recent weeks four of our Australian friends I have finished the Christian way after having appreciated the truths of God's Word for a considerable time and rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. The following reports are to hand from Adelaide and Perth.

During the month of October two Sisters—Sister Sanders and Sister Attard, both of Adelaide —reached the end of the earthly way.

Sister Sanders, who was elderly, was one who had learned to love the Lord and His truth many years ago; and during a long lifetime held firmly to the precious truths of His Word. Sister Sanders was a strong and rugged character and gave evidence of much faith, patience, and trust in the Lord, and in the outworking of His Plan.

Sister Attard also was one who had a strong faith in the Lord, and trusted Him fully during a long life. Sister Attard gave evidence of much Christian grace in the way she bore the discomfort of her ill-health during many years.

It is good to realise that “the Lord knoweth those who are His,” and during this time of His presence—”the days of the Son of man”—’He is gathering His elect, and calling them Home when the work of preparation is complete. Soon the number of the elect will be completed, the Church glorified in the First Resurrection, and the work of blessing all the nations will begin. “Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.”

From Perth the following has been received respecting the passing on of Sister Neville of that city:—On the 16th of October we had the little service in laying aside the earthly remains of our Sister Neville. We think of the words of our Lord to Mary when she was showing her love and appreciation of all He had done for her, when she broke the precious ointment and washed His feet with her tears. He said, “She hath done what she could,” and we feel this could be said of Sister Neville.

After a long illness the end came somewhat suddenly. Sister Neville used to come with Brother Neville to spend an evening with us about once a week, and we talked of the things that concern our wonderful hope in Christ and the blessing that will come to the “groaning creation” when the Messianic Body is complete. (Rom. 8:19-22.) Sister had known the truth for many years and was strong in faith and full of zeal to tell the glad tidings to others. With Brother Neville, Sister did some colporteur work while health permitted, but this was interrupted by failing strength. The zeal was still there, and we feel that it can be said—”She did what she could.” We loved to have the little talks for Sister was so earnest and the truth seemed everything to her.

The service at the undertakers was a simple reminder of our hope whereby we sorrow not as do those who are without hope. We are living in the time referred to in Rev. 14:13, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth . . . they rest from their labour, and their works do follow them,” and as 1 Cor. 15:51, 52 states, there is no need for these to sleep in death, waiting for the second presence of Christ, but they are “changed in a moment,” and caught away to be with the Lord. The passage in 1 Cor. 15:35-58 was read.

What a wonderful experience it must be to close one's eyes to this suffering world and be awakened in the likeness of Christ, to see Him not in human form, as He was, but “as He is,” in the express image of the Father. (1 John 3:1, 2; Heb. 1:3.) So we rest the life of our dear Sister in the Lord, in the sure hope, which was her hope; and we are “persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day.”

Word was received also of the passing on of Sister Burridge of Wallerawang, N.S.W., in October last. Our Sister Burridge had rejoiced in the truth for over thirty years, and had been in regular correspondence with us in Melbourne; she manifested much love and zeal for the Lord and His truth, and assisted in the work as she had opportunity.

While Sister Burridge was known personally to very few of the brethren, being isolated in the country except for brief periods at some of the Memorial seasons in Sydney, she was no doubt with us all in spirit and truth throughout the years of her earthly pilgrimage.

A distressing complaint over recent months revealed the great patience and unselfishness of our dear Sister to the last, and this was a good witness for the Lord and His truth to a relative who cared for her so well till the end came.

We trust for our dear Sister Burridge the abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom, by the Lord's grace.

Correspondence.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I received the papers last week and was pleased to receive same. I am a keen listener to your Dialogues; I feel your Talks are so true and face up to the issue word for word. You say every one is to be resurrected; this seems to answer many Scriptures for me.

I have had a lot to do with the J.W., lately, but I find I cannot agree with many of their teachings; they have many people already in the Second Death; though I believe many are trying to serve the Lord faithfully they seem to be trying to earn a reward, and are apt to forget the love of the Lord and the love of Jesus by His sufferings and death for us all. I mention this, because one night I said that I thought there was to be a resurrection for all, and the reply was that if this was so, why worry now. These were my thoughts, too, when I first heard- you on the air, but now I believe man should serve God for love of Him and when we read His Word that He gave His, Son to die for us, well, we do have this love, or the beginning of a true love. This is one of the reasons why I like to hear your Dialogues on Sundays from 2KY; they have this message of love and faith in Jesus Christ.

Would you please send some reading matter to —and would you send me two of each of “God’s Plan in Brief” and “God and Reason,” and four of your last Dialogues. In closing may I ask in Jesus’ name for God’s guidance and blessing for us all. Please use enclosed money. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—It is some time since I received “The Divine Plan of the Ages.” As usual, it more than fulfilled any expectations I had; I read and reread it, hoping to remember all that is necessary. Will you send the next book; I feel I am ready for it. I have placed seven books—’God’s Plan in Brief’—and I am now waiting for the various opinions. One friend would like your explanation of 1 Pet. 3:19. I am interested too. I often have Phil. 1:21, 23 quoted in support of the immortality of the soul; I must admit I am puzzled.

I would like “Hope Beyond the Grave” also recent Sunday broadcasts; I heard last Sunday’s and did enjoy it, and found it very enlightening. Enclosing money; anything over please add to broadcast fund. Yours in faith and hope.

(Literature explaining 1 Pet. 3:19 and Phil. 1:21, 23 is gladly supplied free to all seeking the understanding of these Scriptures.—B.B. Institute.)

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Your radio session 3GL Sunday is a very effective way of introducing people to the Bible. Will you favour me with a free copy of your pamphlet “Hope Beyond the Grave,” also any other free literature showing men to be mortal from the Scriptures. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Your Sunday broadcasts are much appreciated by our family and friends. On their behalf I thank you for your excellent work. I forward herewith my cheque as a small contribution for the continuance of your work. I should be glad if you would let me have, for distribution among friends, copies of your last six broadcasts and “The Manner of Christ’s Return.” Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Would you please forward me the Biblical Dialogue for last Sunday, also previous ones, “God’s Plan,” and any literature you may have available.

I often wonder if one part of the Lord’s prayer has been misunderstood, viz., “And lead us not into temptation,” so would like an explanation of it please. I think the Dialogues most enlightening. Wishing you both God’s blessing. Yours sincerely.

(A better translation of Matt. 6:13 reads—”And abandon us not to trial, but preserve us from evil,” [Emphatic Diaglott], and no doubt gives the correct thought.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Frank and Ernest—Your Sunday morning talks on 2KY are very well received here now and I enjoy listening. I think the talk you gave yesterday week is one I would like to have a copy of; it was about the resurrection of the dead, and most interesting.

Your version of the Scripture on that particular subject brought me comfort when by daughter, who had not openly acknowledged Jesus as her Saviour, was “cut off” in a motor accident; it seemed so much more consistent of a God of love. I should like to pass it on to someone who may have a similar experience. Enclosed 10/- cost of magazine you send along so regularly. God bless you both. In His name.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Will you please send me a copy of the discussion, “Why Does God Permit Evil?” and

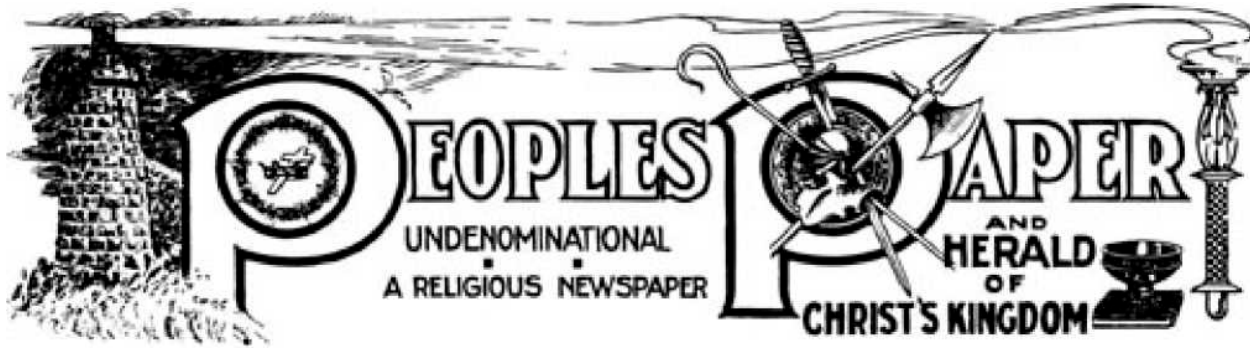
also a copy if you have it, or a book, explaining the Sabbath Day, as I would like to understand the real meaning of it. Please let me know if I have to send any money. I listen with deep interest to your discussions of a Sunday morning. Yours sincerely.

(The booklet “What is the Christian’s Sabbath” is supplied free to all desiring an explanation’ of this subject.—B.B. Institute.)

Papers are available free on the following subjects :— “Does the Bible Teach Divine Healing for To-day?” “The Risen Christ—Will He Appear as a Man at His

Second Advent ?”

“Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon ?—Will Australia Be Involved?”



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What Shall I Render?

(Psa. 116:12-14. Address—Contributed.)

Spiritual Israel these words have a much fuller meaning than they would have to the Psalmist. Nevertheless, we think the prophet David had to a large extent grasped the proper thought as to the sentiment of the words. The Psalms of David show us that he had a very appreciative heart, grateful for the-blessings that came to him from the Lord. Properly enough his heart cried out—'What shall I render unto the Lord?' —What return can I make for all His loving kindness?

David was aware of God's promise to Abraham: he knew that God had made definite promises to bless all the families of the earth, and that this blessing would come through the seed of Abraham. As a descendant of Abraham, David no doubt felt that he would be identified with the promise.

In proposing to "take the cup of salvation," the Psalmist probably had in mind that whatever experiences the Lord might consider necessary for him he would accept, for he hoped for a share in the salvation provided by God. He would continue to call upon the Lord that He might have such a share; he would pay his vows unto the Lord "in the presence of all the people." He had made solemn vows, and he would fulfil them—he would do this willingly, delighting to do the will of God.

To the Christian, however, all this has a much deeper significance. The church of this Gospel Age has much more reason to be grateful to God than had the Psalmist. We have experienced so much more of the Lord's favour than those of the Law dispensation. We have been given much clearer views of God's wonderful plan of salvation than was possible to those in previous ages.

The most that could be claimed under the Law Dispensation was the relationship of servants; but those with whom God is dealing during this present Gospel Age are called sons of God. Those favoured under the Law Covenant had only a typical cleansing from sin, but the church of this age have their sins really cleansed, forgiven, washed away through the merit of the cleansing blood of Christ. (1 John 1:7; Heb. 9:14.) Yes, surely, we have received so much from the Lord that should, and we are sure it does, call out our gratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. In reference to this quality of gratitude another has said—"In every truly noble heart gratitude is the responsive chord of kindness and love; and no harmony is sweeter or more inspiring to noble deeds and lofty purposes. God would have His children cultivate for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, all the graces of true nobility and moral excellence. It is therefore most fitting that we should note every deed of love and kindness toward us, and be careful to return- the gratitude and appreciation due. How often does love go unrequited because selfishness or thoughtlessness crowds out the noble instincts of the soul.

“While human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgement and praise! To Him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by His love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the wealth of our Father’s storehouse.

“We are the special objects of His grace; who of us cannot trace a long line of special providences on our behalf? Who of us as we take a mental retrospect of our lives cannot exclaim with the poet, ‘Looking back I praise the way, God has led me day by day.’

“How wonderfully the Lord has guided His people! His children have ever been His constant care. No good thing has He withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed Him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smile and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of His precious promises and His abiding faithfulness!

Surely, ‘not one thing, bath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you?’ (Joshua 23:14.) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives He has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining.”

“What, then, shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits?” Is it possible that we can render something to God? Yes, indeed, there is something we can each one do to show our appreciation of all the Lord has done for us. In Luke 17:11-19 we have recorded the incident of the cleansing of the ten lepers. There is something beautiful about the simplicity of these little stories of Jesus and the love He manifested. The Master was passing through Samaria and Galilee. At a certain village along the way there met Him ten men who were lepers. Perhaps there is no more loathsome and dreadful disease than leprosy, a fitting type of sin and its corrupting, contagious and consuming character. The, poor lepers had evidently heard of Jesus and His wonderful works of healing, and they had sufficient faith to cry to Him for mercy. When He saw them Jesus was moved with compassion and He said to them, Go, show yourselves unto the priests. As the ten hastened to comply with the Lord’s injunction they found that they were restored to normal conditions again. They were healed of their leprosy. One of them, finding he was healed, immediately turned back and gave thanks to God, prostrating himself before the Master, offering his heartfelt thanks to his deliverer. The other nine passed on to comply with the Lord’s words, to show themselves to the priests, not having a sufficiency of love, appreciation and thankfulness to return in their cleansed condition to, first of all, acknowledge the giver of the blessing they had received. Our Lord remarked on this and called attention also to the fact that the one who did return was a Samaritan, and not one of the Jewish household of faith; saying, “Where there none found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger?” And He said unto him, “Arise, go thy way; thy faith bath made thee whole.”

This little incident serves to illustrate conditions around us. We may find those who have suffered from the leprosy of sin, and who have appealed to Jesus for mercy and help, and who have been justified by faith—cleansed from their iniquities, covered with the righteousness of Christ—and yet amongst all these who have experienced such blessings and favours at our Lord’s hands, how few there are, comparatively, who return to Him and, prostrate themselves before Him, to offer thanks for release from the bondage of sin and condemnation, and lay themselves at His feet, living sacrifices — making a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, their reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1.)

This matter of rendering what we have to God is also illustrated in the parables of the Pounds and Talents. (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27.) The parable of the Talents seems to represent the natural ability of the Lord’s people—”to every man according to his several ability”—some one, some two, some five talents.

The parable of the Pounds ignores the individual abilities of the servants and shows them each as receiving the same thing and for the same purpose.

The Pound given to each servant seems very fittingly to represent the gift of justification by faith, available to each true believer. Then the Lord expects that we will put our pound to the banker, or in other words, to present our bodies a living sacrifice. Failure to use our pound in this way would result in our loss of it, because the justification by faith provided by our Lord is only a means to enable us to go on to consecration, following in the Master's steps.

When we make consecration we are stewards of all we possess—time, health, means, the knowledge of the truth, and more or less of ability to present it to others. These things would be represented by the talents of the parable.

We must use our talents if we would increase them. The Lord expected even the one talented man to make use of his talent. It will not do to allow it to be hidden or lost sight of by the things of earth. The Lord's words are—"to him that hath (used) shall be given and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not (used) shall be taken away even that which he hath."

What the Lord wants now is our full heart devotion to Him and to His Word. He is not asking for our service, however, unless we are willing first to give Him our heart. To the justified believer He says—"My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." (Prov. 23:26.) Like Cain, some of us may have been inclined to offer to God the fruits of our own doings. - There are some Christians who seem to glory in their wonderful works. They say, "Have we not prophesied in thy name . . . , and in thy name done many wonderful works. But the Lord says to them, I never knew you (I did not recognise you as my servants) ; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21. 23.)

We must stop and consider our course and we will find that it is not so much what we can 'do for the Lord, but rather what are we willing to allow the Lord to do for us? We must come to the point of full surrender. "Not my will but thine, O Lord, be done,--before we can work, before we can render acceptable service to God. Love for God must be the motive power. "The love of Christ constraineth us," says the Apostle, "because we thus judge, and if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live for themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:14, 15.) Truly, the Apostle says--Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price. (1 Cor. 6:19, 20.) So we come to that place where we are glad to "take the cup of salvation," rejoicing in Christ as our deliverer from sin and death, and also rejoicing to have a share in His sufferings now, that we may also share in the honour of His Kingdom in the future.

We will need also to "call upon the name of the Lord," for grace to help us to tread the narrow way. There are many lessons to be learned in the school of Christ, and we will each need the graces of the spirit in our hearts—meekness, gentleness, patience, faith, etc., as well as the Lord's promised grace to help in every time of need, to enable us to overcome.

In considering what we are to render to the Lord we need to keep before us that our consecration to God includes all that we have and are. God will not accept our offering unless it is a complete giving up of our all. We are to serve the Lord with all our heart, mind; soul and strength, and how we must watch against the encroachments of the world and the desires of the flesh. "The heart is deceitful above all things," says the prophet. (Jer. 17:9.) The tendencies of the natural heart, the old man are toward the human, earthly things, so we need the help of God's holy spirit to assist us to carry out our vow of consecration. (See Rom. 8:11.)

Along the Christian way we find we get some experiences that are joyful and happy, and again we have

other experiences of pain and sorrow; so there is need to have a good, strong faith in God, and to remember that He has promised to make all things work together for good to us, to fit us for His future service. So the Christians' main work now is the preparation of themselves in order to be fitted for a place in the heavenly kingdom. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (Thes. 4:3.)

The Apostle says we should "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, but especially unto the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10.) One way to do good to all men would be to try to get them to understand God's Word, and the grand plan of salvation revealed therein. We are to let our light shine out, striving to be good examples of the believers, in word, in conversation (manner of life), in faith and in purity. We are to let our light shine not only by our conduct but also by telling out the message of truth to all who have an ear to hear it. One good method of witnessing to the truth is by means of the printed page; the tracts can be handed out here and there to those we meet daily and often good is done in that way. Though results may not appear very great, we should not feel that there is nothing more to do in that direction. While pressing on in the narrow way and seeking to build each other up in our most holy faith, we want to do what we can to assist others around us to an understanding of the truths that have so refreshed our own hearts. Some one may say, but I seem to have so little ability to serve the truth; well, that may perhaps be so, but if we use our little talent, the Lord assures us that more will be given to us, whereas if we hide the talent and fail to make use of it, the opportunities of service, which might have been ours, will pass to someone else more zealous and appreciative. (See Matt. 25' 24-29.)

The question, then, What shall I render? is one that each Christian must ask and decide for himself and herself. It is not a question of What have I rendered? but, What shall I render? No matter whether we are young or old in years, or whether we have been serving the Lord a little time or a long time, there is always something that the children of God can do for others around them. We can help to bear each other's burdens. When the spirit of Christ is truly dwelling in the heart it will prompt to words and deeds of kindness and helpfulness. But to have the fulness of God's spirit we must earnestly co-operate with Him, watching unto prayer and seeking to check, subdue, and quench the spirit of self-will. Self must be yielded up; we must lose sight of selfish interest to be of that class who are "beheaded for the witness of Jesus." The battle with self-will seems to be the most difficult fight. Only by the assistance of the Lord's promised grace can we hope to overcome. Let us look earnestly to Him for the needed help.

To help us to render our all to God in loving, humble service, we need to cultivate the spirit of thankfulness. The unthankful, grumbling spirit is the very opposite to the spirit of Christ. Thankfulness will make every trial and sacrifice on our part seem small, and proportionately easy to be offered, and it will make all of God's mercies and favours toward us proportionately grand and great and inspiring.

Let us render our little all to God thankfully, gladly. After all, the most that the very best Christian may render is a very small return for all we have received from the Lord; and anyway, in every sacrifice and service for the Lord and His cause we are richly blessed even now. We find the Lord's words are true—It is more blessed to give than to receive.

My Morning Resolve.

My earliest thought I desire shall be—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"

I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord (for grace to help). I will pay my vows unto the Most High.—Psa. 116:12-14.

Remembering the Divine call "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Psa. 50:5), I resolve that by the Lord's assisting grace I will to-day, as a saint of God, fulfil my vows, continuing the work of sacrificing the flesh and its interests, that I may attain unto the heavenly inheritance in the joint-heirship with my Redeemer.

I will strive to be simple and sincere toward all.

I will seek not to please and honour self, but the Lord (God first).

I will be careful to honour the Lord with my lips, that my words may be unctuous and blessed to all.

I will seek to be faithful to the Lord, the Truth, the brethren, and all with whom I have to do, not only in great matters, but also in the little things of life.

Trusting myself to Divine care, and the Providential overruling of all my interests for my highest welfare, I will seek not only to be pure in heart, but to repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement.

I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit, because "Faith can firmly trust Him, come what may."

Passover Memorial, 1954.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Good Friday; after sundown on Friday evening, the 16th of April, will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by all true followers of the Master.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention is to be held again this year, commencing on Good Friday, 16th April, and continuing till Easter Monday evening. A hearty invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information will appear in later issues of "Peoples Paper," and may also be obtained from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

Used Postage Stamps.

Used postage stamps of all varieties can be sold to support the truth work. Friends willing to assist may forward all the Australian stamps they can procure, as well as other stamps, leaving at least a quarter of an inch of paper around the stamps; that is, do not remove stamps from the paper.

(Quite a number of friends have sent in used postage stamps; would all please accept sincere thanks for their efforts in this way.)

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Convention News.

THE four-day Annual Convention in Melbourne, arranged by the Berean Bible Class over the recent Christmas period, once again proved a most helpful and encouraging season of spiritual refreshment, for which thankfulness and praise are offered to our gracious Heavenly Father.

The average attendance throughout the gatherings was very good, and it was a great pleasure for the Melbourne friends to welcome visiting brethren from various parts of Australia, including Adelaide, Sydney and Queensland, all of whom contributed in good measure to make the Convention such an outstanding success.

Each day the gatherings commenced with praise and prayer to the Lord whose blessings were realised as essential and were experienced very fully by all who assembled in His name. Each day a Bible Study was held, the passages of Scripture examined being—.Heb. 10:19-25; Psa. 91:1-11; Luke 12:31-40 and Eph. 6:13-18.

In Hebrews 10 it was seen how clearly the Apostle Paul presented the great privilege of the heavenly calling to all who were favoured to become members in the priesthood of God, and how those thus called should encourage fellow members to "hold fast the profession of faith"; "provoking unto love and good works" and "assembling together" to accomplish these things in spirit and truth.

From Psalm 91 very helpful thoughts were gained of God's protecting care over all His dear people, especially those of the "David class" living at the end of the Gospel Age. Many of the snares and besetments of God's people were revealed from this Psalm, but also the counteracting protection and comfort of the Lord which more than compensates to all who have "made the Lord their refuge, even the Most High their habitation."

The passage in Luke 12 provided encouragement also for all who are "seeking first the kingdom of God," and brought to mind the additional blessedness during "the days of the Son of Man" in which we are living, showing the great necessity for watchfulness on the part of the Lord's disciples that they may be worthy "to sit down to meat" which the Lord is serving to those who hear His "knock" and who "open

unto Him immediately.” Consideration of Ephesians 6 was another profitable study, the “armour of God” being the full equipment necessary for all soldiers of the cross to come off conquerors against the deceptions of the great adversary and his associates. Each part of this armour was detailed in a helpful manner, showing how the Apostle was so fully used of God to present such a complete “covering” which, together with earnest prayer and supplication in the spirit would enable all the brethren to be -strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.”

Many helpful thoughts were gained from the addresses by the brethren on a variety of subjects, the titles of which were: “The New Heavens and the New Earth”; “Salted with Fire”; “Worth Knowing”; “God is Our Refuge”; “Adding to our Faith”; “We are not Wrestling against Flesh and Blood”; “The Prince of Peace, and His Message of Hope for To-day”; “The Lord’s Clear Guidance for Righteousness”; “The Anointing of the Holy Spirit” and “Christian Life and Doctrine.” It is hoped to present some of these addresses in the columns of the “Peoples Paper” from time to time, and brief outlines of each will be found in the Convention Notes mentioned in this issue of the “Paper.”

Three Fellowship Meetings consisted of praise and testimony and a hymn session, all of which were very enjoyable. The sentiments in some of the beautiful hymns were well expressed by a number of the friends, and the testimonies respecting the Lord’s providence and blessing, with thankfulness for the opportunity of attending the Convention gatherings and many other favours, all added to the benefits of the occasion. A Question Meeting also gave opportunity for thoughts on three- important and timely questions pertaining to doctrinal truth, a brief account of which also appears in the Convention Notes.

Messages of greetings were received from a number of Classes and brethren and were much appreciated, and the Convention message to be sent out to all dear friends everywhere, with the warm Christian love of all assembled at the gatherings, is found in Paul’s words in Hebrews 10:21-25. The usual Love Feast, during the singing of “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love,” and the parting hymn “God be with you,” with closing prayer of thankfulness and request for God’s blessing upon His people everywhere brought to conclusion a very profitable and refreshing Convention assembly.

Convention Notes.

Notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been compiled by one of our brethren, and copies are obtainable free from this office.

”He Shall Cover Thee with His Feathers.”

A very helpful incident was expressed during the study of Psalm 91 at the recent Christmas Convention in Melbourne, revealing the wonderful protection and care which our Heavenly Father exercises over His own people who dwell in the secret place of the Most High.

It was stated that after a bush fire had swept through a property where poultry was kept, what seemed like a black stump of a tree near the ground was in reality a charred hen. On disturbing the remains of the bird a number of chickens ran out unharmed — the mother bird had protected her little ones so well with the strong feathers in her wings, but had lost her own life in so doing.

Thus the Psalmist declared of all who abide under the shadow of the Almighty—”He shall cover thee with his feathers (pinions, strong wing feathers) , and under his wings shalt thou trust.” (Psa. 91:4.) Our Lord’s words at the close of His ministry, as He wept over Jerusalem at the time of Israel’s rejection of Him (Matt. 23:37), also illustrate this important and comforting lesson of God’s loving and powerful protection over all those who truly say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust.

Baptism Service.

It is always a joy to the Lord’s people when others enter into the Christian way, to walk in the steps of the Master, and the symbolizing of consecration by water baptism is an occasion for rejoicing also. Our Lord Himself took this symbol of water immersion to indicate His heart condition of yielding up His life on behalf of humanity; likewise, the Lord’s true followers also symbolize their consecration in this way to show their acceptance of the invitation to sacrifice with Christ—to be dead with Him, that they may also live with Him.

On the 12th of December last another of these happy occasions took place in Melbourne, when a visiting Sister gladly symbolized her consecration to God in the waters of baptism. Our Lord apparently knew that such a public confession or witness would assist His people in the pilgrim way to be “baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with,” and gain the victory by His grace and strength. We rejoice, then, with this member of the Lord’s family who recently demonstrated her heart’s desire to be dead with Christ, and with all who have likewise entered into the covenant of sacrifice in hope of the wonderful calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Anointing of the Holy Spirit.

“Christ in you the hope of glory.”—(Col. 1:27.)
(Convention Address)

THE Scriptures frequently speak of the church as being “in Christ,” giving the thought of membership in His body. (Rom. 12:4, 5; I Cor. 12:12-27; 2 Cor. 5:17.) Our Lord Himself used the figure of a vine and its branches to convey the same thought; He spoke of Himself as the vine and of the church as the branches in the vine, partaking of nourishment therefrom. (John 15 :1, 2.) It is not this thought, however, that is expressed by the Apostle’s words—”Christ in you the hope of glory.”

The word “Christ” signifies “anointed.” All who will be members of the royal priesthood will be anointed—not separately but collectively. This was pictured during the Jewish Age by the installation into office of both the kings and the high priests of Israel. According to the Law, every king and every high priest must be anointed, or he could not serve.

The oil which was used for this ceremony was of a peculiar kind, which must not be used for any other purpose. (Exod. 30:31-33.) The anointing which our Lord and the members of His mystical body have received is different from anything else in the world. It is the anointing of the holy spirit, which is variously spoken of as the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of truth and the spirit of God. It is not the truth, but the spirit of the truth; it is not the Word of God, although it is in harmony with the Word; it is not holiness, yet it is in full accord with holiness. It is the spirit, disposition which is associated with the sound mind, with holiness, with truth and with the Word of God.

As the anointing of kings and priests in Israel was the Divine evidence that they were accepted to office, so it was with our Lord Jesus. The Apostle Peter tells us that “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy spirit and with power.” (Acts 10:38.) Our Lord was set apart for a very high office. In harmony with the Divine arrangement, He is to be the great anti-typical King and Priest “after the order of Melchizedek.”

During the Gospel Age, God has been setting apart those who are to be members of the body of Christ. These are invited to be kings, and priests unto God, a royal priesthood. (Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:9.) Consequently, when one is received into this body, under the headship of Christ, he comes under the anointing of the holy spirit. This unction is from the Father in that He alone can give the recognition. It is from the Son in that we can come to the Father only through Him. This is well illustrated by the consecration of the Jewish high priest. The holy oil was poured upon Aaron’s head, typifying the anointing of our Lord at the time of His consecration. The oil then ran down to the very skirts of Aaron’s garments, thus typifying the anointing of the body of Christ, which is the church. This descent of the holy spirit upon the church was manifest at Pentecost.

The anointing of the holy spirit is somewhat different from the begetting of the holy spirit. The holy spirit which came upon Jesus at Jordan was both the begetting and the anointing power of God; our Lord was the Anointed from the moment at which He was begotten. So with the church at Pentecost; they were waiting for the acceptance of God. Our Lord had appeared in the presence of God as their Advocate, in order that their sacrifice might be acceptable. When the Father recognised their acceptance by shedding forth the holy spirit—when there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them (Acts 2 :3)—that recognition was both their begetting and their anointing. The former — the begetting --+ represents the matter from the individual standpoint, and the latter—the anointing—from the collective standpoint. We are begotten individually, but we are anointed collectively.

If we should consider the anointing and the begetting as two different steps of progress, we should be

obliged to say that the begetting takes place first, and that the begotten one is anointed or recognised as an heir of God. But this giving the one a priority over the other is not necessary to the thought. These seem to be two pictures which represent the matter from two different standpoints. We are not individually anointed, nor are we collectively begotten.

This spirit which we receive from God abides in us. Whoever loses the spirit of God loses the light, and passes into the death condition. So the Apostle urges, "Grieve not the spirit of God." If we lose the spirit of our begetting, we shall die. The begetting represents the beginning of our experiences and the resurrection the completion, the born state.

Each is individually begotten and born of the spirit.

In the picture of anointing, the whole body of Christ is anointed. There will be no need for a repetition of the ceremony. At the beginning of the Gospel Age the body was anointed, and all who will be members of that body come under that one anointing, and all these will share in Christ's resurrection — the first resurrection, the chief resurrection.

Not only was our Lord begotten to the new nature, anointed of the holy spirit, but each member of the body must be similarly begotten, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.- If we have received this anointing, we are eligible to all that God has promised to the Christ—primarily to the Head, and also to the members of His body. As God foreknew the great Shepherd of the sheep, the Redeemer, He also foreknew this class.

Long before our Lord came into this world the Father had planned that there should be an Anointed company, the head of which should be our Lord, and the body of which should be the church. (Eph. 1:4.) Jesus was to have the first place in the Christ company, and associated with Him would be those who would have His spirit —His will, who had made a full consecration of their lives to do God's will faithfully, even unto death. For those who have this spirit of consecration, and have presented themselves in sacrifice, our Lord stands as the Advocate before the Father, to make good for them, to cover their blemishes and imperfections.

Our Lord's work is not that of anointing, but that of making it possible for us to be received by the Father. The anointing is of the Father, but by the Son. The Apostle Peter says that Jesus having received the spirit of the Father shed it forth. (Acts 2:33.) As long as we have this spirit of God, it is an evidence to us that we are the children of God. So long as we possess it, we maintain this relationship of sons. (Rom. 8:9, 14.) Then, the consequent thought is that if we are children of God we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5.)

The words of our text suggest the thought that whoever has the spirit of God has the evidence that he is an heir of glory and will receive the reward, if found faithful. On one occasion the Apostle John said, "But the anointing that you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." (1 John 2:27.) Those who have this anointing have no need that anyone teach them that fact, for they have evidence of it, the proof of it in their own hearts and experiences. These evidences are more apparent to themselves than to anyone else.

The evidences that one has been anointed may not be understood except that we have the instructions of the Word of God. The Scriptures give us an outline of the witness to the possession of the holy spirit, so as to leave no room for doubt. They tell us that the holy spirit, the begetting power in us, leads us more and more to have the mind of Christ. We were not anointed with the mind of Christ, but with the holy

spirit, and whoever has the holy spirit will find that he will develop the mind of Christ.

The mind of Christ is to do the Father's will. Our Lord when a child said on one occasion to His mother—"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49.) We recognise that we have a Heavenly Father whose service is the highest possible service. Those who are His must have this spirit. The work of the new creature must be the heavenly work, otherwise he will have no proof that he has passed from the condemnation upon the human race and become a new creature. If we have the spirit of loyalty to God, to the truth and to the brethren, we have the mind, the disposition of Christ.

We also have, indeed, the weaknesses of the flesh, but it is our privilege to fight against these and to become more and more transformed in the spirit of our minds, to have our minds more centered in the truth and in the service of the brethren. If there is a decrease of zeal in this direction, then we may know that there is a danger of going backward instead of forward. We hear of instances where the Lord's people have lost their first love and have become more or less cold. From our standpoint we may know when any have lost their first love: it is when they have allowed their minds to be led away to earthly things -- love of family, of home, of worldly possessions, etc., all of which war against the heavenly things. We should seek our pleasures, not from earthly sources but from the heavenly source. Very frequently we find Christians who tell us that they had a blessed experience when first they knew the Lord, but that they do not feel as near to Him as formerly. If we probe the matter, we nearly always find that they went into business of an unworthy kind, or did something against the holy spirit.

In addition to having the mind of Christ, we have other evidences that we have been anointed. We find ourselves needing the spiritual food, and to satisfy our hunger our Heavenly Father has provided us with the knowledge of the Divine Plan, the knowledge of our Lord. Each new view gives us fresh inspiration. Then, if we find some of the brethren spiritually hungry how can we withhold from giving them the spiritual refreshment which we have? If one has earthly mercies and dispenses them, God may give him the privilege of opening blind eyes. If it is a blessing to open physically blinded eyes, how much greater a blessing it is to open the spiritually blinded eyes! We have the blessed privilege of helping some to get their eyes open to see spiritual things and also of helping others who already see to understand more clearly. If we love the truth, we will serve the truth.

This service is sure to bring upon us the disapproval of the world; it will not bring us an earthly passport. If devotion to the will of the Father brought upon our Lord shame, ignominy, we must not wonder that we are treated likewise.

If the world called the Master of the house of sons Beelzebub, they will assuredly call His followers some evil name. The willingness to receive all this as a part of our reasonable service is a further evidence that we have been anointed.

Probably the Lord's people find that they can very easily love some of the brethren, but that there are some others whom it is not easy to love, for they do not seem to be so lovable. However, we should reflect that if the Lord can receive them and love these brethren, we should do the same, and that our love should help them out of their natural traits of disposition. Thus we shall develop love for all of the brethren, the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, and desire to render them assistance as the opportunity may occur.

The evidences that one has been anointed with the holy spirit are, increasing desire for spiritual things, a desire to assist others to see and to grow in knowledge and heavenly grace, persecution from the worldly minded, and development of the mind of Christ—the disposition which is loving, generous, forgiving toward others and which is reverential toward God and obedient to His will. Whoever finds, on self-

examination, that he has these evidences in his own heart has the witness of the spirit that he is a child of God.

The word “glory” carries with it the thought of honour and dignity and sometimes also that of brightness, shining. The Scriptures speak of the Heavenly Father as having the excellent glory, that glory unto which no others can approach. Our Lord Jesus is said to have been received unto glory—honour and distinction. Of Adam it is said that he was “crowned with glory and honour” was put over the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea. (Psa. 8:5-8; Gen. 1:28.) In this connection the word “glory” seems to indicate that Adam was made in the image of his Creator. Applying these same thoughts to ourselves we find that as yet we have no glory. What blessing we have received is the possession of this holy spirit, the evidence of our sonship into the family of God. This, however, is merely the beginning of the glory which God has promised to those who are faithful—merely the earnest.

To have the holy spirit in us is to have the anointing in us. If we allow the holy spirit to operate in us, and ourselves faithfully co-operating therewith, the end will be glorious. Thus, the anointing which we have received, the spirit of Christ in us, the hope of glory which we are expecting, a glory which is to be like that of our Redeemer, a glory which is above the angels, principalities and powers, a glory which is next to that of our Lord, will be realised by all the overcomers.

This anointing, this spirit of Christ within us, is the earnest hope or basis of all that is coming. Hence we should heed the admonition of the Apostle that we quench not the anointing, this holy spirit of Christ. If we should allow it to die, because of neglect of the help which God has supplied, if we should quench it by indulgence in sin, we should thereby demonstrate that we are unworthy of the blessing and fit only for the second death. On the contrary we are to cultivate this anointing, the spirit of Christ, develop it, give full attention to it, and God will fulfil all His promises and bring us off more than conquerors through Christ Jesus our Lord.

What Would Jesus Do?

When the morning paints the skies,
And the birds their songs renew,
Let me from my slumber rise,
Saying, "What would Jesus do?"

Countless mercies from above.
Day by day my pathway strew :
Is it much to bless thy love?
Father, "What would Jesus do?"

When I ply my daily task.
And the round of toil pursue,
Let me often brightly ask.
"What, my soul, would Jesus do?"

Would the foe my heart beguile,
Whispering thoughts and words untrue?
Let me to His subtlest wile Answer,
"What would Jesus do?"

When the clouds of sorrow hide,
Mirth and music from my view,
Let me, clinging to Thy side,
Ponder, "What would Jesus do?"

Only let Thy love, O God,
Fill my spirit through and through:
Treading where my Savior trod,
Breathing, "What would Jesus do ?"

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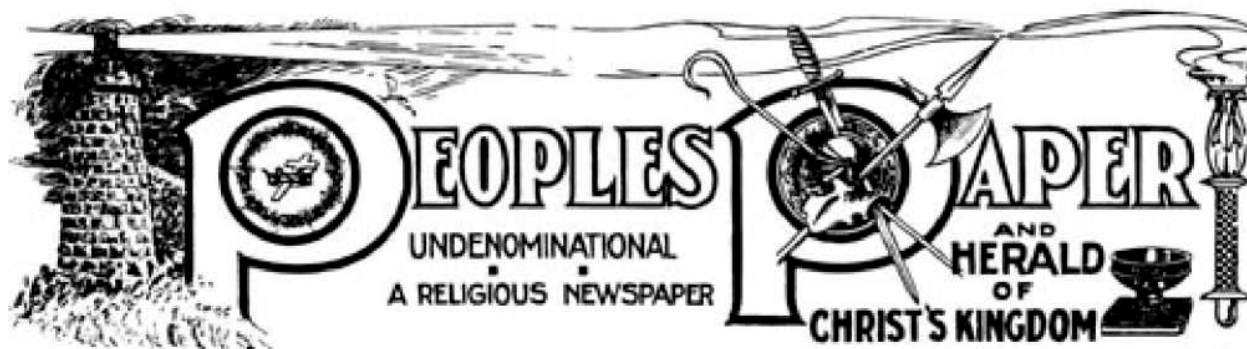
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The Lord's Supper.

THE thoughts of the Lord's consecrated people being more particularly directed toward the Memorial of His death at this time of year, we cannot fail to be benefited by a review of the institution of this Supper, which our Lord established shortly before the close of His sacrificial life on earth. It was celebrated on the day before the Passover proper began—on the fourteenth of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish sacred year.

The Law respecting the Passover was very exact. The lamb was to be taken on the tenth day of Nisan, was to be killed on the fourteenth, and was to be eaten during the night before the dawn of the fifteenth. In the antitype Jesus offered Himself at Jordan and was killed 31 years later, on the fourteenth of Nisan, after all except His faithful few neglected to receive Him. It was in the same Jewish day in which He was crucified that He ate the Passover and later on was betrayed. (The day with the Jews began at sundown and lasted until the next evening.)

One evangelist records that our Lord said to His disciples, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It was His last commemoration of the Jewish rite, which as a Jew He was bound to observe legally, fully. We may not know the particular hour of the fourteenth day at which our Lord and the disciples partook of the Lord's Supper, but probably it was near midnight, after the Passover had been eaten, that our Lord instituted the new Memorial of His own death, substituting it for the Passover Supper of the Law, and intimating this in His words, "Henceforth, as oft as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me." "This" represented the anti-typical Lamb, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and doing this—breaking the bread and drinking of the fruit of the vine—showed forth our Lord's death and not any longer the death of the type, because the anti-type had now come, and in this same day, a few hours later, He would be killed, crucified. Our Lord was thus laying a deep and broad basis for the New Creation, His Church, and separating it from the Jewish type by pointing out to the believers Himself as the antitype, and the higher meaning connected therewith—the deliverance of all the true Israelites, not from Pharaoh, but from Pharaoh's antitype, Satan, the deliverance of all the first-born of God's people from death into life more abundant, eternal life.

It was while the Lord and His apostles were eating the Passover Supper, the typical roast lamb, that our Lord said to them, "One of you shall betray me." John tells us that our Lord was "troubled in spirit," manifested emotion, at the time He said this. His emotion was not caused, we may be sure, by the matter of His betrayal, for He evidently foreknew the particulars as well as the fact of His death. The cause of

His sorrow, we may reasonably suppose, was the thought that one of those whom He had so tenderly kept and cared for should now prove so ungrateful, unthankful, unholy—evidently His sorrow was for Judas. His statement drew forth inquiries from the disciples, “Lord is it I?” Or rather, as the Greek word would seem to indicate, the question signified, Lord, do you mean to accuse me? I am not the one, am I? And the disciples in general were sorrowful, too. It was well, perhaps, that they should pass through this experience at this time, as they evidently needed it all, in order to prepare them for the trying times just before them.

Judas asked the same question with the rest, for not to have asked it would have implied that he admitted his guilt. Our Lord’s answer was that it was one who supped with them, and dipping the sop He gave it to Judas, who forthwith went out. (John 13:25-30.) So far from these incidents melting the heart of Judas and leading him to change his course before it was too late, they seem to have aroused in him a malevolent spirit, just as Divine mercy toward Pharaoh, in the stopping of the plagues, hardened his heart. Instead of resisting the Adversary’s suggestions, Judas entertained them more and more, until he was filled with the Satanic spirit. “Satan entered into him,” fully, completely—took possession of his heart as an instrument of evil, and it was doubtless because he felt out of place in such society that he went out.

It thus seems that Judas was not with the others when our Lord instituted with the bread and the fruit of the vine the Memorial of His death. It was better that he should be absent; and so it would be preferable, where possible, that only the true, loyal, devoted disciples of Christ should meet together to celebrate His death on its anniversary. Nevertheless, let us remember that we are not competent to judge the heart, and hence in coming to the Memorial table all should be invited to come who trust in the precious blood of Christ for redemption and who profess a full consecration to the Lord. Let us leave it to Divine providence to scrutinise those who profess to be fellow-disciples.

In presenting to the disciples the unleavened bread, as a Memorial, our Lord gave a general explanation, saying, “Take, eat; this is my body.” The evident meaning of the words is: This symbolises or represents My body. It was not actually His body, because in no sense of the word had His body yet been broken; in no sense would it have been possible for any to have partaken of Him actually or antitypically then, the sacrifice not being as yet finished. But the picture is complete when we recognise that the unleavened bread represented our Lord’s sinless flesh—leaven being a symbol of sin under the Law, and specially commanded to be put away at this time. On another occasion our Lord gave a lesson which interprets to us this symbol. He said, “The bread of God is He that came down from heaven and giveth His life for the world. I am the bread of life.”—John 6:33, 35.

In order to appreciate how we are to eat or appropriate this living bread, it is necessary for us to understand just what it was. According to our Lord’s explanation of the matter, it was His flesh which He sacrificed for us. It was not His prehuman existence as a spirit being that was sacrificed, although that was laid down and its glory laid aside, that He might take our human nature. It was the fact that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and without any contamination from father Adam, and hence free from sin—it was this fact that permitted Him to be the Redeemer of Adam and his race—which permitted Him to give His life as a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. And when we see that it was the pure, spotless human nature of our Lord Jesus that was laid down on behalf of sinners, sacrificed for us, we see what it is that we are privileged to appropriate. The very thing which He laid down for us we are to “eat,” appropriate to ourselves: that is to say, His perfect human nature was given for us and redeemed Adam and all his race from condemnation to death—to a right to return to human perfection and everlasting life if they could. The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all of past sins cancelled and should recognise us as having a right to return to human perfection, this still would not make us perfect nor give us, therefore the right to everlasting life. In order for the race of Adam to profit by the redemption accomplished by our Lord’s sacrifice, it is necessary that He should make a second advent, and then to be to the whole world a Mediator and King, to assist back to perfection and to

harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the privileges then to be offered.

It is this same blessing which the Gospel Church in this age receives by faith from the Redeemer, viz., justification by faith—not justification to a spiritual nature, which we never had and never lost, and which Christ did not redeem; but justification to human nature, which father Adam did possess and lose, and which Christ did redeem by giving His own sinless flesh as our ransom-sacrifice. The partaking of the bread, then, means to us primarily acceptance and appropriation to ourselves, by faith, of justification to human rights and privileges secured by our Lord's sacrifice of these.

Likewise, the fruit of the vine symbolised our Lord's life given for us—His human life, His being, His soul, poured out unto death on our behalf; and the appropriating of this by us signifies primarily our acceptance of restitution rights and privileges which our Lord has thus, at His own cost, secured for us.

As we have already seen, God's object in justifying by faith the Church during this Gospel Age, in advance of the justification of the world through works of obedience in the Millennial Age, is for the very purpose of permitting those who now see and hear and appreciate the great sacrifice which Love has made on their behalf, to present their bodies living sacrifices, and thus to have part with our Lord in His sacrifice—as members of His Body. This additional and deep meaning of the Memorial our Lord did not refer to directly. It was doubtless one of the things to which 'He referred, saying, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when the spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth, and show you things to come."

The spirit of truth, speaking through the Apostle Paul, clearly explains the matter of this secondary and very high import of the Memorial, for he says, writing to the consecrated Church: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ?"—to share with Christ as joint-sacrificers even unto death, that thereby they may be counted in with Him also as sharers of the glory which He has received as a reward for His faithfulness. "For we being many are one loaf and one body.- (1 Cor. 10:16, 17.)

Both views of this impressive ordinance are important; it is necessary that we should see, first of all, our justification through the Lord's sacrifice. It is proper, then, that we should realise that the entire Christ is, from the divine standpoint, a composite body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head, and that this Church as a whole must be broken, and that in this respect each member of it must be a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the footsteps of His sacrifice. 'We do this by giving our lives, "laying down our lives on behalf of the brethren," as Christ laid down His life for all. It is not our spiritual life that we lay down, even as it was not our Lord's spiritual life that He laid down in sacrifice; but as He sacrificed His actually perfect being, so we must sacrifice our justified selves, reckoned perfect but not actually so. Likewise, the cup represents suffering. It is one cup, though it be the juice of many grapes, even as it is one loaf, though it be from many grains. The grains cannot maintain their individuality and their own life if they would become bread for others; the grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the lifegiving spirit; and thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement, that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and one cup.

Our Lord distinctly declares that the cup, the fruit of the vine, represents blood, hence life; not life retained, but life shed or given, yielded up, sacrificed life. He tells us that it was for the remission of sins, and that all who would be His must drink of it—must accept His sacrifice and appropriate it by faith. All who would be justified through faith must accept life from this one source. It will not do to claim an immortality outside of Christ; it will not do to declare that life is the result of obedience to the Law; it will not do to claim that faith in and obedience to any great teacher will amount to the same thing and bring eternal life. There is no other way to attain eternal life except through accepting the blood once shed as the ransom price for the sins of the whole world. "There is no other name given under heaven or amongst

men whereby we must be saved.” Likewise, there is no other way that we can attain to the new nature than by accepting the Lord’s invitation to drink of His cup, and be broken with Him as members of the one loaf, and to be buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to be with Him in His resurrection to glory, honour and immortality.—Rom. 6:3-5; 8:1 7 .

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue,

Bible Translations.

IN recent years the attention of Christians has been directed to a considerable number of translations of the Bible, a number of which the majority of the Lord’s people have perhaps been unable to examine. Sometimes, over the radio, a Bible reading is heard in modern language from the translation of one or another of these recent publications, and often the expressions, while perhaps plain, seem quite out of place to record the sacred information contained in God’s Word.

Those of the Lord’s people who have become acquainted with the language of the Authorized Version, perhaps from childhood, seem to find in its general expression a flow of majestic language which adds beauty and blessing to the message from the Lord and His servants of both the Old and New Testaments. As an illustration, we quote the opening words of Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews—”God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” Could there be more beautiful language to present such an amount of truth respecting God’s Plan of the Ages and His methods of communication to those who had, and have, ears to be “spoken unto” throughout the ages of the past and present? We know of no other rendering to compare with this translation of the opening words of Paul to the Hebrews, and the same can be said, in a general way, for the language of the

Authorized Version as a whole.

This does not mean, of course, that the Authorized Version is sufficient for the students of God’s Word. The Lord has permitted many valuable manuscripts to be found since the Authorized Version was translated in 1611, and as sincere students of God’s Word we do well to appreciate and use the additional helps available, especially those which are based on the oldest MSS. From these oldest manuscripts it is found that many statements in the Authorized Version of the Bible are not really Scriptural; this comes as a shock to some people, but when it is understood that mistakes have crept into the sacred text through copyists’ errors, and this can be proved by comparing Scripture with Scripture, then all who love the Lord’s true Word only, will surely give thanks to God that He has overruled that these mistakes are

revealed to all who are sufficiently alert and interested enough to detect them by means of the additional helps now available. However, for Bible study classes etc., where practically all members have the Authorized Version before them, it seems that this 'Version is the most helpful for general reading, and where occasion requires, a variation can be quoted as giving a clearer presentation of the truth on any particular subject. To hear verses read from other translations, when there may be no real necessity, seems to take away some of the blessing in which all may share when all are following the same words from the Authorized Version.

Amongst the numerous translations of the New Testament there can be no doubt that the Emphatic Diaglott is one of the most valuable for comparative study, and for those who have Tischendorf's Notes (based on the three oldest manuscripts, including the Sinaitic; but now, unfortunately, out of print) much additional help is available. For the complete Bible the Revised Version has served very well indeed over many years, and now the recent Revised Standard Version of both the Old and New Testaments is undoubtedly most helpful for the Bible student. As an illustration of the clarity of the R.S. Version we quote Genesis 4:7, being the Lord's words to Cain—"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin is crouching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it." (Compare Authorized Version, and note the improvement of the R.S. Version.)

A note of warning is offered against accepting any translation of the Bible without careful examination. To indicate the necessity for proving all things, the following is presented from one of our brethren:—"A copy of the Epistles by J. B. Phillips in modern version has been sent to me. I don't know if you have heard of this man's translation, but I regard it as the poorest of all for doctrinal teaching, for he does not abide by the original words, but brings his sectarian creed into it so many times. For instance, in 1 Cor. 15:51—"We shall not all sleep"—he puts 'We shall not all die.' One can trace the sectarian view in many important passages. In portions not relating to doctrine I think it is perhaps a good translation, but to a student is very mischievous, leading away from the real point . . . I see that Moffatt, too, puts the same text--'Not all of us are to die,' which seems to show that these men have expressed their own views instead of what the Lord intended to teach. Again, in 1 Thes. 4:15-17, Phillips says—One word of command, one shout from the archangel, one blast from the trumpet of God, and God in person will come down from heaven.' It gives the wrong thought, don't you think?"

There can be no doubt that the translations above quoted are very misleading, and it is necessary for all the Lord's people to thoroughly test all that they receive as truth. To this end the Bible Concordances, especially Strong's and Young's, are most helpful in determining the meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words; indeed, one or other of these concordances is essential for detailed study of the Bible.

Then, along with all the careful study given to determine correct translations, it is most essential that the spirit of the Lord be the guiding power to bless the truths of His Word to the hearts and lives of God's people, that the truth may have the sanctifying effect, to the Lord's praise. Thus, and thus only, may sincere Christians grow both in grace and knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Passover Memorial, 1954.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Good Friday ; after sundown on Friday evening, the 16th of April, will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by all true followers of the Master.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the end of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

The following Memorial Services have been arranged, at which all sincere believers in the ransom sacrifice of Christ will be welcome.

Melbourne.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 7 p.m., at Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide

Sydney.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right side of Boulevard, only 10 minutes' walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Perth.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 5.30 p.m., at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, corner Hay and Pier Streets, Perth.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention is to be held again this year, commencing on Good Friday, 16th April, and continuing till Easter Monday evening (D.V.) . The gatherings will be held in the Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and a hearty invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these meetings. Further information may be obtained from the Convention Secretary--Mrs. H.

Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

The best preparation for service is the knowledge of our own weakness, and faith in the almighty power of God.—A.S.

Christian Life and Doctrine.

(Convention Address)

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”—(1 Tim. 4:16.)

THE Apostle Paul, in Ephesians 4:1-6, urges Christians to walk worthy of their calling, in the spirit of lowliness and meekness with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; and urges them to endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, and then lays down seven fundamental doctrines upon which Christian fellowship can be maintained, as follows:—One body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all. Without appreciation of these teachings there cannot be genuine Christian fellowship.

One might also refer to Heb. 6:1, 2 where the Apostle urges holy (consecrated) brethren, -associates of the heavenly calling (chapter 3:1), to leave the first principles (the beginnings of the words of Christ) and go on to maturity of Christian development. These beginnings — the first principles of Christian life and teaching—are repentance, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, the laying on of hands (this was the way the holy spirit was imparted to believers by the Apostles) , the doctrine of resurrection, and eternal judgment. These are referred to as the milk of the Word and there can be genuine Christian fellowship upon these principles, but we must not remain there; rather, we are to build upon these a faith structure of life and doctrine and thus be able to understand the deep things of God—the strong meat, the solid food.

We might also consider the prophetic or dispensational truths fulfilling now at the end of this age, keeping in mind that some of the fundamental truths quoted in Ephesians 4 were once prophetic truths, and were fulfilled during the first advent of Christ and in the end of the Jewish Age. The Messiah who was to come had come, henceforth there must now be recognised and worshipped among God’s consecrated people one Lord (Jesus) in addition to one God (Jehovah) .

The doctrine of faith justification, without works, was foretold and must become a fundamental doctrine among the consecrated Christians. There must also be one spirit; this is a fundamental doctrine insisted upon in the early Church. One heavenly calling must also be taught in the Church; the dispensation had arrived in which this truth must be taught. Any one of these doctrines could not be omitted or considered unimportant by any, of the Lord’s people without spiritual loss in Christian life and knowledge.

Without recognising and appreciating these teachings in the Church do you think there could be real unity of the spirit among believers? No. Neither could there be real spiritual character development, sound doctrine or reliable teachers, as the Apostle states in Heb. 5:12-14. He says many of the Hebrew Christians were dull of hearing; i.e., sluggish in understanding. Instead of being teachers they had to be taught again the first principles of the truth, and were thus unfit to occupy the position of teachers in the Church.

We too have reached the end of the age when prophetic truths and dispensational changes are due, and the understanding of which greatly strengthens Christian fellowship, and is a sanctifying power in our lives. The importance of this can best be gauged when we contrast our present Christian experience with our confused and perplexing state in the nominal church.

The 24th chapter of Matthew was once prophetic, but now much of it is being fulfilled and we recognise that the changes now occurring in the world and the Church are the result of the presence of Christ. This is an important dispensational doctrine and many other associated truths have been greatly clarified because of this. Dispensational truths have a definite time of fulfilment and blessed are people, whether in

the beginning or close of the age, who recognise the truths then due, and discern the changes associated with these truths.

For instance, the nature and purpose of the second advent of Christ has become clear and harmonious. The oneness of suffering and sacrifice of Christ and the Church, the oneness of honour and glory in the kingdom is now better understood. The same is true of the ransom; the philosophy of the ransom and its application is grand —first to the Church and later to the world. The covenants also have become clear, as to how they apply and when fulfilled.

All these teachings have their place and are important, playing a great part in our sanctification and separation from nominal Christianity. We are glad to speak of these things to the Household of Faith, and fellowship upon these truths is precious. All may not see these doctrines in the same light; nevertheless, there are many truths on which we can have fellowship.

However, the position is different when a congregation elects representatives or teachers. These must be sound in the faith and in Christian character, the Apostle says—"Holding forth the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers,"—to confute those speaking against or opposing the doctrine. The combination of Christian life and doctrine is necessary for all Christians, and is very essential for teachers in the Church; in other words, it means - growing in grace and knowledge."

The word "life" in a general sense means the natural functions of an organized being—animation, vitality. Also the manner or conduct of living with respect to virtue or vice,—"To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Rom. 8:6.) An additional meaning is supreme felicity, eternal happiness; the Author and

Giver of supreme happiness is spoken of as "The Way, the truth and the life." (John 14:6.)

The meaning of "doctrine" is, Whatsoever is taught; a principle or position of any science, whatever is laid down as true by an instructor or master; the act of teaching, learning, knowledge; the truths of the Gospel in general, and the instruction and confirmation in the truth of the Gospel. Jesus said, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." (John 7:16, 17.)

The way to full and complete life cannot be attained by fallen, sinful beings without doctrine, teachings, the knowledge of the whole counsel of God. Jesus said—"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," and again—"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (Matt. 4:4; John 17:3.) And it is God's will that all mankind be saved and come to the knowledge of this truth for "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth."

These Scriptures reveal that from God's standpoint sound doctrine is necessary, and this has been imparted to us through the words of His Son and the Apostles and prophets. It is also a necessity and advantage that mankind become acquainted with these teachings or knowledge of God, some in this Age, but the majority in the next Age.

The Scriptures urge Christians to hold and teach sound doctrines; that is, sound in the sense of perfect principles, true, free from corruption, appealing and satisfying to sanctified reason. The perfect doctrines of God produce perfect life. To know God and Jesus Christ is (or will result in) everlasting life. This knowledge and the spirit of that knowledge received into the heart has a sanctifying power. "Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself." (1 John 3:3.)

Not only do sound teachings affect the life: they also serve as a protection against unsound teachings, fables and wrong conduct. The Apostle Paul predicted that the time would come- when they (professing Christians) will not endure sound doctrines. (2 Tim. 4:3.)

The doctrines or teachings of Christ and His Apostles are those set forth in the New Testament. Jesus, in His prayer to the Father, declared—"I have given them the words which thou gavest me." Jesus here indicates that the doctrines of the Christian religion originate from God Himself; He has spoken unto us by His Son, and Jesus communicated these teachings to His Apostles. Therefore we need not go outside the Bible for a knowledge of the truth which sanctifies. "For I am convinced that the scripture given by inspiration is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for all good works." (2 Tim. 3:15-17.)

The necessity for individual study of the Scriptures is thus evident. It is a fact, they do make us wise; they develop in us a spirit of a sound mind; they give us better judgment — able to form a better estimate of the things that matter in comparison with things that are secondary. The Scriptures make us better men and women —better husbands and wives, better workmen, better business men, better neighbours, and produce a better and kindly spirit toward enemies and even to the animal creation.

Sound teachings have a good, helpful, uplifting influence upon ourselves, which is really the main purpose of receiving a knowledge of the truth of God. (Psa. 119 :9 ; John 17 :17.) The Apostle Paul urged a young Christian and elder in the Church to "meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:15, 16.) And again, in 2 Tim. 2:15, the same Apostle declares—"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

This responsibility is placed upon all consecrated Christians; indeed, each member placed in the Body should not so much regard this as a responsibility, but rather as a great privilege a gracious favour of the Lord to have inclined our hearts and minds toward the things that are spiritual. As Jesus said to some of His disciples—"Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous ones have desired to see the things you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them." (Matt. 13:16, 17.)

The Apostle Peter also says that the prophets in past ages have enquired and searched diligently, and prophesied of the favour that should come unto us Christians; but it was not revealed to them. This Apostle added that angels desire to look into the things concerning our great salvation (1 Pet. 1:10-11.) Is it any wonder that we are urged to be on our guard lest we be beguiled of our reward, or deceived with another gospel. (Col. 2:18.)

We need to distinguish between the doctrines of God and the doctrines of man. The teachings of men, as represented in the creeds, do not satisfy nor sanctify. If any who support the teachings of men give evidence of being sanctified and renewed in heart—and there have been these men even in the dark ages—it was not the creeds and traditions that accomplished this. The erroneous and superstitious teachings the Apostle Paul calls "doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1, 2. See also Tit. 1:10-13.)

All the consecrated Christians have a charge or stewardship placed upon them concerning the truth. Besides conforming their lives to the teachings they are also set for the defence of the Gospel, whether opportunities are large or small. This often has the effect of dividing; the Lord said it would in Matt. 10:34-36—"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I

am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Why is this so? "Because the word of God is quick (living) and powerful (energetic), and sharper than any twoedged sword . . . dividing soul and spirit," that is, dividing the natural from the spiritual. (Heb. 4:12, Diaglott.)

Because of this there is a tendency in these days to set little importance upon sound Scriptural doctrines, and the urge is to concentrate on Christian living only. This kind of philosophy sacrifices truth—right doctrines and principles—for the sake of greater numbers in fellowship, and many denominations (and some groups of the Present Truth Movement) are trying in this way to overcome their divided state, and present a united front to the enemy. But this is not Scriptural. The Founder of Christianity said His message would be as a sword, causing division and spiritual warfare. The Apostle Paul urges consecrated Christians to avoid those who are contrary to the doctrines of Christ. (Rom. 16:17, 18.) He wrote to Christians in Corinth (2 Cor. 11:13, 14), and warned them of false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the servants of Christ. We are urged to hold fast the faithful words. (Tit. 1:9.)

The Apostle Jude urges us to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, because of ungodly men turning the grace of God into lasciviousness and denying the Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 3, 4.) These are some of the warnings that there is indeed a great controversy between light and darkness, truth and error, Christ and Satan; and this has continued all down the age to the present day. Errors of doctrine take away our Christian liberty, and this has happened time and again, even in the midst of the Present Truth Movement. Therefore it is truly said, Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

From these references to the words of our Lord and the Apostles, warning of false teachers and their errors, who would say that sound doctrines are not important? If they are not very important, perhaps it is because we have not seen their value in the plan of God. Do you think the understanding of the manner and purpose of our Lord's second presence is very important? And what relationship this bears to the Church and the world? The correct understanding of this has changed much of our wrong thinking and teaching.

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down (human) reasonings, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.) The weapons referred to are the teachings of the Scripture, which are indeed mighty. If we did not know what these were how could we counteract and resist false teachings, and how could we resist an enemy if we are urged to leave our armour off, as not important? No! The fact is that Christians are engaged in a warfare not only against the natural, evil propensities and weaknesses of the flesh, but against wicked spirits in high places, and against religious teachers who by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, the unsuspecting. (Rom. 16:18.) From this standpoint, Christians are referred to as soldiers under Jesus, their Captain or Leader. The fact that we are exhorted to hold fast the faithful words implies there are some who would try to wrest them from us by false philosophies. And the Apostle Peter declares—"Many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." (2 Pet. 2:2.)

There is a close relationship between Christian life and Christian doctrine, like faith and works; to be effective they must operate together. These two halves make one truth, and produce one result—our salvation. The same can be said of sanctification and witnessing to the truth; you cannot separate these two; our building up in Christ and witnessing to the Gospel go together, otherwise spiritual stagnation will set in.

Doctrines or teachings have a definite effect upon our conduct. If we believe in teachings which are

unkind, cruel, unreasonable, our conduct will be confused; likewise our thinking on religious subjects will be more or less the same. The hell-torment theory has made people very cruel. The supposed heretic, those who dared to differ from popular religion of the established church, were persecuted and tormented in a most cruel way before death. The tormentors believed that this was the right thing to do to heretics and that they were only beginning the torments which God proposed to give them in hell. You see, “as a man thinketh in his heart so is he.” It is not the threat of eternal torment which makes people good; it does not produce repentance. No, but as the Scriptures—the true doctrines—say, “The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.” And “Thy gentleness hath made me great.” (Rom. 2:4; Psa. 18:35.)

Let us take examples from the Scriptures. There is Mary Magdalene out of whom the Lord had cast seven demons. What prompted her to bathe the Lord’s feet with her tears and wipe them with the hair of her head? It was the goodness and gentleness of the Lord Jesus. We are reminded also of that once timid, and yet great Apostle Peter. On that tragic night when the Shepherd was smitten and the sheep were scattered, the Lord warned Peter of his coming trial, but declared—“I have prayed for thee,- and “Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.” During that mock trial of our Lord, Jesus turned and looked at Peter in his fear; Peter remembered, “And he went out and wept bitterly.” Then three days later, when Jesus was risen from the dead, He declared—“Tell the disciples and Peter”; and later— “Peter, lovest thou me more than these?” “Thou knowest I love thee,” was the response. “Feed my sheep,” our Lord stated. It was the gentleness and ‘goodness of the Lord which made Peter great.

Is not that also our experience? Many broken reeds shattered hopes or despairing efforts have been revived by the gentleness of the Lord. “My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.” (Deut. 32:2.) The influence of the Lord’s doctrines is like the dew descending softly on the tender grass, penetrating into the affections, renewing the spirit, reviving hope. “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life,” said Jesus. (John 6:63.)

We need to rightly divide the Word of God, to search the Scriptures. One seed of truth is the revealment of other truths; it is sown in us to bear fruit, not to lie dormant. The power of the mind by which the truth becomes prolific is freedom, and “the truth shall make you free.” Our duty, and especially that of a chairman in Bible Study, is to try and encourage vigorous action of the mind in others. This takes time and experience. This was the purpose of the Apostle Paul’s instruction to Timothy—“Give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.” The greater number of free and vigorous minds brought to bear upon a subject, the more truth is promoted. No one should contend for an opinion or doctrine merely because some

Brother has set it forth, without being convinced that the said doctrine is true.

Aside from the fundamental truths, we should exercise great moderation toward the brethren on any point of doctrine not clearly declared, such as a parable not explained in the Scripture itself. All consecrated Christians should be individuals, at the same time exercising great care that they circulate no doctrine or matter not ,specifically and clearly stated in the Scriptures,’ and especially never to teach or attempt to teach speculations of which he himself is not thoroughly convinced. “If in anything you be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.” (Phil. 3:15, 16.)

The Apostle Paul refers also to those who are contentious and obey not the truth, in Romans 2:8 This condition develops when attempting to grow in knowledge without growing in grace—in love, kindness, meekness, goodness and patience. To the attainment of an ideal well-balanced Christian character we need to live up to the truths we have already recognized as true and pure. (See Psa. 19 :7-12.)

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Christ Was Heard In That He Feared.

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.” Heb. 5:7.

THAT which the Lord feared was not that the love or promises of God would fail. He knew that God was faithful who had promised; that God is a covenant-keeping God, and that all His conduct and dealings are founded upon the eternal principles of truth and righteousness, from which to vary in the least iota would be a moral impossibility. But the Lord also knew that the plan of human salvation was made dependent upon the obedience of the Anointed High Priest to every jot and tittle of the Law concerning Him, as shown in the typical service of the Tabernacle. Not only must the sacrifice be made but it must be offered exactly as prescribed.

If the typical high priest, Aaron, had at any time failed to conform to the directions given for the offering (see Lev. 9:16) ; if he had forgotten or ignored any part of the directions; or if he had substituted some of his own ideas, he would not have been allowed to sprinkle the blood of such imperfect sacrifice upon the mercy-seat; his offering would not have been accepted; he would have died, and so could never have come out and blessed the people.—Lev. 16:2, 3.

Thus we see that when undertaking the great work of redemption our Lord bore in Himself the issues of life and death, not only for the whole human race, but for Himself as well. Figuratively speaking, He took His life into His own hands. No wonder, then, if under the weight of His responsibility, the Lord feared! The tension of the trials to which He was subjected was too great for even the perfect human nature, unaided by Divine grace. Therefore He frequently sought the place of prayer for grace to help in every time of need.

Consider the great fight of afflictions through which He passed; the subtle and deceptive temptations in the wilderness; the contradiction of sinners against Himself; and the base ingratitude of those He came to save; consider also His poverty, His loss of friends, His labours and weariness, His homelessness, His bitter and relentless persecutions and finally. His betrayal and dying agony! Surely the tests of endurance and of obedience to the exact requirements of the Law of sacrifice, under these circumstances, were most crucial. What carefulness it wrought in the Lord; for He feared, lest the promise having been left Him of entering into the rest that remaineth and the glory to follow the Day of Atonement, He should come short of the full requirements of His Office as Priest, to render acceptable service. So also, says the Apostle (Heb. 4:1) , should we fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to

come short of it.

When the Lord came to the last night of His earthly life, then the question came to His mind with increased force, “Have I thus far done everything in exact accordance with the will of God? And now, in full view of the agony which it will cost, am I able to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs? Can I endure, not only the physical agony, but also the ignominy and shame and cruel mockings? And can I do it so perfectly as to be entirely acceptable to God in my own righteousness? Can I endure to see My disciples scattered and dismayed and My lifework apparently destroyed, My name and the cause of God covered with infamy, and My enemies triumphant and boastful? Can I do this so as to hear the ‘well done’?”

Such was our Lord’s last conflict, doubtless the powers of darkness were busy in that awful hour, taking advantage of the circumstances and of His weakness and weariness to discourage His hope and to fill His mind with fears that, after all, He would fail, or had failed to do the work acceptably; and that a resurrection, therefore, was uncertain. No wonder that the perfect human heart sank before such considerations and that an agony of emotion brought great drops of bloody sweat! But did He yield to the discouragement and give up the struggle when the crucial test was thus upon Him? No! He took those human fears to the Heavenly Father, “to him who was able to deliver him out of death,” in order that His human will might be reinforced by Divine grace to go forward and complete His sacrifice acceptably to God; to freely submit to be led away as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so to open not His mouth in self-defence—Isa. 53:7.

His prayers to the Father were not in vain: “He was heard in that he feared.” Though His words were few (because no words could express the emotions of His soul) His chastened spirit was all the while making intercession for Him with groanings which could not be uttered. (Rom. 8:26) Then God sent an angel to comfort and minister unto Him; to assure Him still of the Divine favour, and thus to give Him fresh courage, strength of mind and steadiness of nerve to endure all that was before Him, even unto death.

With this assistance of Divine grace our dear Lord went forth from that moment with undaunted courage to finish the work which was given Him to do. Calmly He could come now and say to His beloved, but weary and bewildered disciples, “Sleep on, now, and take your rest.” The bitterness of the mental conflict was over, and the light of heaven shining into His soul had chased away the deep gloom that hung over Him like a funeral pall, making Him “exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Yes, “he was heard in that he feared-; and the fear was all taken away: and, strong in the strength which God supplied, He felt that He was able to offer the acceptable sacrifice, to meet every jot and tittle of the requirement of the Law in doing so: and hence, that His salvation out of death, His resurrection, was assured.

The fear on the Lord’s part was not a sinful fear. It was a fear such as we, also, are exhorted to have—we who are striving to walk in His footsteps—lest we fail to realise the precious promises vouchsafed to us upon conditions that are positive and unalterable. (Heb. 4:1.) It was a fear begotten, not of doubt of the Father’s ability and willingness to fulfil all His promises but of a knowledge of the righteous principles which must in every case govern the Father’s course of action; a fear of the inflexible Law which righteously affixed the reward of eternal life and glory to His fulfilling of His Covenant of sacrifice, or of eternal death should He fail. At the same time He began to realise that, though perfect as a human being, His heart and His flesh would fail unless reinforced by Divine grace. The Psalmist expressed this fear of the Lord and the source from which His help came, when He said, “My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.” (Psa. 73:26)

It was a filial fear entirely compatible with His relationship to God as a recognised Son; for “though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience through the things which he suffered.”--Heb 5:8.

We are glad that Jesus was not cold and stoical, but that He was full of warm, loving, tender feelings and

sensibilities and that we, consequently, can realise His ability to sympathise with the most tender, the most delicate, the most refined, the most sensitive, more than could any other human being. He must have felt keenly the conditions under which He had placed Himself, in laying down His life on our behalf; for the more perfect the organism, the more sensitive and high-strung are the feelings; the greater the capacity for joy, the greater the capacity for sorrow. Being absolutely perfect, our Lord must have been immeasurably more susceptible to the influence of pain than are others.

Besides this, He knew that He had a perfect life, unforfeited, and realised that He was about to part with it. Others of the human family possess only a forfeited or condemned existence, and realise that they must part with this some time. It would, therefore, be a very different matter for our Lord to lay down His life from that of any of His followers laying down theirs. If we let one hundred per cent represent perfect life, our Lord had the full one hundred per cent to lay down, while we, being more than ninety-nine one-hundredths dead through trespasses and sins and condemnation could, at most, have had but one-hundredth part to lay down. A cold, stoical indifference to the loss of life, based upon knowledge that it could last but a short time longer at best, would, therefore, be a very different thing from the clear knowledge which our Lord had of the experience which He had with the Father “before the world was”; and the realisation that the life He was about to lay down was not forfeited through sin, but was His own voluntary sacrifice.

There can be no doubt that this thought of the extinguishing of life was an important factor in our Lord’s sorrow.

The Apostle clearly intimates it in the words (Heb. 5:7) , “Who in the days of his flesh . . . offered up prayers and supplication, with strong cryings and tears, unto him who was able to save him from (out of) death, and was heard in (respect of) that he feared”—extinction. This thought brought with it another, viz., Had He done the Father’s will perfectly? Could He claim, and would He receive the reward promised Him—a resurrection from the dead?

Had He failed in any particular to come to the exact standard of perfection His death would have meant extinction; and although all men fear extinction, none could know the full depth and force of its meaning as could He who not only had the perfection of life, but had recollection of His previous glory with His Father before the world was. For Him the very thought of extinction would bring anguish, terror of soul. This thought seems not to have come to our Lord with the same force previously. It was this, therefore, that bore down upon Him now so heavily as an exceeding sorrow unto death. He saw Himself about to suffer according to the Law as an evil-doer, and the question naturally arose, was He entirely blameless, and would the Heavenly Judge thoroughly acquit Him whom so many were disposed to condemn?

After praying He went to His three disciples, but found them asleep. Gently He reproved them asking, “Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” Then our Lord went away and used the, same words in prayer; and again He prayed a third time, similarly. The matter was weighing upon His heart. Could He rely upon it now, that having sought to do the Father’s will, having finished His course, He had done it acceptably? Could He have full assurance of faith that God would save Him out of death by a resurrection?

In answer to His petition a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort Him, to reassure Him, to strengthen Him. We are not informed what message the angel brought, but we can see that it was a message of peace; that he brought assurance, not only that the Lord’s course had the Father’s approval, but that He would be brought again from the dead by a resurrection. These were quite sufficient to give our Lord all the strength and courage necessary for the ordeal before Him; and from that moment onward we find Him the coolest and calmest of the notable figures brought to our attention. When approached by Judas and his band, He was the most calm and self-possessed of all; when before the chief-priest, Caiaphas He was the

same; when before Pilate, the same; when crucified, the same. He had found peace in the message that He was approved of the Father, and that all the gracious promises of glory, honour and immortality were His; and now He could pass through any ordeal, He could submit Himself perfectly to His enemies.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word. we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used. either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

How Should We Treat the Conscientious Objector?

AN answer to the above question was given by Professor Walter Murdoch in the Melbourne “Herald” of February 20th last. It is felt that the thoughts will be of good interest to all our readers. Permission has been granted to publish the remarks in full, and which are as follows:—

“Whether we think him right or wrong, we ought to treat him not merely with tolerance but with deep respect. That, at any rate, is my attitude towards him: because I respect and admire courage wherever it is revealed.

“The conscientious objector shows himself to possess a moral courage to which I fear that I myself could not rise in similar circumstances. I admire him as a man braver than I and braver than most of those who judge and condemn him.

“Think of the gallantry needed to stand up for your principles alone in the face of general obloquy. It takes courage of a rare kind to face the certainty of being hooted at for lack of courage.

“And in times of war delirium, being hooted at is not all the conscientious objector must expect. During the 1914-18 war, many of these dauntless men — I forget the number — actually died as a result of the brutal treatment they received.

“The public also has a conscience, which awakened in time to give the objectors during World War II a more humane and reasonable treatment: but the general attitude towards them remained contemptuous. They were still jeered at.

“I have sometimes thought that the sternest tribunal they faced and still must face is their own minds, before which they have still to answer for their motives and make dead certain whether they are really standing up for their convictions or for their comfort and safety.

“And when they have assured themselves of their genuineness, they have still to answer that implacable inward judge when he asks them if they are sure they are justified in letting other men go out to fight and die for the freedom they are claiming for themselves.

“But to the genuine conscientious objector—the man who is convinced that war is a shameful and immoral business, and that by refusing to play any part in it he can best serve the cause of peace and the ultimate good of humanity—I say that we should take off our hats.

“I am not here discussing whether their principle is right or wrong: I merely maintain that anyone who stands up for a principle, even a mistaken principle, and is prepared to suffer for it, deserves our deep respect. That, I think, is the sane answer to your question.”

Humility an Element of True Courage.

NOTHING is more dangerous to the child of God than self-conceit; it hinders reformation of heart, as well as true usefulness to others, and especially usefulness in God's service; for the Word declares, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (James 4:6.) The Scriptures everywhere make prominent the fact that those who would be in harmony with God must be humble. The Lord bestows blessings upon the humble, the meek, the teachable. Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek.- (Matt. 5:5.) The Apostle exhorts, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."-1 Pet. 5:6.

The Word of God points to the fact that Jesus was meek and lowly. (Matt. 11:29, 30.) This humility of mind and heart was, in many respects, 'the secret of His success. If He had not been humble, He would not have attained to the glorious station to which He was exalted.

There is a 'marked contrast between Jesus and Satan. The one thought to exalt himself, and the Other to humble Himself. (Isa, 14:13, 14; Phil. 2:8.) Satan said: "I will elevate myself above the other angels; I will be like the Most High, and exert such a power as He does. I could show the angels very great wisdom if I were in control of affairs." Inspired by this wrong spirit, Satan became ambitious to make an exhibition of what he could do.

The Scriptures give us to understand that Satan's inordinate desire to gain distinction was the secret of his fall.

Ambition is good, but only when it is based upon humility. Any spirit that does not respect God's Wisdom is indeed foolish.

Satan's spirit was one of ambition and pride. Already highly favoured of God as one of the highest rank of angels, he was not content with his great honours and blessings, but was desirous of attaining still greater influence and power than God had been pleased to grant him. This unlawful aspiration to obtain control led him not only to rebel against the Divine Government, but also to become the "murderer" (John 8:44) of our first parents, that he might gain control over them—the object of his ambition.

How short-sighted was the Adversary, that he should think to out-general Jehovah, and to exalt himself and erect a rival Kingdom! Soon Satan's folly will be manifested. When the Lord's due time shall come, the One who humbled Himself in obedience to the Father's will shall be exalted to kingly power and authority, to the position at the Father's right hand in the Kingdom of the Universe; but the one who attempted the usurpation shall be bound and utterly destroyed.

Our Lord Jesus took a different course from that of Satan. Instead of trying to exercise power He had supreme reverence for Jehovah. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God".- Following this course of humility in the presence of the great Eternal One, Jesus was loved of the Father as He would not have been if He had had a self-sufficient spirit. Under the Father's guidance He was humiliated. He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8) ; and after His death and resurrection He received the reward of the Divine nature. He became Heir of all the gracious promises of God's Word, "Heir of all things."—Heb. 1:2.

These two great examples afford us an impressive lesson. They show us that if we copy the ambitious and self-wise attitude of Satan, it will estrange us from God. We should realise the Wisdom of God and submit ourselves fully to His will. If we walk obediently in the footsteps of the Master, we shall attain

glory and honour with our Lord.

The Wisdom of God is foolishness with men. The people of this world are leaning to their own understanding.

People sometimes boast along this very line, saying, "I have some ideas of my own.- We all find that what we know is but very little and generally very incorrect. Experience is an excellent teacher.

The lessons that we have learned in the School of Christ are to a great extent those of humility, a great deal of which is required of pupils in that School. The path of life is so narrow that those who love the broad way would not think of walking in the narrow one. The Lord is allowing those who are self-conceited to turn aside. Even though they started out to walk in His way, they are permitted to go after their own foolish misunderstandings. If they continue in this course it will lead to their destruction.

As for the world, whether they live in Christian or in heathen lands, all shall come to a knowledge of the Truth. (1 Tim. 2:3, 4.) This knowledge will not be theoretical, for mankind will be brought to it through practical experience.

In fact the whole world is getting a great lesson now. When the New Dispensation is ushered in and the Truth is made plain, mankind will perceive how very foolish they have been. They will see the unwisdom of the greater part of their course. "For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish."—Isa. 29:14.

It will be a hard experience for mankind to realise what clumsy efforts they have made along different lines. If scientists and philosophers, when asked as to God, had said, "We do not know," they could have been respected for their honesty. But they have boasted about geology, evolution, etc., and have pretended to know all the secrets of the Universe. What shame will be theirs when confronted with the facts! It will be a severe chastisement for them to perceive how foolish they have been and to know that others are aware of their folly.

The truly noble soul feels humbled upon the borders of the vast unknown, thankfully accepts the Divine Revelation as to his nature, origin, destiny, etc., and patiently awaits the Lord's good time for a fuller understanding of all the mysteries of His wondrous grace.

We may well fancy that some of the great theologians who have taught with such positiveness what they do not know and what is contrary to the Bible, will feel very strange when they learn the Truth. Already this is true to some extent. They are ashamed of many of the theories of the past. Yet they still hold on to the creeds of nominal Christianity, but cover these up; accordingly, with such an attitude of heart, they make very little progress..

Leave All to God

“Spin cheerfully.
Not tearfully,
Though wearily you plod ;
Spin carefully,
Spin prayerfully.
But leave the thread to God.

“The shuttles of His purpose move
To carry out His own design;
Seek not too soon to disapprove
His work, nor yet assign

Dark motives, when, with silent dread,
You view each sombre fold;
For lo! within each darker thread,
There gleams a thread of gold.”

Selected.

“God hath not promised skies ever blue, Flower strewn pathways always for you. God hath not promised sun without rain, Joy without sorrow, peace without pain ; But He hath promised strength from above. Unfailing sympathy, undying love.”

—Selected.

Adding to Faith.

(2 Pet. 1:3-8).

(Convention Address)

THE first essential thing is, we must have faith, for you cannot add to anything that is nonexistent. In his epistles generally, Peter tells us much that assists in the establishment of a true faith, but when he comes to verse 5 in this passage he is instructing us further. He is not only solicitous that we have a proper faith, but that we demonstrate the fact in the proper manner. As James says, “we must be doers of the word, and faith without the proper works is dead--a useless thing (James 2:17). It is important to see that we must have the right kind of faith before we can add the things of which the apostle speaks.

Simply believing that there is a God and that there was a person in history, Jesus Christ, is of no avail. The devils believe after this manner and tremble (James 2:19), but it has no good effect upon their actions: it does not control them in any way. In their innermost selves nearly all men believe that there is a God, though some do not openly admit it, and most know nothing about Him. Multitudes still worship altars bearing inscriptions parallel to that of the Athenians in Paul’s day--“To the unknown God” (Acts 17:23).

God, by divine power, has given us all things necessary for the establishment of a true faith, as well as all things necessary enabling us to walk in the way of it and attain finally to the fulness of spiritual nature that He desires we should have. Let us review briefly some of the things that He has given us--

(1) He has given us Jesus as our Redeemer. He gave up His own dearly beloved Son for our sakes (while we were still sinners and totally unworthy). Without the ransom sacrifice of Christ we could have no faith in anything, except the certainty of death and extinction forever.

God further favoured us by opening the way of the high calling to us, the merit of Christ enabling us to enter into the required covenant with God—a covenant by sacrifice, presenting our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to Him; and whereby He showers His blessings upon us as His sons.

His divine power or the holy spirit has begotten us to a new nature — we became new creatures. He has opened our minds to receive and appreciate spiritual things, wonderful things that unregenerate men cannot receive (1 Cor. 2:14).

(1) He has given to us His Word which assists in the revelation of Himself—His glorious character; and shows us further how we can become like Him and be filled with spirit, a God like disposition. Further, He has promised and gives all the help and guidance we need to run the race for the prize of His high calling. Only Divine power could do all this.

A translation of the third verse of our passage is noted with great interest—“Accordingly, divine power has given us all things necessary for a godly life, through a glorious divine efficiency.” We do realise divine efficiency in all that pertains to our experiences here below, as we seek to become “partakers of the divine nature.” It is divine efficiency that orders and overrules our way so that we escape the corruption that is in the world through human frailty. It is divine efficiency that works all things together for good to_ them that love God—to Him be all the praise.

Retaining our faith in Christ as our Redeemer, we are to give all diligence to super-add the things that make us more and more pleasing to our Heavenly Father, and finally give us an abundant entrance into the kingdom.

Peter's thought seems similar to Paul's, where, in Phil. 2:12, he exhorts the Philippian Christians to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling." We know that no amount of works of themselves can accomplish salvation, and with the helps supplied we learn that this phrase means literally—"to work fully," "to accomplish" in the sense of completing.

God of His own will begat us with the Word of truth (James 1:18). Yes, we were begotten of God, and by His glorious, divine efficiency were provided with everything we needed to bring us to a condition where we could begin to help ourselves. Now, says the apostle, continue this work that God began in you, until it is complete—work out your salvation with fear and trembling; not slavish fear, but as one translates it "continual earnest anxiety," that is constantly watchful in respect of our spiritual development, fearful of allowing any slackness or spirit of indifference to creep over us. The adding to our faith that Peter exhorts, seems to be one and the same work that Paul alludes to as working out your salvation to completion; both apostles agree that it will result in an abundant entrance to the kingdom.

Let us note briefly but carefully "these things." First, we are to add to our already established faith—virtue. The translation is poor, for the word means firmness, courage. It is necessary to have a genuine faith, to know what we believe and then be courageous and firm in standing by it. We must not be like those of 'the parable who endured only until they began to experience persecution, difficulty and trial (Matt. 13:5. 20, 21). Whatever the trials and difficulties we meet in connection with our Christian faith and walk, we must learn to meet them with firmness and courage. We must be careful, however, that our firmness is for proper principles in connection with the true faith.

Add to your courage—knowledge. It is possible to be firm and courageous for "a faith", even to the extent of going to the gallows or being burned at the stake and yet accomplish little. In Paul's day there were some who had "great zeal for God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). These were punctilious in observance of rites, ceremonials, ritual, but were woefully lacking in knowledge of God's true character, and the reverence and worship He desires. It is incumbent upon us to diligently enquire and learn about God, His character and plans or purposes regarding ourselves and all men. This implies a thorough study of His Word which He has given us for the purpose. This study serves also as an antidote against the worldly influences which continually tend to stimulate the old nature, and helps us to appreciate more deeply spiritual things and provides the help we need to enable us to become doers of it — showing our faith by our works.

Thus, add to knowledge—temperance. Again the translation does not do full justice to the word, which means selfcontrol. Professed faith and love for God, attained with any degree of knowledge and courage, but which does not control the person, is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. A genuine Christian realises that he or she is a new creature, that old things and desires have passed away, and that God does not now judge us for inherited weaknesses of the flesh, but readily accepts the will for the deed. The heart intention is the thing that matters. However, He does expect and require of us that we practise the new life in the old bodies. Self-control could be defined as the new creature practising on the old mortal body, using it as the servant of the new mind. Paul viewed it that way when he spoke of subduing his own body, bringing it into the proper subjection. (1 Cor. 9:27.) The writer of Proverbs spoke truly when he said, "He that hath no rule (control) over his own spirit (mind, disposition) is like a city without walls" (open to every form of attack). (Prov. 25:28.)

Add to self-control—patience. The A.V. rendering again fails of the best meaning; "persevering endurance" is much better. We often associate the word "patience" with a passive state or condition—waiting, or inactivity. But the word used here has almost an opposite meaning—a persevering endurance through trial, difficulty, affliction, opposition, etc. In Rom. 2:7 we have similar words translated "patient continuance"—a much better translation. In Rom. 8:25 the word is used again. This does not mean

inactivity, but a hope that stirs us to action; in line with Paul's word in 1 Cor. 15:58—steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as we know (a very decided hope) that such labour is not in vain in the Lord. Also please read Rev. 1:9 where the word occurs again. John was not there because of inactivity. In Heb. 10:36 we see that we have need of persevering endurance that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise. We are not to serve the Lord in fits and starts, or slacken off when facing trial or difficulty.

Add to persevering endurance—godliness. This means “a great reverence for God”. It implies “earnest desire” or great carefulness in seeking to do His will. The fact that we are to add this to persevering endurance suggests that it is not merely stoicism in facing trial and difficulty, but must have its rise in our reverence for, and appreciation of, the Lord. It is possible to exhibit a tenacity or persevering endurance, in labours professedly for the Lord, yet withal they are really for a sectarian organisation or a religious denomination—work that does not arise out of a deep reverence for the Lord and His Word, therefore not done in true godliness. If we add to our faith courage, knowledge, selfcontrol and persevering endurance, based on a deep or supreme reverence for God, we will surely be found demonstrating our faith acceptably both before God and men—we will in the very best sense of the term “be showing our faith by our works.”

And further we are to add to our piety or deep reverence for God—brotherly kindness. The R.V. better expresses it “love of the brethren”. True reverence for God implies appreciation in the fullest sense of those chosen by Him to be His sons; and so we have the matter squarely before us. Read 1 John 4:20 (first portion) . In these last days of the age we cannot overstress the importance of loving the brethren, by doing our utmost to assist and comfort them in the Lord. From the very beginning we have had this message—that we love one another (1 John 3:11) . Let us fully appreciate the fact that it is God who has chosen each individual member of the body of Christ, and bear to each the proper love. Note also the connection with the early portion of the next verse of John—“let us love one another, not as Cain”. The special characteristic of Cain was jealousy. He was jealous because his brother's offering was more acceptable to God than his own. Beware of jealousy in every form.

To love of the brethren, add charity (or love) . This refers to love in its widest scope—in its fulness; a love that extends to those who are unlovely in character, yes, even to our enemies. Not only to those whom we know regard us with enmity, but who do not interfere with us unduly ; but love also towards those who openly, maliciously, persecute and spitefully use us. The mark of perfect love—how many sermons have been preached on it, and how many of God's earnest people have hung on their words expectantly, that they might find some aid in its ever elusive acquirement? There is nothing new to tell; we can only continue looking to Jesus and His example “who while we were yet sinners died for us. ‘ The constant “considering him who suffered such contradiction of sinners against himself” is the only known way of cultivating a similar spirit—love in its fulness.

If we can add to our faith these things, if we possess and manifest these characteristics, it will show (as verse 8 says) that we have not been inactive, but that we have been diligent in their cultivation with the Lord's help, and that we are bearing fruit pleasing to Him. And let all who desire to make this growth, diligently continue despite their heartrending failures. Our Advocate stands ever by to help us, and at long last we shall find an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom.

Passover Memorial, 1954.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Good Friday; after sundown on Friday evening, the 16th of April, will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by all true followers of the Master.

Memorial Services.

The following Memorial Services have been arranged, at which all sincere believers in the ransom sacrifice of Christ will be welcome.

Melbourne.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall. 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 7 p.m., at Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street. Adelaide

Sydney.—Good Friday, 16th April. at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right side of Boulevard, only 10 minutes' walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Perth.—Good Friday, 16th April, at 5.30 p.m., at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, corner Hay and Pier Streets, Perth. **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention is to be held again this year, commencing on Good Friday, 16th April, and continuing till Easter Monday evening (D.V.). The gatherings will be held in the Builders and Contractors Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and a hearty invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these meetings. Further information may be obtained from the Convention Secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

“Christ's Return.”—This 38-page booklet which took the place of January, 1954, “Peoples Paper” has been warmly appreciated by readers. It is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

Correspondence.

New Zealand.

The Berean Bible Institute, Melbourne recently received two copies of your Truth Publication the "Peoples Paper"

(the first I have ever seen), from Brother -----, and seeing much in them that may be helpful in my own studies I now desire to subscribe to your little paper myself.

To this effect I have sent to your nearest Post Office, Kew, Victoria, 1 in Australian currency for one year's subscription, which I understand to be about 4/6 per annum, the remainder of which you may use as you think fit.

I would be very obliged if you could commence posting your paper to the above address as soon as you found it convenient, for although I have known of the Blessed Hope through that wonderful old book, "The Divine Plan of the Ages" for 10 years, I have only during the past year met others of like mind, the Truth coming to me through reading old copies of Scripture Studies rather than through personal approach from others in the Narrow Way.

As you were asking for useful postage stamps, I have included some I have recently received on a letter from earthly Israel and post-marked Jerusalem.

Thanking you, and looking forward to your little publication. I am, yours in Christian bonds.

New Zealand.

Berean Bible Institute, Melbourne, Dear Friends —Would you please send me a copy of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and any other Bible Helps which you think will help me in study: also any other literature on prayer which you can spare. I am sorry to say I am in prison, where I will be for two more years, so if you have any books which you think will improve and strengthen, I shall be very pleased to receive same. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours sincerely.

Tasmania.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—We received the December issue of "Peoples Paper" and with it your booklet "Christ's Return" which took the place of January's issue of the "Peoples Paper." The wife and I think this a splendid idea as we were most interested in this very important subject, and you explain everything so clearly; we thank you very much for it.

We think our subscription for your "Peoples Paper" must be close up, so we are forwarding you a postal note for £

1, and would you kindly post to us your booklet "What is the Christian's Sabbath?", also a copy of Frank and Ernest talk for last Sunday. We listen every Sunday morning with deep interest to Frank and Ernest. We get splendid and very clear broadcasts from 3GL, and we enjoy your very sincere Dialogues and we believe they will greatly help to make Australians a better living people. We wish you a very happy and successful year. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Christian Friends—Would you kindly send me a copy of your address given this morning, concerning the age of the human race. A visitor called and I was not able to hear it completely; I

would not like to miss the interesting evidence that you gave.

Also if you have any old copies concerning -The Two Salvations” I am curious to read up on that subject. It is rather different to thoughts usually presented. Thanking you for your kindly offer to send this material. Yours sincerely.

Dear Sir—I listened with great interest to your broadcast to-day, and would like a copy of same. I am amazed in this so-called age of enlightenment that men are so easily deluded. One set of scientists claim the earth is 100,000,000 years old: others say that is not true, it is 50,000,000. Why will men be so blind: study of the Word of God is the paramount need to-day. I shall be looking forward to the copy of the address. Thanking you in anticipation; I remain, Yours in service of the Master.

Dear Sirs--I have been listening to your discussions on the Bible for a number of mornings now, and find them very interesting. I would like if possible to have a copy of any of your past Dialogues which may be available and also a copy of last Sunday's—"The Keys of Hell." I would appreciate it also if you could send me the booklets "God and Reason," and "Hope Beyond the Grave.- Thanking you; Yours faithfully.

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/. post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book. '—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10 / - post paid.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

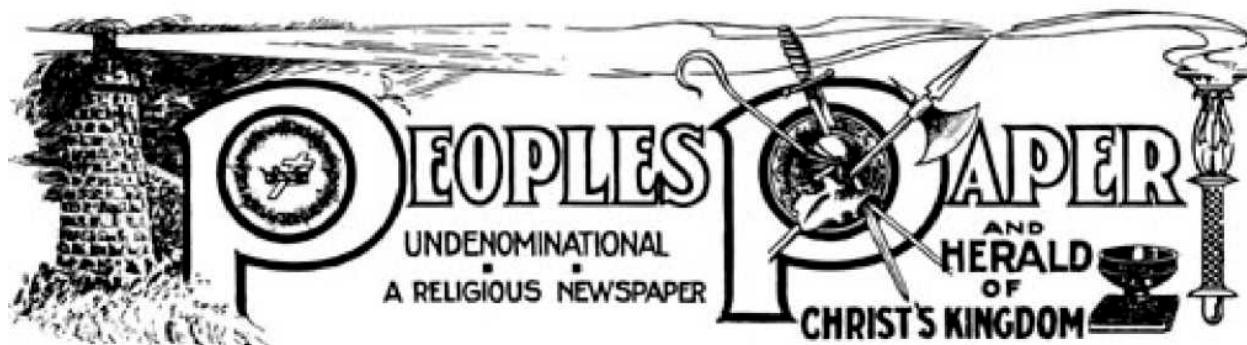
Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. 4.45 p.m.

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Christ Our Passover.

(1. Cor. 5:7, 8. Memorial Address.)

DURING recent times we have considered one of the greatest transactions that has occurred in the history of mankind. Nevertheless, not many of the human family are aware, as yet, of this most important of all dramas which over nineteen centuries ago ended on Calvary's Hill. But the called out people, those separated unto God, gather again in all parts of the world in remembrance of this occasion, and how impressive and inspiring it is to celebrate this important event on its anniversary.

The great men of this world wish to be remembered because they lived; but this Man—"The man of sorrows," despised and rejected of men," —asked to be remembered because He died. "By this loaf and cup, ye show forth the Lord's death." "This do in remembrance of me," said Jesus.

The precise time of this great event had been typified for centuries with careful precision by God-given instructions as to the day and the hour, and our Lord Jesus several times declared—"My hour is not yet come." But when instituting the Memorial of His own approaching death as the antitypical Passover Lamb, He waited, "and when the hour was come he sat down with his disciples to eat the Passover lamb." "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) This was strictly observed at the appointed time—not any time, but as a supper; not any day, but on its anniversary—the appointed month, day and evening.

Every age has connected misery with guilt, anguish with iniquity, suffering with sin. It was in vain that suffering Job protested his innocence; his friends insisted that his sufferings were because of his sins. A man was born blind and the question was asked—"Did this man sin or his parents?" "Neither this man nor his parents," Jesus replied.

The verdict passed upon the sufferings of Jesus by the thoughtless crowd was put into their mouths by one of their prophets—"We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted . . . We hid as it were our faces from him." (Isa. 53:4, 3.) One of their leaders announced—"He is guilty of blasphemy and worthy of death." But all the while Jesus opened not His mouth; He was silent before His judges except when His refusal to speak might appear as compromising the truth. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.- Why this speechlessness? In part it was due to the Saviour's clear apprehension of the futility of arguing with those who were bent on crucifying Him; due also to His quiet rest and peaceful submission to the will of His Father. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and

assurance for ever.” (Isa. 32:17.) He anticipated the hour when His Father would arise and give Him complete vindication.

Our Lord’s silence was also due to the fact that He carried within Himself the Divine solution of the mystery of human guilt. All the world, Jew and Gentile, stood guilty before God. As children of Adam none was righteous: Jesus knew the purpose of the Levitical dispensation; that its sacrifices and sprinkling and pouring of blood gave meaning to His own approaching death and brought to view the great law of the transference of human guilt. He realised that He was the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

There is no injustice done in such a transference of guilt, for Jesus’ act of self-sacrifice and death on account of others was quite voluntary. “No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself.” (John 10:18.) He could afford to be dumb until He had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, nailing it to His cross. “Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in himself” (Col. 2:14, 15.) Time would vindicate Him presently. What He carried as a secret in His heart, and that which His closest disciples could not understand then, would soon be proclaimed from the housetops. -By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” (Isa. 53:11.)

Those who are called to follow in the steps of Christ, to lay down their lives in sacrifice, also need to learn this lesson of silent suffering and submission under misrepresentation. We are often quick to pass the story of wrongs done us into the ears of man, complaining of every slight and injury. We forget that God is waiting in the shadows, keeping watch upon His own and is sure to bring your righteousness into the light and your judgment as the noon day. Our present example is in Christ; when He was reviled He reviled not again. “Here unto are ye called, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.”

Our Lord humbled Himself even to the shameful death of the cross, wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name. God vindicated Him. “He hath borne our sin,” “therefore he (Jehovah) shall divide him a portion with the great (Jehovah), and he (Jesus) shall divide the spoil with the strong (with His followers and joint heirs).” (Isa. 53 :12.)

There is no need to prove that the common lot of man is suffering, sin and death. It has long been declared, “that by one man sin entered the world and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom.:12.) Centuries before the wear and tear and sorrows of modern life began, it was declared, “Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.” Behind these sufferings there is a sense of guilt, of disobedience to right rules of action. Man tries to evade the consciousness of guilt by plunging into gaiety, dissipation, travel, adventure and ceaseless change. The sense of sin covers the world with altars, temples and churches, and wheresoever a man is found some religious rites and sacrifices betray the heavy sense of sin, but death overtakes all.

The Son of God died also; He too was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But His death was the notable exception, “because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit found in his mouth.” (Isa. 53:9.) His life was searched with scrutinising care to discover a single flaw to justify His condemnation. The, traitor could not find any; charges were trumped up, by scribes and Pharisees, but evidence did not harmonise; while Pilate and Herod asserted His absolute faultlessness. None could meet His challenge—”Which of you convinceth me of sin?” Why, then, did

He suffer and die? Had not the Law declared--He that doeth this law shall live by it”? The secret of His death was contained in that vast system of Levitical sacrifices which foreshadowed the “offering of the body of Jesus once for all.” Year by year innocent, spotless victims surrendered their lives prematurely; their blood flowed freely for no fault of their own, but for the sins of those who brought them to the altar

of God. “Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins,” and it is most obvious that these died for the sins of others, typically cleansing them.

There are many instances, among mankind who will suffer for others. Does not a father suffer for his son as he strips himself to poverty to pay his foolish debts; does not a doctor suffer for the sins of others when he himself is stricken down in an effort to rescue another from disease caused by violating the laws of health. Thousands have died in the effort to rescue others from fire and flood. Soldiers are highly esteemed who lay down lives for the freedom and protection of their loved ones. These imperfect illustrations reveal in a measure how the Saviour of mankind poured out His life unto death for others. “When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet for a good man some will dare to die . . . When we were sinners Christ died for us . . . We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” (Rom. 5:6-10.) And in due time all will come to see, as the Prophet Isaiah predicted, that He bore our grief and carried our sorrows—died for our sins.

His was a voluntary death for the cancellation of the sins of the world. “He was made sin for us, though he knew no sin.” He was willing that the transfer of guilt should be upon Him; He was willing to give all He had to buy the field and the treasure hid in the field. “Through this one act of righteousness the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” “To this end Christ died and rose, that he might be the Lord (Controller) of the dead and living.” (Rom. 14:9.) The perfect man Adam had sinned, and we were all involved in Him, though yet unborn; the perfect Man, Christ Jesus, became the corresponding or ransom price for the purchase and release of all from the original condemnation. It is strange, but true, that the saddest, darkest day that ever broke upon this world (when even nature shrouded itself in literal darkness for three hours) is destined to cure the sadness and scatter the darkness for evermore.

The death of the Son of God was no ordinary incident, but distinguished from all other deaths, martyrdoms and sacrifices in its unique and lonely grandeur—the one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. With a loud shout of triumph the Sinbearer cried, “It is finished,” and He expired. Having purchased the world He now possesses the right, in due time, to cancel the world’s condemnation and raise them to perfection and reconcile them to God.

We have the writer of Hebrews pointing to the sacrifice of bulls and goats which accomplished only typical cleansing of sin once a year. “But now, by Christ’s own blood he has entered in once into the holies, having obtained eternal redemption. It is the blood of Christ (the sacrifice of His perfect, human life) who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, that purges your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” (Heb. 9:12-14.) Adam had broken the law of obedience and offended God. Hence we read, Christ offered Himself to God, which satisfies the demands of the law which stood against Adam. But “thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” “therefore in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Suffering alone would not accomplish our redemption. From the time sin entered the world, God had intimated that the death of another only could accomplish the release from the condemnation of His broken law—the death of a sinless one. None among the human family could be found who could give a ransom for his brother; none was righteous. This offer was made to the Son of God, for we read (John 1:14), “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth.” His motto was, “I come to do thy will, O God . . . By which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Heb. 10:9, 10.) He stood before the universe charged with the sins of the human race and their consequences. The great Sinbearer allowed Himself to be numbered with the transgressors, not as natural but as sympathetically one with them. He tasted death for every man; He was identified with sin, its shame, suffering and penalty. He deemed Himself forsaken of God. In that one act of the cross He put away sin, exhausted the penalty, wiped out the guilt, and laid the foundation of a deliverance which, in its time, will include the whole human race. He appeared in the presence of God first for His church.

He was the antitype of the bulls which were killed year after year to make atonement for Aaron and his house. His suffering and travail of soul, and pouring out of life unto death cast a new light on the continuation of pain, sorrow and sacrifice.

May it not be that there are other sufferings and sacrifices which in a lower measure are also redemptive, fulfilling Divine purpose in the lives of others? Yes, we do find it so stated in type and antitype. To the sacrifice of the bull must be added another sacrifice—a rather insignificant animal, a goat. And Aaron had to do with its blood the same as was done with the blood of the bull; namely, take the blood and sprinkle it on and before the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. This was done on the appointed day, the Atonement Day, once a year. The blood of these two animals accomplished the typical cleansing of Israel—the bull for the priests and Levites, the goat for the remainder of Israel—one sacrifice in two parts, once a year.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews points back to the blood of these animals and says,, Heb. 9:23,24,— ‘Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens (the tabernacle) should be purified (typically) with these, but the heavenly things themselves (the antitype) with better sacrifices than these.’ In like manner as Aaron went into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the blood, so Christ once in the end of the Jewish Age, has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Why then does the Apostle Paul refer to his own sufferings because of his loyalty to Christ, as the “filling up (the Greek word here means “supplement”) that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”? (Col. 1:24) The Greek word rendered “behind” means “a deficit, also poverty”. “Fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ.” (E.R.V.) The Apostle also reminded the Roman Christians (Rom. 15:16) of the favour given him of God that he should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel -of God, that the offering up or sacrificing of the Gentiles might be acceptable to God. Does it not seem that those who are in Christ as members of His body, yielding their bodies voluntary sacrifices, suffering with Him, bearing their cross, dying with Him as a part of the Christ, are also acceptable to God, and used by Him in due time to sanctify the people? If not, we might ask the same question as Paul (1 Cor. 15:29). “Why are we then baptized (giving ourselves in consecration) for the dead, if the dead are not to benefit?” The Apostle was sure that there was a purpose in our call to be sacrificers which would be to the advantage of the dead world when raised to life again. “Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people (this includes the dead, too) with his own blood suffered without the gate. Let us go forth, therefore, unto Jesus without the camp, bearing his reproach.- The sacrifice of Christ’s body members is acceptable to God because of the merit, the all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus, the Perfect One. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

In 1 Cor. 10:16, 17 the Apostle Paul seems to link these two sacrifices together as one. “The cup of blessing which we, bless, is it not the communion (participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion (participation) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” There is a sharing, a communion, in the sufferings of Christ, and there is a sharing with Him in the future glory, honour and exaltation. We cannot have the crown without the cross; let us go with Him, bearing His reproach. This is the purpose of our consecration; His grace will enable us to fulfil it, even unto death. Let us examine ourselves: are we fulfilling our consecration—dead to self, dead to the world? How much will we suffer, endure and sacrifice in doing God’s will? -For if we be dead with him we shall also live with him. If we suffer with him we shall reign with him.” Soon this offer will close; soon the elect will be complete and glorified. Let us give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. “Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” (Gal. 6:9.)

We do become weary. The Lord Jesus Christ knew how to speak a word in season to those who are

weary, for He Himself, was weary. He too passed through each class in the school of weariness. Being wearied with His journey He sat by Sychar's Well. On another occasion "they took him even as he was, unto the ship." He looked up to heaven and sighed because of the pressure of human pain, and the obstinacy of unbelief. He suffered being tempted, and once cried in the bitterness of His soul—"How long shall I be with you and suffer you.- And though possessed of inexhaustible patience there was an incessant waste of physical tissues beneath which at last He fainted on the way to Calvary. Yes, He was weary.

Multitudes of all nations pass through this school of weariness, physical weariness, mental weariness, heart weariness,—the weariness of the Christian conflict of striving day by day against selfishness entrenched in us; the works of the flesh, its waywardness and weakness; unbelief, a conflict which is tedious, incessant, painful and terribly wearying. We sigh for a quiet place over whose portals Christ has written, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.- No one ever comforted the weary as He did. "Never man spake like this man." The sheep knew the voice of the Shepherd, From whence did He derive this matchless power? We have it recorded of Him—"The Lord God gave it me."

From Isa. 50:4-10 we quote—"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned (R.V.—of disciples that are taught) that I should know how to speak a word in season (to sustain with words—R.V.) to him that is weary." His education was by God Himself in the school of pain and weariness. As He said, "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father taught me, I speak these things." "I am a man that told you the truth which I heard from God.- (John 8:28, 40.), Isa 50:4—"The Lord God . . . waketh (me) morning by morning, he waketh my ear to hear as they that are taught." The care and loving attention of His Father was constant—"morning by morning."

Would that we were quicker to detect the same awakening touch, and learn the lessons taught by the circumstances of our lot as to the treatment of the weary and suffering. It is not easy to know just when and how to speak to the weary. There are times when the nervous system is so overstrained that it cannot bear even the softest words. Our Master knew, when to speak and when to be still, because He graduated there.

Verses 5 to 7 speak to us of His invincible resolution, which set His face like a flint, and knew that it would not be ashamed. Throughout the Book of Isaiah He is called the servant of Jehovah. "He bath opened mine ear." This is supposed to refer to the ancient custom of boring through the ear of a slave or servant, thus signifying that such was willing to remain forever the servant of his master. The Lord Jesus placed Himself voluntarily and with keen sympathy and readiness in the service of His Father, whatever it might involve, because He loved Him and would not go out free. This devotion of love bound Him to the cross.

The will of God is that men shall live,—"Why will ye die?" But the servant of Jehovah was born that He might die. From His birth the shadow of the cross fell over His life; death pursued Him; as soon as He was born. "The Son of man must be lifted up,- like the serpent in the wilderness. Though He anticipated all that would be involved in His devotion to God's will, we hear Him saying in verse 5, "I was not rebellious, nor turned away back." This is absolutely voluntary surrender. The martyr dies because he cannot help it. Christ died because He chose to do so—no one took His life from Him. He might have been rebellious, or turned away back, or called for twelve legions of angels. But no; listen to His words—Thy will not mine be done."

This stirs our hearts with admiration and devotion, as we see Him deliberately give His back to the smiters and His cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and expose His face to shame and spitting, a face from which the present heaven and earth shall flee away. He triumphed in the confidence that the Lord

God would help Him, as we read in verse 8, "He is near that justified me." These are words upon which Jesus may have stayed Himself during those long, weary hours of trial. The Father who sent Him was with Him. This may be understood as "He is near that vindicates me; who will contend with me?" Who will condemn me? The Apostle Paul quotes these words in Rom. 8:33. With us, this is an imputed righteousness, but with the Divine Servant it is the Lord God who vindicates Him, because of His righteous and faithful conduct.

Christ contemplated His vindication before all nations. They said He blasphemed when He called Himself the Son of God. But God justified Him by raising Him to the right hand of power, and from whence He comes again in power and great glory, and all nations shall serve and obey Him. But His enemies, verse 9—"Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up."

Verse 10 is an appeal.—"Who among you that feareth the Lord, that obey the voice of His Servant, that walk in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Those who fear, reverence and obey the Lord may also be called to walk through darkness where there is no light. It may be even in the valley of the shadow of death, or garden of Gethsemane. But from the depth of His own experience Jehovah's Servant counsels such that they should trust where they cannot see, and stay themselves upon God. "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." "I shall not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn they went out."

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A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue,

Convention News from Adelaide.

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide was once again a happy and helpful season of spiritual fellowship. The blessing and presence of the Lord was much in evidence at each gathering during the four days from Good Friday to Easter Monday. A good number of visiting brethren from Victoria and some from New South Wales were welcomed in our midst, and their presence contributed greatly to the general helpfulness and blessings derived from the gatherings.

It was good to see the earnest, loving zeal of the various members, as they endeavoured to encourage us in the heavenly way. This applies not only to the brethren who spoke to us in their addresses etc., but also to those who participated in the Bible studies and fellowship meetings with helpful thoughts and Scriptural exhortations.

The Convention opened with the address of welcome on Good Friday, as a Brother with some well chosen words bade our visiting friends welcome to- the gatherings. As the Memorial of our Lord's death was to be kept on Good Friday evening a Bible study on 1 Cor. 11:23-32 claimed our attention during the afternoon session. A short report of our Memorial Service appears elsewhere in these columns, so reference need not be made to it again here.

Each day our gatherings opened with praise and prayer, and we had some very helpful Bible studies in Rev. 2:1-7; Rom. 12:9-18 and 1 Pet. 1:1-9. Also a Question Meeting and Praise and Testimony Meetings added to the general helpfulness of the Convention.

Various brethren spoke to us, giving of their best to exhort and encourage us in the narrow way to life. The topics for these addresses were as follows:—"Some Thoughts on Dan. 7:27"; "Joseph"; "My Father Knows"; "Earthquakes (the First Easter and Since), What Do They Mean?"; "Keep Yourselves in the Love of God": "At the Time of the End" and The Protection of the Lord.-

The days seemed to pass all too quickly, and at the closing feature we all bade each other goodbye with the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," and "God be with you till we meet again." The Convention closed with prayer of thanks to God for the many blessings received, and with the desire that we may be able to retain the good thoughts, and so our spiritual lives may be enriched as we go on our way to our heavenly Home.

During the Convention we received many messages of love and goodwill from brethren throughout the Commonwealth, wishing us God's blessing at the gatherings. These messages were much appreciated, and the message sent from the Convention to the various Classes and brethren is contained in the words of the Apostle Peter in 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

The Christian's Contact.

The whole Christian life is found in our making vital contact with God and in keeping the contact. There is no more apt illustration of this than the electric tramcar we see in our streets. The car with its overhead arm is united to the cable through which flows the power of the dynamos in the power-house. Have you watched such a car reach a terminus and observed the conductor disconnect the arm? Out go the lights!—and all the vibrating, pulsating power has ceased. The car is a dead, dark, useless thing; it has no power to move. But round comes the arm to make contact again, and up go the lights!—and throb, throb, throb the vehicle rocks with its renewed power. Light in us—light of hope, light of joy, light of faith; and Power—power of God to intervene, through us, in the world around us become our wonderful and thrilling experience, when we are living in right relationship with God. Let each praying Christian determine what that right relationship with God is, and keep it as the most valuable service he can render to fellow Christians and all with whom he comes in contact. —Selected.

Used Postage Stamps.

Used postage stamps of all varieties can be sold to support the truth work. Friends willing to assist may forward all the Australian stamps they can procure, as well as other stamps, leaving at least a quarter of an inch of paper around the stamps ; that is, do not remove stamps from the paper.

(Quite a number of friends have sent in used postage stamps; would all please accept sincere thanks for their efforts in this way.)

Concordances

Some copies of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 17/1216.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE Melbourne brethren gladly gathered together on the night of 16th April to remember again the great sacrifice of our dear Saviour. L. was with hearts full of solemn thoughts that we approached this time of the year, having had our minds refreshed on the important events that led up to the crucifixion of our dear Master by appropriate studies on previous Sundays.

The order of service, commencing with hymn 438 (B.S. Hymnal) and prayer (in which the Lord's people who everywhere at nearly the same time would be remembering Him were brought before the throne of grace) seemed to take us in a special way to that "upper room.-

Singing of hymn 345 and readings from Matt. 26:17-53 and John 18:28 to John 19:30 brought before our minds the great love of our Lord for His people, and also our responsibility to share with Him the way of the cross.

Hymn 280 was then sung, after which the Memorial address was given, in which special mention was made of the significance of the Memorial in type and antitype, and calling to mind the many blessings which are ours as a result of the Lord's sacrifice.

The singing of hymn 2 was then followed by the simple order of service as followed by our Lord in Mark 14:22,

23, 26, in 'which all gladly partook of the emblems which our Lord requested should be used to represent His body and blood, first of all "in remembrance of Him," and also showing our willingness to sacrifice with Him, to suffer with Him that we may also live with 'Him.

Hymn 414 brought the service to a conclusion with the triumphal words of verse 4 still ringing in our ears and joy in our hearts, in the knowledge that the Saviour's work of redemption was not in vain, but that soon -the joyful sound will be heard through all the nations round," "when he shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied." (Isa. 53:11.)

Adelaide.

It was a privilege once again to observe the Memorial of our Saviour's death, in accordance with His request that we "do this" in remembrance of Him. In keeping the Memorial we are reminded that all our hopes of life and blessing are centered in Him who "bore our sins in his own body on the tree."

After reading appropriate Scriptures and singing hymns in keeping with the occasion, a Brother spoke to us regarding the importance and value of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Also we were reminded of the privilege which is ours of sharing in the sufferings of Christ at the present time. As members of the Body of Christ we have fellowship with our Lord at the present time, and rejoice to be permitted to share in His sufferings now, and look forward to the Kingdom Age, when, if faithful unto death, we may be permitted to share with our Lord and Head in His great work of uplift and blessing for all mankind.

It was a pleasure to have the presence and fellowship of about ten members from Victoria and New South Wales, who were visiting us for the Easter Convention. During the Service, prayers of thanks were offered to our Heavenly Father for the many blessings and favours which come to us through Christ, and especially for His goodness and mercy again at this Memorial season, and we seek His grace to enable us to serve Him more acceptably and wholeheartedly in the days that lie ahead. Also our earnest prayers

were for all the Lord's dear people everywhere, known and unknown to us, who, like ourselves, were keeping the Memorial of our Saviour's death. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

Perth.

We celebrated our Lord's Memorial on the evening of the 16th of April. We all thought how privileged we were to be of the Lord's followers whom He has invited to share with Him all that He passed through, symbolised by the bread and wine. We remembered our Lord in His sufferings on man's behalf, and how He was wounded for our transgressions. He gave His soul an offering for sin, and asked His disciples to do likewise, and have that communion or participation with Him in all things.

We partook of the emblems with solemnity, realising that it means death of our humanity, which we give over to crucify, and that the emblems are a symbol of greater issues in our lives. Gladly we would "this do in remembrance of Me," as the Lord enjoined: gladly we would symbolise our covenant of sacrifice with our Lord after recognising His supreme sacrifice on Calvary, and His cleansing blood giving us justification with God. About twelve partook of the emblems with another little group partaking at Fremantle.

Tasmania.

On 16th April four of us gathered together to celebrate the Memorial at the appropriate time after sundown on the 14th of Nisan. Our studies and thoughts were centered around the passages of Scripture found in 1 'Cor. 5:7; 10:16; Luke 22:14-16 and Exodus 12.

Very helpful thoughts were put forward by each one present on the subject under consideration, and on the obligation of each of us to examine our own hearts over the past 12 months and to resolve with determination to be more watchful in this the beginning of the Christians' new year in things wherein we had been weak in 1953. All God's true people throughout the world were remembered at the throne of grace, as they gathered together in various parts to "Do this in remembrance of Me." Truly a blessed and helpful time was spent by us all.

Sydney.

Brethren and Sisters to the number of thirteen attended our Memorial. After singing the hymn "In memory of our Saviour's love," the chairman offered up a brief prayer and then gave an address of welcome to the assembled friends. Then, after considering the typical lesson of Exodus 12, and comparing with the great antitype, we spoke about our own unworthiness of so great an exaltation as God was offering us were it not that our Lord by His own blood had made good our deficiency, for we were sinners even as others before this grace came to us. We spoke about the redemption provided in His precious blood and broken body, not only for us, but also for the whole world, and we were astonished at so great a love and mercy. We remembered our high calling, and how God, through His holy spirit speaking to us in His Bible, had given us this knowledge, and which must now ripen in us the fruit of love. In this way we came to realise that humility is the very heart and centre of consecration.

We resolved that we would walk in His footsteps humbly, as He set us the example, and that we would continue together in the bonds of love. After a Brother had prayed over the bread, and another over the cup, the emblems were partaken of, and after the singing of the hymn "Man of Sorrows," we quietly dispersed.

Canberra.

The small group of friends at Canberra participated in the celebration of our dear Lord's Memorial on the night of 16th April. At the Service it was emphasized that at the inauguration of the Passover the atmosphere was one of solemnity and fear. When the Master celebrated the Passover with His disciples and afterwards inaugurated the Memorial for the antitype of the Passover lamb, the occasion also was one of apprehension and foreboding, hence His words of comfort—"Let not your hearts be troubled." (John 14 :1.)

Over the years this Memorial has been lovingly and reverentially kept, but it was stressed that never was there an occasion such as April, 1954, when the surrounding world conditions justified a solemnity and a deportment in keeping with the expectation of the imminence of the disintegration of the "world that now is." Hence, how timely the exhortation,—''Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all conversation and godliness.'' •

Glenbrook, N.S.W.

On Friday evening April the 16th once again, under the Lord's guidance and blessing, we had the privilege of partaking of the Memorial Supper. It was a time of great refreshment and blessing to the six brethren present as we viewed the accounts of the Memorial Supper given us in the Scriptures.

We thanked God in prayer that with all the dear Israel of God throughout the world we once again were privileged to partake of this solemn feast, and to realise that our present Lord was with us in spirit. Our closing hymn was, "Take my life and may it be, Lord acceptable to Thee."

Queensland.

We were a very small company this ,year, but we met together in the spirit of unity and the bonds of peace—Brother --, Sister and myself. We had a nice meeting, opening by singing hymn 166 in Bible Students Hymnal,

followed by prayer, and then remarks on how it was our privilege to meet together to keep the Memorial of our Lord's death in obedience to His request, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Then we read Exod. 12:1-14 and explained the various points in the chapter. The firstborns were spared alive, but to receive protection they must be under the blood. Then, respecting the antitypical Lamb, we read Isa. 53, and on to "Behold the Lamb of God," and Paul's various references to the subject, and we finished with Matt. 26 for the emblems, asking the Lord's blessing on both, and after partaking, we sang hymn 42.

The Camel.

The camel at the close of day,
Kneels down upon the sandy plain,
To have his burden lifted off
And rest again.

My son. thou. too, should'st to thy knees.
When twilight draweth to a close,
And let thy Master lift thy load,
And grant repose.

The camel kneels at break of day
To have his guide replace his load
Then rises up anew to take
The desert road.

So should'st thou kneel at morning dawn
That God may give thee daily care,
Assured that He no load too great
Will make thee bear.

--Selected.

Think of all He has done for us. Be happy. Weep, but let them be tears of thankfulness.

—Charles Kingsley. The Water of Life.

Thirst

A party of surveyors had been sent out in order to survey the forest of Florida. The weather was hot, and the air was stifling under the trees, and the poor men were almost dying of thirst.

“I would give anything,” said one of them, “for a swallow of water.”

He had hardly said the words before he saw a bird pierce its beak through a swollen leaf—a kind of bladder leaf—which belongs to a peculiar tree called the air-tree. So the surveyors slit open one of these leaves, and out flowed a mouthful of cool, refreshing water.

They had been ready to die of thirst while all around in the leaves there was water sufficient to supply all their needs.

How many there are in the great world to-day just longing for a little of the water of life, a little knowledge of God and His great Plan of Salvation, a little understanding as to why a God of love can permit the present conditions of injustice and cruelty, sin, sorrow and wickedness. They, like this party of surveyors, know not where the refreshing draught can be obtained, and yet it is so near. The water of truth is so clear, so simple, so pure and so refreshing. What a privilege to be like the bird in the story, to pierce the leaf and let the stream flow, be refreshed ourselves and show those who thirst for righteousness and truth and the knowledge of God where and how to be filled and be satisfied. “Oh, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters and he that hath no money come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.” How many there are who discard all religion because they cannot understand matters which are so easily explained if they would but search.

“Knock, and it shall be opened,” “Seek and ye shall find.”

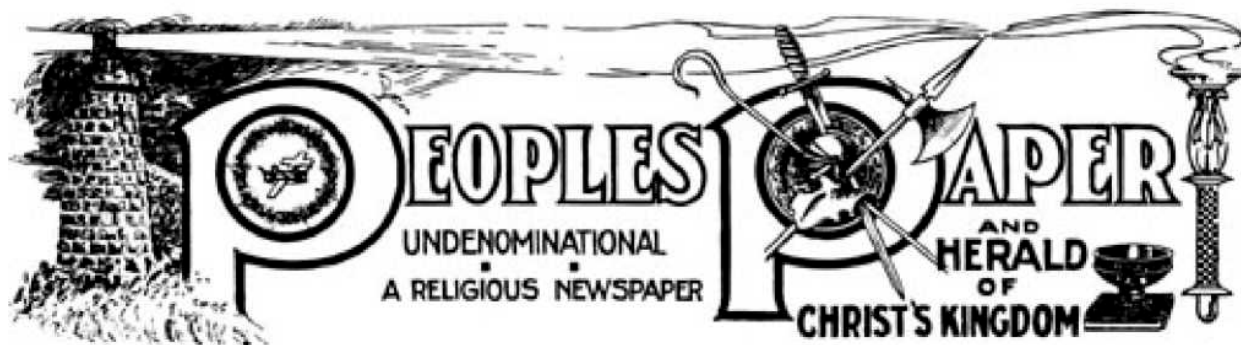
There are briers besetting every path
That call for patient care;
There is a cross in every lot
And an earnest need for prayer;
But the lonely heart that leans on Thee
Is happy anywhere.

—A. L. Waring.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. I, 9 a.m.
Perth, 6KY, 227 M. II 4.45 p.m.

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Earthquakes at the First Advent and Since-What Do They Mean?

(This article is published by request.)

THIS subject is brought more particularly to attention by the earthquakes in various parts of the world in recent times, including one experienced in South Australia earlier this year. Such happenings are rare in this country, and this fact helps to attract attention all the more when earthquakes do occur, and cause even greater consternation amongst the inhabitants than would be the case in those countries where earthquakes are prevalent. Where events, even of a serious nature, happen fairly regularly, the population becomes somewhat resigned to the occurrences, and accept the outcome as inevitable, unavoidable.

As an illustration, we have heard of the population of the various European countries becoming almost careless and indifferent to their safety after periods of bombing raids over those countries during the last great war—there was an apparent resignation to calamity, and an acceptance of the fact that death may claim them at any time. This same fact is in evidence in the world since the discovery of atomic energy. When the first atomic bombs were exploded towards the close of the last war, the effect on the world of mankind was staggering. Consternation reigned amongst the world's population at this new and destructive force which man had been permitted to harness, in this end of the age. But those explosions of a few years ago were as a child's firecracker in comparison with the mighty force of present-day hydrogen bombs: yet mankind is becoming used, and to a degree indifferent, to events growing bigger and bigger: and after one event, it takes much greater happenings to awaken or startle humanity.

We believe that this principle will be demonstrated in a very marked way in the closing of this "present evil world" or dispensation, in which earthquakes of a symbolic nature will play a very marked and important part in the Lord's plan to ultimately bring peace to the world of mankind, when humanity is sufficiently humbled to be able to truly value, for all time, that peace and happiness which the Lord alone can give.

At our Lord's first advent, the disciples came to Jesus on one occasion at the temple in Jerusalem, and we read in Matt. 24:1 that their object was to show him the buildings of the temple." Perhaps they were particularly proud of that temple in their minds it probably represented the height of stability and strength, and they possibly felt that such a structure, being God's house, may well represent the cause of the Master Himself, and would last forever. Can we realise their surprise and amazement when Jesus replied—"See ye not all these things? There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown

down.” What a thing for the Master to say about such a structure!

No wonder the disciples followed up our Lord’s words with further questions, as we have it recorded in the further verses in Matt. 24.—”Tell us, when shall these things be?” And the Lord answered, quoting in part—”Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” It seems as though the Lord was impressing a very necessary lesson upon His disciples, namely, that all the greatest works of men, pictured by the temple and other mighty achievements, could not endure. In brief, He had really described the history of the Gospel Age, and while the “wars and rumours of wars” so aptly refer to mankind in their fallen and selfish ambitions, the literal famines, pestilences and earthquakes describe the imperfect climatic conditions of this “present evil world” in particular: and God has allowed these imperfections on every side in order to express purpose of impressing the unfruitful results of disobedience, from the time of our first parents to our own day.

We call to mind God’s words at the time of disobedience in the Garden of Eden, recorded in Gen. 3:17-19. “Cursed is the ground for thy sake,” and all the famines, pestilences and earthquakes are part of the curse. However, in contrast, we have a record in the Scriptures when perfect conditions will beautifully and naturally prevail in the earth — when Christ’s kingdom is established and the curse is rolled away. It states—”The tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase.”—Ezek. 34:27.

It is of interest to note that the Greek word used (as also the Hebrew word) from which our English word “earthquake” is translated, means—commotion (of the air) a gale; (of the ground) an earthquake.” This is helpful and instructive, as on one occasion during our Lord’s first advent, we read in Matt. 8:24—”There arose a great tempest.- This word “tempest” is from the same Greek word as “earthquakes” in Matt. 24:7. From this Scriptural standpoint, the cyclones and tornadoes in various parts of the world are also earthquakes, just as much as the shaking of the earth itself.

Following the tempest (earthquake) recorded in Matt. 8, the next Scriptural reference to an earthquake is found in Matt. 27:51, at the time of our Lord’s crucifixion. The outcome of this convulsion of nature is well described in verse 54, —”Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done (including the darkness over the land, verse 45), they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.”

What did the earthquake mean? Undoubtedly it was God’s method of revealing to Israel, and to the Roman occupants of Jerusalem, His great displeasure of the terrible act of crucifying Jesus. As, though God would say to Israel—Henceforth, your temple services are finished; the veil of the temple was rent, from the top to the bottom. God’s presence with Israel would no longer be manifest in the temple. Our Lord Jesus pointed forward to this very time by His words in John 4:20-23. So God’s use of the earthquake revealed His judgment upon Israel, striking fear into their hearts; and into the hearts of the Roman rulers.

Again, two days later, we read in Matt. 28:2 —”Behold, there was a great earthquake.” This further convulsion of nature, on the morning of our Lord’s resurrection, struck terror into the hearts of the keepers of the sepulchre, along with the appearance of God’s angel; but, on the other hand, heralded our Lord’s resurrection morning with joy to those disciples who came to the tomb of Jesus. This earthquake really signalled the time for the resurrection of Christ, the angel also rolling back the stone from the door of the sepulchre and proclaiming these words of comfort to the women—”Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said.”

Then, following the Lord’s manifestation of His power upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, and Peter and John being brought before the Jewish council for their preaching, and healing of the lame man,

we read in Acts 4:31— "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together: and they were all filled with the holy spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness." This "shaking" was an evidence of God's presence to bless the disciples.

Quite a different lesson was intended of God when Paul and Silas came under the disfavour of magistrates and multitude of the people at Philippi, when Paul cast out the evil spirit from the young woman, as recorded in Acts 16:16-40. When the two followers of the Lord had been thrust into prison and their feet made fast in the stocks, we read in verses 25, 26—"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." What a momentous happening! ! There were God's faithful servants praying and singing praises to the Lord, content to be counted worthy to suffer for His sake, and then "suddenly there was a great earthquake." Just to think of the terror struck into the hearts of the jailor, the magistrates and the population of that town; and the encouragement, support and vindication of Paul and Silas.

What did that earthquake mean? It meant in no unmistakable manner God's judgment against those opposing His true and courageous servants, and with the happy result that the jailor was converted when he realised, by that amazing experience, that God was speaking to him through that convulsion of nature. What an effect that demonstration of God's power had upon the population of Philippi, the outcome of which was the establishing of one of the churches of God's people, and to whom Paul, in later years, wrote in endearing terms.

Passing on to the Book of Revelation we find that the term "earthquake" is used symbolically in a number of places to refer to revolutionary upheavals. In one case, in Rev. 11:13, the reference is applied by Bible students to the French Revolution. Historians reveal the terrible slaughter of human lives in that upheaval, and the apprehension of the leaders of nations at that time was the danger that such an outbreak of human passions might spread throughout the world. It would seem that this "earthquake" was a pointer to events to be enacted worldwide at the end of this age.

From Rev. 6:12-17 we have presented a most comprehensive description of the closing scenes of this Gospel Age, given through various symbolic terms, commencing with, 'And lo, there was a great earthquake.' "The sun,- "moon" and "stars- are appropriate symbols referring to the decline in appreciation of the sunlight of truth, even by the leading lights (stars) in the religious heavens—their fall to the ground indicating their departure from spiritual truths. 'Ultimately the "heaven- itself is said to depart, this reference being to the overthrow of the ecclesiastical heavens —the nominal church, mother and daughters. Departing as a scroll would indicate the process of being rolled together, possibly by amalgamation first of all, and then as the Apostle Peter declared —"passing away with a great noise." (2 Pet. 3 :10.) The "mountains" (governments of earth) are also shown to be moved out of their places, shaken down as the result of this great "earthquake- condition which will extend throughout the world. While all these events are under way, mankind of all stations in life will seek protection in one or another of the "dens and rocks (fortresses of society) of the mountains (governments) ." No lasting protection will be available, because the Lord has decreed that all systems of men must be removed from the earth, to make way for Christ's Kingdom. From the words of Psalms 46:6 we read—"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved ; he (God) uttered his voice, the earth melted," And all these events are said to follow as a result of "a great earthquake" — a tremendous upheaval, that will shake down all the systems of men — political, social, financial and religious.

In the following chapter of Revelation (7:1-3) , we are given another picture of the closing scene of this Gospel Age, and the forces to be used are described as "the four winds of the earth.- These "winds" are shown as being restrained, held back, until a most important work of this Gospel Age is accomplished—"the sealing of the servants in their foreheads.- Not that the Lord will delay any feature of His plan to

comply with the desires of any of His earthly people, but, in His providence, the holding back of the winds of trouble corresponds with the period of the sealing of the last members for the heavenly kingdom. As the meaning of the word “earthquake” includes that of a tempest, or mighty wind, so in this passage in Rev. 7, we have the symbolic earthquake depicted. The conclusion to be taken from this vision in chapter 7 is, that when the full number of God’s servants “are sealed in their foreheads”—made intellectually acquainted with all features of the truth—as well as their hearts sealed unto God, the time in God’s divine plan will have arrived to “hurt the earth, • the sea, and the trees.” In other words, for the blowing down, or removal of all institutions or systems of men which would interfere with the operation of the kingdom of Christ.

The Apostle Paul so clearly revealed the same truth in Hebrews 12, when he contrasted the rather terrifying experience that the Lord sent to accompany the inauguration of the Law Covenant, with the much greater shaking experiences that will accompany, the inauguration of the New Law Covenant. The Apostle declared—”Whose voice then shook the earth (in the days of Moses) ; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken (margin— may be shaken) , as of things that are made (man-made)., that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” (Heb. 12:26, 27.)

Realising the unmistakable meaning of symbolic earthquakes in the Scriptures, it may be asked, What would literal earthquakes mean today? While at the first advent, at the time of our Lord’s death on the cross and His resurrection, it is very evident that God’s judgments were revealed through the particular convulsions of nature, and the same was true in the case of Paul; yet to-day, when an earthquake -occurs, whether it be in New Zealand, Japan, Greece, or in Australia, we would not attribute this to a judgment of God, but rather an evidence of imperfection still abroad in the earth, which, however, could remind us of the great judgments of God to come, when “this present evil world” will pass away to make way for “the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2. Pet. 3:13.)

While the world of mankind will be in great distress and perplexity, with the “sea and the waves roaring, and men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are’ coming on the earth, and the powers of the heaven being shaken,- the Lord’s people are reminded by the Lord. that “when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:25, 26, 28.) Yes, indeed, how favoured are those whose hope is in the Lord, and to whom the Apostle Paul wrote so confidently—”Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

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A Bomb No Nation Dare Test!

THE following article by W. S. Noble appeared in the Melbourne "Herald" on 22nd May, under the above heading. Can you imagine a cloud of death sweeping across the country, obliterating all life as it passes—silent, invisible, yet striking from the upper atmosphere with deadly rays against which there is no protection?

Imagine the scene in the wake of the cloud. The stillness of the countryside from which all life has disappeared, the desolate, empty streets of ghost cities whose inhabitants have been enfolded in a common doom. You probably think that is a mad nightmare, something from the realms of horror fiction. But to-day men who know what is going on in the laboratories and studies of nuclear scientists are beginning to believe that humanity may be faced with just such a threat.

For it is known now that the weapon capable of wiping out life over vast areas can be made any time some country gives the word for its production. It is the cobalt bomb, recently called by one man who had been given a glimpse of its potential terrors, "the most deadly weapon of all." It is so terrifying in its possibilities that sober scientists have called it "madness" to think of making one. For they know that with its entry into the range of nuclear weapons, man stands on the brink of disaster.

A few weeks ago Professor Marcus Oliphant, Director of the Research School of Physical Sciences at the National University, Canberra, said: "Only madmen or devils would contemplate the use of cobalt bombs or other weapons designed to spread long-lived radioactivity over the earth. . . Only a devil would deliberately spread sterility and impotence among mankind, his own side included, or store up genetic monstrosities for the future."

The day in November, 1952, when the Americans first exploded a hydrogen device at Eniwetok atoll in the western Pacific saw the opening of the door to the cobalt bomb. The hydrogen bomb is not just a more destructive version of the atomic bomb. It is a bomb which gets its power from the fusion of atoms, instead of from splitting them, as in the A-bomb. Theoretically

It has no limitations to its explosive force. Already science has new terms to express the shattering power of the two types of bombs. An atomic explosion, which has a force equivalent to thousands of tons of TNT, is measured in "kilotons." But the hydrogen bomb reaches into a new range of power. This is recorded in "megatons," one megaton being equivalent to a million tons of TNT.

The cobalt bomb is a hydrogen bomb with a difference. The latter bombs which were exploded at Eniwetok were encased in steel, which became only mildly radio-active as it was vaporized in the heat and pressure of the blast. But a cobalt bomb would have a casing of cobalt surrounding both the hydrogen charge and the atomic bomb which acts as a hydrogen trigger. It is known from small scale laboratory tests that when cobalt is bombarded with neutrons it turns into an element which gives off deadly gamma rays, similar to X-rays. So, as the hydrogen bomb exploded within its cobalt casing, the cobalt would be turned into a gas that would become violently radio-active, spreading out into a cloud whose active ingredients were 320 times more active than radium. The cobalt bomb will never be tested. It is the one weapon with which no scientist may experiment, for no one could control the death cloud that would sweep outward from the explosion.

If ever a cobalt bomb is fired, it will be in war-time --and race suicide will have been let loose. The scientists have no doubt that the cobalt bomb can be made. Once the hydrogen bomb was successfully fired, the cobalt bomb automatically became practicable. There is no longer any comfort in the fact that

the hydrogen bomb, as originally made, was an enormously expensive weapon, possessed in its perfected form probably only by the United States. It has now been announced that any nation with a stockpile of atom bombs can convert them into hydrogen bombs by the addition of a relatively simple and abundant new chemical compound, called lithium 6 deuteride, or Li6D . It is a compound of a light isotope of lithium and a heavy isotope of hydrogen (deuterium).

The nuclear science writer of the "New York Times," William Laurence, says that the discovery makes all existing stocks of A-bombs obsolete, except for their role as "triggers" for the H-bomb. He adds: "A small fission-bomb stockpile, such as the one now possessed by Britain, could thus be transformed in a relatively short time into a gigantic stockpile in the billion-ton range. The Soviet Union also, of course, can, and will, do likewise. In fact, it is highly unlikely that it is not already doing just this."

It is claimed that a cobalt bomb could be made which would yield 71 tons of radio-active cobalt — equal to nearly five million pounds of radium. Such a bomb would be too big for any existing aircraft to carry. But if it were exploded from a raft in the Pacific, a thousand miles off the Californian coast, the radio-active cloud, carried by the eastward winds, would reach the mainland in about a day. Three or four days later it would have passed over New York and the east coast. Behind it most life in its path would have disappeared, killed by the rays shooting down from the radioactive dust.

Professor Harrison Brown, nuclear chemist at the Californian Institute of Technology, has calculated that cobalt bombs could be exploded on a north-south line, about the longitude of Prague, that would "destroy all life within a strip 1500 miles wide, extending from Leningrad to Odessa, and 3000 miles deep, from Prague to the Ural Mountains. Such an attack," he adds, rather unnecessarily, "would produce a scorched earth unprecedented in history."

Four years ago Professor Einstein was speculating about the chance that United States scientists would master the difficulties involved in producing the hydrogen bomb. Looking into the witches' cauldron which he already saw bubbling, he said: "Radio-active poisoning of the atmosphere, and hence annihilation of any life on earth, will have been brought within the range of technical possibilities." •

The above article truly reveals the extent to which mankind has advanced (?) in this twentieth century civilization. There can be no doubt in the minds of Bible students that the great increase of knowledge, which has produced such amazing and terrifying inventions, was restricted until such time as these deadly weapons would not hinder, but rather accomplish the Lord's plan of salvation for mankind. It may seem strange to some minds to think of such destructive forces as the bombs above mentioned having any part in the Divine plan of salvation, but it is very clear in the Scriptures that God requires humanity to thoroughly humble itself to the dust, so to speak, before He brings in the restoration and blessing which will follow at the right time for the benefit of all truly seeking deliverance from the chaos and ruin of man's world-wide destruction.

Prior to the atomic age it was perhaps difficult to understand what forces could accomplish the "great tribulation" of which our Lord stated--Except those days should be shortened, there should be, no flesh saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matt:24:21, 22.) While we do not know that the dreadful bombs will be used upon mankind in the last days of the age, yet the possibility of all flesh being destroyed could no longer be doubted but for the Lord's assurance that the days of great tribulation will be shortened, to prevent the destruction of all humanity, and additionally -for the elect's sake."

The shortening of the days of tribulation "for the elect's sake" seems to refer to the periods of easement between the various spasms of trouble over the last forty years in particular, thus allowing opportunities and privileges for the truth message to continue the "sealing in the forehead" of all the true servants of

God, before the winds of trouble are finally permitted to devastate the harvest-field. (Rev. 7:1-3.) The selection and development of all the Lord's people for the heavenly kingdom is of paramount importance, and God has provided that the shortening of the days of tribulation will work out this special feature of His plan, as well as save some of the human family from destruction.

With the great tribulation over, what relief there will be for those of humanity who have passed through the terrible experiences, but the blessings of Christ's Kingdom then established will quickly compensate and give that peace and contentment of heart and mind for which the poor groaning creation now longs and struggles to obtain by its own unavailing efforts. The lesson must be learned by all than only by full obedience to the Lord and His righteousness can true and lasting peace and happiness be established in the earth. Following the benefits to those who have passed through the great tribulation, the resurrection of all mankind will proceed in orderly manner, and the grand times of restitution of all things will progress on the restored earth throughout the thousand years of Christ's kingdom.

In the meantime the Lord's people may view each phase of the gathering storm of trouble with quiet confidence and trust in the Lord, well knowing that God's wisdom sees that the permission of this last and greatest tribulation the world has ever experienced will be in the best interests of the whole human family. The assurance also that the Lord will care for His people, and deliver them in His own good time and way to be associated with Christ in the work of the kingdom age, gives comfort and joy even amidst some of the travail which precedes the birth of the new order of things.

Salted With Fire.

(Mark 9:33-50.)

(Convention Address)

ONE of the effects of our Lord's instructions to His disciples was to teach them the necessity for self discipline.

On several occasions He pointed out in very clear language the terms of discipleship. (See Mark 8:34.) "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." To deny one's self is to say "No" to oneself: to refrain from a certain course of action, because we have learned that the outcome or result of such action would be detrimental to our highest interest, or maybe cause injury to another. To illustrate: When we were children, no doubt we were all fond of sweets. Then one day it was brought to our attention that sweets, especially those made from refined white sugar, were really harmful to our health, and we were urged in the interests of our health and wellbeing to cut down drastically our intake of sweets. In doing this, we found certain benefits came to us. We found we had' healthier bodies and minds, and therefore we could work better, and we were more able to help those around us. We found the discipline of self-denial brought a blessing to us.

Now, we find that this simple illustration of the child and the sweets may be used in respect of our Christian life and experience. During this Gospel Age, our Lord is calling a certain class of people—not chiefly the great or wise or noble of this world. In 1 Cor. 1:26-29 Paul describes the kind of people who are called of God to be disciples of Christ. Those who are true disciples have learned how unsatisfactory is the service of self and sin. We have heard the voice of Jesus saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you (become My disciples) and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:28, 29.) We have responded to this heavenly call. After accepting Christ as our Saviour from the Adamic condemnation we have heard the call to present our bodies .a living sacrifice, and we have received the begetting of the holy spirit. (Eph. 1:13.)

Those who have taken the step of full consecration, that is, their justified human nature presented to be dead with Christ, are said to be "in Christ." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." (2 Cor. 5:17.) This "new creature" has a new will—a will to do God's will; but it can express itself only through the imperfect body. So, as Paul states it, -We have this treasure (this treasure of the new mind) in earthen vessels that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves." (2 Cor. 4:7.)

If we fully realise our weakness and imperfection, and our inability to accomplish anything without the strength, grace and help of our Lord and Head, we will feel very humble and dependent upon Him. We will realise that we can render acceptable service to God only as He is pleased to use us and give us the grace and strength which His holy spirit imparts. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing," Again our Lord said, "If ye abide in my Word, then are ye truly my disciples, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Here we see that in order to be true disciples we must abide in Christ's Word.

In John 14:23 our Lord said, "If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Those who abide in Christ's word, those who keep His word, are those who maintain in their hearts the spirit of consecration, the spirit of loving obedience to God, the spirit Which says, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Let us see that we maintain in our hearts this spirit of Christ, the spirit of discipleship, the spirit of loving obedience to the Word, and to the leadings of the spirit of God. Our Master said, "I delight to do thy will, O God; thy law is within my heart."

It is interesting to note the similarity of meaning of the two words “disciple” and “discipline.” Both these words are derived from the same Latin base which means “to learn.” According to the dictionary, the meaning of “disciple” is “One who receives instruction from another, a learner, a pupil.” The meaning of the word “discipline” is “Training, education, instruction and the government of conduct or practice; also, punishment inflicted by way of training and correction, instruction by means of misfortune, suffering, and the like, chastisement.”

How important it is that consecrated Christians should continue to be disciples, learners. We want to be willing learners, disciples indeed, disciplined disciples. Of course it is God, the great Husbandman, who instructs or disciplines His Church. Our part in the matter is to seek His grace and help to keep our hearts in the humble condition of learners. “My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ was a very keen disciple. See Isa. 50:4-6: “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned (them that are taught, the instructed) . . . He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned,” — the disciplined. It was because our Saviour was such a good disciple, such a diligent and humble-hearted learner, that He was so highly favoured of the Father with the gift and grace of the spirit which enabled Him to manifest such a deeply sympathetic and understanding heart and mind. (See Heb. 5:8.) Our Lord learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Of course, Jesus Christ had always been obedient to the Father, but during His earthly life He manifested His perfect obedience to God under conditions of most crucial pain and suffering. The sufferings of our Lord in the flesh were permitted by a wise and loving Father, whose wisdom foresaw the necessity for those experiences of severe trial and testing, in order to equip His Son for the future position designed for Him by God. (See Heb. 2:17, 18; Phil. 2:3-9.)

Our Lord, then, was a thoroughly disciplined disciple of God. God taught Him to discipline Himself, and now God is asking us to follow in the steps of Christ. “Learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart.” Just as our Lord Jesus yielded Himself to the leading of God’s holy spirit, so we also are constrained by the love of Christ to yield ourselves to His obedience. “As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:14.)

In Mark 9:42 our Lord shows how careful we should be not to cause offence or injury to one of His trusting disciples. Let us, like the Apostle Paul, seek to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. Let’ us apply the Golden Rule and endeavour to “Treat others as we would be treated.- We should endeavour at all times to cultivate an appreciation of the rights and interests of others, and seek by the Lord’s grace to bring our thoughts, words and actions into line with His law of love. “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

In verses 43 and 45 our Lord gives us a warning—“If thy hand offend thee, cut it off; if thy foot offend thee, cut it off.” etc. Then in verse 47, “If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into Gehenna.” The meaning in each of these instances would seem to be the same. The “hand” may represent our work, our actions: we should see to it that our hands are clean, that we are true and honest and free from impurity in our actions. The “foot” may represent our walk, our manner of life; let us see that we are walking as the Lord would have us do. Are we walking worthy of our calling? Are we walking as Christ walked, following in His steps, setting our affections upon the things that are above? The “eye” may represent our motives, the hidden springs from whence come our words and actions. Our Lord said, “If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.” How important it is to maintain the spirit of our consecration, to keep our hearts right, our motives pure, to keep the example of Christ and the great hope of our heavenly calling clearly before our minds.

Our Lord suggests as an illustration that the tendency to wrong doing which would prove an injury to others, might be a quality of character that would seem as close and precious to us as a right hand, or a foot, or an eye; it might be one form of wrong doing, or injury, or another form, but in every case those who would be followers of .he Prince of Peace and ultimately be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, must, as good soldiers of righteousness, fight against all such sinful, selfish, injurious tendencies of the flesh. These must be combated to the extent that the new creature would be willing, indeed anxious, to destroy utterly that element of his fallen disposition which is contrary to the Master's good pleasure, even though it be at a sacrifice that would be illustrated by the loss of an eye, a hand, or a foot.

We are to put away such practices, that we may be truly our Lord's footstep followers, and be counted worthy to enter into and share His kingdom. If we will not do so, we cannot enter the kingdom. If we will hold on to these tendencies of the fallen nature, they will mean ultimately our destruction in the second death, for every person who has and who maintains an injurious character, a tendency to injure others, will be esteemed of the Lord wholly unfit for any part in His Kingdom--indeed unfit for eternal life at all. Hence the Lord's declaration that such would go into the fire or destruction eternal--the second death. No wonder, then that our Lord urged all who would be His disciples to put away from them, to mortify, the deeds of the body, the selfish instincts of the fallen nature, at any cost, no matter how dear, that they might enter into life with Him, as participants in the kingdom, as members of the Bride.

Our Lord urges that such a loss of an eye, or a hand, or a foot, as representing earthly advantages and privileges of the present time, would be far better than possessing these privileges, to be ultimately destroyed in Gehenna fire. Gehenna fire here refers primarily to the valley outside the city of Jerusalem, where all the offal was destroyed (not preserved or tortured) , and this symbolised or prefigured the general destruction of the second death associated with the New Jerusalem government of the Millennial Age, in which all the unworthy, all the offal, all the unfit, will be utterly destroyed in the second death, that the Lord may we a clean universe in which every creature would praise and honour Him and exemplify His law and character and government of love.

Verse 49—"For every one shall be salted with fire." In Lev. 2:13 we read that salt must be offered with all the sacrifices. All the offerings, all the sacrifices must be salted with salt. The salt was emblematic of purity, of preservation, and of fitting the offering for an acceptable sacrifice. So in this expression,"Every one shall be salted with fire," our Lord meant, every disciple shall be preserved by exercising the spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice.

The disciples who were still natural minded men had just been disputing among themselves who should occupy the most important place in the kingdom, and the Lord told them the one who would be chief in the kingdom would be he who would be willing to serve the interest of the others most truly. "Every one shall be salted with fire." How important it is that we should be disciplined disciples. How important that we submit to the disciplines sent by our loving Heavenly Father. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him." While it is the great Husbandman who prunes the Vine, we must co-operate with Him and seek to learn the intended lessons. Paul says, "If we would judge ourselves we would not be judged," (of the Lord).

We are to judge ourselves, to examine ourselves, with the object of having our thoughts and words and doings in line with the Word and spirit of God, and with our consecration 'vows. To be "salted with fire" would convey the thought that as New Creatures we would be preserved by the fire of self-denial and self-discipline, in keeping ourselves from the gratification of self and selfish desires. As if the Lord had said,-- Look at the sacrifice on the altar.

It is an offering to God, about to be presented to Him. It is sprinkled with salt, emblematic of purity, of preservation, and of fitting it, therefore for a sacrifice." So you are devoted to God. You are sacrifices,

victims, offerings to Him in His service. To make you acceptable offerings, everything must be done to preserve you from the corrupting tendencies of self-gratification. The fire of self-discipline and self-denial is the proper preservative in the service of God. "Have salt in yourselves." Have the preserving, purifying principle always, the principles of self-discipline and self-denial, of suppressing pride, ambition, contention, etc., and thus you will be an acceptable offering to God. "And have peace with one another." Avoid contention and quarrelling, struggling for places, honours, and offices, and seek each other's welfare. For just as salt is sprinkled over every sacrifice for its purification, so must every soul be purged by fire, by the fire, if need be, of the severest and most terrible self-sacrifice. Let' this refining, purging, purifying fire of searching self-judgment and self-severity be ours. Let not this salt lose its savour, nor this fire its purifying power. "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Ignatius and the Sabbath.

"Be not deceived with heterodox opinions nor unprofitable fables. For if we still live according to Judaism, we confess that we have not received grace. For the Divine prophets lived according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this they were persecuted, being inspired by His grace to assure the, disobedient that there is one God, who manifested Himself by Jesus Christ, His Son, who is the eternal Word. If, then, they have cast off indeed their old principles and are come to the resurrection of a new hope in Christ, let them no longer observe the Jewish Sabbath, but live according to the resurrection of the Lord, in whose resurrection from the dead our resurrection also is ensured, by Him and by His death, which some deny."

From these words of Ignatius, written only about fifty years after Paul's day (Ignatius was a pupil of St. John) , we may see how incorrect is the statement of Seventh Day Adventists to the effect that it was the Raman Emperor Constantine who instituted the first day of the week instead of the seventh for the Christian Sabbath. Constantine was two hundred years later than the time of Ignatius. The writings of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians, Galatians. Romans and Hebrews are to the same effect. It is surprising how easy it is for men to blind their minds to facts if they become obsessed with any particular theory or fancy.

Our Father Knows.

Oh, Father, do you know when hearts are aching,
When summer days have fled and north winds blow,
Skies heavy, grey, and days so dark and lonely ?
“My child, I know.”

Oh, Father, do you care when hours are empty,
Empty of all that made this world so fair,
When blessings once so precious now have faded?
“My child. I care.”

Oh, Father, must we trust when ties are broken,
When loves of earth, once strong and deep have gone,
And strange, unwelcome things beset our pathways?
“Yes child, trust on.”

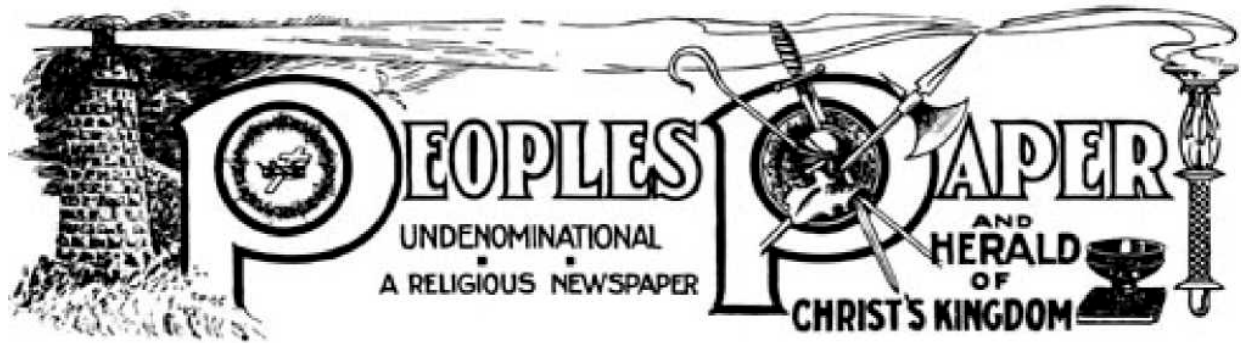
And, Father, are you near when storms are raging,
When life is draped in winter till we fear.
The fight will overwhelm and crush our spirits?
“My child, I’m near.”

Be of good cheer, let not your heart be troubled,
Nothing can touch your life unless I will,
I, who have shared life’s joy and sorrow,
Say, “Peace be still.”

Father, I will believe:
Oh, keep me faithful,
Through life’s long day till setting of the sun,
And may I hear when dawns eternal morning,,
“My child, well done.”

—Selected.

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Divine Justice in the Deluge.

WHILE to-day there are those who deny the teachings of Genesis respecting the creation of man and the deluge, we have the words of Jesus in Matt. 24:39 stating that the flood came and took them all away; proving that God permitted the deluge and that He was just in blotting out the human family with the exception of righteous Noah and his family.- 2 Pet. 2:4-10.

We should remember that God's covenant with Adam was based upon the fact that he was created perfect (in God's image and likeness) , and was to be granted everlasting life on conditions that he would maintain this image and likeness by continued obedience to his Maker. When Satan obsessed the serpent and guided it to eat the fruit which our first parents were forbidden to eat, he produced thereby a temptation. Mother Eve saw that, so far from the serpent being poisoned by the fruit, it was the wisest of animals. She reasoned that humanity was so much superior to the brute creation that the increased wisdom would make her husband and herself like gods. She thirsted for knowledge and power, and only the Divine command seemed to stand between her and the highest ideals. She partook of the fruit and recommended it to Adam, who was not so deceived (as the Apostle informs us) , for he knew that death would surely follow disobedience. Nevertheless, he disobeyed, thinking he would rather perish with his wife than live on for ever without her.

The disobedience led to expulsion from Eden, and the beginning of the gradual execution of the sentence which reads, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," or as worded in the margin, "Dying, thou shalt die." Up to this time Adam was not dying by any means, for sin alone brought death through separation from the life-giving groves. And according to the Divine pronouncement, he died within the day in which he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The Apostle Peter informs us that a day with the Lord is a thousand years, and Adam died when nine hundred and thirty years old. His race inherited his dying conditions and sinful tendencies. Thus all humanity are under the curse, condemned, not to eternal torment, but to death in Adam. Whatever, therefore, may cut short human life is no injustice to humanity, because whatever life is now enjoyed is just so much more than the human race can justly claim. Hence the deluge was merely a quick means of executing against Adam's family of sinners the death sentence already expressed sixteen centuries before.

There is the same hope for these as for all the remainder of the human family—the hope of a fresh trial for life lost in Adam. This means not merely a hope of being awakened from the sleep of death, but a hope of restitution, a hope of returning, if they will, to the full measure of human perfection—the image of God in the flesh. This hope rests first of all on God's gracious promise that all the families of the earth

shall be blessed in Abraham's seed. Secondly, it rests on the assurance that Jesus is the Head, and the Church the members of that spiritual seed of Abraham which, as the Elect of God, will soon be completed and glorified with the risen Lord and Saviour.

In the Messianic kingdom, this great "seed" will accomplish the world's blessing foreordained. St. Paul emphasised this, saying, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise made to Abraham." See Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:29.

As we review the situation we are amazed at the exhibition given of Divine patience. We are reminded of St. Peter's words that God is not willing that any should perish. How easily He could have blotted out of existence our first parents and have created another pair. How easily He could have hindered Satan from presenting the temptation. How easily He could have warned the angels against a course of disobedience and have shown them His full power at any time. These incidents illustrate to us a general principle of Divine character and Divine dealings. God had indeed a glorious dominion before sin entered the world. And He could, of course, have hindered any spread of disloyal ambition of Satan by destroying him, or God could have coerced him into obedience as a slave. But the Almighty has the very highest ideals in respect of His Government and all His subjects. All His work is perfect, as the Scriptures declare, and every variation from that perfection must be the result of disobedience; while the unalterable law of God is that the disobedient shall perish. Whoever does not learn to love righteousness and hate iniquity will be counted unworthy of everlasting life. And so we read that, after the coming of Christ, -Whom the heavens must retain until the

times of restitution of all things," that it shall then come to pass that "every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people"—destroyed in the second death and not preserved in a place of torment.

God not only foreknew that the conditions under which man was created would result in sin, but without causing the temptation and without giving any excuse for the disloyalty. He determined to permit it, but only for a very limited space of time. The reign of sin and death is only to last for six thousand years. Then, by bringing in the Messianic kingdom, God will abolish sin and death, lifting all the willing and obedient to human perfection and life everlasting in Eden restored.

He put the death penalty upon humanity, knowing at the time that it would require the death of an obedient sacrifice for human redemption, and purposing in advance that He would provide a Redeemer such as would willingly become man's surety by paying the ransom price. Thus the permission of evil has resulted in the manifestation of God's love, in a manner that otherwise would hardly have been revealed. The infliction of the death penalty for so long has, likewise, demonstrated the persistence of Divine justice. The recovery of the dead by a resurrection will prove, as nothing else could, the wonderful power of our God. And when the entire plan of God shall have been outworked and shall have been made known to angels and men, it will demonstrate the wisdom of God, as it never could have been known, had He not adopted the plan of temporarily permitting a reign of sin and death.

Another thing made possible by the permission of sin has been the special call to joint heirship with Christ in the heavenly phase of the Kingdom. The Bible declares that the Elect Church are begotten of the spirit throughout this age, and are promised that they shall be born of the spirit in the first resurrection. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." The need of a Redeemer opened the way for Him who was "the Word" to become flesh. He was then in the position to demonstrate His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross.—Phil. 2:8. And this great sacrifice constituted not only the ransom price for Adam and his race, but also the basis on which the Heavenly Father highly exalted His Son far above angels to the Divine nature—John 5:26. Similarly the exaltation of the Church to be the Bride of Christ and partaker of the Divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) was made possible by the permission of evil. The

Heavenly Father could justly permit members of the fallen race, of the same disposition as Jesus (having the mind of Christ) , to sacrificially lay down their lives as members of the Body of Christ, and by thus suffering with Him to be accounted worthy of reigning with Him in glory.—Rom. 8:17.

As the Psalmist exclaims, “Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.” Infinite in wisdom, justice, love and ‘power. Is it any wonder, in view of this work, that God has outlined for His Son and the Church glorified, that He should consider it necessary to give us tests of faith in loyalty and obedience. Is it any wonder, in view of the work which He has for us to do for mankind, that the Redeemer Himself was given experiences in suffering, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things of God in relation to humanity. Since having gained a better understanding of the Bible, we see that the redemption which God provided through His only Begotten Son is to be world-wide in its effect. The race was not condemned individually, but as a whole, in one man, on account of Adam’s sin. Similarly, the race has been redeemed as a whole by the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all. — 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2.

The fact that God did not deal with any of the human family, except the Hebrews, for four thousand years, does not mean that He cared for the Hebrews only, nor that they alone are to receive the Divine blessing. It simply means that, during that time, God dealt with the Hebrews to select from among them some especially loyal characters to be sharers in His future work, when He will deal with the world in general.

The fact that all this work of selecting one class of servants from Hebrews and another class from every ‘nation during the Gospel Age, has required six thousand years is no argument against God’s purpose to bless all Adam’s children ultimately. We are glad to see in the light of present truth that it is in the eternal interests of all mankind that the past and present elections have been proceeding. The fact that a long time has been consumed in getting ready the instruments of Divine mercy shows the greatness and the thoroughness of the Divine Plan in respect of the race as a whole. Let us then avail ourselves of the glorious opportunities for Bible study and for growth in grace and love. Let us walk worthy of the light, and rejoice in Him who bought us with His precious blood.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

The Institute's Work.

ANOTHER year's work for the Berean Bible Institute has been completed, and once again we desire to express thankfulness to the Lord for all His blessings bestowed upon the efforts to serve His cause of truth together with our brethren throughout Australia and other lands. It has been a joy to have the loving cooperation of our dear brethren in the privileges of service, and their voluntary efforts are most encouraging and warmly appreciated, knowing that all is accepted of the Lord as done unto Himself.

There is nothing spectacular to report, nor is this to be expected in the Lord's cause, but rather the work has gone on steadily along similar lines to former years. Most of our readers will know that the Institute exists as a centre for proclaiming the message of the Gospel of Christ to all who have ears to hear, with the main object of finding those who are yearning after truth and righteousness, and delight to walk in the steps of Christ in response to His invitation for the high calling. Various means of proclaiming the truths of God's Word are employed, including the printed page in varied forms, the radio (a short report on this feature appearing separately), and gatherings for Bible study, lectures, etc.

Our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom," now in its 37th year of publication, continues to reach our brethren and interested friends throughout Australia and overseas, and the messages in its columns are received with appreciation by many readers. A number of brethren contribute to the pages of the "Paper" and their assistance in this way is greatly appreciated, and is of good help in proclaiming the general and harvest truths of God's Word.

As in former years, the cost of printing the "Peoples Paper" has not been covered by subscriptions, and the deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund. Copies of the "Paper" are used liberally as free literature amongst a considerable number of interested friends, so the expense to the Tract Fund is well spent. Extra copies of the "Peoples Paper" are always available to all for distribution as they have opportunity, and the continued voluntary checking of proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching of the monthly -Paper- by some of our friends is of good assistance and much appreciated.

Despatch of Bible study helps in the form of books, booklets, and tracts has continued throughout the year over a wide area, and our friends are welcome to supplies of free literature for passing out to those who have the hearing ear for spiritual things. Kingdom Cards are also available for the same purpose, and the Consolation Cards for mailing to the bereaved have been used by some Classes, as in previous years. This is a helpful means of supplying some comforting literature to those in sorrow who are desirous of this.

Some Lectures for the public were arranged during the year, and these occasions give opportunity to invite those who are contacted by the radio or advertising circulars. While the attendance from the public is usually small, there is always some blessing from the efforts in this way in encouraging those who are really earnest to attend the regular Bible studies. It is surely good for the Lord's people to be active in any way their talents may provide, and it is a pleasure to hear from all who desire to have some part in the Lord's work.

The financial position for the past year is indicated by the General Tract Fund Account (the radio being separate), and all the goodly provision has been lovingly and voluntarily supplied by our dear friends who desire to use their particular talent in this way, as unto the Lord. We trust that all may realise God's blessing in the sacrifice of the good things of this present life.

Looking forward there is cause for much apprehension as people view the international scene in these days, but for the Lord's people there is cause for much thankfulness for present opportunities and

privileges of service for the Lord, both as respects their own upbuilding, by His grace, and the encouragement of others of precious faith. Many hindrances to progress in the Christian way are certainly before us day by day, but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, and what could be stumbling stones may be used as stepping stones when our hearts are fully surrendered to the will of God, and His spirit is dwelling within. Prayers of faith surely keep the Christian's armour bright, and we ask all our brethren to join in prayer for the blessing and guidance of the Lord upon the work that may yet be His will and good pleasure to accomplish in this, and all other parts of the harvest field. "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have opportunity, let us, do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Gal. 6:9, 10.

General Tract Fund.

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By FreeTracts and Deficiency		
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„ Hall Rents, Advertising, Circulars .		
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„ Towards Personal and House	2650	0
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„ Free Books and Booklets . .	8	0
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The Radio Work.

THE witness of the truth over the radio has continued throughout another year, and the Lord's blessing has also attended the efforts in this way. We render thanksgiving to God for this further privilege of service, in which a number of brethren gladly associate, their help being greatly appreciated.

The same radio stations have been used over the past year, namely, 3GL Geelong, 2KY Sydney, 4KQ Brisbane and 6KY/NA Perth and Narrogin, the friends in Western Australia having the cost of the W.A. stations in their care.

There is no doubt about the witness of the truth over the air doing good where other avenues of service could not reach, and this is the case even amongst the brethren who know the truth. The plan of God never grows old; so the simple truths, which are the main contents of the broadcasts, continually bring the fundamental truths to mind and refresh the heart with the great love of God which is shed abroad through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Considerable numbers of new enquiries have been received throughout the year, and from amongst these there are some very earnest and sincere friends who are embracing the truth in all its beauty. We have full confidence that the Lord will add the increase as He sees good, both now and in the time to come. The Lord's assurance through the prophet—"My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please"—(Isa. 55:11), gives encouragement at all times.

Friends who are able to advertise the radio should surely do so, either by the distribution of radio cards or through the newspapers. Sample broadcasts are available in quantity for those able to place them to advantage. Also printed copies of all broadcasts and other free literature are offered over the air to all listeners, and considerable quantities of these have been sent out. All new listeners who enquire also receive several issues of "Peoples Paper" free, and some then de-sire to subscribe to the "Paper"

themselves.

In the Lord's providence the expenses of the radio have been fully covered through the voluntary support of our brethren, and which is very encouraging in this work in the service of our Lord. The Radio Fund shows the main details. The future for this feature, as also other branches of service, are committed to the Lord for His blessing and guidance as He sees good, and the prayers of our dear friends are also requested upon this work that the Lord's will may be done in these last days of the age, to His praise.

Radio Fund.

To Credit Balance,	£ 6 8 6 9	
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By RadioStations 3GL Geelong, 2KY		9
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Dialogues, etc. .	21	0
„ Travel and Sundries ..	8	0
„ Bank Charges .. .	1	0
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Convention Notes.

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention (16 pages) are now available free from this office.

“Christ's Return”.—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street) —Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

The Life of Joseph

(Convention Address)

WE find Joseph brought into prominence in the 37th chapter of Genesis. He was then seventeen years of age, a very exemplary son, and the favourite of his father, Jacob.

Jacob was then 109 years old, and it was 200 years after Abraham was called. We find that God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that He would make a great nation of their descendants, and that all the families of the earth should be blessed by that nation. These promises of the Heavenly Father may have appeared slow of fulfilment, as Jacob had twelve sons and one daughter only, after all this time.

Jacob's family consisted of four sets of children, and this in itself did not tend to full harmony and peace in the home. If the father expected the elder brothers to share his sentiment towards Joseph he was very much mistaken, as they were envious of him and hated him. In their shepherd life the sons became widely scattered and had much time for good or evil, and Joseph was troubled at what he saw and naturally told his father of the state of affairs. The coat of many colours which Jacob gave to Joseph may have been understood by his brethren to mean that their father would bestow the chief blessing on Joseph. • And the dreams of Joseph, which were quite prophetic of his later supremacy in Egypt, may have made the brothers fear that Joseph would advance to a higher and more exalted state in life than they. Joseph probably did not understand his dreams; he innocently told his father and brothers about them, and even Jacob rebuked him, saying, "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth."

So, we find that when the elder brothers had Joseph far away from their father and home, they were ready to murder him in their envious and malicious state of mind. Two of the brethren, Reuben and Judah, were not in favour of taking Joseph's life, but did not dare to openly oppose the rest, so they suggested other measures. Reuben had him cast into a pit, intending to rescue him secretly and save him. Before Reuben could do this, Judah proposed to sell Joseph to a company of travelling merchants going down to Egypt, and to this the other brothers agreed; so Joseph was sold, and his brothers divided the price among themselves. Reuben evidently was not informed of this transaction, as he shared his father's grief at the supposed death of his young brother. Judah's motive apparently was a double one; first, to ease his conscience by choosing the lesser of the two evils—avoiding murder and yet getting rid of Joseph at a slight profit to all the brothers. Then in common with the other eight, he was willing to lie to his father, and make believe that Joseph was dead.

This supposed loss of a beloved son was a severe ...fiat for Jacob, as evidently Joseph was the one in whose line of descent Jacob looked for the fulfilment of the divine covenant. Joseph was the eldest son of his beloved Rachel, a son after his own heart, in whom was the reverence of God and the love of righteousness. And in Reuben's favour it may be said, that of all the brethren he had the most reason to be envious of Joseph, as Reuben was the eldest son of Leah, the first wife of Jacob.

In the case of Joseph the trial was very severe. From being a beloved and favourite son tenderly reared in his father's house, he was suddenly transported to the position of a slave in a foreign and heathen land. Added to this, too, were the bitter experiences of the murderous hatred, and cold-hearted cruelty of his brothers, and the thought of his father's grief and loneliness; and that, without any apparent prospect of ever seeing his face again, or of ever hearing a word from him, as there were no postal arrangements between foreign nations in those days, and Joseph, as a slave, had no command of time or money. This was surely a bitter experience for a young man of seventeen, but as he left the scenes of his childhood and all he held dear, he took with him the staff of the divine promises, and the principles of truth and righteousness, under which influence he had been reared, and he resolved to be loyal and faithful to God.

While God could have prevented and might have interfered at any step of these distressing circumstances, we see that He did not, but allowed each one to freely manifest Joseph's disposition for good or evil. Yet above them all we see God's overruling providence in turning these very circumstances to account in a most marvellous way for the furtherance of His benevolent designs, and to the special blessing of His faithful servants. Thus, for instance, Joseph being thrown more upon his own resources and in contact with a new, and at that time, the most advanced civilization of the world, received a new and valuable education which otherwise he could not have received. This, together with his trust in God, enabled Joseph to develop that strength of character which he later so wonderfully displayed. Also, in the providence of God, Joseph was the forerunner of all Israel in the land of Egypt, where God proposed to give that entire nation a needed and valuable experience for a long time, in contact with the highest civilization of that day. Yet, as slaves, 'they would be taught humility, and reliance upon God. Also, their race be kept pure and distinct from others, because as slaves they could not intermarry with the Egyptians. And through the Israelites in their land, the Egyptians, and also other nations, were to learn something of the character of the true God.

In Egypt, we find Joseph making the best of his trying circumstances. Because of his faithfulness he soon gained the confidence of his master who made him overseer of all his house, and all that he had he put in Joseph's hand, and the Lord was with Joseph. • After some ten years of service Joseph was falsely accused and cast into prison, but here also the Lord was with him and showed him mercy, and Joseph again made the best of his situation. After some time of discipline and testing in prison, God set before him an open door; He did not take Joseph out immediately, but prepared a way for him to freedom. When God showed Joseph the meaning of the dreams of the butler and baker in prison, he had hopes of release, but the ungrateful butler forgot his benefactor, and Joseph remained a prisoner for two more years. Then the door was swung open this time, not only to freedom, but to honour and advancement.

Joseph's suggestion to Pharaoh of a wise course, in view of the predicted famine, was an evidence not only of his faith in God, but also of a keen active business turn of mind. Joseph evidently did not regard his exaltation next to the king as the full reward for his faithfulness. The throne of Egypt had never been the goal of his ambition, for like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, he looked for the kingdom of God. With the same faithfulness as before, he quietly set about his new duties of piloting the nation through the threatening dangers of the future. Joseph did not become puffed up with pride, but with the same, quiet dignity that characterizes a true man, he went about the business of his new office with the same energy, competency and faithfulness that he had shown as a slave, a brother, and a son in his father's house.

Again, the wisdom and noble character of Joseph shone out brilliantly in his treatment of his erring brethren, when the widespread famine had brought them down to Egypt. He knew them, but under the changed circumstances they did not recognise him. He had left them a beardless boy of seventeen, sold into slavery; they now saw him a man of forty, arrayed in the vestments of royalty and speaking a foreign language which they did not understand. Had Joseph been of a revengeful spirit, here was his opportunity for retaliation; but Joseph was a well-balanced man, and revenge could have served no good purpose. His course showed that he had a forgiving, as well as a cautious spirit, and that under proper circumstances he was ready to exercise forgiveness. Joseph therefore wisely dealt roughly with his brothers at first, that he might prove whether the experience of years had brought about any change in them, and also that he might learn something about his father and his younger and only hill-brother, Benjamin.

Joseph soon learned that his father and Benjamin still lived, but by concealing his identity and dealing roughly with his brothers he improved the opportunity to test their present disposition, both toward their aged father and Benjamin, and toward each other. He witnessed their concern for their father's feelings about Benjamin, and their tenderness toward Benjamin who was now the father's favourite, thus showing that they had overcome the bitter envy and hatred of their younger days. Joseph heard them confess too,

in their own language, one to another, their guilt with reference to their former treatment of himself, and learned also of Reuben's remonstrance of that time. Then the circumstances drew forth the pathetic prayer of Judah for the restoration of Benjamin to his father, and his offer of himself as a substitute—as a bondman to Joseph.

This was enough for Joseph, penitence and a true change of heart were all he desired, and having proved this thoroughly and wisely, he could no longer restrain himself. His truly forgiving heart now overflowed with benevolence, and he wept aloud, and embraced and kissed his brethren.. His brothers returned home, not only to tell the good news, but also to confess to Jacob their sin against Joseph, as under the circumstances this became necessary. Jacob, who at first thought the news too good to believe, until he saw the wagons from Egypt, said, "It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die.

On the long journey God appeared to Jacob in a vision at night, and promised to be with him in Egypt, and that He would there make of him a great nation. Then the joyful meeting and the realisation of Joseph's glory and power, and better still, he saw Joseph's love toward God, toward himself and toward his brethren. In the meeting with Pharaoh, the king bestowed favour upon Jacob and he was thus able to settle in the land of Egypt and enjoy the remainder of his life amidst his family for seventeen years until his death.

We can gather precious lessons of confidence in God and faithfulness and zeal in His service from this beautiful account of the life of one of God's chosen ones. We may observe in Joseph's life the typical foreshadowing of Christ, the Saviour of His people and also of the world. Joseph was another illustration, like that of his father, of the chief blessing coming specifically upon a younger son. So, the chief blessing of God is also to come upon the Christ, Head and Body, the Gospel Church, not the elder Jewish church.

While all of Jacob's sons were elected and inherited a share of the blessing promised to Abraham, Joseph was specially chosen as a type of Christ, Head and Body. He is the one through whom blessings will come upon the natural seed of Abraham, that they in turn may bless all the families of the earth.

As Joseph was hated of his brethren, so Christ also was hated of His brethren, the Jewish nation.

As Joseph came unto his brethren and they received him not, so Christ also was rejected by His Jewish brethren when He came unto them.

Joseph's imprisonment seems to represent the three and a half years of our Lord's ministry, the years after His baptism when He was dying daily, giving up His life for others; or they were parallel also with Christ's three days in the tomb, from whence, like Joseph, He came forth and was highly exalted next to the King.

As all power was given unto Joseph by Pharaoh throughout the land of Egypt, so all power has been given to Jesus our Lord by the Heavenly Father throughout the whole world.

As Joseph used his power to bless others, storing up food for all, so our Lord will use His power, laying up sufficient grace to give everlasting life.

Although Joseph knew that shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians he was not ashamed to present his father and brethren to Pharaoh. So also our Lord is not ashamed to own as His brethren those who have nothing to commend them but humble, contrite hearts.

Then, in the period of famine, Joseph used the grain, which meant life, to preserve for Pharaoh the land,

the people, and all they had. Here again we may observe a striking type of the work of Christ. During the Millennial Age Christ will give the bread of everlasting life to all who desire it. Thus, as Joseph, Pharaoh's representative, gave life to or saved the lives of many, so Christ, as God's Prime Minister, has provided life for all, and offers it to all on the same conditions of faith and obedience to the King.

We notice, also, how beautifully Joseph's noble and benevolent treatment of his erring brethren prefigures the foretold course of our exalted Lord Jesus with His former enemies. Charity is always a noble quality when seen in such a setting as this. Joseph did not even suggest what he might justly have done to his brethren as punishment for their sin against himself, twenty-three years before. After testing his brethren and finding them changed in heart and penitent, he reveals himself a true, loving, forgiving friend and brother. He makes no boast of his own wisdom or virtue as the cause of his exaltation, but ascribes all the honour to God's overruling providence. He does not even remind them of his prophetic dream which they had just fulfilled in kneeling down before him. Joseph did not say that his brethren were not guilty of evil or wickedness, but was willing to forgive-, because they were now in the right heart condition. So, also, our Lord Jesus is willing to forgive freely all who are penitent and humbly come to Him.

In Joseph's case was emphasized God's promise to all His people, as we read in Romans 8:28— "All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

Concordances

"Daily Heavenly Manna."—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/-, post paid,

Revised Standard Version Bible,-1 9 5 2. Copies of the Revised Bible are available, and will be found helpful for Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50/-; in red rexine 60/-.

A New Picture Bible.—A Cambridge Bible, containing 30 coloured illustrations, with marginal references, and strong, black, cloth cover. A very good child's Bible; price 15/6.

Submission.

Oh teach me. Lord, the art
With Wisdom to remove
The errors that deceive the heart
And Truth to clearly prove.

"O! arm me with the mind,
Meek Lamb, that was in Thee;
And let my fervent zeal be joined
With grace and charity."

Correspondence.

Dear Brother—Am enclosing postal note for my subscription to “Peoples Paper” which I am enjoying, especially of late. Also for “Divine Plan of the Ages,” and should you have a cheaper volume than the 4/6 it would do; I wish to give it to a person who has never read the book. With Christian love; your Sister in Him.

Dear Brethren—At your request for old stamps, I submit my gathering herewith. May I add how we in Ireland appreciate the help we receive from “Peoples Paper”—its simplicity and purity of doctrine, to say the least. Loving greetings; Yours in His service.

Dear Brother in Christ—I have to thank you for the prompt despatch of your truth publication, the “Peoples Paper” to me, and which I am enjoying and finding of good help along the Narrow Way.. .

Many thanks for your good wishes and also for including in your last letter a copy of the Adelaide Convention programme in which I was deeply interested, and would have liked to have visited. I feel that such a visit would be of great spiritual benefit to one here in this country where opportunities to meet fellow Bible students are few. . . I intend, God willing, to try and visit one of your Conventions as soon as circumstances permit, probably around Memorial time of next year, for I feel the fellowship with those of like mind, to one as isolated as I am here in New Zealand, would be a very great help along the Pilgrim Way. With sincere Christian love and greetings in Christ; I remain, Yours in, the Blessed Hope.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends—’I am very sorry I have not sent this postal note sooner, but I do appreciate all your kindness, sending along the “Peoples Paper.” It has been a wonderful help to me since my husband passed away so suddenly. . . . I do wish the Institute every success; I do listen to the broadcasts of Frank and Ernest and really enjoy them; I have not been able to get along to the Free Lecture on a Sunday afternoon, but hope some time to get along. Once again thanking you for your kindness. I remain, Yours faithfully.

Dear Friends—I shall be pleased to have some of your latest discussions on the Bible, especially leaflets dealing with the present time of trouble.

I am an inspector of coal mines and in the course of my duties I often discuss your lectures with the coal miners and it is surprising how many take notice of me regarding these discussions.

As the world goes on, it is evident that there is no solution to the problem I remember my old mother many years ago talking on the Bible to us, while residing in Scotland, about Christ’s wonderful kingdom, and she often said that 1954 would be a very eventful year and would probably see the great time of trouble just on the eve of the establishment of the kingdom.

I would like to give you a donation towards your wonderful work. . . . Will be pleased to have all the topical literature relating to the present time of trouble. Yours very sincerely.

Dear Friend—Please find P.N. to value of being a donation towards your wonderful work in spreading the good news during these very troublous times. . . I was most interested in your literature and shall be pleased to have the leaflets as advertised; I listen in every Sunday morning at 8.15 a.m. to Frank and Ernest —two very logical debaters.

Hoping this small donation will assist you considerably in your great and noble work. Thanks very much

for your very kind letter. Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Gentlemen—As it is a very long while since I have asked for copies of your broadcasts, although a frequent audience, might I be pardoned for asking for copies of your past nine broadcasts, if that be possible, including yesterday's. . . . Could I also have your booklet offer of yesterday, "Christ's Return," and another booklet, "God and Reason."

Just one more request, of great importance I think, because of its unusualness. I believe I have heard you teach that man is to be given a second chance during, I think, the Millennium. Orthodox religion, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, teaches the reverse of this doctrine. Also the Christadelphians, a most emphatic sect, and the Seventh Day Adventists, teach the reverse—what a man believes, thinks and does on this earth during his lifetime, this lifetime, is his only chance, and upon that he is judged. In fact, you are the only Bible study group who teach the doctrine of a "second chance" within my knowledge; consequently, have you a booklet, or other literature, which deals specifically with this doctrine, putting forward your argument with reasons and Scriptural support?

By the way, what impelled the latter request, yesterday in a broadcast one of the experts answering questions said that there was no evidence whatever in the Bible to support the claim that man has a second chance; in short, his life, belief and conduct in this life is his one chance. They also stated that Christ's words to the thief upon the cross proved that the spirit goes straight to heaven. Yours most sincerely.

(Literature covering the above questions will be gladly sent to all enquirers, including the Lord's answer to the thief on the cross. In next month's "Peoples Paper" an article will also appear respecting the one full chance which God promises to give to all mankind—either in this life, or in the resurrection day of Christ's Kingdom. B.B. Institute.)

Messrs. Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I am ashamed to say that in my forty odd years. I have been "too busy" to have much time for Christ in my life. However, since a friend asked me to accompany her to church one evening, I am pleased to say that I have found a new interest.

As you can quite imagine, I do not know how to start, or where to begin, and I hoped you might be able to help me with some literature, or advise me what to purchase in the way of books. For any comments or helpful suggestions I would be most grateful. Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

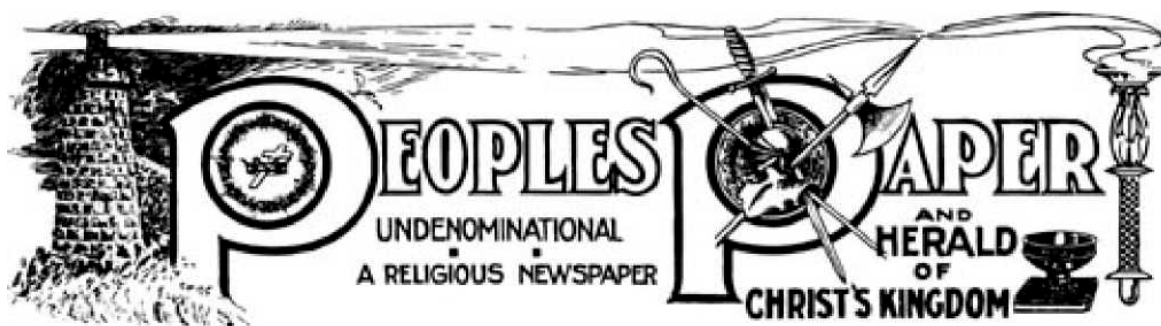
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ., 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ., 4.45 p.m.

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Is there a Second Chance for Salvation After Death?

THE subject of salvation is really the most important presented and explained to us in God's Word, because however true and beautiful other features of the plan of God may be, without salvation none of the human family would be able to enjoy and benefit from them for more than the few years of this present life. The Apostle Paul had this thought in mind when he stated—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (1 Cor. 15:19.) Paul would reason—If there is not real, lasting salvation, which continues in the hereafter, then we have cause to be most miserable.

Then the question may be presented to our minds—What do we mean by salvation? The main meaning of the Greek and Hebrew words, from which our English word "salvation" is translated, is—"rescue or safety." And someone may ask—Rescue or safety from what? Our Lord's words give us the answer—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) The Greek word which is translated by our English word "perish" means—"to destroy fully." In other words, it means death, lasting death, with no thought at all of consciousness. So, the salvation mentioned in the Bible means, to be rescued or made safe from death, from destruction.

Inasmuch as every member of the human race has been condemned to death in Adam, the matter of salvation will have to be faced, sooner or later, by every man, woman and child who has ever lived; and the Lord be praised that it is in this way, because every human being will thus have an opportunity for salvation—to be rescued, made safe from destruction; as the Apostle Paul so clearly declared—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (1 Cor. 15:22; Heb. 2:9.)

The majority of our readers will remember one of Sankey's hymns—"Rescue the Perishing,"— and this title really gives the correct thought behind the word "salvation," so long as we remember that perishing means destruction. Probably the compiler of the hymn had the thought that if people were not rescued in this present life they were lost, condemned to eternal torment. This idea is both unscriptural and unreasonable, as any school child can prove from the Bible.

Quoting from the words of Jesus, when He was speaking with the woman of Samaria, we read in John 4:22—

"Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews." Someone may say, That seems strange, why was salvation, or rescue from death, destruction, only for the Jews at the time Jesus spoke?

The instructions which our Lord gave to His twelve disciples may assist; He declared—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5, 6.) Also Jesus' reference to Himself is enlightening, as found in Matt. 15:24—"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The Apostle Paul, looking back to the time of Jesus' first advent and before, stated—"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles (utterances) of God." (Rom. 3:1, 2.) Again, in speaking of his kinsmen according to the flesh, Paul declared—"Who are the Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." (Rom. 9:4, 5.)

The above quotations help us to understand what John meant in John 1:11—"He came unto his own (Israel) and his own received him not." The nation of Israel had been God's chosen people for centuries, and Christ was sent to them, as their Messiah, to give them the opportunity for salvation to the heavenly kingdom, prior to all other nations. This was surely a great privilege which the Israelites as a whole did not appreciate, as shown again by the statement of Acts 13:45, 46—"When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye have put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (See also Eph. 2:11-13.)

A further statement by the Apostle Paul is most enlightening in connection with our subject, as found in Rom.

1:16—"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"—Gentiles generally. How clear it is that God determined to give the Jewish people the first opportunity for the heavenly calling, but seeing that sufficient were not worthy of that "so great salvation," the invitation to believers in Christ from all nations was made operative 31 years after our Lord's sacrifice unto death, so that the full number of the Bride of Christ may be called, chosen and proven faithful to, reign with Christ in His heavenly kingdom.

Now, it may be asked, What happens to those Jews who rejected Jesus at His first advent, who had the opportunity to hear the "gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth"? Following the words of advice which our Lord gave to His disciples in Matt. 10:6, where He directed them to preach the message to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" only, we read in verses 14 and 15 "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." It will be seen that the Israelites would be rejecting the light and truth of the Lord in rejecting the disciples of Christ, and so would not be worthy of any special consideration from the Lord as respects the heavenly calling—they had shown their lack of appreciation for such a high honour. Yet, Jesus implied that it would be a tolerable time for Israel in the day of judgment, but more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, because the people of those cities had sinned against much less light and truth.

Through the prophet Ezekiel we have a wonderful account of how God will deal with Israel, Samaria,

Sodom and all other nations in the day of judgment—the thousand years of Christ’s reign, when He will judge the world in righteousness. (See Acts 17:31.) In Ezekiel 16, the prophet, speaking for the Lord, after revealing the sins of Sodom and her daughters and declares that God “took them away as He saw good” (verses 48-50) , then continues, speaking prophetically to Israel—”Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done . . . When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them. That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou has done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.” (Verses 51-55.)

The declaration that the Lord would “bring again the captivity” of Sodom, Samaria and Israel, is more clearly revealed in the Revised Standard Version, which translates verse 53 as follows :—”I will restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your own fortunes in the midst of them.” Thus, God’s prophet was speaking of the great resurrection day in restoring the fortunes of these nations. They shall all “return to their former estate--come again from the land of the enemy, death— that they may profit from past experiences, for “when the Lord’s judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isa. 26:9.) (See also Ezek. 16:60-63.)

The Apostle Paul confirms the words of the prophet in Roman 11:1, 2—”I say then, Hath God cast away his people? (Since they had rejected the high calling for the heavenly kingdom.) God forbid . . . God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” No, indeed, after showing that “blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”—to make up the full number of Christ’s Bride --Paul goes on to state—”And so all Israel shall be saved (shall be resurrected from the death condition) ; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (natural Israel) ; for this is my covenant unto them (the New Covenant which the Lord will make with Israel at that time) , when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel (the high calling for heaven) , they are enemies for your sakes (you Gentiles) ; but as touching the election (by which they were promised, through Abraham, that they should be the earthly seed to bless all other nations) , they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” (Rom. 11:25-29.)

Does this mean that Israel and all the Gentile nations will have a second chance for salvation? No; all who will be dealt with in the Kingdom Age will really be having their first, full chance. They were not really touched by the message of the gospel previously (even if they heard the words of Jesus or His disciples; the majority, of course, ‘having never heard Christ’s name) , hence were not called for the heavenly kingdom. Our Lord very clearly explained, even respecting those who heard Him — “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” (John 6:44.) By meditating-on this statement of our Master’s we are able to see, as never before, that during the Gospel Age (between Christ’s first and second advents) , God is drawing to Jesus only those in the right heart condition. If these accept Christ as their personal Saviour they may be prompted by the spirit of God to present themselves in full consecration. It is an individual matter as to who accepts the invitation for the heavenly salvation, but one must first be invited, and having answered the call, all must then be proved faithful unto death to gain the inheritance.

Truly an understanding of the drawing and calling of the members who will make up the Bride of Christ helps us to be sympathetic towards all who now do not show interest in spiritual things; for if God draws only a very limited number to Jesus during the Gospel Age, and the Scriptures affirm that this is so, then the majority of mankind cannot be having any chance for salvation in this life. Their first, full and only

chance will be in the Kingdom Age. Our Lord indicated this when He said, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, bath one that judgeth him; the words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:46-48.) The "last day" here mentioned by Jesus will be the judgment day of a thousand years on earth, and how reasonable it is to note that the words (truths, principles) spoken by Jesus at His first advent, will be the standards by which all mankind will be judged in this "last day" prior to the handing back of the kingdom to God, even the Father, when all the obedient will be able to stand before God's justice, as was the case with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before sin entered. (1 Cor. 15:24-26.)

Another statement by the Apostle Paul which agrees so fully with the foregoing, is found in 1 Tim. 2:4-6, where we read—"God will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth." Strange as it may seem to some people, Paul here states that all men will be saved first, and then brought to a knowledge of the truth. Yes, indeed, they could not be brought to a knowledge of anything while in the death condition; hence, they are saved from death in Adam by a resurrection, and then instructed during the Millennial Age concerning the wonderful truth that "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom (corresponding price) for all, to be testified in due time." All who then receive this testimony into good and honest hearts, (it not having been their "due time" to hear it previously) will progress up the highway of holiness to human perfection, with life everlasting on the restored earth.

Of course some texts of Scripture are misunderstood and misapplied in connection with this subject of an opportunity for salvation after death. As an example is the passage in 2 Cor. 6:1, 2—"We, then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." The Apostle is here referring to the day of salvation for the heavenly calling, and of course the Gospel Age is the only "day" for this; but to imply from this text that there is no hope of salvation beyond the present life for mankind in general is quite erroneous. The Apostle was not dealing with mankind in general, but writing to those who had already received the favour of God, and exhorting them not to receive this favour in vain, for truly, now is the only accepted time for the heavenly calling—during this present Gospel Age, and during the present lifetime of each one called of God and who has responded to that call to walk in the steps of Christ.

How important it is to keep the salvation for the heavenly calling—to the Jew first and also to the Gentiles — separate and distinct from the general salvation for mankind in general on the earth. By so doing, there is no confusion as to whether there is a second chance for salvation after death. It is hoped that the Scriptures used in this article clearly reveal that there is one full chance for salvation for every member of the human family, and no second chance for anyone.

Also that the consecrated followers of Christ receive their full chance for the heavenly salvation in this present life, whereas the world of mankind will receive their full chance for the earthly salvation in the resurrection day. Should any of the consecrated followers of the Lord reject the favour of God, and wilfully despise the blood of Christ there would be no further opportunity for salvation for them; they would die the second death. (Heb. 10:26-29.) Likewise with the world of mankind in the judgment day to come: if they refuse to obey the laws of that kingdom, under the favourable conditions of that time with Satan bound and no outside hindrances (Rev. 20:1-3), they must be destroyed in the second death also. (Acts 3:20-23.) Thus God will have perfect and obedient beings in heaven and earth following the kingdom reign of Christ, and even death will then be no more, because all then living will be worthy of lasting life, to God's praise. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26.)

How favoured are the Lord's true people during this "acceptable time" of the Gospel Age, having been

drawn of God to accept Christ as their personal Saviour, and then called further to present themselves in full consecration, to walk in the way of sacrifice in the steps of their Master, in hope of the heavenly inheritance, as' they prove faithful unto death. While the blessings upon all mankind in the kingdom of Christ on earth will be gracious and perfectly satisfying, even "the desire of all nations" to all in that earthly sphere who have no aspirations for spiritual things, yet the heavenly inheritance will be the glory that excelleth, for the Lord's faithful people now, as expressed by the Apostle—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (the naturally minded), the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us (the followers of Christ) by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 1:9, 10.) It is when we see clearly the two salvations which God provided through Christ, that our hearts surely long to serve such a loving Heavenly Father, and the language of the Psalmist expresses the desire of all who are now yielding their hearts and lives to God in spirit and in truth —"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psa. 116:12.15.)

Love feels no burden, thinks nothing of trouble, attempts what is above its strength, pleads no excuse of impossibility.... It is therefore able to undertake all things, and it completes many things, and brings them to a conclusion, where he who does not love, faints and lies down.—Thomas Kempis.

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

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To Put You in Remembrance.

“Though ye know and be established in the present truth.--2 Pet. 1:12.

WHILE the matter of being able to appreciate that we are living “in the days of the Son of Man” or the second presence of Christ, also of how we understand the “changed in a moment,” is not so fundamental as the decidedly anti - ransom theory of Universalism, yet it is important to know the present truth, and there is the blessing promised in the appreciation of our Lord, as a glorious spirit being, in the “express image of the Father’s person.” The gathering of His elect from the four winds of heaven and dealing with His people—the Church—is in accord with the two parables— the Ten Virgins, which indicates the condition of the watchers at the time of arrival, and the Talents, showing the work of Christ among His people, prior to the time when He will manifest His great power and control the poor “groaning creation.”—Rom. 8:19-22.

The Greek word “parousia” occurs in the following references:—Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39;

1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Cor. 16:17; 2 Cor. 7:6, 7; 2 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 1:26; Phil. 2:12; 1 Thess. 2:19; 1 Thess. 3:13; 1 Thess. 4:15; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8, 9; Jas. 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 2 Pet. 3:4, 12; 1 John 2:28. It is badly translated “coming” in the King James’ Version in all but two instances (2 Cor. 10:10 and Phil. 2:12), where it is translated “presence,” as it could hardly be translated by any other English word. In fact, every occurrence of the word parousia can be reasonably rendered “presence,” which seems to be the only English word that will express the meaning. All Greek scholars seem to agree that “presence” is the English equivalent of the Greek word “parousia.”

Then read Matt. 24:37-39: “As the days of Noah were so shall, also the ‘presence’ of the Son of Man be.” “For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the presence of the Son of Man be.”

In the preceding verses our Lord said it would not be possible to locate Him in any one place, for His presence would not be like that of a man to be seen face to face, but like the sunshine—the rising of the “Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings.” It is unreasonable to say that the “bright shining” out of the east unto the west refers to lightning and “so shall the presence of the Son of Man be.- How could a flash of lightning symbolise “presence” or “the days of the Son of Man”?

After the breaking of the persecuting powers of Papal Rome there was to occur just what has taken place—the darkening of the sun, the dimming of the Gospel message -by Evolution and Higher Criticism, in the pulpits; and the “moon”—the Law—does not give its light. Its ceremonies are not understood and its sacrifices, ‘ shadows of good things to come,’ are referred to as old pagan institutions. Then comes the “sign of the Son of Man in the heavens.” Satan is referred to as the “prince of the power of the air”; he has been ruling in the religious or ecclesiastical heavens. Now Christ has come to take control of religious matters, first dealing with those who look for His appearing and kingdom. He is surely judging among His people and rewarding them according to the use of talents entrusted to them.

If Christ were to be visible to all, there would be no need of a “sign” that He had come, that He was there “in the heavens.” The sign in the heavens appears to be the gathering of the elect from the four winds of heaven, a harvesting work, in the Christian world. For He shall send His angels (messengers) with a great sound of a trumpet (not for the world to hear) to attract, to gather His elect. The voice of the trumpet is the present truth proclamation. “One shall be taken, one shall be left,” and in Luke 17:34-37 the disciples asked, “Where, Lord?” And He said unto them, “Wheresoever the body is there will the eagles be gathered together.” (See also Matt. 24:28.) So it is, “blessed are they that hunger after righteousness for

they shall be filled.” It is the feast of Luke 12:37 and Rev. 3:20 to which the messengers have invited those who are watching for Him.

So the trumpet sounds “in the days of the Son of Man,” and in Rev. 10:7 we read “in the days of the seventh (trumpet) messenger, when he shall begin to sound.” It is not just a blast of a trumpet, any more than it is a flash of lightning, that symbolises the Lord’s presence; it is, “in the days” of the sounding of this trumpet by the seventh messenger that the mystery is to be finished. The plan is to be made plain and the Church completed, for during this time when the trump of God shall sound the dead in Christ shall rise first, and during the same time those that still remain in the flesh shall be caught away, as they finish their course, to be together with the Lord in the air. All who are baptised into Christ are baptised into His death. Just as the first veil to enter the Tabernacle signified our consecration to death as human beings, so the passing under the second veil indicates the actual death of the human being. The “new creature,” like the great High Priest, Christ, must leave behind the human nature. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, and the bodies of those beasts, whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. “. . . Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp.” “As many as are baptised into Jesus Christ are baptised into His death.” “But blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth. . . .” —Rev. 14:13.

But “behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep (be in a state of sleep, though we must all die), but we shall all be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of the eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.”-1 Cor. 15:52, 54. In verse 54 “corruptible” seems to refer to the dead who are raised “incorruptible,” and mortal to those still alive who are to be changed to be immortal.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 1/12/6.

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Teach Me to Live.

“Teach me to live, ‘tis easier far to die,
Gently and silently to pass away,
On earth’s long night to close the heavy eye,
And waken in the realms of Glorious days.”

“Teach me that harder lesson—how to live :
To serve Thee in the darkest paths of life,
Arm me for conflict now, fresh vigour give,
And make me more than conqueror in the strife.”

“Teach me to live Thy purpose to fulfil.
Bright for thy glory, let my taper shine,,
Each day renew, remould my stubborn will.
Closer round Thee my heart’s affections twine.”

—Selected.

The Zeal of the Lord’s House.

(This Article Contributed.)

“The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.” (Psa. 69:9:)

FIRST of all let us note what “zeal” means. Professor Strong gives the meaning of the word—”in a favourable sense ardour, in an unfavourable sense jealousy.” Sometimes in the Bible this word is translated “jealous” where it would be better translated zeal. For instance in 2 Cor. 11:2 the Authorised Version reads, “I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy,” but a better translation would be, “I am ardently devoted to you with a godly zeal.” We see, then, that to have zeal indicates that one is ardently devoted to a certain work, or one can be ardently devoted against a certain work.

So our text, spoken by David, would refer to himself in a sense, because David, like all the ancient worthies, was zealous. David had a great desire to do some work for God. He had a zeal for the Lord’s house—the tabernacle first, and subsequently for the temple, which he desired to build, but the Lord would not permit him.

This text was spoken prophetically of our Lord also. We can see this by referring to John 2:17, where the same text is referred to by our Lord. We remember that at this time our Lord had gone to Jerusalem at the Passover season, and coming to the temple, found the outer court filled with oxen and sheep etc., which were sold in great numbers at this time, because of the many visitors at Jerusalem. This filled our Lord with righteous indignation, to see the place which was supposed to be a place of worship used in this way. He decided to rid the temple of these things. He made a whip of cords, and drove out all the animals and those that sold them. He also overturned the tables of the moneychangers, leaving them in disaster, and said to those that sold doves, “Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise.” The temple was supposed to be a place of worship, but part of it had become more like a shamble, so our Lord was justified in such an action. His disciples, referring to our Lord’s act, quoted the Psalm—”The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.”

Our Lord's zeal in the temple showed His earnest desire to serve God. But there is a still deeper meaning to our text. We understand that the Church in this Gospel Age is the House of God. (Heb. 3:5, 6.) We see there are two houses of God, a house of servants and a house of sons; and Christ is head over the house of sons, which is also the true Church.

The same thought is expressed in I Pet. 2:5—"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And in 1 Cor. 3:16—"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

So we see the real house of God over which Jesus had zeal was the house of sons. We have no better example of zeal displayed in the Bible than that of our Lord Jesus. When He came at His first advent, He came to give His life for us—Mark 10:45. Our Lord's life was a willing sacrifice, and with this thought before our minds we can understand how it was that the zeal for this house of sons did eat Him up or consume Him. For the whole of His earthly life, from Jordan to Calvary, was one of service—loving service, zealous service, so much so that it gradually ate him up.

It may do us good to note particularly to whom our Lord's energy and zeal were extended. Throughout His ministry His great theme in preaching was to gather together a little company of believers. His own words in Luke 4:18, 19 show this. Although, our Lord expended much of His energy in healing, the purpose was to gather the wheat out of the chaff during that harvest time. How often Jesus went aside to pray for those, and how He used to watch those who accepted Him. At the close of His earthly ministry our Lord's zeal was devoted almost entirely to His disciples. Jesus said Himself, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 15:13,14.)

We who have become members of this same House are likewise invited to preach the Gospel as our Lord did, to lay down our lives as He did, for the brethren. Let us do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the Household of Faith. If we, then, have the spirit of Christ, we will have the spirit of service. It will be like a fire within us, an energy permeating us, driving us to serve the House of God.

The Apostle Paul was also a great example of a zealous Christian. We see it all through his writings, and the text in 2 Cor. 11:2 indicates that he had a great desire to serve the Church at Corinth, and this was so toward all the Churches. He said, "I am ardently devoted to you with a godly zeal." In the 28th verse of that same chapter he said, "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." So it would seem that the Apostle's time was mainly for those who had accepted our Lord and become members of the House of Sons.

It would seem important, then, that we have a rightly-balanced zeal. That is, that we should see to it that our desire to serve God is exercised in the right direction. The Apostle Paul speaks of some in Rom. 10:2 who had a zeal, but not according to knowledge. The ones referred to were holding to the old Law. Their time and energy was exercised so that they were still trying to gain righteousness by serving the Law, so that their zeal was misdirected. We see this same spirit about us to-day among nominal Christians. Some devote all their energy in social life and many other ways, and expect to gain righteousness in this way, but this is not the work of the House of sons to be done during this age. We all need to search our hearts diligently, to see that our zeal is not for outward show to appear obedient in the sight of our fellow-creatures.

That this is possible is illustrated by a sermon delivered some years ago. The preacher dreamed that his zeal was wrapped in a package of considerable size, and some angels came and weighed it, and assured him that it was a full weight, 100 pounds—all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyse it. They put it in a crucible and tested it in various ways, and

then reported the result: 14 parts selfishness;

15 parts sectarianism; 22 parts ambition; 23 parts love for men; 26 parts love for God.

Wakening, he realised it was but a dream, but he felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it for the remainder of his life. That dream may be profitable to each of us in leading us to a close examination of the motives which lie beyond all our words and thoughts and doings, especially the service for the brethren. There would seem to be a lesson for us all here. Love for God and for our fellow-men are the only elements of real zeal in the above analysis. It would show us that the zeal to serve God should come from the heart. These other elements mentioned are satisfying only the old nature, and would be zeal used, but not according to knowledge.

It is possible then, as we see in this result, that we can use our energy in a wrong way and yet think that we are serving God, and as we saw, that zeal could be used in a favourable or unfavourable sense. We do well to search our hearts to see if it is used in the wrong way. The lesson we should take from this result is, that love should prompt us to serve God and our fellow-men, and it is our zeal to serve God and the brethren that measures our love for the Lord.

Again, our Lord was a great example. We remember in John 13:1-14, shortly before our Lord's crucifixion, before He had eaten the Passover, He performed the manual service of washing the disciples' feet. While there are many good lessons to learn from this incident, one would be that we should be willing to render loving service to our brethren. Jesus said, "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

Our Lord had great love for His disciples, and here He wished to show them that while they were afraid to perform this small duty for each other, He, in performing it, had humbled Himself to serve them all, and had rebuked their lack of humility, and at the same time set them an example that would help them in every affair in life.

We see from this, too, that our zeal to serve does not necessarily mean that great works must be done to be seen of men in order to be acceptable to God, but even the little duties of life, performed faithfully and with love, have Divine approval. It is the little daily sacrifices which we are privileged to perform that make up the sacrifices which we have covenanted to make.

We remember, too, in the typical picture of the Atonement Day sacrifices, Leviticus 16, that the bullock represented our Lord Jesus, and the goat the Church, His body members, and we are told that the bullock was killed and atonement made for the High Priest and his house. The blood was used for atonement, but the carcase was burned with fire, and the vital parts of the bullock were burned on the brazen altar in the Court. Then there was also the fire on the golden altar in the Holy. The Three fires were burning at the same time, representing different phases of the consuming of our Lord's sacrifice.

Fire here would seem to represent destructive influences that came against Him and caused His death, as viewed from the different standpoints. To those outside in the camp, in the world, the burning of the flesh and the skin etc., had a very bad odour. To them our Lord's life was foolish, wasted; but to those inside the Court, justified believers, the burning of the fat was not a bad odour, but acceptable to God as a sweet odour. It was the burning of these vital parts of the bullock which seemed to represent the devotion and love and zeal of the Lord, and it was the love and zeal of the Lord to serve God and His brethren that brought Him up against such experiences as represented by the fire which led to His death. The incense sprinkled on the fire before the Mercy Seat represented our Lord's acceptable sacrifice in God's sight.

So in line with this, our text says, “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” Yes, it was our Lord’s love and zeal for His house for the 3 years of His earthly ministry that gradually used up His strength. His life, and rose as an acceptable incense to God.

In the type, everything that was done to the bullock (representing Christ) was done to the goat. which represented His footstep followers. So it should be the love and zeal to serve God and His

House of Sons which should rise as an acceptable sacrifice to God, and just as it was with our Lord, it should use up our strength and life. So then, let us take our Lord as an example of zeal, and let us endeavour to serve God and lay down our lives for the brethren more and more as the days go by.

Things Worth Striving For.

(From Bro. B. H. Barton’s Note Book) .

THE PATIENT PERSEVERANCE which defeat cannot discourage nor discouragement defeat.

THE IMPARTIALITY which delights as much in a grand work another has done, as if you had done it yourself.

THE SPIRIT which finds a more ready excuse for your brother than for yourself.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS which would rather right a wrong than conceal your share in it.

THE CHASTITY which always looks for some good intention, even where a slight or injury are seemingly intended

THE CHRISTIANITY which is as careful how we live in our homes as how we act before the brethren.

THE LOYALTY which even your stumblings and failures cannot dishearten.

THE LOWLINESS which will sorrow when your enemy falls and rejoice when you are humbled.

THE WISDOM which knows when to speak and when to be silent.

THE ZEAL which can never do enough and yet asks no credit and encourages no compliments.

THE FORGIVENESS which not only pardons in words, but proves its reality by never referring to the matter again.

THE HUMILITY which would choose the meaner and more undesirable part of a service, to leave the nobler and more honourable part for another brother.

Used Postage Stamps.

Used postage stamps of all varieties can be sold to 84 port the truth work. Friends willing to assist may forward all, the Australian stamps they can procure, as well as other stamps, leaving at least a quarter of an inch of paper around the stamps; that is, do not remove stamps from the paper.

No Rudder to Noah's Ark

And Noah went into the ark; and the Lord shut him in .—Gen. 7.7, 16

There was no rudder to Noah's ark. He had obeyed God and now was shut in, with God only to steer; for he was on God's errand. The man who could endure what he endured for more than a century, while preaching the word amidst a hostile people, did not have any fears as to where he was going. And what an experience it is when we believe that God is steering our little barque over life's tempestuous sea.

—S. D. Gordon.

Prayer Brings Peace.

"Being in agony, He prayed," is the record of our Saviour's Gethsemane experience. The lesson stands for all time. Like a bright lamp, the little sentence shines amid the olive trees in the garden. It shows us the path to comfort in our time of sorrow. Never before nor since was there such grief as the Redeemer's that night, but in His prayer He found comfort. As we watch Him the hour through, we see the agony changing as He prayed, until at last its bitterness was all gone, and sweet, blessed peace took its place. The gate of prayer is always the gate to comfort. There is no other place to go. We may learn also from our Lord's Gethsemane how to pray in our Gethsemanes. God will never blame us for asking to have the cup removed nor for the intensity of our supplication; but we must pray with submission. It is when we say in our deepest intensity, "Not my will, but Thine," that comfort comes, that peace comes.

Perfect loyalty to Christ brings perfect peace into the heart. The secret of Christ's own peace was His absolute devotion to His Father's will. Any resistance to God's will, any disobedience of His law, any wrenching of our lives out of His hand must break the peace of our hearts. No lesson that He gives ever mars our peace, if we receive it with willing, teachable spirit, and strive to learn it just as He has written it out for us. If we take the lessons just as they are given to us, we shall make our life music, and we shall find peace.—T. R. Miller, D.D.

Chosen Lessons.

“He shall teach Him in the way that He shall choose.”—Psalm 25 :1 2.

In the way that He shall choose
He will teach us :
Not a lesson we shall lose,
All shall reach us.
Strange and difficult indeed
We may find it.

But the blessing that we need
Is behind it.
All the lessons He shall send
Are the sweetest,
And His training in the end
Is completest.

—F. R. H.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.



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Redeeming the Time.

“See, then, that ye walk circumspectly, not as tools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil.”—Eph. 5 :1 5 16.

THIS text, like all injunctions in the Scriptures, is addressed to the Church of God, not to the world; for the Lord is not dealing with the world at present. It is an important thing to recognise this fact. Many, losing sight of it, are in confusion when they come to the study of the Bible. In His Word, the Lord is not telling the world what they should do, but is telling His servants what steps they should take from the time they become His people. Many think of the Bible as being addressed to the entire world, and then are surprised that the world cannot understand it. But we who know that our Lord said to His disciples, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven,” are not surprised that before any can understand God’s Word they must take the step of full consecration to Him.

It is to Christians, then, that the Lord gives this message of our text. God’s children should walk circumspectly, wisely, carefully, redeeming the time. Our time is redeemed, bought back, by making some sacrifice, that we may have that time to use profitably. There are certain natural claims upon our time. We need time to eat and to sleep, to earn and prepare our food. Besides this, there are other calls. Our families have some demands upon us, whether Christians or not. Husbands have some proper demands upon wives, and wives upon husbands; children upon parents, and parents upon children. Our neighbours have some proper call upon us in the way of helpfulness.

Then beyond all our obligations, the world now has many things to allure and attract, to please eye and ear. There are newspapers and periodicals, moving pictures and fairs, art galleries, concerts, and what not. Any one who has brains may have his time filled to the full in these multitudinous ways. The Lord’s children find that their entire time might be taken up by earthly interest, if they would permit it.

But God has called us to be New Creatures. He has put into our minds new plans, new interests, and into our lives new work, new obligations. The earthly ambitions have died since we received the new ambitions, since we have found that the Lord has invited us to become joint-heirs with His Son Jesus in, the glories of ‘the Kingdom. We say to ourselves, “All those earthly things are transitory, and never were worth very much at best. The riches which God has promised are everlasting and of infinite value.” So we wish to have our minds set upon these things.

God invites us to Himself through the promises of the Bible; and these promises work in us to will and to do His good pleasure. In selecting His Church the Lord is not using force. We are. not cattle to be driven,

but sheep to be led. The Heavenly Shepherd calls His sheep; and they follow Him; “They know His Voice”; but “they know not the voice of strangers.” The Good Shepherd’s voice sounds forth from the Bible; and if anybody says of some voice, “This is the voice of the Lord,” we are to make sure by going to the Bible and proving or disproving the claim. We might get some serious error ‘even from a friend. We must in every case, as Christians, prove all things by the Word and hold fast that which is good.

As we endeavour to meditate upon the things which God has promised, we find that we have very little time for that purpose. One may begin the day by thinking, “I will do thus and so on.” But difficulties and interruptions come ‘pressing in, and, fill the day. What shall be done? The Apostle says, Redeem the time—buy it back. Curtail some of the other things, that you may have some time to use in the cultivation of your own character, in the study of the Scriptures.

Presumably, as Bible students, we have all had experiences in reading the Scriptures without helps. We have read chapter after chapter, and often it did us little good. But we find that there is a different way to study the Bible, by which we may enjoy the Scriptures and be profited. We find that we have needed a kind of outline—from Creation down to the Deluge one great period; from the Deluge down to the First Coming of Christ another period; from the first Coming to His-Second Coming another period; then the Millennial Age; and lastly the ages of glory to follow.

This helps us to straighten matters out.

When we read, we should ask ourselves, “With what does this part of the Scripture deal?” The Bible is full of problems to solve, like an arithmetic. We do not merely read through an arithmetic; if we do we would learn little. We are to study the Bible according to dispensations, and according to what God outlines as His great Plan of the Ages. Nobody can comprehend the Divine Plan of the Ages (Eph. 3:11, Diaglott) without studying it. This Plan of God is outlined in the Bible. We must examine each Scripture in relation to its context. So we need considerable time to understand properly the Word of God.

The older we grow as Christians, the more we find is necessary for these spiritual things. Natural food is to make one strong, bright; intelligent, quick. as a natural man; and spiritual food is to make the New Creature intelligent, quick, well established, apt to teach, able to “rightly divide the Word of Truth.” As we mature we need stronger food. It was sufficient that we had milk to start with. But milk will not suffice for adults.

Albeit we are growing to appreciate more the Word of God, the whole world is becoming filled with attractions.

But as we see the Day of Christ drawing on, yea, that it is even now upon us, we, as God’s children, must be more and more attentive to our Heavenly Calling. Why did not the Lord arrange things some other way, that we might have more time? He wishes to see whether we appreciate the spiritual things or not. Whoever is not hungry for spiritual food, has no desire, to go to the spiritual table, is not using his talents along spiritual lines. We should give a good share of our time to the study of the Truth as it is in Jesus. We should have a hunger for righteousness, for Bible Truth. The Lord is testing us. He knows that whoever is really hungry and thirsty for righteousness will redeem the time and the zeal with which we redeem the time and give it to the spiritual things is one of the evidences we give of growing real Christian character.

If we take time for a picture show, but do not take time for the study of God’s Word, this is abundant proof that we do not love Him supremely. We say that we are hungry for the Word of Truth. How much time do we spend with the newspaper? How much time do we spend with the Bible? There is no use in trying to deceive the Lord. “God is not mocked.” He knows all about what we are doing. He will not be

deceived in respect of our character.

We know that, as Christians, we have two natures to deal with. We have the old nature—reckoned dead—which has its ordinary appetites and desires, the same as other people. We like certain kinds of foods. We have a variety of natural tastes, all of which are clamouring for recognition. We desire to investigate machinery, to look into investments, to think about the triumphs of mankind, to study the sciences, etc. These are all right enough in their places. God does not say that it is wrong to have a desire to know; but He is putting things in such a way as to give us tests as to whether we are the more appreciative of these things or of the heavenly things.

Whoever spends his consecrated time in reading history, novels, etc., or in attending places of amusement, is not spending it in building up the New Creature. Each human being has his natural individual desires; but the New Creature is to put these natural cravings down. The New Creature is as yet only in the mind. He figuratively puts down his foot and says, “God has promised me His grace to rule this body. Backed up by His help, I can succeed. I agreed to sacrifice these earthly interests, and it SHALL BE DONE! I am determined to live on the spiritual plane: therefore I must grow; I must get stronger every day.” If we let ourselves drift, the flesh will take possession of everything: and we shall die of spiritual starvation.

The Apostle Paul wrote to certain of the Church in his day, implying that some were still babes. He says, “When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.” (Heb. 5:12-14.)

We must not think that we are to do something for somebody else first, neglecting our own spiritual development.

As New Creatures we must build up ourselves first. Then we may do all that we can to assist others, “doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the Household of Faith.” This is our personal contract with the Lord; and thus it is with the whole family of God. We are building up ourselves and one another. The faithful members of Christ’s Body are growing, everywhere; and soon, we believe, this spiritual family of God will be completed beyond the veil,

Many of the Lord’s people do not see the force of the Apostolic injunction that they should redeem the time; and therefore, they are living at a disadvantage. They do not notice the many minutes they waste in the twenty-four hours. Let us then, as consecrated children of God, see that we do not squander time. Let us see what we can lop off, how we can get the minutes under our control. If one can get sixty of them redeemed, he will have an hour. By pinching and economising here and there one may very easily save this hour for the service of the Lord or for Bible study.

“Because the days are evil,” says St. Paul. His thought is, “Realising that our days, as they are passing, are unfavourable to us as New Creatures.” This is particularly true of our own day. With all the enlightenment of today there are many blessings of an earthly kind coming in, preparatory to the New Age. The nearer we get to the establishment of God’s Kingdom, the greater is the pressure on every side from the world.

As we see that the Day of Christ is right upon us this should be all the more an incentive to draw us together as children of God. (Heb. 10:25.) We shall have special need of the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and all the Christian’s armour. (Eph. 6:12-18.) We have come down to the time when there is trouble all about us. It is the fire of the “great Day of the Lord.” This fire “Shall try every man’s work.” Some who have built their faith structure on traditions of men will find that they have built with

wood, hay and stubble. Others have built their faith with gold, silver and precious stones, God's revelations. All who have builded with combustible material will find that their structure will be consumed. Only those structures will stand that have been built with God's Truth.-1 Cor. 3:11-15.

If we wish' to make our "calling and election sure," we shall have special assistance, but we shall have trials to correspond. People to-day have many more trials than our grandfathers had. On Sundays they had little else to do but attend worship. They had much quiet in which to think about God and the Bible. We do not find it so. But God has so provided that His people of to-day have abundant supplies of grace to carry them through if they will eliminate the unnecessary things. But in order to make use of God's provisions we must deny ourselves these things that the flesh is craving. As the Apostle says, "Mortify your members which are upon the earth."—Col. 3:5-10.

There is a beauty about the Lord's Plan. He deals with us like this: "You have said that you have given your life to Me. I told you that you must redeem the time, which you have consecrated to Me. Now demonstrate your ingenuity in the matter, your earnestness and your spirit to sacrifice your earthly interests." If you thought that in your consecration your earthly interests are to be just as well taken care of as before, then either you do not understand the matter, or-else you are not living up to your covenant. Give less attention to bodily comforts. Give more time for spiritual food, to service for the Lord, the Truth and the brethren. We are happy to learn His will. He is not expecting anything unreasonable of us. But He does expect us to be careful of our time, of our conduct, of how we live our profession.

We know that God loves all His children, and desires to see them beautiful. Then why does the Apostle advise the Lord's people not to adorn themselves with "gold or pearls or costly array"? (1 Tim. 2:9, 10.) In the present time there are various reasons why God would advise us not to wear jewellery and expensive clothing.

In the first place, in our present fallen condition of mind, when we put gold or diamonds upon our fingers and in our ears, in the bosoms of our shirts, etc., it indicates a certain amount of pride, a factor that would not be advantageous to us. We are, naturally, like the rest of mankind, more or less susceptible to pride, although we have nothing of which to be proud. Moreover, it might have a bad effect upon others. Some might see a Christian elegantly appareled and say, "Look how that lady or that gentleman is decked out! And that ring must have cost 20, or

50!" Then they feel envious—"What right has he, or, What right has she, to have these things when I cannot have them?" Is it not better that Christians who have money should not wear such things and thus excite the envy of those who cannot afford them?

There are a great many people in the world who have a hard time to make a living, and never get enough to have the reasonable comforts of life. Why should a child of God put on diamonds or rich clothing to show himself or herself off as a picture, while many others lack food or clothing or medicine? Rather than wear such things, would he not prefer to give its value to somebody who needs it or to carry the Truth to others? Certainly this would be the mind of the Lord.

There is a further reason. As Christians, we stand more or less as reflections of God. We profess to have renounced the pride and vanity of the flesh, and to have set our affections on heavenly things, and to be putting on the spiritual adornments. We must, therefore, not follow our natural mind in this matter, but the mind of God, that we may show forth His praise "who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

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While it is our intention that these whims be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (n) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue,

Walk By This Rule.

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy."—Gal. 6:16.

Deep rest of mind, tranquility of soul, is a the happiness that all men crave, yet seek in vain, because they seek it where it cannot be found. God created man for His own pleasure (Rev. 4:11; Isa. 43:7) and in His own image, so that man's true pleasure, happiness, and peace should be found only in harmony, fellowship, and sympathy with his Creator, that thus the fellowship of the Creator and the creature might be responsive. He wanted that love should respond to love, admiration to admiration, virtue to virtue, and grace to grace, in the Creator and the creature as face answers to face in a glass. In this 'natural attitude of the Creator and the creature, generous benevolence and filial gratitude combine in mutual happiness. God is happy in the realisation and in the exercise of all the noble traits of His glorious character, which happiness is enhanced by appreciation of the same on the part of His creatures and manifestations in them of the same qualities and dispositions of mind and heart. And likewise man must both realise and exercise the noble endowments of his nature, and form a character modelled after that of his Heavenly Father and meeting His approval, if he would find that true happiness, which consists in the approval of his own conscience and of his Creator and Judge, in whose favour is life, and "at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Psa. 16:11.

True, all men have lost much of the original likeness of God, but this does not alter the fact that they still crave the happiness and peace which never can be found except under the natural, original relations to their Creator. No matter how deep a man may sink in sin, how far he may stray from the path of rectitude, how low and vile he may become, he still remembers that he is a man, a member of that noble, though fallen race, which God created in His own likeness, and he knows and feels his degradation. He knows that he was made for higher and nobler ends than those towards which he is ever tending, although he has neither inclination nor desire to strive towards those nobler ends, not having the fortitude to resist the inherited and long-cultivated bias of his fallen nature.

In this painful realisation of the absence of true happiness and peace of mind and heart men have sought for happiness and peace in ways in harmony with the more or less depraved tendencies of the fallen nature—in the poor substitutes which pride, ambition, strife, rivalry, wealth, fame, power, etc., have to offer; but the happiness they find is only delusive, and at most very short-lived. The bubble of success may burst in an instant, and the peace and happiness built upon it be utterly wrecked.

There is no peace, therefore, to any man except in the re-established relationship between himself and his God. And since this relationship of sons can only be re-established through Christ there is no peace to any man out of Christ. "There is no peace saith the Lord to the wicked." (Isa. 48:22.) "And if any man be in

Christ he is a new creature. Old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17.) He has “passed from death unto life,” and has found the peace which the world can neither give nor take away. He realises himself a son and heir of God. To these justified sons and heirs of this age God has not only granted His recognition, but also His special favour in offering to them great and precious promises—to become the sons of God on a higher plane. and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, the conditions of which relationship are that we follow in His footsteps of sacrifice even unto death.

Those who thus covenant with God are begotten of the spirit of God, and as many such as are henceforth led of the spirit of God, they are the recognised sons of God (Rom. 8:14), while those who fail to recognise, appreciate, and accept the great favour offered, lose the benefit of their reckoned justification in this age.

It is to these new creatures, begotten and led of the spirit of God, that the words of our text are addressed — as many such as walk by this rule, peace be on them and mercy. The rule referred to is the rule of the new creature mentioned in the preceding verse “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Forms and ceremonies are not the rule, but the new life itself; the new creature filled with the holy spirit of God and led of the spirit. “Walk ye in the spirit,” says the Apostle “and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.” (Gal. 5. 16, 17.)

To as many as walk by this rule are promised peace and mercy, mercy because our best efforts to walk after the leading of the holy spirit will be imperfect; but God who judges our heart’s desires and efforts, is merciful, and will not exact from us more than we are able to perform. And, therefore, notwithstanding our lameness and halting steps in following the lead of the spirit, He gives His blessed peace to all them that walk by this rule—the rule of the holy spirit, the rule of the new creature.

Now, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, he has put away the old man—the carnal nature, which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be —with all his evil deeds, which the Apostle thus enumerates (Gal. 5:19-21) . Now, the works of the flesh (the carnal nature) are manifest, which are these:— Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

While we might wonder that the Apostle in addressing the saints should make mention of the grosser forms of sin, which could only be predicated of those who have fallen from grace, when we consider, we see that it would not have done to leave these out, because they belong to the category of evils, which are opposed to the spirit of God, and can have no place in His Kingdom. Then again, they are the abominable ends to which the lesser evils inevitably tend, as the nature. of sin is always progressive. The Apostle gives fair warning that those who do such things, no matter how loud may be their professions, have no inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and, therefore, they have no right to the fellowship of the saints upon whom and in the cause of Christ in general, they bring only disgrace.

But the effect of the rule of the spirit, in all those who are truly new creatures, begotten of God, and led of His spirit is very differently described by the Apostle. He says, “But the fruit of the spirit is joy, love, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. And they that, are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and desires.” If we are living according to the rule of the new nature, following the leading of the spirit of God, then we must have these fruits in some measure, even from the very start of our Christian experience; and if we are following on to know the Lord and to walk in the spirit, these fruits are surely growing and becoming more and

more manifest to all with whom we are associated.

If those who are in Christ would observe this principle and deal With each other as new creatures, much discord would be avoided, for the motives and endeavours of the new creature would be considered and not the frailties or mistakes of the earthen vessel. "Let us follow the things that make for peace." (Rom. 14:19; 1 Thes. 5:13.)

Earthly Way Finished.

On the 16th of last month our elderly Brother Tippet, of Box Hill, Victoria, finished the pilgrim way.

About nine years ago our Brother Tippet contacted us from the country of Victoria through the radio - sessions over 3GL on Sundays: The message of truth appealed to him so fully; when realising that God's plan of salvation will yet benefit the world of mankind as well as Christians, he wrote, saying—"If that is really the Bible truth I must know all about it, and pass it on to a number of young people I am teaching in Sunday School." The Bible study "The Divine Plan of the Ages" was greatly appreciated and completely assured our dear Brother of the fulness of God's love and mercy as revealed in His Word.

Coming to Melbourne some years ago Brother Tippet attended the meetings whenever possible, but for the past three years had become an invalid, being confined to his bed for the greater part of that time. However, he was always of a cheerful disposition, and appreciated greatly the regular visits of the brethren to sing hymns and have studies together in his home, where he was cared for in a wonderful manner by his daughter and family to the end of the earthly way. Our sincere sympathy is extended to Brother Tippet's daughter and son and families in the loss sustained.

It was always a great pleasure to have fellowship with our dear Brother and he will be greatly missed; but we have very happy memories of his love and devotion to the Lord, and appreciation of truth now due to the Lord's people. Thus we have confidence in his having entered into his reward in the heavenly home, by the Lord's grace, now that we have reached the end of the Gospel Age, when the faithful overcomers do not "sleep" but are changed to be with the Lord, in preparation for the Millennial reign. (1 Cor. 15:51-57.) "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Tracts Available.

The first article in last month's "Peoples Paper" —"Is There a Second Chance for Salvation After Death?"—will be available in tract form shortly. Friends desiring copies may order what they may use to advantage, these tracts being supplied from the Tract Fund.

Humility In Service.

“Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud and showeth favour to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”- 1 Pet. 3:8; 5:5, 6.

THE Apostle has been addressing the elders of the Church, exhorting them to give attention to the feeding of God’s flock, and pointing out what should be the constraining influence of such a service. That they may feel his sympathy with them, he points out that he also- is an elder; and then warns them against a tendency, natural to all fallen humanity in any place of influence, to misconstrue their position, and to think of themselves as lords of God’s heritage, rather than as servants of the flock.

In our day, the natural tendency in this direction is greatly accentuated by the long-established custom of all denominations of Christians to regard the ministers or servants of the Church as of a different class from the others of the flock—a class -vested with authority from God, and not amenable to the same regulations which govern all the members of the body. But how great a mistake this is! The Apostle distinctly points out that a servant is not a ruler, that a servant has no authority. Indeed, so far as the true Church is concerned, the only authority in it is the Lord, the Head of the Church, and His Word, and the words of those whom He specially chose to be His mouthpieces, the Apostles.

Where these speak, all the body of Christ are to give attention to hear. Where these are silent, no one has authority to speak. An elder should be chosen to the position of serving and feeding the flock, because of special aptness to teach, to point out the instructions of our Lord and the Apostles upon any subject. Such an elder should, therefore, in this way, be specially helpful to the body of Christ in drawing the attention of all to the inspired authority of the Word; nevertheless, any member of the body of Christ has the same privilege—not of exercising authority, but of calling the attention of his fellows to the Word of authority. The Apostle exhorts the elders that so far from, in any manner or degree, exercising a lordly or authoritative position in the Church, they should rather be “ensamples to the flock.” They should be examples in the matter of meekness, in the matter of patience, in the matter of brotherly kindness, in the matter of courtesy, so that the more any of the brethren would copy these elders the more would the spirit of the Lord prevail in the flock, and the fruits and graces of the spirit be manifested. On the contrary, we know that if the elder or leader of a little company of the Lord’s people be self-assertive, dogmatic, imperious in manner, tone, or look, the effect upon the company under his influence is to produce bickerings, rivalries, ambitions, strifes, as to who is greatest, etc.

Manifestly, whoever occupies the position of an elder amongst the Lord’s people, however small the group may be, occupies a position fraught with responsibilities to the Lord and to the flock, as well as besetments to himself. Great care should, therefore, be exercised by every company of the Lord’s people, to so far as possible select for the position of leaders or elders in the Church such persons as would not be -likely to be injured by the privilege of service, such as occupying this post would indeed be ensamples of the flock in humility, and in all of the graces of the Lord’s spirit. It would seem to be with reference to the special trial of such as occupy this position of service in the Church that the Apostle speaks, saying: -Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that we (occupying such a position) shall receive the severer testing.”—James 3:1.

It may not be amiss that here we notice the fact that although the word “elder” has the significance of “older,” yet amongst the Lord’s brethren it is not merely years of natural life that is to be taken into consideration; in the Lord’s family we sometimes see “babes” with grey hairs. Nor can we even count eldership according to the number of years that have elapsed since the begetting of the spirit: for some grow rapidly and mature quickly; others who receive the truth permit the “thorns” or cares of this life and

the deceitfulness of riches to choke the Word, and hence never get beyond the position of “babes”—never bring forth the ripe fruits of the spirit.

Nor can we reckon this matter of relationship merely according to the degree of knowledge of the divine plan attained; for as the Apostle assures us, it is possible for some to have much knowledge and yet be but “tinkling cymbals,” according to the Lord’s standpoint of estimation. While, therefore, an elder, in order to be “apt to teach,” must have attained to some considerable degree of knowledge of the divine plan, nevertheless, the real evidence of his fitness for the service of an elder must not be determined by his knowledge merely, but, additionally, must be measured by his growth in grace. So, then, such of the brethren in any place as possess clear knowledge of the divine plan and are “apt to teach,” and who, additionally, give unmistakable evidence that they have grown in grace and are bearing in daily life the fruits of the spirit of the Lord, in considerable measure of maturity, may be considered qualified to be elders; and such may properly be chosen to the eldership by their brethren, regardless of their age according to the flesh.

According to the flesh, Peter and several others of the Apostles of our Lord were His elders, but according to the spirit, our Lord is the Elder Brother of all accepted to the family of God. According to the flesh, bosh Timothy and Titus were young men—young in years—so that the Apostle needed to write to one of them, “Let no man despise thy youth.” (1 Tim. 4:12.) And yet these young men the Apostle recognised as elders in the Church, who, because of their spiritual development and knowledge of the divine plan, and aptness to teach, were well qualified to feed the flock of God, and to be overseers in it—but not lords, not rulers, not masters, and not vested with any authority—merely privileged to call to the attention of the flock the voice of the great Shepherd and His twelve chosen assistants, and to lead them to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth.

It was after specially enjoining modesty and humility upon the ones most advanced and most capable of the flock that the Apostle, in the language of our text, urges that each one of the Lord’s sheep, so far from seeking to be a leader in the sense of a ruler, or lord, or master, should seek to be subject one to another—to hear gladly from the humblest of the flock, and be willing to yield his own preference so far as his judgment and conscience would permit. A Church operating under this spirit would not be rent with contention, for each would be so anxious for the interests of the cause and so willing to condescend to the wishes of others, that even the will of the majority would not be considered satisfactory, but rather all would seek, if possible, to reach such a modified conclusion as would meet with nearly or quite unanimous approval.

The Apostle most distinctly points out that the quality essential to such proper conduct on the part of the elders and on the part of all, is humility. How beautiful is his exhortation—“Be clothed with humility.” The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humblemindedness, the opposite disposition to pride.

By way of clinching this argument, the Apostle reminds us of the principle upon which our Lord dealt with His flock and with all—that He disapproves of pride and that all who are actuated by pride may be sure that the Lord, so far from receiving them, fellowshiping them, leading them, blessing them, will resist them, push them from Him. The natural inference is that thus resisted of the Lord, the tendency of such as come under the influence of a spirit of pride and ambition will be not toward the truth nor toward any of the fruits and graces of the spirit, but further and further from these. “The Lord resisteth the proud, but supplies his favour to the humble.”

Let us cultivate this humility, which the Lord so loves and appreciates and promises to reward, that He may exalt us in due time.

Seeing that we are under this mighty hand of God. and that. too, by our own volition, how shall we act? Shall we yield ourselves to His will, and permit Him to “work in us both to will and to do His good pleasure,” and our ultimate exaltation, or shall we resist the Lord’s power, resist His Word of instruction, resist the example set us in the meek and lowly Lamb of God, and seek to exalt ourselves and to be somebodies, either in the world or in the Church? Nay, let us remember that it would be folly to attempt to work against the divine arrangement; we might to some extent seemingly succeed, and bring upon ourselves, and perhaps upon others also, more or less of separation from God through such resisting, on account of a wrong spirit; but in the end we should utterly fail of God’s favours, which He assures us will be bestowed only on the humble. -

As a result of true humility, the Lord may increase our opportunities in service in the present life, and perhaps He may not; but no matter for this. It is not for the present life that we are seeking and striving, but for the glory, honour and immortality which the Lord has promised to them that love Him; that love Him so much that they hearken to His Word and seek to develop those elements of character which are pleasing in His sight, seeking to become more and more copies of God’s dear Son.

The Apostle adds: “Casting all your care upon him.” All true saints of God have an interest and care in respect of the Lord’s work. Every elder must feel such a care, especially for the flock in connection with which he has been appointed to service, “to feed the flock of Christ”—not to shear them, not to frighten them, not to club them, not to exercise authority and lordship over them, but to feed them.

This care affecting the chosen elders (and all the elders or advanced ones in the Church) although it is a right sentiment in itself, might easily be so perverted as to be dangerous. The elders, either individually or collectively, might become so nervously careful of the flock as to destroy their own peace and joy in the holy spirit, and it might also lead them to take various improper steps, which in their over-zealous judgment they consider necessary for the welfare of the flock. We see such a spirit of carefulness and over - solicitude marked prominently by the various creeds and regulations and restraints put upon the Lord’s flock, contrary to the Scriptures, and to the liberty wherewith Christ makes free His people. The motive in some respects was sometimes good; the difficulty was that some elders, caring for the interests of the flock, forgot that they were only its servants, and that they were not authorised to make any laws or restraints whatsoever for the flock. They forget that the Lord Himself is the Good Shepherd of His flock still, that He has not given over His care of it, nor His authority to anyone, to permit such to exercise lordship or to make laws of any kind for it, He having made all the laws and regulations necessary and desiring that His sheep shall be free, with the liberty wherewith He made them free, in the fullest sense of the word.

The remedy for all such unauthorised over-carefulness for the interests of Zion is pointed out by the Apostle, saying: “Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.” Each sheep is to remember that the Shepherd’s mighty power is still in the midst of His people, and that because of His care we do not need to overburden ourselves with care, nor to feel that we must make changes in His plans and arrangements to meet what one might fancy to be new exigencies in the case. All such over-carefulness leads to fear, and fear indicates a lack of faith, a lack of confidence in the, Shepherd; and is generally used by the Adversary as one of His most powerful levers to lead the Lord’s people into a wrong course.

Let us all, then, have a’ care for the flock, but let us cast the weight of this care upon the Lord, and let our faith trust Him, that He who has been working out so grand and glorious a plan as His Word reveals to us now, has made full provision for every feature, every circumstance, every condition; and let us thus be ready to co-operate with Him in harmony with His Word, but not to run where we are not sent, nor in any manner to take our Lord’s place, nor attempt to do His ,work. But only the humble-minded are likely to receive any lasting blessing, present or future, at the hands of our Lord; for He resisteth the proud and showed) favour to the humble.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall. Ryrie Street—Sundays. 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

To bear another's weakness.
To soothe another's pain;
To cheer the heart repentant.
And to forgive again
This is my work to-day.

—Thomas a Kempis.

Keeping True to Principles of Divine Law.

People usually are attracted to wrong-doing by the thought that thus they escape difficulties or sufferings, or thus they gain advantages and blessings. But this is only a theory; as a matter of fact it is the reverse; every misdeed is costly.

Spiritual Israelites should never take this position—should never say, let us do evil that good may result, let us yield some principles for the sake of the harmony and the good of the cause. Alas, this seems to be the difficulty with the leaders of God's people all through the ages. The fear of man, that bringeth a snare, has interfered with the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom. All Spiritual Israelites should learn, should fix it in their hearts, that while moderation and a disposition to be obliging and helpful and considerate of the wishes of others are prominent elements of Christian grace and to be cultivated, nevertheless, the principles of the divine law are never to be infringed, nor even compromised for the sake of blessing others. We are to remember that even when great emergencies arise God is superior to every one of them, and they can never be understood as His voice commanding us to violate the principles of righteousness which He has set before us. We are to do our duty in harmony with His law as kindly, as gently, as wisely, as possible, and leave all the results to Him —the Almighty. Whatever others may do, however others may think or compromise, let us take the Apostle's standpoint and say, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." (2 Cor. 13:8.)

Our consciences will not permit us to compromise where principle is involved, though we should gladly be the readiest- of all to compromise where principle is not involved.

Revised Standard Version Bible,-1952. Copies of this Revised Bible are available, and will be found helpful for comparison in Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50/-; in red rexine 60/-,

A New Picture Bible.—A Cambridge Bible, containing 30 coloured illustrations, with marginal references, and strong, black, cloth cover. A very good child's Bible; price 15/6.

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Thy Kingdom Come.

MOST people are very well acquainted with the words of our Lord's model prayer, in which He taught His disciples to earnestly desire the Heavenly Father's kingdom to come, but do we wonder how much thought is placed upon these words—"Thy Kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,"—by multitudes of people who repeat this prayer over and over again, week by week, month by month, year by year?

It is good, of course, that a great number of people do have these words of our Lord's prayer before their minds, but unless these is a sincere desire to understand the real meaning our Lord intended, when giving this model prayer to His disciples, those using the prayer will not benefit very much.

In the first place, when our Lord declared—"After this manner pray ye; Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,"—He desired to lift the minds of His sincere followers to the Father's presence, in the deep realisation that only the great Eternal One, the Father of mercies, could supply the desire of their hearts, as they communed with Him amidst all the adverse circumstances of this "present evil world." As though our Master would imply—There may be times, many of them, when outwardly it may seem that God's Kingdom will never come, when you may be tempted to think that the Heavenly Father had even forgotten you and all mankind, by the way things are happening on earth; or you may have the thoughts presented to you that God is powerless to interfere in world affairs, by the way things are getting out of hand. But, despite all the temptations to the contrary, our Lord would say—Keep on praying to the Heavenly Father in sincerity of heart, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Thus, our Saviour would have His disciples grasp the important truth—Even if the kingdom does not come in your lifetime, you will, by so praying, have your minds and hearts brought into line with the plan of God, which is, that

God's kingdom in "due time" shall bring about the deliverance of mankind from sin and death, so that God's will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

It will be noticed also that in referring to the kingdom as the only means of accomplishing that deliverance, our Lord presented this subject from two distinct standpoints. For instance, in Matt. 4:17 we read the words of Jesus—"Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John the Baptist had also used

the same statement previously. And we may ask, What did our Lord mean by those words? Did He really think at that time that the kingdom was about to come—over nineteen hundred years ago? The following verses—in Matt. 4:18-22—give us a guide to our Lord's meaning. To His invitation—"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"—we read that four disciples gladly left their fishing business and followed Jesus.

Thus, when our Lord declared, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" in His day, He was undoubtedly referring to the opportunity for His disciples to become members in the kingdom of heaven class; and His whole ministry was devoted mainly to this most important work of finding those who were worthy of being invited to share in the kingdom of heaven with Him. How Jesus encouraged His disciples to appreciate and meditate upon the truths of the kingdom is shown by His words to them, as recorded in Matt. 13:11—"It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." This was in contrast to our Lord's treatment of the multitude—He spoke to them in parables because they were not worthy of the deep and precious truths of the kingdom—but to His true-hearted followers the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were revealed. And so, as those devoted disciples prayed, "Thy kingdom come," they would do so with much more understanding as they progressed in the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom—allowing the Lord's spirit to bring them into line with this wonderful feature of God's Plan, the preparation of the kingdom of heaven class.

The Apostles, of course, carried on this great work which Christ began in their hearts, as they preached and proclaimed the invitation for the heavenly kingdom. How beautifully did Paul express this matter in Col. 1:12, 13—"Giving thanks unto the Father, who bath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Who bath delivered us from the power of darkness, and bath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." What a thought is this—that here and now the Lord's dear people are translated in their minds, hearts and devotions, into the company of their Lord above, together with other members in Christ who are likewise energized by the spirit of God.

The question that we could well ask ourselves is—Do we feel that we have been delivered from the power of darkness, and have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son? Perhaps no one of the Lord's people feels that way fully, but if there is progress in that direction then we can pray, "Thy kingdom come," with confidence and trust, knowing that our development in the school of Christ is all part of the preparation for the kingdom to come to the earth, so that God's will may be done here, even as it is done in heaven.

The words of the Apostle Paul in Phil. 3:20 are in full agreement—"For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Our hearts, our minds, our ambitions are centered there, during the time of our earthly sojourn, to the intent that our new minds may be fully transferred to that heavenly kingdom at the time of the spirit birth, in the first resurrection. What meaning, then, is contained in the words "Thy kingdom come," as we meditate upon the first or spiritual phase of God's kingdom? Of those who shall inherit that heavenly kingdom, the Apostle declared—"And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

While then, our Lord encouraged His true disciples with the words—"The kingdom of heaven is at hand"—that they may give diligence in their preparation as members of that kingdom of heaven class, yet how differently did Jesus answer respecting the kingdom of God when this subject was put to Him by the Pharisees, those who did not in any way appreciate the Lord nor seek to understand the heavenly phase of the kingdom. We read—"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (with outward show—margin) : neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold the kingdom of God is within you (among you—margin) ." (Luke 17:20, 21.) Our Lord was here referring to the time when the

kingdom of God would be operating in the world, when its rule and authority would be felt by mankind, including the Pharisees, who would be resurrected and required to obey the laws of that kingdom, if they were to receive its blessings. The Pharisees had really sought to, ridicule the idea that Jesus would ever have a kingdom; they would reason—He is so insignificant, with no visible support, no army of soldiers to ever establish a kingdom, having only a few, lowly followers of little reputation in their eyes. Jesus' answer that His kingdom would never be established with great, outward show, so that it could be located or pointed out in any particular country, but rather that its effect would be felt worldwide, no doubt astonished the Pharisees, but is a very helpful and important guide to all who are worthy of understanding the establishment of the kingdom on earth, as well as the setting up of the heavenly phase of the kingdom.

Jesus gave a similar answer to Pilate to that which He gave to the Pharisees, when He declared in John 18:36—"My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." "My kingdom is not of this — this order of things, this present evil world. No, our Lord would imply. My servants will never need to fight for the establishment of My kingdom. Rather, when Christ's kingdom comes all* adverse rule and authority in the world will have been subdued, Satan will have been bound, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14.) Truly the kingdom of God will be "among" or "in the midst" of all nations, and all mankind shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest. (Jer. 31:34.)

We also have the same truth respecting the kingdom of God in its two phases presented by various of the prophets in the Old Testament. Of particular interest is the prophecy of Daniel. In chapter 2 we have the record of God's revelation to Daniel of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Daniel was given a wonderful interpretation of a great image of which Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed. This image of a man, comprised of various metals--gold, silver, brass, iron and clay—represented the four great empires of earth from the time of Babylon, to Medo-Persia, Greece, and finally Rome, each empire being pictured by a portion of this image from the head down to the legs, feet and toes. There can be no doubt that the important lesson which Daniel was instructed of God to give at that time was especially recorded for the instruction and guidance of God's people of this Gospel Age.

Quoting from Daniel 2:44, 45, we read—"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest (see verses 34, 35) that the stone was cut out of the mountain; without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." It is of special interest to note that the stone (verse 34) smote the image upon his feet. Therefore, "In the days of these kings," represented by the toes of the image—the divisions of the Roman Empire which exist in the world today—"shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." The members who will comprise this heavenly phase of the kingdom have been selected from all nations since the time of our Lord's first advent, as we saw from our Lord's words—"The kingdom of heaven is at hand." However, the actual "setting up" of this kingdom, takes place in the closing, days of this Gospel Age, in "the harvest, which is the end of the world" (age); Matt. 13:39, the time in which we are now living and have been for some considerable time.

From Mal. 3:17 we read—"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." The "making up" or gathering to the Lord's "jewels," or special treasure, as the margin states, is described by the Apostle Paul as the resurrection of "the dead in Christ" and the "change" of the last living members beyond the veil in the first resurrection, during the period of the harvest of the Gospel Age. (1 Thess. 4:1 5-17; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.)

In Daniel 7 we have the same picture of world empires depicted as four beasts, and the outcome with the establishment of God's kingdom is clearly revealed. In verse 22 we read—"The Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. This follows the complete overthrow of the Papacy which sprang up within the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire, which is pictured by the "fourth beast, dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly." (Dan. 7:7:) The power of the Papacy began to be broken in 1799, when Napoleon took the Pope prisoner to France, and verse 26 of Daniel 7 indicates the "consuming" of this Papal system is to continue unto destruction.—"The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Then follows the description of the complete "setting up" of God's kingdom,— "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. 7:27.)

The question may be asked—When does God's kingdom really come? In the first place, it will be when the kingdom of heaven class is complete and with their Lord in the heavenly inheritance. Further, with earth's turmoil and distress over, then will follow the fulfilment of the prayer—"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," as expressed by the Psalmist—"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is governor among the nations . . . All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." (Psa. 22:27, 28; 145:10-13.)

The manner in which God's kingdom will come and how its power will be exercised in the world is also of great importance. It will be realised that the gathering of the kingdom of heaven class to the inheritance above will be unknown to the world at large; to the majority of mankind the Lord's people finish their earthly lives as do others of the human race. It was prophesied by the Psalmist concerning the saints — "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." (Psa. 82:7.) While people generally fall into death like prince Adam, the Lord's true people finish their earthly course like prince Jesus. Our Lord's death on the cross was an ignominious one and in apparent weakness, but His resurrection was in great power and glory. Likewise it is recorded of His followers:—"Sown in dishonour; raised in glory: sown in weakness; raised in power: sown a natural body; raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:43, 44.)

With the completion of the body members of Christ, the heavenly phase of the kingdom will be fully "set up." Then, out of the earth's travail will come the order of the new birth for humanity, as pictured by the rising sun which sheds its warmth and healing rays over the whole globe. Our Lord gave this beautiful illustration to show that the kingdom of God will not be isolated in any one locality, so that no one could rightly say —"Lo here; or lo there. . . . See here; or see there." Rather, it will be—"As the bright shining, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day." (Luke 17:21, 23, 24.) The prophet Malachi gave the same testimony respecting the shining forth of the kingdom blessings to all humanity worthy of that favour when God's kingdom has come, and His will is done on earth, as it is in heaven — "The Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2.)

Thus, with the kingdom established in heaven and in earth, it will be truly manifest that "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be (become) his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. 21:3.) The "tabernacle of God" here mentioned will be those in whom the Lord can fully dwell, the glorified church, with Christ as its Head. In verse 2 of this 21st chapter of Revelation this same Gospel

Church in glory and kingdom power is termed "the holy city, new Jerusalem," and is said to "come down

from God out of heaven.” Yes, indeed, the holy influence and power from God’s exalted “new heavens,” the “first fruits unto God of his creatures,” will descend upon all the families of the earth for their lasting blessing as they co-operate with the laws of the kingdom in sincerity of heart. This will truly be the fulfilment of the “earnest expectation of the creation waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God,” (Rom. 8:19.) “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) over the Christmas season, for the four days December 25th to 28th, with additional gatherings on January 1st and 2nd. These assemblies will be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord’s name. A helpful season of refreshing is confidently anticipated, by the Lord’s grace. Further information is obtainable from the secretary, Mr. J. B. Hiam, C/o Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

Lord, Increase Our Faith.

(Luke 17.5-19)

OUR Lord’s teachings were contrary to the spirit of this world, and so adverse to its policy that His disciples felt that to adopt His methods and principles and discard their own really involved a revolution of their former ideas. And in yielding themselves as true disciples, they felt the need of a stronger, firmer faith than they had yet been called upon to exercise. They were quite persuaded from the purity and nobility of His character and from His miracles and His teachings, that He was indeed a teacher sent from God; yet, remembering the requirement of discipleship, “Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath (all his own ideas and will and possessions and earthly prospects) , he cannot be my disciple,” they felt that to continue in this attitude of acceptable discipleship would require a growing faith which would rise to every emergency of His requirements. Hence their request, “Lord, increase our faith.”

And they were quite right in their reasoning; for the Lord also clearly shows that the true disciples make progress in the school of Christ toward the full overcoming of the spirit of the world. And this progress can be achieved by faith only—by such full, implicit confidence in His teachings and training as will keep them continually as earnest, diligent pupils under His guidance and instruction. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

(1 John 5:4.) This, by the way, is very suggestive of what it signifies to be an “overcomer,” to whom pertains all the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel of Christ. It is simply this: That day by day we attentively heed and patiently carry out the instructions of our infallible Teacher and Guide in full, unquestioning faith in His wisdom and love, no matter how heavy will be the daily cross or how severe the discipline. It is indeed a tedious, life - long process, but the end will be glorious, and even the daily discipline, patiently and meekly borne, will bring the present rewards of conscious progress in the great work of overcoming and of a nearer approach to the goal of a ripened Christian character. All of this is implied in the beautiful words, so expressive of the faith and fervent devotion of true discipleship

“Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee,
E’en though it be a cross that raiseth me.”

We observe that the Lord made no direct answer to this request of His disciples, but that He dwelt upon the power and desirability of faith. He showed that even a weak, but genuine faith could so lay hold upon the power of God as to instantly root up and replant a tree, and on another occasion He said it could

remove mountains into the midst of the sea. Is the suggestion preposterous? No, not to faith; for, bear in mind, faith is not imagination, nor self-will, nor ignorance, but it is a reasonable thing, founded upon good and substantial evidence; so that our Lord's teaching here implied what on another occasion He clearly stated; namely, that the request be made according to the will of God (John 15:7) . Thus, for instance, if the least disciple were assured, on good evidence, that the removal of such a tree or mountain would be a part of the Divine will, and that it was his duty to do the commanding, he should have equally strong faith in the results. Thus it was when the Lord caused the barren fig tree to wither. This, observe, was not to satisfy mere idle curiosity, but, like all of His miracles, which God wrought by Him (Acts 2:22) , it was for a definite and wise purpose, to teach an important lesson, and also to convince His disciples of His Divine recognition and authority.

Verses 7-10 show that it is in the Lord's service we are to look for rewards of faith, the special manifestations of Divine favour, in the removal of obstacles and difficulties found to be in the way of our progress in His service by cultivating Christian character in ourselves and others, and in ministering generally to the furtherance of Divine plans. We may not expect these rewards of Divine favour, except as we prosecute the service. And when they are received we are not to regard them as evidences that we have done any more than it was our duty to do. As servants of God we owe Him the full measure of our ability; hence we may not feel that we have merited or earned the great blessings of heavenly inheritance and joint-heirship with Christ. We have merely done our duty; but God, with exceeding riches of grace, has prepared, for those who lovingly serve Him, rewards far beyond what they could have asked or hoped for. We can do no meritorious works; even at our best our service is marred by many imperfections, and could never find acceptance with God except as supplemented by the perfect and finished work of Christ.

Verses 11-16 show how the rewards of faith, which are of God's free grace, and by no means earned by our faith, should be gratefully received. The examples given illustrate the fact that rewards of faith are not always gratefully received. Here were ten lepers cleansed, and only one returned to give thanks and worship. So also of the many who receive justification by faith, the forgiveness of sins and have peace with God through Christ, how few return to present themselves living sacrifices, thank-offerings to God, their reasonable service.

Thy Will Be Done.

With quivering heart and trembling will
The word hath passed thy lips,

Within the shadow, cold and still,
Of some fair joy's eclipse.

"Thy will be done!" Thy God hath heard,
And He will crown that faith-framed word.

Thy prayer shall be fulfilled,—but how?
His thoughts are not as thine;

While thou would'st only weep and bow
He saith, "Arise and shine."

Thy thoughts were all of grief and night,
But His of boundless joy and light.

Thy father reigns supreme above;
The glory of His Name

Is grace and wisdom, truth and love,
His will must be the same.

And thou hast asked all joys in one,
In whispering forth, "Thy will be done!"

—F. R. Havergal.

Any influence is religious which fills the mind with gratitude and peace, which makes a man humble and patient and wise, which teaches him that the only business possible is to attune and harmonise his mind with the precious purpose of God. A. C. B.

Prayer--How and for What Should We Pray?

(Matt. 6:5- 13.) (Address Contributed.)

ALTHOUGH prayer is essential to true Christian living, nowhere in His Word has God commanded His people to pray. In many places we are invited to do so, and told that it will bring blessings, and particularly do the Apostles exhort us to pray; in fact, they would impress that it is an absolute necessity, but God's Word does not say that you must pray.

It is good to reflect on that. God apparently does not want to compel anyone to pray to Him —considering it as a duty to be performed. Quite a few people grow up with this thought that prayer is a duty, because as children they were trained at their mothers' knees to lisp their prayers to God. That is good surely, and every Christian can appreciate the good endeavours of mothers to train up their children in the way they should go. But later in life it is possible for such children to continue their prayers mechanically—merely “saying their prayers.”

While, as Christians, we would not discourage even this, yet it is clear to us that the real essence of prayer is much more than this. One cannot but question the sincerity of many who merely repeat written prayers; the prayer books of the nominal churches have never appealed to us, nor the chants set to music with the same object in view. In remonstrating with some on this point they have sought to impress the beauty of these prayers; we would not question the beauty of words (except where doctrinal points may enter in) , but the fact that the words are written and often learned off by heart, they are not always (we would be inclined to say, rarely) uttered in real sincerity. A little poem is of interest and to the point:—

I often say my prayers,
But do I always pray ?
And do the wishes of my heart
Go with the words I say ?

I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone.

For words without the heart
The Lord will never hear.
Nor will He to those lips attend
Whose prayers are not sincere.

The old saying, “Familiarity breeds contempt” is very true in many respects, and even applies to Jesus' model prayer, which is commonly referred to as “The Lord's Prayer.” Rather, in this case, we would say, “Familiarity breeds indifference,” for the words are uttered so often that little thought is given to their significance. In fact, the manner in which the Lord's prayer is often recited is repulsive. One wonders if our Lord ever intended that it should be a prayer uttered word for word throughout, as is the custom in the so-called Christian world. The thought has been advanced (and it seems reasonable) that the Lord gave it to His followers as an illustration, or example of the things for which we should ask our Heavenly Father, leaving the choice of words in our petitions to us. This thought seems strengthened by our Lord's words—“After this manner pray ye.”

Both in public and private prayer it is essential that we mean what we say, and that we remember that we are actually speaking to our Father in heaven. In private prayer, the fact that there is no one else to hear us

sometimes promotes the tendency for the mind to wander. Every Christian knows something of the distractions that occur to the mind while engaged in prayer. In public prayer it is the opposite. The fact that there are others to hear, sometimes presents a temptation to pray so as to impress them and to forget that we are praying to our Heavenly Father.

To lead in public prayer is not always easy: in fact to do so for the first time or two is often a real ordeal. The advice of one has been of much help—"Forget everything but the fact that you are praying to God; thank Him for those things which personally you recognise as His good gifts to you, and request of Him for those things that you personally desire and of which you feel in need, and you will find that you have voiced a prayer to which every earnest soul present can utter a fervent Amen." Be not worried over much about a prayer of many words; remember the Lord had little time for those who thought they would be heard for their much speaking. In public prayer two things appeal—sincerity and brevity.

Our Lord's model prayer can and should give us much help regarding that for which we should pray, and the manner in which we should do it. First seems the thought of deep reverence—"Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name.- Only those who know the true character of our God can approach Him with the proper reverence. "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." Only the Lord's true people can pray in such a strain, for one must have at least an elementary knowledge of how the kingdom is to come that will mean God's will done on earth, before he can pray thus with sincerity. Thousands utter these words who know little and believe less of Christ's personal return with the object of fulfilling the prayer; they pray for the extension of Christ's Kingdom through the enlargement of their particular denominational system; they pray uninstructed by the Word of God. Many others who utter these words are more patriotic than they are God-fearing; so long as Christ establishes His kingdom through their nation it will be all right.

Those who pray these words intelligently and sincerely know that the best of earthly kingdoms are still incomparable with that which will operate when the prayer is fully answered, but the child of God who prays sincerely is no agitator. Though he prays sincerely for God's kingdom to come, he does not desire to hasten it beyond God's appointed times and bounds. A true Christian is a most law-abiding subject and is sympathetic to every endeavour by nations and governments in their herculean task of trying to better the conditions of their people. Because their failures are so manifest, the Christian prays for the One Kingdom that can usher in lasting "Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men."

"Give us each day our daily bread." While the thought of our temporal needs, in the way of food, etc., may be included in this request, it apparently should not be the uppermost thought. Rather should we view it as a request for the supply of spiritual food that nourishes and builds us up as "new creatures in Christ." To agonize in prayer for temporal blessings would put us with the unconsecrated, for -all these things do the Gentiles seek after." (Matt. 6:31-33.)

-And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Perhaps this aspect of sincere prayer is more carelessly passed over than any other. Many times are these words uttered without due thought to their significance. Just how freely do we forgive those who trespass against us? Do we not allow wrongs done to us to rankle in our minds, so that for days, sometimes months, and even years, a grudge or unforgiving spirit is exercised? Would we like to think of God forgiving us our trespasses that way, holding against us the things we do wrong? That is what we ask every time our lips frame the prayer—"Forgive us, as we forgive others." If we would pray this prayer sincerely, we must search first our own hearts to see that no lingering animosity and bitterness against any remains there. God has pardoned us fully, without merit on our part. He has done it fully, forgiven every offence: He has done it liberally, forgiven many offences. This is to be the measure of our forgiveness and our pity for others. We are all liable to offend brethren, just as we are liable to offend God. We all need forgiveness of one another, as we all need it of God. There is no danger of carrying it too far. Let us each remember our own sins and

follies: let us look over our and see how often we have offended God; then, remember that all this has been forgiven us and then fresh with this feeling let us forgive our brother, our sister, as we have been forgiven. And let us not rake up old offences and charge them again, but let us forgive utterly and treat others as though they had not offended, for so God treated us. Let us endeavour to cultivate a very tender sympathy and pity for the weaknesses of one another, not from any standpoint of our superior virtue, but from the standpoint of our own liability to err.

“Lead us not into temptation.” The thought here seems to be—Help us, forewarn us, so that we do not allow ourselves to endure needless temptation. So many things we do thoughtlessly tend to increase our difficulties in maintaining a consecrated walk. We need to be resolute, uncompromising, respecting all of which God’s Word warns

us as hindrances to the walk of the new creature. Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15) i.e., He did not give way to the tempter. He did not say—“Well, I have given up this way of living really, realising that it indulges the fleshly mind, and encourages a worldly spirit, but I suppose this once won’t matter, I don’t want to appear too unsociable.”

The point is well illustrated by the story of a man who wanted a new bus driver. There were several applicants for the position and he asked each one, How near could you drive to the edge of a cliff with safety, for my buses traverse some hazardous roads. One thought he could steer the bus within a foot of the edge with safety; another thought he could go within nine inches, and so on. One said, “I don’t really know how close I could drive to the edge with safety. but I know that I would keep as far from the edge as I possibly could.” He got the job. Lord, guard us, help us to steer as far clear of temptation as possible, and so—“Deliver us from evil”—i.e., the results of entering into temptation, steering too close to the edge of the cliff, instead of giving it a wide berth. We cannot play with fire and not get burnt.

So, we see the force of the Apostle’s injunction, “Watch unto prayer.” Watch before you pray and watch after you pray. As we are about to draw near in prayer we might ask ourselves for instance — Am I allowing any spirit of bitterness against anyone to remain within me? If so, I must get rid of it, because I am asking the Lord to forgive me for trespasses and shortcomings. When we have prayed we should say, Now I have asked the Lord to help me, put me on guard concerning those things into which I might enter unheedingly, and that would hinder me from walking in that “newness “of life” that truly pleases Him. I must watch for His leadings and promptings, be led of His spirit, for “as many as are led by, the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Watch to keep humble; let no proud spirit enter and remain. Never be self-confident of being able to do anything. Poor Peter; if only he had watched more unto prayer on the night of our Lord’s betrayal, he would have spared himself much remorse—“Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.” The motto is— Don’t be too sure anywhere.

Watch unto prayer. As one has said, “If you foresee trouble, don’t say, I will pray about that to-morrow.” Take it to the Lord straight away; then watch for His answer. Many a time we may not know just what we should do in certain matters, but if we take it to the Lord He will guide us; it may not always be instant guidance, but it will be guidance; that is sure. Sometimes the best thing is to watch, pray, then watch again; in other words, wait in watchfulness. If not answered soon enough to suit us, don’t faint and cease to pray. (Luke 18:1-8.) It must be God’s will that the answer should be delayed.

Another mistake many of us make regarding prayer, is to think it is a means of grace for petitioning the Lord only. (See Phil. 4:6.) Forget not the prayers of thanksgiving. Count your many blessings and it will surprise you what the Lord has done. We should thank Him that we have been endowed with hearts and minds that sought Him, and for His unspeakable gift of His Son, Jesus, that made it possible for us to

approach Him in prayer. Frequently, we are quick to thank the Lord for all the pleasant things we receive at His hand, but as we gain experience in the Christian way we find cause for thankfulness also in the persecutions and afflictions, the hard places. These things help to refine our hearts and cause us to appreciate more deeply still the things that are right and good and true. Severe trials and testings often show up to us our own lack of patience and spirit of long suffering. Thus the realisation of our failings is conducive to humility and contriteness of heart, whereas if we met only with proportionately less severe experiences and were thus able continually to overcome, we would surely become puffed up, and start congratulating ourselves as to what fine Christians we were. How true are the words of the hymn—"Our Father knows what things we need, each step along the way."

"Then let us leave it all with Him,
Assured that, come what may.
Our Father knows just what we need
Upon our pilgrim-way."

So should our prayers be prayers of faith also —fully, completely satisfied that He knows what is best. Such a faith will leave all our prayers and requests rested completely on Him—"Nevertheless, Lord, not my will but Thine be done." And let our prayers and concerns for others rest likewise. Sometimes we are ready to trust the Lord fully for the conduct of our affairs, but we let the concerns of other brethren, with whom we are intimately associated, lie as a burden on our heart, and fear that the Lord cannot do for them as He can for us. May God guide these few thoughts that they may be a help in keeping our prayers simple and sincere, both in petition and thankfulness, and full of faith toward God.

Liberty.

According to the Scriptures, liberty is granted only to those who are doing the will of God, and, according to Isa. 35:8, during the Millennium the highway of holiness leading to the perfect law of liberty and love will not be trodden by anything unclean. The Scriptures show that those who will be judged during the Millennium are called the unjust; therefore, being raised from the dead, a schooling process will be necessary, and Rev. 20:4; 2:27, shows that the Christ, Head and Body, reigning a thousand years, will rule with a rod of iron. We see that during that time the law of obedience will be enforced and those who will not hear (obey) will be cut off. (Acts 3:23.)

The reason the new creation is under the law of liberty is that, having put away sin, they are dead with Christ from the elements of the world (Col. 2:20), and, having the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5), they, through the spirit, mortify the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13), and walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4), following in the steps of: their Redeemer (1 Pet. 2:21) . Should they no: keep in this condition they will cease to be sons of God and cease to be under the law of liberty.

Used Postage Stamps.

Used postage stamps of all varieties can be sold to support the truth work. Friends willing to assist may forward all the Australian stamps they can procure, as well as other stamps, leaving a, least a quarter of an inch of paper around the stamps: that is, do not remove stamps from the paper.

(Quite a number of friends have sent in used postage stamps: would all please accept sincere thanks for their efforts in this way.)

Rest in the Lord.

Oh, blessed life !—the heart at rest
When all without tumultuous seems—
That trusts a higher will, and deems
That higher will, not mine, the best.

Oh, blessed life!—heart, mind and soul.
From self born aims and wishes free,
In all at one with Deity,
And loyal to the Lord's control.

—W. T. Matson.

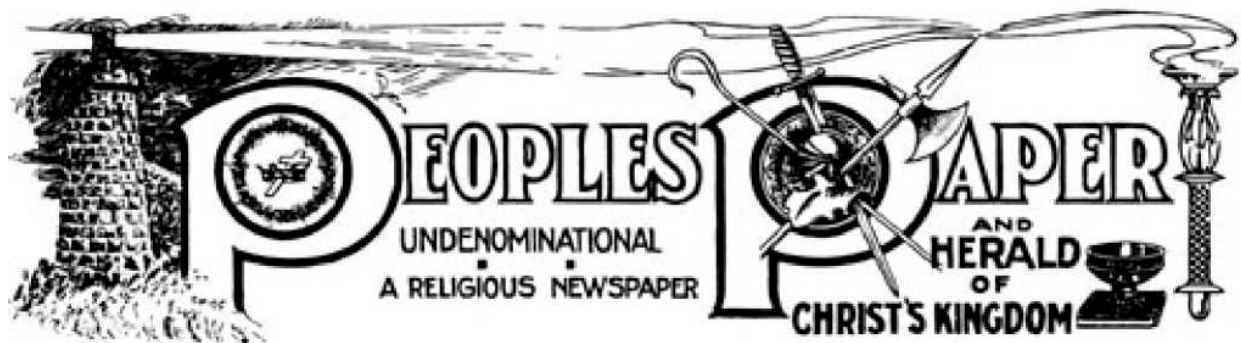
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 1.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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Lovest Thou Me?

(John 21:17.)

(Translated from the West German truth paper—"Christliche Warte.")

THE question of our Lord's—"Lovest thou me?" comes to His people from the Gospel of John like an urgent, reminding call. It is weighty and important, and blessed is the man who aims to make this call a guide to all his - actions. Woe unto them who are of the opinion that they may attach little importance to this deep meaning question; there is great danger therein that may cause the careless to stumble, and under some circumstances the promised crown may even be lost. We must lend wings to our spirit and soar upward to find true, precious, everlasting love in wonderful harmonizing perfection. Since unprovable ages we find embodied in the majestic personality of Jehovah, our Heavenly Father, the holy, original principle of all-embracing love for the world.

This boundless love is one of the costliest blooms which adorn all the beautiful characteristics of our Almighty God, the lovely fragrance of which lends a beautiful odour to His entire workmanship. All His works are crowned with love. We may look about in all directions—down to the diminutive beetle which, full of the joy of life and bathed in golden sunshine, moves up and down the waving stalk of grass; or up to the firmament at night, where numberless heavenly bodies travel their everlasting way in silent majesty, and there we see the starry hosts in their sparkling beauty; or at the restless, rolling waves of the ocean; the white, shining glaciers of the mountain ranges; the solemn, rustling forests; the flaming red of the sunset; or at the enrapturing colours and forms of the flowers of summer. Everywhere in these beautiful things we seem to perceive the undying voice of the Creator—"Lovest thou me, Oh heart of man?"

Men should be thankful, endlessly thankful, for God's providence, for His faithfulness, for His world-wide love; they should open their hearts to this warm, living stream of love, and let it fully enter into themselves; and yet, how far are they still away? Selfishness rules more to-day than ever before — very little can be noticed of love towards God or neighbourly love. At the present time, gross egoism and cold lovelessness have become so established as to cause us to fear the worst, and which is also confirmed in the Scriptures. That the fall of mankind is a hopeless one is becoming increasingly clear, so far as regaining, in their own strength, that which was lost.

A master of love is required to awaken the stony hearts of fallen men, to change them to fleshly hearts with the balsam of that godlike love which can conquer the most stubborn opposition. In the coming age,

long centuries will be at our Redeemer's disposal to accomplish this world-wide work. All men will be brought back to a state of perfection in love, and in all eyes will the wonderful words be lit up—"Lovest thou me?" Glorious time!

When these deep-meaning words are held in remembrance at every step and stride of humbled men, selfishness will be conquered; truly, if the distracted world is to be recovered, complete self-denial will be necessary. This way will mean following Jesus, and slowly but surely adopting the noble characteristics and costly virtues which our dear Master possessed so richly at the time of His human perfection.

The essence of God is love in its most glorious and perfect state. Besides His exalted wisdom, it was God's boundless love which moved Him to create all His wonderful beings; and this love rules and embraces the universe and finds ways of reaching man when he is in despair. We have the most positive proof of God's boundless love in that He gave His dear Son, His most precious possession, in order to pay the ransom price for the lost and fallen human race. We now understand the important words of the Psalmist, in Psa. 77:13— "God, thy way is holy." (Luther's translation.)

As we all know, "holy" means "selected for a purpose," and this is also true of the way which the Lord's wisdom chose for His Son in the flesh—that He became the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1:29.) We note the wonderful wisdom of God, whereby He harmonized His unbending righteousness with His world-wide love. No human brain would have discovered this way of God, which is so unendingly exalted, and yet so very plain.

The attitude of our Saviour towards the burning question of mankind's redemption is no less marvellous. As God made known His purpose to His dear Son, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence (Col. 1:18), Jesus was, in love, fully prepared to do the will of the Father. "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart," (Psa. 40:8), was His answer to the Father's question, "Lovest thou me?"

We have a pattern in our Lord's unconditional surrender, in His willingness to sacrifice, in His great love. The spotless, Holy One gladly left the blissful, heavenly surroundings to become despised, rejected and persecuted, in fulfilling His mission in this world which was hostile toward Him, He fulfilled the written law and the will of the Father so conscientiously and faithfully that He will be recognised as the luminous morning star into the remotest ages, and will let His saving light shine, not only in this world, but throughout the entire universe.

Many of our Lord's precious teachings were laid down in the New Testament by His disciples who had the privilege to walk in closest companionship with Him. Our beloved Master was the greatest teacher the world has ever seen. His godly teachings, which breathe the spirit of righteousness and unbounded neighbourly love, will, when, they become operative in the Millennium, renew the world and humanity. They accomplish the washing of regeneration (Tit. 3:5), in which the sins, faults and weaknesses of mankind will ultimately come to naught, in order that the holy principle of true love may shine forth for all time.

As the Lord at that time spoke to His disciples, He still speaks to you, to me; and to all whom He will still call, He will also speak—"Lovest thou me? then follow me." His kind soul-searching eyes are turned toward us, full of love and goodness; who could withstand Him? "Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:68.) For His called and chosen class, His own people, the little flock, which He drew out of the darkness of sin into His wonderful light of truth, Jesus left a number of teachings and guiding principles which, if followed, will bring us ever nearer the heart of the Father.

Besides all other virtues the principle of love in every form naturally takes first place in our character

development.

It is a precious way, this pathway of love, this following in the footsteps which our dear Master left for us. He who earnestly strives to follow will not only receive much quiet joy and rich blessing now, but to him it will be more clearly revealed that “love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Rom. 13:10.) “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” (I Cor. 13:13.) Love for God and His everlasting truth; love for our Lord, for the brethren, for our neighbour, for our enemies; this is the sum of God’s law which we must obey as much as possible, if we wish to stand before the Master when He asks us, “Lovest thou me?”

It is sometimes very difficult to conquer the opposing desires of our own selves, the world, and Satan’s wily influences. At the same time the Scriptures give us a sure answer for any and every difficulty—”Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate.” (Isa. 34:16.) As regards our attitude towards the world, we find the instructions in 1 John 2:15 and 1 John 4:16—”Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,” and “He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” It is so very important for the consecrated followers of Jesus to walk strictly in the way set forth by the Lord, as then they are in the least danger of stumbling. “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” (John 14:21.) Added thereto, a constant searching of the precious depths of God’s Word is necessary, because only thereby are we able to withstand Satan’s methods of deception in the present “evil day.”

Again we hear the Lord speak, “Lovest thou me?” if so, then “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” These are very important words, and may we always keep them in mind. In following Jesus there is so very much of which to take heed, and many lessons to be learned in humility, in loyalty, and in faith.

In order to gain brotherly love—that beautiful virtue of character—often much tact is required, much fineness of feeling, and the spirit of the Lord exhorts us to practise forgiveness, instead of desiring to judge hastily in a false heart condition; and herein we all fail without exception. Our Lord certainly recognised the great importance of this point in the character development of His followers. He knew that our brotherly love could be strained and ensnared in a web of self-assurance, which in many cases would make clear discernment difficult. However, our brotherly love must be proven and tested, and by such the new creature demonstrates how much has been learned in the school of Christ. Even when, in our opinion, we are absolutely in the right, we could be especially tested respecting our readiness “to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John 3:16.) In such moments the question may well arise in the heart of a brother or sister—”Lovest thou me?”

While our Master desires to preserve us from unnecessary conflicts, He impressed upon His disciples, and us also, such loving, thoughtful words—”A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” The Lord’s words remind us, as those of the truest friend we ever had, “Lovest thou me?” then, “follow me”;—this is the way, walk ye in it. Our Master calls to us continually live according to my maxims and commandments, which are dictated by love.

It is so very necessary that we practise wholeheartedly brotherly love in this time of testing, while divisions and factions are permitted to thoroughly sift us, in order to reveal the fully consecrated ones. We wish to quote an example from life, in order to emphasize the danger of many testings, and that all hasty judging may be far from us, and that we become constantly more cautious. There was a certain beloved, old, grey-haired brother whose calling took him on many journeys to foreign lands in tropical climates, so that he was often absent from home for years. Recently, he went on his last great journey; namely, to the

other side of Jordan. Although his rugged profession naturally made a strong impression on him outwardly, he possessed some noble qualities within. His whole life was a continuous chain of difficulty, misery and mistakes; yet this little one of the Lord's proclaimed, with wonderful faithfulness, the love of the Master to those, with whom he came in contact. He had a firmly fixed faith of being a child of the Father, and his unshakeable love for his Lord Jesus was really touching; and yet, this beloved brother had an imperfection, an evil habit, which he could not leave because he inherited it from his father, as he often expressed with bitter tears—he drank, not always, but periodically—and he fought very hard against this evil. However, this matter was sufficient for another certain brother to refuse to recognise him as a brother, to avoid him, and no longer to have fellowship with him. The old brother was laid on a sick bed, from which he was never to rise again.

Another brother came who looked at the situation from a different angle. He decided within himself that love must be supreme, as long as there was still living faith in the ransom price; and besides, it is not for a man to judge another. He supported the old brother, and comforted him with the consolation which we all have had, and went to visit him until shortly before his death, and both were richly blessed. As he was with him for the last time and took his thin hand in his, a look of joy entered the eyes of the old man, and he whispered words which fill the heart with joy and can never be forgotten—"You are the only one that still comes to see me." He had several times pleaded with the other brother who avoided him, and if he would have been present, he could have read in the tired eyes of the dying one, the silent question—"Lovest thou me?"

Yes, dear brethren, there was a very important lesson to learn in this matter. Blessed is the person that learns it thoroughly, and stands the test connected with it. May we never adopt any self-considered theory of brotherly love, because all human theory is darkening and misleading like a thick fog. What is so very necessary is the practical, unconditional, active living of precious love which will not be prevented from showing its wonderful strength by any weakness in a brother or sister.

Does not this cause us to think deeply? And now "Lovest thou me?" Then not only take up your cross, but deny yourself; lay your life down for the brethren, and follow in the Master's footsteps. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." (Isa. 30:21.) You know the way; I know the way; why do we hesitate? Let us go, for the way of Jesus is also our way. Who, while hearing this little story would not have brought to mind the fitting verses of Scripture in Luke 6:36, 37, 41, 42. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." "Lovest thou me?"

Now, another example taken from reality, in which we can so clearly see how easily we are inclined to set up conditions in the practise of brotherly love, and to judge, and how the Lord permits these things for our testing. Two brethren in the Lord met on the way, and their conversation turned to a debated question which to the one seemed very important, but the other could not consider it so. So important did the first brother consider this question, that in his opinion all that would not understand it as he did were in danger of judgment. At the end of the conversation this brother said, "We could love you much more if you could come to the same understanding as regards this important point as we have." This is about as much as saying, Up till now we love you 90 per cent., but if you had the same opinion as we have, we could love you 100 per cent. The fullest, whole-hearted love would then depend on the acceptance, or rejection, of various man-made theories and view points. Let each one judge for himself whether this is showing true, unselfish brotherly love.

Did the Lord, in John 21:17, say to Peter, whose weaknesses had become manifest, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me 90 per cent," or did He simply say—"Lovest thou me?" Then in verse 19 we have the Master's invitation—"Follow me." Yes, if we wish to practise this "following" in all particulars, it becomes difficult indeed. We still fail so very much; and always, only because we do not sufficiently heed the guidance of the Lord—Let all things be done in love.

Let us call to mind the words of the Apostle Paul—"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor. 4:3-5.) The leaving of things to the Lord is the lesson we must learn; nothing more and nothing less.

The imperfections of His disciples caused even our beloved Lord to utter those well known words in Matt. 17:17 and Luke 9:41—"How long shall I suffer you?" Quite apart from their lack of faith mentioned here, the perfect, delicate, tender feelings of Jesus must often have suffered painfully, as He observed the weaknesses of His first twelve followers. But just herein He demonstrated, as a far-reaching example, an all-embracing and atoning love. Our Master bore their weaknesses in love: therefore, let us do likewise. We must bear with each other reciprocally, in spite of our great variety of characteristics. "Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand." (2 Cor. 1:24.)

A beautiful thought by the well-known poet Klopstock reads—"Seed sown by God, to ripen for the harvest day." God has also sown His seed in our one-time obstinate heart, when He permitted us to see the wonderful depths of His elevated wisdom. He has sown seed, whereby love, that indefinable power which permeates the entire universe like a refreshing breath of life, must come to the fore. Love originates from God. If, in the day of harvest, when the Master gathers the wheat into His barn, the God - sown seed is to be thoroughly ripe, love in every form must become sufficiently developed in the New Creation.

The alabaster box must be broken now, and its precious contents be spread over the brother and the sister, as in Israel the high priest, Aaron, was so richly anointed with the holy ointment that it flowed over the whole body, right down to the feet. Lovest thou thy brother? Then break your alabaster box of love; the best is just good enough for him. We must lay down our lives for the brethren; therefore, do not hesitate to break it. Our Lord permitted Himself to be broken for the wellbeing of the entire sin-sick humanity. And now, prove yourself—"Lovest thou me?" Do you wholeheartedly love your brother and your sister? If so, then forget entirely and unconditionally that which is past. Stretch out both hands; let your eye shine with pure, rich love, because the heart shines forth from eye. Sweep the last of the leaven out of the hidden depths of your heart, out of the depth of your mind, and say, without hesitating, joyfully say, "I love Thee." Then will you be acceptable to your Lord and Master, and the countenance of the Father will smile kindly upon you. O, let us learn more and more to keep ourselves in the right heart condition, and to gain the hearts Of opposing brethren with the wonderful, deep question—"Lovest thou me?" Let us live according to the meaning contained in His own words—"Then follow me." This is the way, the way to life. Forget not, that we find ourselves on the highway to our Heavenly Home.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) over the Christmas season, for the four days December 25th to 28th, with additional gatherings on January 1st and 2nd. These assemblies will be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. A helpful season of refreshing is confidently anticipated, by the Lord's grace. Further information is obtainable from the secretary, Mr. J. B. Hiam, C/o Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

When we are judged, we are chastened' of the Lord.
1 Cor. 11:32.

When on entering a house I see a child in disgrace for disobedience, although I tenderly consider the erring child, I especially feel with the grieved, sorrowing parent. When we sin, and are chastened of God, we should rather consider how the heart of our heavenly Father has by us been grieved, than be taken up with the smart of our stripes by His rod of correction. R. C. Chapman.

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue,

Let Not the Sun Go Down.

“Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”-Eph. 4:26.

IN his epistles to the various churches the Apostle Paul was careful to include instructions to cover all manner of shortcomings likely to affect every member of the assemblies to whom he ministered. The Apostle seemed to have a complete understanding of the deceptions of the adversary, and sought to warn, exhort and encourage the followers, of the Lord not to be deceived by the wrong influences of the evil one. As we have the same great opposer in our midst to-day, it is not surprising to find that the same difficulties encountered by the saints in Paul's day are also now present amongst the Lord's people.

One of the most encouraging features of the Apostle's instructions to the churches is the recognition of shortcomings in a way that gives hope to those who know and feel their weaknesses and are ever striving to overcome in the Christian way. For instance, in our text in Eph. 4:26, Paul does not say that a true follower of the Master would never give way to wrathful feelings, wrathful words, or wrathful actions; he admits the possibility of some being overtaken in these faults, and then seeks to present the remedy for the correction and overcoming of these difficulties by all who are truly teachable in the school of Christ.

This same helpful approach to the subject of shortcomings was presented by the writer of Proverbs, in chapter 24:16—“A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.” The main point in this text is that the just or honest one that falls is not discouraged, to become weak-hearted and give up trying. No, the “rising up again” shows that the shortcoming that produced the fall is dealt with in accordance with the Lord's instructions, and can be overcome. While, then, there may be numerous falls, recovery is attained on each occasion by the just or true-hearted of God's people, and so strength is gained for final victory, by the Lord's grace and strength.

So the Apostle in our text seeks to encourage the brethren who may be overtaken with a feeling of wrath, or who have spoken or acted unbecomingly in any manner, that recovery is possible and should be sought without delay— “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” This clearly implies that the sins or shortcomings of each day should be corrected before a new day begins, and the way to gain recovery is, of course, to seek forgiveness before the Lord in prayer. Failure to seek forgiveness for “wrath” in feelings, words or acts would be most detrimental; hence, the Apostle's exhortation to get right with the Lord while each day is with us, for “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9.)

Further, if any of the Lord's people feel that they have been wronged by another, there are also very clear and definite instructions in God's Word as to how to act in such circumstances, in harmony with the words of our text— “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” In Matt. 18:15 we have our Lord's words—“If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother,”

It is at once apparent that the “gaining” of the brother or sister who has supposedly trespassed against another member in the Lord's family is of greatest importance; therefore, the “telling him of his fault” must be done kindly, in view of possible misunderstandings, and also in private—“between thee and him alone”—without any previous conversation or gossip with others respecting the supposed trespass. Thus, with love in the heart and a desire to gain a brother or sister to restored harmony and unity of the spirit, the Lord's help also being invoked in prayers, the outcome in most cases would surely be productive of lasting good, in the strengthening of the ties of brotherly love in the Lord's family, to His praise.

On the other hand, if the Lord's instructions are ignored or overlooked, and the real or supposed trespasses are held against another over days, weeks or months, a very sad condition of heart would be the

outcome, for the spirit of the adversary could quite easily take control, which would result in “grieving the holy spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption.” No wonder, then, the Apostle continues—”Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” (Eph. 4:30-32.)

How important it is, then, that the hearts of God’s people be kept pure and tender, kindly affectioned one toward another, and indeed toward all men, that in their minds, intentions and ambitions they may become copies of God’s dear Son, our Lord and Redeemer. How quickly, then, should evil thoughts be put away, and kept away, so that the spirit and love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit which is given unto us. As the Apostle Peter also declared --”Above all things have fervent love among yourselves; for love shall cover a multitude of defects.” (1 Pet. 4:8.)

Yes, indeed, love does not notice the unintentional shortcomings of others, for “love thinketh no evil.” Therefore, “let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

Tracts Available.

The article—”Is There a Second Chance for Salvation After Death?”—has been appreciated by the brethren, and is now in tract form. Quite a number have been forwarded to various friends, and further supplies are available for all who can place them to advantage.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

“Do the Dead Know Anything”—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24 -page booklet. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for 2/-, posted.

“Christ’s Return”.—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

The Christian's Joy.

“Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.”—Psa. 16:1•.

WHEN we consider how much is said in the Scriptures about joy and rejoicing among God's people, we are deeply impressed with the thought that our Heavenly Father is very solicitous for the happiness of His children even in the present life. The worldly minded cannot see this ; they look upon the lot of God's children as a hard and joyless one, and upon God as a hard Master, without concern for the happiness of His children. This, however, is only because the natural man cannot receive the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. But the spiritually minded have meat to eat of which the world knows nothing; and their hearts rejoice, and their joy no man taketh from them.

How strange it seems, says the world. Why, there was Paul a man of great talent and opportunity, who might have been somebody in the world; he wasted his talents, was a poor man all his days, homeless, friendless, knocked about and persecuted, a sort of religious fanatic. But Paul, viewing the matter from the standpoint of his spiritual discernment, said, “I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations” (2 Cor. 7:4.) ; for he was one of that anointed body who, like his Lord and Head, could say, “I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad” (Acts 2:25, 26) .

So the Psalmist bids all the anointed body rejoice, saying, “Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright” (Psa. 33:1) . And Isaiah, speaking for the same class, says, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels” (Isa. 61:10.)

This blessed joy which so wonderfully lifts the soul above all the vicissitudes of the present life is, as the prophet expresses it, joy in the Lord, not a joy in earthly possessions, or earthly hopes or ambitions. These earthly things are all so transitory and so changeable that a single blast of adversity may sweep them all from us; but not so is it with those whose hearts are centred in God, and to whom He has shown the path of life. These have learned to estimate the things of this present life according to their true values; they see that all of its joys are both transient and unsatisfactory, and that the only real value in it is in the opportunities it affords for experience and discipline and education in the things of God, and for hearing the call of God and making our calling and election sure. In thus making the proper use of the present life—walking in the path of life which God shows us through His Word—we have the present joys and hope and faith in the things unseen, but sure and eternal, knowing also that by and by in the immediate presence of God we shall have fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore at His right hand—the chief place of favour.

But while the fulness of joy in its widest sense is reserved for that blessed time when we shall be like the Lord and see Him as He is (1 John 3:1, 2), and be in His presence and at His right hand (in His chief favour) , there is a fulness of joy in the presence and favour of God, which is the privilege of every Christian now. Our capacity for joy now is not what it will be by and by, but it is possible now to have our earthen vessels as full as they can hold of the joy of the Lord. And day by day it is our privilege to realise the presence and favour of God, if, by walking in the path of life, the path of obedience,- and loving service, we draw near to God. “If a man love me,” said our Lord Jesus, “he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him” (John 14:23.).

In such company as this, can any Christian fail utterly to realise some measure of joy in the Lord? No, it

his faith grasps the promise and holds it, the realisation of joy in the Lord is sure to follow, and the more firmly his faith lays hold upon the promise the more he will realise its fulfilment, and the more fully will his joys abound, for in the presence of the Lord is fulness of joy, no matter what may be the conditions and circumstances.

In the blessed realisation of this experience, and the assurance of faith which it gave, in the midst of all his labours, Paul exclaimed, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:33-39.)

It was this strong persuasion, this confident faith of the Apostle, that gave him such joy in the midst of all his tribulations. His faith laid hold upon the promises of God with a strong and steady grasp, and love and gratitude impelled him to prompt obedience to the will of God and ardent zeal in His service, and evidently the Lord's promise was fulfilled in the abiding presence of Father and Son with him at all times and under all circumstances.

This blessed privilege is ours also if by faith we enter fully into the Lord's will and favour. And with a blessed realisation of the abiding presence of our Heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of their love and favour, and a faith that lays hold of all the exceeding great and precious promises of God, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fulness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord's acquaintance more, drawing near to Him in prayer, in the study of His precious Word, in meditation upon all His goodness, His providential care, the marked manifestation of His grace in our own individual experiences, and His precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus "draw nigh to God. and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8) ; He will manifest Himself to you and take up His abode with you.

It is indeed the will of God that all His children should be happy in Him, that they should be always rejoicing; and if any one lacks this blessing he is living below his privileges. Let us appreciate the favour of God to the extent of seeking for it more and more diligently, remembering the exhortation, "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." All the riches of Divine favour are ours if in faith and humility we claim them and place ourselves in the position to receive them as directed through the Word of God. "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full." And your joy can no man take from you, so long as you abide in Him who is our life, our joy, our rest, our hope.

"Why should the children of the King
Go mourning all the day?"
"Children of the Heavenly King,
As we journey let us sing!"

The Right Motive.

When Andrew Fuller went into his native town to collect for missions, he was accosted by an old acquaintance. who said, “Well, Andrew, I’ll give you five pounds, seeing it is you.’

“No,” said Mr. Fuller, “I cannot take anything for the cause, seeing it is me.”

He handed the money back to his friend.

The man saw the point, and said, “Andrew you are right; here are ten pounds, seeing it is for Jesus Christ.”

It is not the amount that we give towards helping on the Lord’s work—it is the motive that He looks at.—
”Sunday Circle.”

Let us plant and rear all tender thoughts, knowing surely that those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.—
Hare.

St. Paul’s Valuable Counsel

“The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient, in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves.”-2 Tim. 2:24, 25.

THE Apostle is here addressing his much loved I fellow disciple, Timothy, and after exhorting him to continue in the faith and to hold fast the form of sound words, guarding well that which was intrusted to his care, he goes on to counsel son Timothy as to what are the requisites of an overseer in the Church and the responsibilities attached thereto.

The context shows the Apostle relating the sad position of some of the brethren, inasmuch as they had become led away from the pure teachings and had allowed themselves to be mixed up in erroneous doctrines through their carnality and neglect to keep the body under and bring same into subjection. This class is referred to by the Apostle in our text as opposing themselves, and who concerning the Truth had erred.

Well should all Christians, and especially those having the oversight in an Ecclesia, mark well and appreciate the importance of the above words if they would seek to have Divine approval. First of all, strife, argument, or contention, only savour of the fleshly mind and lead to confusion and every evil work, and is the outcome of a wrong condition of heart.—”Let all strife and bitterness and anger be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind one toward another,” says the Apostle. Furthermore, in endeavouring to so demonstrate this Christlikeness, all can see the necessity of gentleness in dealing with the shortcomings of others and the patience that is ever required if we would be used as a blessing to such in saving them from the error of their way.

Regarding Timothy and his responsibility as an overseer, the Apostle Paul well knew the necessity and importance of exercising patient, gentle reproof along right lines. Not only should Timothy be able to teach and instruct through the medium of the infallible Word of God and know the Scriptures which are profitable for doctrine, but also in order to be an able teacher of the Word there must be associated the manifestation of its spirit with faith and power: In so doing, the Apostle reminds Timothy of the great necessity of exercising the quality of meekness in order that he might be guided in judgment at all times, and under every circumstance, in the Church.

No doubt, the Apostle Paul had learned in his experiences how necessary were the qualities of gentleness, patience and meekness, without which no servant of the Lord could possibly be used of God as a blessing, especially to those of the brethren who had gotten away from the teachings as suggested in the words of our text.

“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.”—Rom. 12:11, 12.

These verses contain some very necessary exhortations embodying many important features which should characterise the daily life of the Christian.

The first few words call to mind the statement in Prov. 18:9 that, “He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.” Here, too, it is necessary that we should exercise the spirit of a sound mind. We are to be neither neglectful of our duties, nor should we go to the other extreme and allow our temporal affairs to take up an undue proportion of our time.

Then, again, another phase of the subject is brought to our attention in Heb. 6:11, 12. We realise that since we have consecrated our all to the Lord our chief interest is in the Lord’s service, and it is for us to live up to our privileges and responsibilities in this respect.

We are to be “fervent in spirit.” As we are told in Rev. 3:15, the Lord would have us either hot or cold, but He finds no pleasure in those who are satisfied to remain in a lukewarm condition. We, too, with our Lord, should be able to say, “The zeal of thine house hath consumed me.” (John 2:17.)

Our service to the Lord should be willingly and joyfully rendered. We should “rejoice evermore” on account of the knowledge that we have of God’s plan and wonderful hope set before us. We are told in Hebrews that “no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous,” yet when we understand our place in God’s great plan we can be “patient in tribulation,” and so be rightly exercised by it. (1 Pet. 1:7-9; Rom. 5:1-5).

In order to be faithful and fully appreciative of the Lord’s goodness, it is necessary that we should obey the final injunction in verse 12. “Be instant in prayer,” or as in I Thess. 5:17, “Pray without ceasing”; see also Eph. 6:18.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

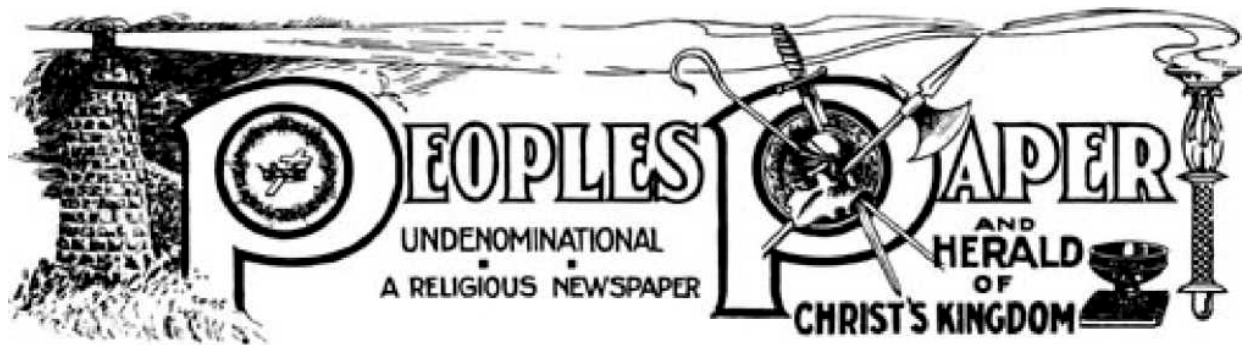
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ,, 4.45 p.m.

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The Babe Born to be King

WHY were all men in expectation of Him at the time of His birth? What was to be peculiar about Him to lead Israel to expect His birth? The answer to this question is that God had made a certain promise centuries before and the promise had not been fulfilled. This promise contained the thought that a holy child would be born and that in some way, not explained in the promise, this child would bring the blessing the world needed.

The promise behind the expectation was that which God made to Abraham, saying, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." From that time onward, all the Israelites were waiting for the birth of the child that should bring the blessing.

But why was a Messiah necessary? Why wait at all for the birth of the child? The answer to this question is that sin had come into the world; that God had placed our first parents—holy, pure and free from sin—in the glorious conditions of the Garden of Eden with every favourable prospect and everlasting life at their command if they continued in harmony with God. But by reason of their disobedience they came under Divine displeasure and sentence of death. This sentence of death has brought in its wake aches, pains, sorrows, tears, sighing, crying and death — all of these experiences as the result of sin.

Our Heavenly Father said to our first parents—and this was the first intimation that He gave them of a deliverance—that "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The serpent in this expression means Satan—all the powers of evil, everything adverse to humanity, everything, adverse to the blessings which God had given them, and which they had lost by disobedience. But the promise was vague and they understood little about the "seed of the woman" and "bruising the serpent's head." It merely meant in an allegorical way a great victory over sin and Satan, without explaining how it should come.

So mankind continued to die; they continued to have aches and pains and sorrows; they continued going down to the tomb. They realised that what they needed was some Saviour to come and deliver them from the power of sin, to deliver them from the death penalty of sin—a Saviour who would be, in other words, a Life-giver. They were dying and needed new life. This is the meaning of the word Saviour in the language used by our Lord 2nd the Apostles. They were hoping and expecting that God would send a Life-giver.

It was on this account that they were so greatly concerned regarding the promise made to Abraham —"In

thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed”—they shall be granted a release from sin and death. In no other way could mankind be blessed. It would be impossible to bless mankind except by releasing them from sin and death. Hence, the Scriptures tell us of God’s sympathy; that God looked down from His holy habitation; and beheld our sorrow, and heard, figuratively, “the groaning of the prisoners” humanity—all groaning and travailing under this penalty of death—some with few aches and pains, and some with more aches and pains; some with, few sorrows, and some with greater sorrows, but all groaning and travailing in pain.

But God’s sympathy was manifested; and we read that, “He looked down and beheld that there was no eye to pity and no arm to save” and with “His own arm he brought salvation.” This is what was promised to Abraham—that one should come from his posterity who would be the Saviour of the world; and because this promise was made to Abraham and to his seed, they were marked out as separate from all other nations and peoples. To the Jewish nation alone belonged this great honour—that through them should come this salvation. Hence, from that time onward the Jews spoke of themselves as God’s people, the people whom God had promised to bless, and through whom He would bring a blessing to all others. Therefore, all other people were called heathen. Israel was thus separated because God’s Covenant was with them, and not with the others. But God’s Covenant with Israel was for the blessing of all the others: “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Now, we have the “Why” of this wonderful babe being born.

How could He be a Saviour? In what way could He be different from any other babe? Why not use some other babe as the one through whom salvation should come? The answer of the Bible is that salvation could not come to mankind unless there should be a satisfaction of justice on account of original sin. That must be the first consideration. The penalty, “Dying, thou shalt die,” pronounced against the first man, must be met before the world could be blessed.

Why not let any man die? Because all were under the sentence of the original condemnation, and none could be a ransom-price or a substitute. Hence the necessity for a specially born babe, different from any other babe. In what way was this One differently born? The Bible explains to us very distinctly that He was not begotten of an earthly father. Although Joseph was espoused to Mary, yet this child was not the child of Joseph. The Bible explains that this child was specially begotten by Divine power, in the mother, though she was still a “virgin” when she brought forth the child.

This is the Scriptural proposition; and while it may not seem clear to some, yet the Word of God standeth sure. If the Redeemer was not perfect then He could not be the Saviour of the world. The promised redemption implied that Jesus would be perfect; it implied that He would be as the first man was before he sinned. “For since by man came death, by man shall come also the resurrection of the dead”: “As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive.”

So this one must be, as the Apostle declares, “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26.) He must be entirely distinct and separate from humanity so far as sinful features were concerned. If we had time it would be interesting to go into the scientific features—of how a perfect child could be born from an imperfect mother. If we can have a perfect life germ we can have a perfect child from an imperfect mother. And so, if we had perfect fathers, we would soon have a perfect race. But there is no father who can produce a perfect child. Hence it was necessary in this case (and the Scriptures declare it was accomplished) that God should beget this Son by power from on high. Therefore, that which was born of the “virgin” was separate and distinct from all humanity. His life came not from an earthly father, but from His Heavenly Father.

It is written that before He became flesh Jesus had an existence; as He declared, “Before Abraham was, I am.”

Again, in one of His prayers, He said, “Father, glorify thou me with the glory that I had wish thee before the world was.- The Revelator tells us that “He was the beginning of the creation of God,” and Paul says that “by Him all things were made.” And so our Lord Jesus was not only the beginning, but also the active agent of the Father in all the creative work in the angelic world and in the creation of humanity, and in all things that were created.

The whole matter is summed up by the Apostle John. We will give a more literal translation of “In the beginning was the Word.- This expression, Word, in the Greek is Logos. The thought behind the word Logos is that in olden times a king, instead of speaking his commands directly to his people, sat behind a lattice work, and his Logos, or messenger, or word. or representative, stood before the lattice work, and gave the message of the king to the people in a loud tone of voice. The king himself was not seen by the people—the Logos was the one seen. So this is the picture the Scripture gives us of how Jesus was the express representative of the Heavenly Father, the One through whom the Heavenly Father made Himself known--the Word, or the Logos. So we read in the first chapter of John, “In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with the God, and the Logos was a god. The same was in the beginning with God. By Him were all things made, and without Him was not anything made.-

In other words, Jesus was the direct Creator of all things. He was the Divine Power, Agent, Word, Messenger, the Logos of Jehovah. He did all the great work of creation; but He Himself was the first of God’s direct creation the Firstborn of all creatures, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence—the first place.

When the time came that our Heavenly Father made known His great purpose that He would bless the world: He gave opportunity to this First-begotten One—this One begotten of the Father—to be the servant in this great work He intended to accomplish for mankind. Consequently, the Scriptures state that “for the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame.” And now He has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty • on high. He has this great reward because of His obedience even unto death, the death of the cross.

The Apostle speaks of Him as having been rich, but for our sakes becoming poor, that through His poverty we might be made rich. He tells us how , He left the glory which He had with the Father and humbled Himself to the human nature. Why? Because, as already stated, it was necessary that some one should become man’s Redeemer; an angel could not redeem man, neither could an animal redeem man. The Divine law is “an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; a man’s life for a man’s life.” This was to teach us a great lesson that perfect human life having been condemned to death, it would require a perfect human life to redeem it. It was therefore necessary that Jesus should become the “Man Christ Jesus,” in order “that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man.”

The results that have followed have been that He Himself proved His own faithfulness. “Being found in fashion as a- man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” — the most ignominious form of death. It pleased the Father thus to prove Him, not only by death, but by the most ignominious form of death—dying as a culprit, being crucified between two thieves. What a terrible ignominy to die thus!

It would be ignominy enough for us in our imperfection, but for Him, perfect, “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners,” it must have been a cause for deep and poignant sorrow. Having completed the laying down of His life, at the end of the three and a half years, He cried, “It is finished!” What? Not His work, for much of that lay before Him! He merely finished this part of the work, finished laying down His life a ransom-price.

What next? After His death came His resurrection; and we read that “God raised him from the dead on the third day.” According to the Scriptures He was raised up from death a glorious being—”Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonour, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spirit body”; “Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, those in heaven, and those on earth, and those under the earth; that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:10.

But we see not yet all knees bowed to Him, Why not? The Scriptures tell us that before He begins His great work for the world of mankind, He first does a work for the elect, the Church, those who desire to walk in His footsteps, to gather out of the world a Bride, to be co-workers with Him in all the great work of the Father. This is the only work yet in process of accomplishment, and this has been going on now for over nineteen centuries. We see how he

gathered out the saintly ones from amongst the Jews, “Israelites, indeed, in whom there was no guile.” Not finding enough to make the desired number, He proceeded to gather them from all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples.

The Apostle tells us that when this Bride class is united with Him they shall be parts of the Seed of Abraham; as we read, “And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29.) This statement relates to the promise made to Abraham, that through him and his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Thus we see the work that Christ is accomplishing now.

The invitation to become the Bride of Christ is a very special invitation and those who would be His must walk in the -narrow way.” If they will sit in His Throne, they must suffer with Him. If they suffer with Him they shall also share His glory. So “the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that shall follow,” were not only to be accomplished in our Lord Jesus, personally, but He was an example for all the Church who are justified through faith in His blood. They have a share with Him in His sufferings, and will share in His glory; they have a share in the First Resurrection, as the Revelator declares, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him for a thousand years.”—Rev. 20:6.

The Apostle says, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord,” “that I might know him and the power of his resurrection” (the special resurrection) to the divine nature. How? By being made conformable to His death; for “If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.”

All the families of the earth are to be blessed, as originally promised in Eden: “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” Also, as Paul states in the 16th chapter of Romans, “The very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” So, then, the next thing in order in the outworking of God’s Plan will be to bruise Satan and destroy sin.

When will Satan be bound or restrained? Just as soon as this Age shall end; because this Age is merely for the development of the Bride class; then will come the promised Free Grace to all the families of the earth. Messiah’s Kingdom shall come. He has promised that when He shall reign, all His faithful shall reign with Him: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.” All the Church will be associated with Him in His great Messianic Kingdom; and “He shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth”; and “Unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God the Father”; “The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth “ The whole earth will become as the Garden of Eden. Paradise Lost will be Paradise Restored. The divine image lost in Adam will be restored to man.

Human nature will be brought to perfection. But the glorious reward to the Church will be the divine nature, to be like her Lord, to sit at His right hand, and to bless the world of mankind. Man will become not only perfect, having all that Adam had, but will have additional knowledge and character; and there is every evidence that this shall be an eternal blessing.

However, the Scriptures tell us that some will be lost, and that the loss they shall sustain will be loss of life, and therefore all the pleasures of life. "They shall be as though they had not been"; "They shall be destroyed from amongst the people." Peter says, "They shall be destroyed as brute beasts."—Acts 3:23; 2 Pet. 2:12.

When? When the eyes of their understanding shall have been opened to see the Lord and to understand His glorious character, and they shall have had opportunity to appreciate and enjoy His blessing. When such intentionally reject the grace of God, they shall die the Second Death, from which there is no resurrection, no hope of recovery. But, thank God, there shall be no knowledge of suffering for them; they shall be destroyed as brute beasts.

In proportion as we believe in this Babe of Bethlehem shall we rejoice to-day. In proportion as we believe He was manifested on our behalf; in proportion as we believe He' died for our sins; in proportion as we recognise Him as the glorified Saviour; in proportion as we have surrendered our hearts to Him and seek to do the things well pleasing to Him shall we have the peace of God.

Our hope on behalf of mankind in general is that in God's due time His blessing shall reach all—not the same as that for the Church, but as Peter tells us in Acts 3:20, 21, "He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets."

Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper."

The booklet, "Why We Observe the Lord's Supper Annually," is taking the place of January's "Peoples Paper," and is being posted with this issue of the "Paper" to all subscribers.

Bible Studies.

Copies of the following books are expected to arrive by the time this issue of "Peoples Paper" reaches our readers. Prices on application

"Hymns of Dawn"—music.

"Divine Plan of the Ages"—cloth and paper covers.

"New Creation."

"Atonement Between God and Man."

"Most Holy Faith."

"Everlasting Gospel."

"Chosen People."

"God and Reason."

"Hope Beyond the Grave."

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Christian Character.

“Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.”—Phil.:4:8.

MANKIND in general does too little thinking, and what it does is more or less not on right lines and built on false bases and premises. Nevertheless, all will agree as respects human welfare there is a power in thought second to no other one in the universe. Few, perhaps, realise to what degree their own happiness and well-being is dependent on right thinking, to what extent whole communities and nations owe their happiness or misery to their right or wrong thoughts on the important problems of life. Words are a power in the world. Truly did the wise man say, “As a man thinketh in his heart so is he” (Prov. 23:7). If he thinks justly, he will speak and act justly; if his thoughts are selfish and ignoble, his words will be deceitful, and his conduct dishonest.

The teacher appeals to the power of thought, also the preacher, politician and financier appeals to it, as well as the sociologist. Thousands of books, magazines, pamphlets and newspapers published in every land are all appealing to thought. It is the great engine which is moving the whole world. The difficulty is that few are of logical and discerning mind, the fall having affected and disordered our reasoning faculties, and self-seekers frequently take advantage of the weak mental state of humanity to delude with sophistry, and thus to hinder and obscure correct thinking and reasoning. Against the great force and weight of selfishness does humanity labour, as well as the wiles of Satan, and so it is not surprising that generally it is misled and deceived because also it must struggle against its own inertia and inaptitude.

The Lord also appeals to the power of the mind through His Word, and urges upon His people that they be “transformed by the renewing of their minds” (Rom. 12:2). Indeed, it may be said that the cultivation of the power of thought began with the Lord’s people, and that insofar as religious matters it has in no degree left them. Heathen religions seek to restrain the intellect and appeal chiefly to passions, prejudices and fears. The Lord, on the contrary, calls to His people saying, “Come, let us reason together.” (Isa. 1:18.)

Nominal Christendom have not responded in any great measure to our Lord’s invitation, and therefore have not had their “senses exercised by reason of use,” and are not in the Lord’s family. (Heb. 5:13, 14.)

Thinking also may be a dangerous practice in the absence of absolute knowledge upon which to base and exercise our reasoning faculties, but the Lord has protected His faithful ones. The Scriptures lay down certain broad lines, and invite God’s people to reason within these lines of revelation, and thus to taste and see that the Lord is gracious, and come to a clearer knowledge of Him, a better understanding of His character and plan. Many who are awakened to independent thinking are careless of the limitations of Divine revelation, and therefore the influence of the Divine Word upon them is a mental liberty which, lacking the Divine control, is very apt to go to the extreme of license, self-conceit and infidelity. Wherever the Bible has gone it has been the torch of civilisation; millions have profited by its enlightening influence, though only a few have walked close to its light, and these few are the true Christians, the “wheat” of this age, “the first fruits unto God of his creatures” which He is now harvesting. (James 1:18.)

Thought can be controlled just as words or actions can; the will is at the helm, and it is necessary first of all that it be rightly directed and strong in curbing those thoughts which it recognises as evil, and encouraging those which are helpful and beneficial. The will in Scripture is called the heart, and is always appealed to by the Lord as He seeks amongst men for His “peculiar people.” The message, “My son, give

me thine heart,” thy will, is to those who have been brought into harmony with Him through forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ Jesus the Redeemer. It is for such if they would go on to perfection to the full attainment of His gracious purposes for them, to give their hearts and wills to Him in consecration.

The heart given to God thus seeks to know the Divine will, to catch the Divine thought, and obey it in word and act; in proportion as this is attained will there be a newness of life in every respect. It is for this reason that the revelation of the Divine will and plan is furnished to believers, that by growing in the knowledge of it the transforming influence may extend to every avenue of life. Our text is addressed to the saints, not to sinners, evil doers and evil thinkers. The entire epistle to the Philippians is addressed to “all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi” (1:1), and applicable to all the saints everywhere, not to the worldly, but only those who have consecrated their will and heart to God.

The context proves our assertion, for after speaking of prayer and thanksgiving to God and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, Loping their hearts and minds, the Apostle sums up this advanced position of grace with the words of our text as the finish of the argument and of the process of character development, “Finally, brethren Whatsoever Things Are True.”

Love for the truth lies at the very foundation of saintship, and the apostle declares that those who will be rejected in this harvest time are such who receive not the truth in the love of it (2 Thess. 2:10). With our imperfect brains we are in danger of being misled, and hence the Word of the Lord appeals to us with force that we should not even touch that which we realise is untruth. To tamper with error after we see it is error, to “see how it would reason out anyway,” is to lay a trap for our spiritual feet. If we are following God’s admonition in this text it will mean an avoidance of fiction, of novels, of unrealities. This will mean an increased reverence for whatsoever things are true and more devotion to them, an increase of time to study, and an increase of the spirit of truth in our hearts.

“Whatsoever Things Are Honest.”

Who does not know that there are dishonourable and dishonouring thoughts the pondering of which not only wastes valuable time, but instead of bringing a reward, a blessing, entails a loss, a disadvantage, a stain upon our minds unworthy of us as new creatures in Christ Jesus. These true but dishonourable thoughts that present themselves at the bar of our minds are usually in connection with others, the errors, weaknesses or follies of our friends; the sooner we discern the matter and dismiss them, the better, and our hearts will become more noble.

“Whatsoever Things Are Just.”

We are not to be continually meditating over grievances and injustice; we are living in this present evil world, hereunto we were called, even to endure it for righteousness’ sake, to lay down our lives for the Lord and His Word, and yet to be evil spoken of and to have all manner of evil spoken of us falsely for Christ’s sake. Remembering our consecration, we are to take it as it comes, not grieving specially. Thus doing we will have more time to think of the more strengthening and elevating things that are just an; in harmony with righteousness.

“Whatsoever Things Are Pure.”

The Lord’s people must maintain purity of heart, and then purity of speech and action will follow; the mind is the one first attacked by impurity. The Apostle James declares: “Lust, when it has conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15).

“Whatsoever Things Are Lovely.”

The saints must have kind, gentle and lovable thoughts. These, in turn, will gradually develop into graces of character. Shun vindictive contentious thoughts, as they are enemies of the new creature.

“Whatsoever Things Are of Good Report.”

Some may argue that since the world hateth the light and rejoices in iniquity, that therefore the things that would be reputable with it would not be so with the children of the light. But not so; the world does recognise a right standard, even though it does not follow it or pretend to do so, even though it call us hypocrites, as it did our Lord.

Many would think, if they divested their minds of all untrue, unworthy and impure thoughts, that their minds would become quite vacant, and that they would have no topic whatsoever to engage them. This is true with many, but by the time they would be in this attitude they would have such a hunger and thirst for righteousness that they would be in just the right condition to receive the spiritual food the Lord has prepared for them. There is only one thing which demonstrates itself to be the thing true, honourable, pure and lovely, and that is the Divine character and plan, whose length, breadth and height and depth no man can measure; only the saints can comprehend by the holy spirit, and in proportion as they possess the spirit, do they obtain the holy mind, replacing and displacing the unholy thoughts of the natural man (Eph. 3:18). Such a ruling of the mind, such a self-mastery is a conquest. “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he who taketh a city” (Prov. 16:32) , and they shall have a share in the kingdom. Oh! then “let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith” until He shall have become the finisher of it” (Heb. 12:1, 2) .

Well do the Scriptures emphasise the importance of guarding the heart, the mind, the will, saying, “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”

He who for Christ’s sake shares his own loaf with the hungry, casts more into the treasury than they who, out of their abundance, scatter hundreds and thousands they never miss. Hare.

Church Membership.

THE matter of membership in any church gathering THE of course, be on the basis of the truths of God's Word, and that only. We do, not think that any sincere Christian who has come to a knowledge of Bible truth would desire membership in any gathering where the theories of immortality of the soul, trinity, and confused teachings respecting the Lord's return, kingdom, and the harvest work, etc., were taught. Inasmuch as the Lord is calling His people out from the church systems where such errors are taught (Rev. 18:4), it would not be pleasing to Him for any one knowing the truth to remain in such associations.

In the case of funeral services, when any of our brethren were not available to take the service, some of our friends in the past, feeling- that the usual burial service of the various denominations would not be pleasing to the Lord, have approached a minister and suggested certain Scriptures be read at the graveside, and in some cases a prepared statement by the bereaved relative in the truth has been passed on to the minister with the request that it be used instead of the church service. The necessity for this is evident to the brethren, because the usual church burial service allows no distinction between a Christian and an unbeliever, and it is most inappropriate, even to relatives around the grave, to hear Scriptures read and statements made which refer only to the Lord's followers being applied to their departed loved 'one, who may have been a good person, but not at all a believer in the Lord in this life. As a funeral service should in no way be considered an occasion for proclaiming any particular church doctrine, but rather the simple statements from the Scriptures, it is felt that almost without exception ministers would be ready to comply with the wish of bereaved relatives respecting a funeral service.

With reference to weddings it should be remembered that the authority to perform marriages is granted by the government of the land to certain individuals, which includes officials of registry offices and ministers of most denominations. It is therefore appropriate to procure the services of registrars for marriage ceremonies where the parties feel this to be the best and proper course. A number of our brethren have been married by the government registrars after which functions in keeping with the truth have been held with others of the Lord's people, and the occasions have been helpful and a blessing to all concerned.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held again this year (D.V.) over the Christmas season, for the four days December 25th to 28th, with additional gatherings on January 1st and 2nd. These assemblies will be held in .the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. A helpful season of refreshing is confidently anticipated, by the Lord's grace. Further information is obtainable from the secretary, Mr. J. B. Hiam, C/o Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

The Refiner's Fire.

He sat by a fire of seven-fold heat
As he watched the precious ore,

And closer He bent with a searching gaze,
As He heated it more and more.

He knew He had ore that could stand the test,
And He wanted the finest gold,

To mould as a crown for the King to wear,
Set with gems of a price untold.

So He laid our gold on the burning fire,
Tho' we fain would have said Him -Nay":

And He watched the dross that we had not seen.
As it melted and passed away.

And the gold grew brighter, and yet more bright,
But our eyes were so dim with tears,

We saw but the fire—not the Master's hand—
And questioned with anxious fears.

Yet our gold shone out with a richer glow
As it mirrored a Form above,

That bent o'er the fire, unseen by us,
With a look of ineffable love.

Can we think that it pleases His loving heart
To cause us a moment's pain?

Ah, no! but He saw thro' the present cross
The bliss of eternal gain.

So He waited there with a watchful eye,
With a love that is strong and sure,

And His gold did not suffer a whit more heat
Than was needed to make it pure!

—Unknown.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 1 7/12/ 6.

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages".—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

"Christ's Return".—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

"Do the Dead Know Anything"—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24 -page booklet. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for 2 /-, posted.

Revised Standard Version Bible,-1952. Copies of this Revised Bible Are available, and will be found helpful for comparison in Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50 / - ; in red rexine 60/-.

A New Picture Bible.—A Cambridge Bible, containing 30 coloured illustrations, with marginal references, and strong, black, cloth cover. A very good child's Bible; price 15/6.

Radio Sessions on 4LG.

Arrangements were completed last month with the manager of Radio 4LG, Longreach, Queensland, to broadcast a series of our Frank and Ernest sessions through that station, at 9.15 p.m., on Sundays. Commencing date was 21st November, and the wave length is 273 metres. It is felt that 9.15 p.m. will be an appropriate time, when people, especially in the outback parts of the country, may be more relaxed and perhaps able to give more attention to the radio than at other times of the day. We pray for the Lord's blessing upon His message of truth as it is sounded forth in this new area as well as in all other parts, that all may be to His praise in the harvest work of these last days of the age.

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Folks—Loving Christian greetings in the name of our loving Lord. It has been some months since I wrote you; not knowing the date when my subscription to “Peoples Paper” expires, am sending herein check for 3 dollars to cover cost of renewal for one year, the remainder to be put in general funds, etc.

My papers after reading are forwarded to another state for an invalid sister who wrote me that she so enjoyed them, so kindly accept double thanks for your little paper which is greatly appreciated by both of us.

If you have leaflets dealing with the unprecedented time of trouble now spreading throughout the whole globe, I would like to be favored with some, as am entirely isolated — no class, no fellowship, excepting through the magazines and few correspondence with truth friends.

May God’s richest blessings be yours as you daily walk the narrow way of sacrifice, and often via the “fiery furnace” route, and thanking you in advance for the leaflets herein asked for. I am, Your elderly Sister.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Many thanks for literature received some time back. “Our Lord’s Great Prophecy” cleared many texts I did not understand; as usual my daughter and I marvel how you are able to explain everything to our satisfaction. As soon as anything arrives in the mail, everything else is forgotten; then in no time I’m looking for more. I don’t seem to be able to get enough. Of course I’ go over everything you send me many times; if only it were possible to join a study group! I have been blessed with so much, I suppose I must be patient; but it really amazes me when I think I have found some one that is searching, and pass on some thing that I expect to capture their interest, and it is usually handed back without comment, or else they fail to understand it. I cannot help feeling sorry they do not grasp it. I remember I read only one article in the “Peoples Paper” to capture my attention. . . .

I know you are against church membership, but it often puzzles me what one should do in the case of a death in the family, or even a wedding. Is it out of order to obtain the services of a minister when one is not in harmony with his teachings?

Are you having a Christmas Convention? If so, I would appreciate a report on the sermons. Although I go over and over the papers and books I receive I’m always wanting more. I will make a list of what I would like you to forward— “Daily Heavenly Manna,” 1 dozen Greeting Cards, “Some of the Parables,” the last three broadcasts if possible. Have you anything dealing plainly with the errors of the Roman teachings; they are numerous, I know, but should I ever get the opportunity, I would like to be able to prove beyond doubt to others, the errors of this system.

I often come across texts which are puzzling, and although I may understand, I cannot explain to others. For instance, a person said there are such strange things in the Bible, like Matt. 23:9, and also the text that reads, “The barren have many more children than she which hath an husband,” or something similar. Many texts that I did not understand in Matt. 24 were answered in the book, “Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.” How I’ loved it and marvelled at the wealth of wisdom contained in it. From verse 16 to 22 was made beautifully clear.

I am enclosing postal note for literature as convenient. Asking for your prayers that we may one day in the future have the great privilege of meeting some of the brethren at a convention; my time is fully occupied at presents but I am not giving up hope. Once again thanking you for the books received some time back. I am, Yours sincerely.

(A short article "Church Membership" appears in this issue of "Peoples Paper" in which reference is made to funeral services and weddings. Some thoughts on Gal. 4:27 will also appear in a later issue of "Peoples Paper," and literature on the Roman Catholic system is available. --B.B. Institute.)

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was very interested in your broadcast from station 2KY. I have never heard anything quite like it before. I am very interested in Dispensational Truth, and would like a copy of these talks and booklets on the second coming. So few Christians seem to be aware of these great truths and I would like something I could place in their hands. Yours truly.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Received your literature which I appreciate very much. . . . I have to stand at a machine all day and I get very weary, but these glorious truths help to sustain one as we look forward with anticipation to the part we have in the kingdom.

I am enclosing 10/- for subscription to "Peoples Paper" and some back copies of Frank and Ernest Biblical Dialogues, as I feel the question and answer is a most helpful method of imparting knowledge. Later I would like "Our Lord's Great Prophecy" and "Divine Plan of the Ages." When you forward the "Peoples Paper" would you please let me know cost of the books and any others dealing with prophecy. With grateful thanks; Yours in Christ.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—When able to do so, I like to listen to your session "Frank and Ernest" and to-day I liked it very much, so I am asking if you will please send me a copy of "Prepare to meet thy God," also "Hope Beyond the Grave," for further reference.

I have been an invalid for a number of years and any talks regarding answered prayers are of interest to me, because I have learned to understand such a lot. Wishing your session much success in its popularity. Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

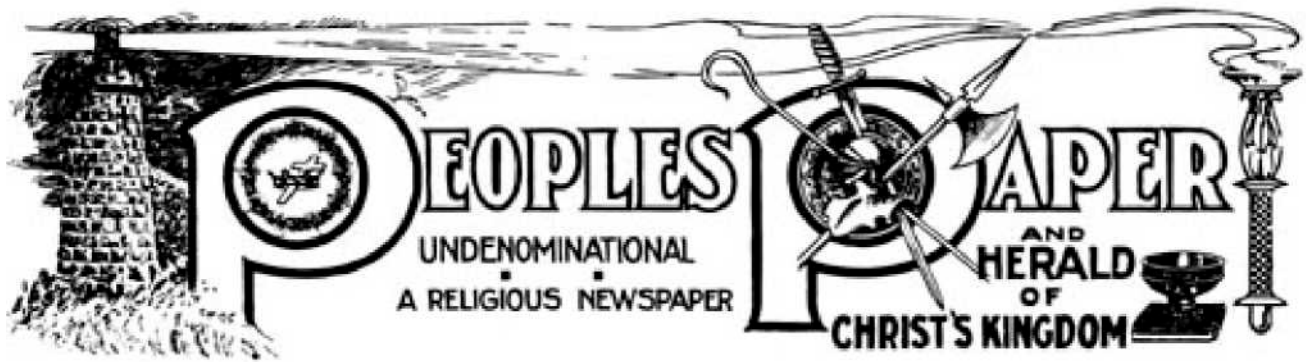
Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends in Christ—I am writing to tell you how much we enjoy your broadcasts; I find them of great assistance to me in my' Christian life. Would you please send me all the literature you have available, as it would be a great help to me. Thanking you very much. Yours sincerely in Christ.

Dear Frank and Ernest—We have just received the October and November copies of "Peoples Paper." I've loved God and Jesus since childhood, but not really properly. Now, recently, I've come to a greater, richer appreciation of truth and I think I'm getting a passion for righteousness . . .

I cherish the booklets and past issues of "Peoples Paper," Dialogues and literature you so generously sent us through the years. I almost became a this year, but I re-read, and studied all the Berean literature, and I've come back to the truth. I want to collect as much truth literature as I can get; I want to be one of the Lord's dear people, but it would be extremely hard. I love the fruits of the spirit, but I'm just a "babe" in Christ yet.

Enclosed please find a donation of 7/6; I would like to subscribe to the "Dawn" magazine; also I'd be grateful for booklets and any past reports and notes of Christmas Conventions. Are the six volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures" available? What is the price, please? I hope to send another donation later. Meanwhile, assuring you that now I'm beginning to love God and His beloved Son Jesus really and truly, and hoping to hear from you. I remain.

P.S.—We do enjoy the Frank and Ernest dialogues, now we have the radio. , .. We would love the broadcasts to be larger.



Volume XXXVIII. No. 3 MELBOURNE, MARCH, 1955 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

God's Solution for the Formosa Problem

VERY great prominence has been given in the world's press and radio broadcasts to the Formosa problem. So important a trouble-spot has this locality become, that the greatest of the world's statesmen, representing the biggest and most powerful of the nations today, are engaged in conferences and deliberations of various kinds to try and find a peaceful solution to this problem which is readily acknowledged as a grave menace to world peace, and obviously, to earnest thinkers, world civilization.

It is not necessary to go into details of how the Formosa problem developed ; anyone who takes a passing interest in the headlines of the press knows that the Chinese Communists, who control the mainland of China today, have vowed that they will conquer Formosa, the last stronghold of the former Nationalist Government of China. On the other hand, the United States of America in particular, and other nations as well, feel that the Communists have already swallowed up far too many countries and brought the inhabitants of those lands under strict control. Therefore, the President of the United States and the government of that great nation behind him, say—So far and no farther, to the Communists on the mainland of China. From the standpoint of natural, worldly men, we can well understand the policy of the United States, when the leaders of that country feel they are standing for the freedom of other nations as well as themselves, in their decision to defend Formosa.

If the Communists of the China mainland persist in their vow to conquer Formosa, all thinking people well know that a major conflict could result in a very short time, and which could develop into another global war, which the statesmen of the world are rightly seeking to avoid with all the diplomacy at their command.

However, looking at the Formosa problem from another angle, all observant people know that this is just one of a continuous string of world incidents which flare up from time to time in various parts of the earth. Following the close of the Second World War, Berlin was the main danger spot, and it seemed impossible for the powers to avoid a conflict there ; then, of course, Korea was the centre of an actual conflict for years and which was limited in its scope only by the slightest margin; more recently, Indo-China was the trouble-spot and which was relieved by a compromise on the part of the anti-communist governments and now the problem area is Formosa.

Any of these trouble-spots could have produced a major conflict but for one important thing. Many onlookers have recognised the able administration and careful tolerance of various leaders in the troubled areas and have given them the credit of preserving peace, or mainly peace. Men of ability who have assisted in this way are to be appreciated and commended, but the one important thing that has enabled a conflict between the great powers to be avoided, in recent years, is the fact that in God's Plan of the Ages, His time for such an upheaval has not arrived.

Some people may say, The main cause of the First World War was the aggression of the German Kaiser, and that which produced the Second World War was the ambition of Hitler for world power. While this is true to a certain extent, yet the main reason that there have been two World Wars, is because God's Plan can be carried forward by their permission, and men like the German Kaiser, Hitler, Mussolini and others are allowed to use their ambitions, even in aggressive wars, when God sees that such conflicts will serve His purposes and ultimately bring honour to His name.

In Psalm 76:10 we read—"The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." How comforting and consoling it is to those who love the Lord and His Word to know that any conflict of the nations can take place only by the Lord's permission; and when God does permit such things, even the wrath of men will work out His plans, and He will restrain that which cannot be turned to good account.

It is helpful, also, to remember that the present generation is not responsible for all that takes place in the world today. We read in Jeremiah 31:29—"The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." From Numbers 14:18 we also read--"The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." So we have in the world today the accumulation, so to speak, of generations of "sowing to the wind," and the Formosa problem is an example of the complications which arise amongst those who are to "reap the whirlwind."

What, then, is the solution, God's solution, for this trouble-spot of Formosa ? Is it that the American 7th Fleet is the answer—to protect this island from invasion? God could, and may use that fleet to work out His purpose, but we could not agree that any armed force, however great, is the solution for any of earth's problems. God's solution for the Formosa problem is the same as His solution for every other international, and national, problem, and that is the Kingdom of Christ.

But how will Christ's Kingdom solve earth's problems? It will solve them by taking over earth's management ! We often see a notice in business premises — "Under New Management"—and the New Management of earth's affairs is certainly God's solution, the only solution, for man's mismanagement of this world's affairs for the past nearly 6,000 years.

Reviewing the history of the human race, we see how mankind, in the persons of our first parents, took themselves out of God's care and protection, when they disobeyed their Creator. God, in His wisdom, allowed mankind to taste the fruits of their own action, their own disobedience ; as though He said, See how you can manage the world in your own way, and for about 6,000 years generation after generation has been learning the hard way, that "the wages of sin is death." What we see in the world, with the Formosa and other great international problems on hand, is the result of man's mismanagement.

How different it would have been had the human family remained obedient to God—with His protection and guidance over all of earth's affairs, and every member of the human race living on in perfect health forever. There would have been no Formosan problem, or any other problems to mar the perfect harmony and peace amongst the human family.

Does it surprise us, however, to know that God purposes to restore the human race to what might have been, if sin and death had not entered in? The Apostle Paul explains this in Hebrews 2. Paul is here quoting from Psalm 8:4-6 where the original perfection of man in the Garden of Eden is described,—"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him." Then, coming down to his own day and looking upon the fallen state of man, the Apostle continues in Heb. 2:8—"But now we see not yet all things put under him (under man)." No, indeed ; man is not yet fit to have control of earth's affairs ; he is fallen, and under sentence of death. But, says Paul, what we do see, or behold in God's plan, is—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels (the same nature as Adam in the beginning) for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour ; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

This is the most important turning point, so to speak, in the history of mankind; this is God's solution for the unsatisfactory state of , fallen man, because, "Jesus, by the grace of God tasted death for every man," so that all the human family may be fully redeemed from death and the power of death, in due time, if they obey the laws of Christ's Kingdom.

However, how do we understand the statement from the Psalmist—"The wrath of man shall praise thee"? Many people may say, How could such a terrible thing as war, the outcome of the wrath of man, praise God? We can think of many ways in which good may come to people, who, humiliated and suffering as a result of war, may learn the full lesson that of themselves they can do nothing, and must turn to God for help and lasting salvation. Also for those who have died as the result of war, whether soldiers or civilians, the resurrection to so much better conditions — to peace and happiness in the Kingdom—in contrast to the strife and tumult of man's inhumanity to man, will indeed bring lasting praise to God. And mankind, looking back upon the chaos and ruin that the wrath of man produced (the memory of such an unhappy state), will no doubt provoke such a dislike for the sinfulness of sin, that the majority of mankind will never wish to taste the sour grape again. How encouraging are the words of Jer. 31:29, when the Kingdom blessings are benefiting all mankind "They shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." No, things will be different then.

How many people today have their teeth set on edge, not only by inheriting life's effects of the sour grape eaten by their forefathers, but also by the wrong-doing, or wilfulness of children and others, and also by their own personal shortcomings. Even the Lord's people to some extent have their teeth set on edge at times ; they feel the weights and pressure of this "present evil world," but how favoured they are in comparison with the world at large. They know the solution for all earth's problems is bound up in the Kingdom to come, and better still, they know and feel assured that

all their personal problems and difficulties are solved as they commit their way, their whole lives, into the hands of their Lord now, in full faith and trust.

How beautifully the Apostle states the matter in Heb. 6:18—"We have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." This, then, is the solution for all the trying experiences of God's people—fleeing to the Lord for His refuge—for all things that would "set their teeth on edge." In Psa. 91:1, 2 we have

this happy condition of the Lord's people shown also,—“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress ; my God ; in him will I trust.”

We note also, from Heb. 6, that those who have fled to the Lord for refuge at this time, also “lay hold upon the hope set before them,” Which is the heavenly hope of joint-heirship with Christ, as Paul goes on to declare—"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus."

Likewise, in Heb. 2:10, 11, after explaining the wonderful hope for the world of mankind returning to the control of the earth, when “all things are put under man,” the Apostle Paul goes on to explain the greater and more excellent glory to which the “many sons” of the Gospel Age are called. It seems that Paul could not refrain from leading on to this highest of all subjects of the high calling, almost every time he dealt with the hope for the world at large. “For it became him (God), for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.”

Surely the knowledge of God's wonderful plan for the whole world, now “groaning and travailing in pain,” with their “teeth set on edge,” is intended to have the same effect upon us as it had upon the Apostle—to draw us fully and wholeheartedly to the Lord, that we may delight to serve Him now, yielding ourselves fully to His service, if haply we may prove faithful unto death, by the Lord's grace. Then will follow, in association with Christ, the glorious Kingdom work of lifting mankind up to perfection on the restored earth, when—"They shall say no more, The fathers have eaten the sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

What a privilege it is for God's people to know assuredly, that God's solution for the Formosa problem, and every other problem of earth, will be fully adequate, and highly satisfactory for the lasting peace and happiness of the human family, or as many of mankind as will gladly co-operate in the Kingdom laws for their eternal welfare.

The island of Formosa may, or may not be invaded ; the 7th Fleet of America may, or may not come into action, but God's Plan for the deliverance of mankind from their fallen state does not take into account the insignificant proposals of men; God will use even the wrath of man to praise Him, to work out His purposes, and the remainder of the wrath He will restrain. There must be a complete overthrow of all man's plans and governments, to make way for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom. How clearly did the Psalmist describe the Lord's hand in world affairs to accomplish His purposes—"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved ; he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth ; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder ; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God ; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psa. 46:6, 8-10.)

Also from the prophet Haggai we read in symbolic terms of the passing of this present order, and the setting up of Christ's Kingdom —"For thus saith the Lord of hosts ; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:6, 7.) What a blessing to know “the desire of all nations shall come,” and all mankind worthy of life will praise and thank the Lord for the great redemption and salvation from the curse of sin and death, all made possible through the sacrifice of God's dear Son. What a joy it will be for the faithful followers of Christ to be associated in the grand work of the kingdom, because they willingly walk in the steps of the Master during the present life.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The friends of the Adelaide Class wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., commencing on Good Friday, 8th April, and continuing till Easter Monday evening, 11th April. The assemblies will be held in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend this Convention. Further information is obtainable from the secretary — Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

Notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been compiled by one of our brethren, and copies are available free from this office.

Passover Memorial, 1955.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 5th of April; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by the true followers of the Master.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by the middle of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.30 p.m., at Stow Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Literary Institute (upstairs), 547 Hay Street, Perth.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Study on Rom. 5:12-21

THE difficulty which some have in understanding this Scripture may probably arise from the fact that they have failed to notice that verses 13-17 are parenthetic, and that the main line of the Apostle's argument passes from verse 12 to verse 18, irrespective of the parentheses, which is introduced to offset a misapprehension on the part of the Jews to the effect that their law covenant conflicted with the gospel of Christ, of which Paul was a minister. It was difficult for the Jews to accept the fact that there was now no difference between Jew and Gentile, but that "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."—Rom. 10:12.

In verses 12, 18-21, the Apostle is showing that by one man sin entered the world, and death as the penalty for sin; and that this sentence of death passed upon all men, because all had sinned—not all individually, but as represented in Adam, in whose loins we all were. "Therefore," he adds, verse 18, "as by the offence of one (Adam) sentence came upon all men by condemnation; even so (by the same law of heredity) by the righteousness of one (of one who gave His life a ransom), the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many (all of the race who will accept it) be made righteous.

In other words, Adam, the head or progenitor of the entire human race, could only bequeath to his posterity the remainder of the ever declining inheritance which he himself possessed, namely, a spark of life under condemnation to death ; but our Lord Jesus, by the payment of the penalty upon Adam, thereby gained the legal right to restore him to life, and in so doing gained the right also to restore all his posterity. And when the "appointed time" for thus restoring life to all the race has come, He, instead of Adam, will be the father, life-giver, or head of the new race, as it is written, "He shall be called the everlasting Father." (Isa. 9 :6.) And the birthright of the race under this head, Christ, unlike that under the first head, Adam, will be life instead of death. And that birthright can never be taken away unless forfeited by individual, wilful transgression against the known righteous law of God, with full ability to keep it.

Thus we see that the Apostle's argument is to prove that by the law of legal heredity the race which, by the working of this law, inherited death from its first head, Adam, will by the same law inherit life from its second head or regenerator, Christ, and that the remedy is co-extensive with the curse. This being the substance of his argument, it is, of course, presumable that his parenthetic remarks are not in opposition to, but in harmony with it. Thus we read:

Verse 13: "For until (previous to) the law (of Moses and the law covenant with Israel) sin was in the world ; but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Consequently there must have been a law, and a covenant based upon that law, previous to the law of Moses. What law was that? It was the law of God originally inscribed, not upon tables of stone, but upon the heart of the first perfect man, and which was gradually more or less effaced in his posterity, because they did not like to retain a knowledge of it. (Rom. 1:28.) That law, whether ignored or recognised, has always been in the world, and sin against that law has always been imputed to men.

Verse 14: "Nevertheless (although the Mosaic law had not yet come, to revive in the Jews the knowledge of God), death reigned from Adam to Moses (just the same), even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression (i.e., to a degree wilfully ; for it reigned over infants as well as over those capable of personal sin), who is the figure (type) of him that was to come (of Christ, the second head of the race)." Thus it is manifest that all mankind were born under original law, the authority of which was never disannulled, and under which all were condemned representatively in Adam, the first head of the race, but who, thank God, in this office of headship was a type of a second head, through which our deliverance should come.

Verse 15: "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. (The results of the offence and the free gift are entirely different.) For if through the offence of one (Adam), many be dead (under the condemnation of death) much more the grace of God, and the gift (of life) by grace (divine favour), hath abounded unto many." From the one head we inherit death ; from the other, the regenerator, we shall inherit life.

Verse 16: "And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift ; for the sentence was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is (the forgiveness) of many offences, unto justification." Note the contrast of the one and the many here, the object of which is to increase our estimation of the value of the free gift.

Verse 17: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by (that) one (Adam), much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness (the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by faith) shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Thus by these parenthetic remarks, which are seen to be in perfect harmony with the main argument, the Jews were shown that their law covenant did not in the least interfere with the original sentence of death of the entire race (all in Adam), nor with the consequent gracious provision of life for all mankind, through Christ, and not for the Jews alone.

Love As Brethren.

LOVE for the brethren is set forth in the Scriptures as one of the indisputable evidences of our having attained membership in the body of Christ. This love may be of varying degrees, but it must be ours in some degree if we are the Lord's for "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9.)

But this flame of sacred love for the brethren kindled in our hearts is not sufficient ; it must blaze, burn, and produce in us not merely a warmth of love, but a consuming love — love which will not only overlook various weaknesses and imperfections in the brotherhood, and will carefully note every good quality, but love which is ready to lay down life on behalf of the brethren because they belong to Christ, because they are of His consecrated ones, however much they may need to strive against sin and weaknesses.

The Gospel message fails to attract many of the noblest, least-fallen members of the race because they have a self-satisfied feeling, and do not realise their need of a Saviour, but think of Him as necessary only to the more degraded of the race. On the contrary, the less known, more depraved, realising to some extent their miserable condition, are more likely than others to respond to the invitation—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) The sin-sick and heavy-laden, therefore, constitute the majority of true believers. And in harmony with this we have the words of the Scripture that not many wise, not many noble, not many learned, not many great according to the flesh have been called of God to the privileges of His Church, the elect class. Consequently, when any of the more noble minded or better educated or more talented accept the Lord's grace, it becomes somewhat of a trial to them to find amongst those whom they must recognise as brethren (because of faith in Christ and desire for the higher things) some of the ignoble, whose company and fellowship, according to the flesh, they would have scorned. This is another reason why not many great, wise, learned, and noble will not make their calling and election sure— many such will allow their fleshly instincts to govern, and repudiating the humblest member of the body of Christ, they are to that extent repudiating the Head, who has accepted that member, and who demands of all who would be His members that they shall love one another as He loved them.

True, the Lord does not say that we should love all the brethren with the same degree or intensity of love ; on the contrary, He showed by His own conduct that we may indeed more highly esteem those who have most of His spirit, those whose hearts are most in accord with the divine will. Thus our Lord, while He loved all of His disciples, had some special favourites, Peter, James and John. His special love for these was doubtless because of their special interest and zeal for Him and for the cause He served. So, therefore, may we, followers in the footsteps of Jesus, have special love for all who are specially zealous and true hearted. But this love ignores wealth, education, earthly standing — ignores the flesh, and takes cognizance of the spirit, the will, the heart.

Tested by this love for the brethren, many who had a loving respect for the Lord as their Redeemer have apparently hindered their own spiritual development, slackened in their race for the prize—running the risk of losing the great reward because of their failure to come up to this divine requirement, "Love as brethren." The proper course for all such is to think of the matter soberly from the Scriptural standpoint, and to decide that the humility requisite to an acceptance of some of the naturally less noble is undoubtedly a necessary element of character for them to develop.

Amongst the fruits of the spirit, the Apostle names meekness. The proud are not in the condition of heart for the Kingdom and the higher stations of life, intellectually, morally and socially, are unfavourable to meekness, humility and long - suffering, with the weaknesses and failures of others. We see, then, that while the weaker brethren, the naturally more impaired, have more to struggle against, more to overcome in one sense of the word, the others of more noble birth and talents have a harder battle along other lines. Let both classes be encouraged, for although the lessons they must learn are considerably different, the results to be obtained are the same, and the instructor, the great Teacher, is the same. He is able to assist the ignoble to gradually overcome their natural meanness and depravity, and to war more and more a good warfare in His name and by His assistance, and He is likewise able to assist the more noble minded to exercise patience, sympathy, toward the less reputable. They have an illustration in Himself. He who was rich in every sense of the word and beyond all compare, perfect in every element of character, talented, noble — He for our sakes became poor, He humbled Himself on our behalf, He took the bondman's place, He suffered in our stead, He died the just for the unjust. He has therefore set us an example that we may walk in His steps, and the more nobility we may have, naturally the more readily we shall be able to do this, and to appreciate and exercise the fruits of the spirit, and grow up more and more accordingly, in sympathy, in likeness to Him.

Whatever we may do for any member of the body of Christ, for any consecrated believer, the Lord tells us He will esteem as though it were done unto Him. Hence, as it would be our duty and our privilege and our joy to lay down our lives in the service of the Lord, we must attain to such a love for the brethren, because they are His, that we will delight to lay down our lives for them as a means of demonstrating to the Lord our loyalty to Him and His cause.

This does not necessarily mean the laying down of physical strength and health and life in the physical services and ministries to the brethren, though these may be and are, in many instances, very profitable. It is not according to the flesh that the Lord's followers are brethren, but according to the spirit, and hence the injunction to lay down our lives for the brethren would more particularly signify the laying down of our physical health, knowledge, talents, and means in the service of the spiritual interests of the Lord's people. As, for instance, in the preaching of the Truth, if there be sacrifices or self-denials, loss of strength, etc., in connection with this service, it is the laying down of that much of one's life for the brethren, for the fellow-members of the body of Christ.

These brethren for whom we are to lay down our lives are not merely those who are with us in fellowship of spirit, in the enjoyment of Present Truth. Perhaps we may have fewer opportunities for laying down our lives for such than for other brethren. For instance, there are brethren, true believers in the Lord, truly consecrated to Him, who are yet in Babylon—in bondage, in darkness. These especially need that we should devote some of our time or influence or means for their aid, for their deliverance. True, the Lord Himself could deliver them, because all things are in His power, including all the gold and silver and the cattle upon a thousand hills. But He has graciously left opportunities for us, that we may use the time, talents and means put within our control, and which we have consecrated to His service. How much it would be to our disadvantage were we so situated that we had no opportunities for exercising these talents in the service of our King; how much we would miss of the spiritual exercise and the growth which this exercise assures. God, therefore, has left open before us doors of opportunity for service to the brethren, and the degree of our love for the brethren is measured in His sight by the zeal which we endeavour to use the talents in our control.— Let this thought of our love, zeal and devotion for the brethren, which testify to the Lord our love and zeal for Himself, nerve us to greater energy and faithfulness in His joyful service.

As we grow in grace and knowledge—as the love that is of God, that is inspired by His spirit, grows in our hearts and fills us, being “shed abroad in our hearts” (Rom. 5:5)—we are led to still wider love—beyond the household of faith, for whom we delight to lay down our lives. We learn to love all mankind, yea, even those who misunderstand us, and are therefore our enemies — we learn to love all these as brethren. Not as brethren in Christ --that is a very special, very dear relationship—but we learn to love them as brethren, of the one family of Adam, redeemed by Jesus, and hence by purchase the family of the second Adam.

As we grow in grace and knowledge, we are able more clearly day by day, year by year, to appreciate the fact that the whole world was born under sin and are children of wrath, blinded by ignorance and superstition, mentally and physically unbalanced through the fall, and really in a terrible state, as the Apostle declares, a “groaning creation.”

In proportion as we are able to take God's standpoint in looking at the poor, fallen world, we are able to sympathise with them, even as the Scriptures declare that God looked down, and heard the groans of the prisoners —prisoners of sin, in captivity to death, going down to the tomb. (Psa. 102:19, 20.) We realise that they were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, that in sin their mother conceived them; that, in addition to this, their associations with evil have all tended to drag them downward, and that, furthermore, Satan, the great adversary, a wily foe to our race, is continually exerting his powers to blind the minds of their understanding and to misrepresent the divine character and plan.

With all this before our minds, what sympathy it gives us for our brothers according to the flesh, sinners, strangers, aliens, foreigners, yet redeemed, and in God's gracious plan en route for the glorious blessings of the Millennial Age. We say to ourselves, if God so loved these, if Christ died for them as well as for us, why should not we be very merciful, very compassionate, very sympathetic with them, and do all in our power to assist them out of darkness into God's marvellous light, out of the ways of sin into the ways of righteousness, out of bondage to Satan into the liberty wherewith God has made us free—the liberty of the sons of God, which He has promised shall be available to all peoples, kindreds, nations, and tongues in the sweet by-and by.

The Glad New Time.

There are coming changes great
In the glad new time;

Trust in God, and watch and wait
For the glad new time;

Mountain fears shall prostrate lie,
Vales of hope be lifted high,
Trembling earth embrace the sky,
In the glad new time.

There shall meet the great and small
In the glad new time;

Love shall be the Lord of all
From the mountains shall descend
Hearts of old that could not bend,
And the poor shall have a friend
In the glad new time.

We shall lift oppressions' load
In the glad new time;

We shall bear the cross of God
In the glad new time;

We shall seek the valleys deep
Where the weary strive or sleep,
And convey them up the steep
To the grand new time.

There shall be a joy in heaven
In the glad new time;

And God's resting shall he given
In the glad new time;

For His Sabbath shall be found
When the skies have touch'd the ground,
And the valleys shall resound
With the glad new time.

These lines were by George Matheson, who, during his college career, suddenly became blind; he, however, studied on, and became a distinguished Scottish preacher. He also wrote the beautiful hymn "O love that will not let me go."

Question Box.

Question: Please explain Phil. 1:21-24. “To die is gain . . . to depart and to be with Christ which is far better,” if the Apostle did not expect to receive his reward at death.

Answer: The Apostle does not imply that he could be present with the Lord before the resurrection. He makes no dogmatic statement regarding the condition of those who have died in faith ; he only expresses his wish. In 2 Cor.

5:4 we read, “We that are in this body do groan, being burdened ; not for that we would be unclothed (in the state of death), but clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” There were three possible conditions : (1) to remain in the earthly tabernacle, (2) to be unclothed, (3) to receive his heavenly garment. The last he could only receive in “that day”—the day of the Lord (2 Tim. 4:8).

We should remember that death is a profound sleep. The dead are unconscious of the lapse of time ; the moment of awaking will seem to be that which immediately succeeds death, although centuries intervene.

The word “depart” in Phil. 1:21-24 is not a correct translation of the Greek. In Luke 12:36 the same word is rendered “return,” but neither does “return” express the meaning of *anulusai*. The literal translation is “the loosing again.” St. Paul was in a strait betwixt two things—whether to live or to die. Both had advantages, and he did not know which he would rather choose but to be “loosed again” from the prison-house of death by the Lord at His second coming was indeed far better than either of these two things, and this is what the Apostle “earnestly desired” above all else.

Question: “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.”—Rom. 8:37. How is it possible for one to be “more than a conqueror” in the good fight of faith?

Answer: In the Divine arrangements there are two divisions of the one spiritual class in process of development throughout the Christian era, from the time of the Lord Jesus’ first advent down to the time of His second coming. These two divisions are mentioned in Rev. 7. One of these is represented as being “a great multitude, which no man could number,” and they are before the throne of God and the Lamb. The other division are the 144,000 that were sealed, and these are on the throne of God and the Lamb, as was promised by the Lord Jesus (Rev. 3:21, 22). Those who voluntarily sacrifice and cheerfully endure the hardships of the Christian course, as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, overcoming the foes of righteousness, are, indeed, “conquerors,” and not only so, in the sense of being victors, but also in the sense of being crowned as such. The great company before the Throne will be conquerors likewise, but they will not receive the crown of life, because they did not overcome in the way the 144,000 did. These, therefore, will be the servants who will minister before the Throne. The Kingly conquerors will be honoured more than the mere conquerors.

Question: Please explain Luke 22:31, 32. Are we to understand that Peter was not converted at this time ? If so, what was the significance of his having left all to follow the Lord?

Answer: Peter was one of the most prominent and active of the Apostles, and by his zeal and energy he naturally became a leading one, as he himself probably realised in a measure, and the others doubtless conceded. In the 24th verse of this chapter is set forth that the Apostles strove among themselves, as to which of them should be accounted the greatest. Peter, no doubt, took a leading part in this altercation. Because of this disposition of self-exaltation he was especially exposed to the attacks of the Adversary, and, therefore, the Lord Jesus prayed for him that he might be delivered from the snares of Satan. Knowing that His prayer would be answered, He could say to Peter: “When thou art converted (from this disposition of desiring prominence and exaltation over others of the Apostles, to a condition of humility and meekness, then) strengthen thy brethren.”



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Christ Our Passover Lamb.

WE meet on the anniversary of our Lord's death in accordance with His request that we should observe this memorial of His sacrifice for us and for all mankind. For 3 years Jesus laid down His life in bearing witness to the Truth. The prophet Isaiah had foretold that He would "pour out His soul unto death ; His soul would be made an offering for sin ; He would bear our griefs He would be wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace would be upon Him, and as a result of His stripes we would be healed."

How great was the love of God which prompted Him to send His well-beloved and only-begotten Son to be man's Redeemer. What a debt of gratitude we owe to Him who so loved us even while we were yet sinners that He gave the dearest treasure of His heart in order to effect our deliverance from sin and death. Do not our hearts go out in thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father, and also to our Lord and Saviour, as we think of all that has been done for us, and will yet be done for the whole family of Adam in due time, as the result of the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ, begun at Jordan and completed at Calvary.

It is, then, with reverence before God, with humility as we realise our unworthiness by nature, and yet with deep gratitude and love in our hearts that we gather according to our Saviour's request to keep the Memorial in remembrance of Him.

The great men of this world are remembered because of some mighty deeds they have done. Great poets, writers, musicians, orators, doctors and soldiers, etc., are remembered because of their accomplishments. The thing which our Lord wished us to remember particularly concerning Himself, however, was His death. This does not mean, of course, that we will forget the life of Jesus, His teachings, His wonderful words of life, His acts of miracle and graciousness. No, but the Lord would have us realise fully the importance and value of His sacrificial death.

If Jesus had not died as our Ransom-price, we would not be able to derive any lasting benefit from His teachings, because we would still be under the sentence of death which rested upon us all in Adam. If Jesus had not died, there could be no hope of life for us or for mankind in general. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14:6.) This agrees also with Peter's inspired words on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 4 :12.)

When Jesus presented Himself to God at Jordan, being baptised by John, there the redemption price for the sin of the world was laid upon the altar. It was revealed to John that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and therefore John was able to say, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." But in order to take away the sin of the world our Lord must die, as He Himself said : "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20 :28.)

The types and shadows of the Law Dispensation all pointed to the necessity for the sacrificial death of the One who would be the world's Redeemer. The killing of the Passover lamb, the sprinkling of its blood on the houses of Israel, the eating of its flesh, the sparing alive of the firstborn of Israel and the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt was all arranged by God to illustrate that the salvation of the church during this age, and the deliverance of the whole world of mankind in the next age, was dependent upon the fulfilment of our Lord's covenant of sacrifice even unto death.

In our studies on this matter we see that the Passover lamb represents our Lord Jesus. This is clearly shown by Paul's

reference to it in 1 Cor. 5 :7. He says : “Christ our Passover (Lamb) is slain for us ; therefore, let us keep the feast.” We see how important it was for all the families of Israel to have the blood sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels of their houses. Any Israelite who did not respect the divine command, and place the blood marks upon the front of his door would suffer the loss of his firstborn in the same manner as the Egyptians. It was the sprinkled blood which distinguished between those who were the Lord’s people and those who were not His people.

What does this signify to spiritual Israel? Surely, the sprinkling of the blood symbolises an acknowledgment of faith in the merit of our Lord Jesus’ sacrifice as our Passover Lamb. By faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, believers have their sins forgiven and are reckoned as having passed from death unto life.

The flesh of the lamb which the Jews were to eat, represented the humanity of Jesus, His perfect human nature given for us. Jesus said : “My flesh I give for the life of the world,” and “except ye eat the flesh ‘of the son of man, ye have no life in you.” (John 6:51, 53.)

The eating of the lamb, therefore, represents how the believer is to feed upon the righteousness of Christ and so grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Also, the unleavened bread which the Jews ate with the lamb would represent the precious promises and truths by means of which the spiritual life of the antitypical Israelite is nourished. The lamb must be roasted with fire ; this would typify the fiery trials—the intense sufferings of Christ—and we are to walk in His steps, to share His sufferings. The bitter herbs would represent the bitter experiences of life which serve to give us an appetite for the spiritual things.

In the type the lamb was eaten in haste, with girded loins, and feet shod, and with a staff in hand, indicating that the antitypical Israelites were to be as pilgrims and strangers in this world, looking and waiting for the promised deliverance from this present evil world.

The Scriptures call the church of Christ, “the church of the firstborns,” and “the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb.” (Heb. 12:23; Rev. 14 :4.) These expressions imply that ultimately there will be others of God’s family later born ; they imply after-fruits. Many Christian people have overlooked the significance of these Scriptures, and have come to believe that only those to be saved are designated in the Bible as the first-fruits—that there will be no after-fruits.

But the Passover type indicates that it was God’s purpose to save all Israelites. We see in our studies that the nation of Israel represented all of mankind that will ever come into harmony with God and be granted everlasting life in the Land of Promise. The type shows that there were two Passovers—the one in which only the firstborns were passed over, and another one at the Red Sea when, by divine power, the whole nation of Israel was miraculously delivered and led across the Sea.

We are to celebrate the antitype of the passing over of the firstborns of Israel in the land of Egypt. Only the firstborn ones of Israel were endangered on that night in Egypt, though the deliverance of the entire nation depended upon the salvation, the passing over, of those firstborns. So, now, only the firstborns, the sons of God from the human plane, the Church of Christ, are being passed over during this night of the Gospel Age ; only these are in danger of the destroying angel.

The Church of the firstborns are those of mankind who, in advance of the remainder of the race, have had the eyes of their understanding opened to a realisation of their condition of bondage and their need of deliverance, and to God’s willingness to fulfil to them all of His good promises. They are such as have responded to the grace of God, have made a full consecration of themselves to Him and His service, and in return have been begotten of the holy spirit. With these, it is a matter of utmost importance that they should remain in the Household of Faith—behind the blood of sprinkling. For this class to go forth from under the blood would imply a disregard of divine mercy. It would signify that they were doing despite to divine goodness. How we, as footstep followers of Christ need to rightly value our privileges as members of His body. Just as Noah and his family were saved from the flood only by entering into and remaining in the ark, so we are safe only as we abide in Christ by faith and obedience.

We notice that our Lord fully identified Himself with the Passover lamb. On the night of His betrayal, just preceding His crucifixion, He gathered His disciples in the upper room, saying, “With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer ; For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.” The Master realised that He had come to the end of the way. On another occasion He said, “I have a baptism to be baptised with and how am I straitened until it be accomplished.” The Lord knew that His sacrifice must be faithfully carried out, even unto death, and He must rise again from the dead and ascend to the Father’s right hand before the benefits of His great sacrifice could begin to flow out toward His beloved followers on earth. No wonder the Saviour, with a great loving heart, earnestly desired to eat this last Passover before He suffered. The type was about to merge into its antitype ; the real Passover Lamb was about to be slain, and the long promised blessing of the Father would soon

begin to reach the little band of disciples, refreshing their hearts with its Pentecostal influence of love and joy and peace. And so, we notice, that as soon as the requirements of the Law were met, by the eating of the lamb with unleavened bread, our Lord instituted a new memorial upon the old foundation, saying, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

We cast our minds back to the occasion of that first Memorial ; the blessing of the bread and of the cup, the fruit of the vine; and our Lord's declaration that these represented His broken body and shed blood, and that all His followers should participate, not only feeding upon Him, but being broken with Him; not only partaking of the merit of His blood, His sacrifice, but also laying down their lives in His service, in co-operating with Him in every and in any manner, that they might later share all His honor and glory in the Kingdom. How precious to us are these grand and wonderful truths.

How fitting is this symbol which our Lord left for us to keep. In giving to His disciples the unleavened bread as a memorial, Jesus said : "Take, eat ; this is my body." The unleavened (pure, unfermented) bread, represents the spotless, sinless flesh of our Lord, His perfect human nature of which we may eat and gain life. (John 6:33, 35, 51.)

Before giving the bread to the disciples our Lord gave thanks and broke the bread ; so, we see that before we can receive the bread of life it must be broken, our Lord must die before the benefits of His sacrifice can flow out to bless and refresh and invigorate.

Along with the bread was the fruit of the vine—the cup. The Master explained that it represented His blood—"The blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins." What a reminder this is of the need of the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order that we, and ultimately all the willing and obedient of mankind may be delivered from sin and death.

By faith, then, we partake both of the "bread," the broken body of our Lord, and also of the "cup," the blood, the sacrificed life. In addition to this, the holy spirit through the writings of the Apostle has shown us that there is for us a deeper significance in this Memorial. Consecrated believers who eat and drink, i.e., partake of the merits of our Saviour's sacrifice, are counted in with Him as "members" of His body. We are being broken together with Him, our lives are sacrificed in His service. By God's grace and under the supervision of our Lord and Head, and by the help and assistance of His holy spirit, the true church, the body members of Christ all down the Gospel Age, have been counted in as a part of His sacrifice. In 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, the Apostle explains this matter.

How important it is that we see clearly both aspects of this Memorial. It is essential first of all, that we should see our justification through our faith in and acceptance of Christ as our Saviour from sin and death. Then, it is proper that we should realise that the entire Christ, the whole consecrated and anointed company, is from the divine standpoint, a composite body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head (1 Cor. 12:12-14), and that this body, this church as a whole, must be broken. We see how our Lord Jesus must be broken before we, His body members, could receive the benefits of His sacrifice; and so also the whole Christ, Head and Body, must be broken before the benefits of the complete sacrifice of the Christ can begin to flow out to mankind, under the terms of the New Covenant.

What helpful lessons there are for us in the observance of this Memorial. As we approach the occasion with earnest hearts, prepared by prayer and meditation, we surely cannot fail to be richly blessed, and draw nearer to our Lord and to our Heavenly Father.

In the type we remember that the eating of the Passover lamb was followed by the feast of unleavened bread which lasted for seven days. The Jews were commanded to put away all leaven out of their houses ; they must have nothing leavened in their homes. This would represent how the spiritual Israelite is to feed upon the unleavened bread of truth—the precious truths and teachings of the Word of the Lord—and he must put away the leaven of the old nature, the tendencies of the flesh toward self-will, selfishness, etc. So the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Seven being the symbol of completeness, the seven days feast of unleavened bread would typify the complete feast of the Christian. The feast begins when we come to the Lord in full consecration, and it continues right throughout our earthly way, until we finish our course in death. We are to feed daily and continually upon the pure truths of the Word of the Lord, and so grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

The question arises as to who may partake of the Memorial. In the type it was only the circumcised who could partake of the Passover lamb. So, it is appropriate that those professing full consecration of heart to the Lord should partake of the emblems. It is a matter for each one to decide for himself ; each should ask himself — have I fully accepted Christ as my Saviour from sin, and have I fully given my heart to Him in consecration. Those who have taken these steps will surely be glad to observe this Memorial, in harmony with the Lord's request, "Do this in remembrance of me."

We notice that in the Master's case, the trials seemed to be more severe and intense as He got nearer the end of the way. We do well also to remember His words—"The servant is not above his Master." Let us not "think it strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try us," but let us remember that we are called to suffer for righteousness sake. "If we suffer we shall also reign with Him." "He that endureth unto the end the same shall be saved."

It is helpful for us to consider the manner in which our Lord met the difficulties and trials which came to Him as a result of His faithfulness to the will of God. His faith stood the test of all those trying hours which He knew to be so near the time of His apprehension and death. The fact that He tendered thanks to the Father for the bread and cup is indicative of a joyful acquiescence in all the sufferings through which the Father permitted Him to pass. Already he was satisfied with the Father's arrangement. In line with this spirit was the singing of a hymn as they parted, a hymn of praise no doubt, thanksgiving to the Father that His course on earth was so nearly finished, and that He had found, thus far, grace sufficient for His need.

In considering the events of those solemn hours which followed the Memorial Supper, let us follow the Redeemer to Gethsemane, and behold Him, "with strong cryings and tears," praying unto Him, "who was able to save him out of death"--expressive of the Master's fear, lest in some particular He might have failed to follow out the Father's plan, and therefore, be thought unworthy of a resurrection. We note that our Lord was in some way comforted with the assurance that He had faithfully kept His consecration vow, and that He would surely have a resurrection as promised.

- We behold how calm He was thereafter when before the High Priest, Pilate and Herod, and Pilate. again, "as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not his mouth"—in self defence. We see Him faithful, courageous to the very last, and we have His assurance that: He could have had more than twelve legions of angels for His protection.. Instead of petitioning for aid to escape His sacrifice, He petitioned for help to endure it faithfully. What a lesson is here for all His footstep followers. On the other hand, we recall that even amongst His loyal disciples, the most courageous forsook the Master and fled ; and that one of them, in his timidity, even denied his Lord.

What an occasion is this for examining our own hearts as respects the degree of our own faith, our own courage, and our willingness to suffer with Him who redeemed us. . What an opportunity is thus afforded for us to buttress the mind with the resolution that we will not deny our Master under any circumstances or conditions—that we will confess Him not only with our lips, but also by our conduct.

As each year goes by we are approaching nearer the end of our course, and the great importance of our heavenly calling, its responsibilities and privileges, should be impressed more and more upon our hearts and minds. We are living in momentous times ; all the indications point to the very near approach of the Kingdom of God, in power and glory. Soon, all opportunities to sacrifice and suffer for the cause of Christ will be forever ended, the number of God's elect will be complete, and the due time for the blessing of the world will have come. Let us, then, redeem the time, earnestly striving to make our calling and election sure. Let us walk with great carefulness, with soberness and watchfulness, yet with joy and rejoicing in our hearts, knowing that our deliverance draweth nigh ; and that if faithful unto death, we shall soon partake with our Lord and Head of the wine of joy in His Kingdom and be forever with Him.

The Cup my Father pours
Shall I not drink ?

And precious, holy thoughts
Shall I not think ?

And if His Love doth send
Less joy than pain,

And if all my friends forsake,
Shall I complain ?

If foes misrepresent
And work me woes,

Shall I not rest content
Since Father knows ?

If where once friend
I had I Judas find,

Still Jesus holds me in
His love entwined.

He knows the love and loss
Of faithless friend;

He'll know each step
I take Unto the end.

His love enfolds me fast—I
cannot fall.

The Cup my Father pours—
I drink it all.

—Hattie O. Henderson.

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

John the Baptist's Ministry

(Luke 3:15, 22.)

“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”—John 1:29.

SEVERAL points in this familiar narrative are worthy of special notice—(1) The deep and wide influence of John's preaching. The prepared instruments of the Lord are powerful in His hand. The whole nation was aroused, the multitudes were baptised with the baptism of repentance (Mark 1:4, 5) and the expectation of the immediate advent of the Messiah was everywhere manifest.

(2) The humility and sincerity of John, which was not changed in the least by the popular favour, is seen in his denial of the suggestion that he might be the Messiah. Had he made the claim, how readily would the people have accepted it! But this prepared vessel of the Lord was so established in righteousness as to be superior to any such temptation.

In disclaiming this honour for himself, John compared his own work and the work of the coming Messiah, and

showed them the difference. Referring to himself, he claimed great inferiority. And his own work he described as only a preparatory work: “I indeed baptise you with water, but . . . he shall baptise you with the holy spirit and with fire.”

It is very manifest that all of the multitudes who were baptised with water were not baptised with the holy spirit. The baptism of the holy spirit came at Pentecost after the Lord was glorified, but only upon a small minority of the Jewish nation. The baptism of fire came later—in the end of the Jewish harvest (A.D. 70), when Jerusalem was destroyed and their national existence terminated in the midst of a great time of trouble. Verse 17 is in reference to the great separating work of the Jewish harvest, and the gathering of the worthy remnant into the garner of the Gospel Age, and the fiery judgments upon the unworthy chaff.

In the baptism of Jesus we see that the ordinance received a new significance. His baptism was not unto repentance; for He had no sins to repent of. “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate, from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26.) With the accustomed view of baptism, John declined to baptise Jesus in whom there was no sin; nevertheless, though he could not understand why He should desire it, John complied with His request—“Suffer it to be so now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”—Matt. 3:15.

The righteousness of God's law which could by no means clear the guilty (Exodus 34:7) without a satisfaction of the claims of justice by the sacrifice of a life for a life (Exod. 21:23; Lev. 24:17-21; Deut. 19:21), He was about to fulfil by the sacrifice of Himself. He was about to give His flesh for the life of the world—giving His life for the life of Adam, in whom we were all condemned, that as all his posterity were included in the condemnation, so they might likewise have a share in the redemption. And all who desire to follow in the footsteps of Christ must likewise present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable through Christ. Thus it becometh us (the Christ, Head and Body) to fulfil all righteousness.

With the baptism of Christ, then, the ordinance received the new signification of entire consecration to God as living sacrifices, even unto death. And in this new view of the matter some of the Jewish converts were baptised again. See the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ and His Body, the Church, contrasted in Acts 19:3, 5.

Passover Memorial, 1955.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 5th of April; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Skipper by the true followers of the Master.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.30 p.m., at Stow Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Literary Institute (upstairs), 547 Hay Street, Perth.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Freedom of Will.

THE Freedom of the Will is an expression evidently brought forward in contradiction of the thought that humanity are mere machines, acted upon by certain influences ; for instance, that God would act upon a person so as to oblige him to do, or to will, or to think in a certain way, or that Satan could control the will of anyone for evil, against his desire.

The Bible gives us to understand that when God created man, He made him in His own mental image ; that is to say, with freedom of will to choose his own course of action—ability and liberty to reach a mental decision for himself.

The Bible indicates that God similarly created all the intelligences of the spirit world —angels, cherubim, seraphim, etc., all of whom are said to be in God's image, possessing full liberty of will.

As God can choose that course or this one, so can we. We can be obedient to God or disobedient to Him, just as we will. But by reason of the fall and its curse, or penalty of death, and the blighting of human powers by the dying processes, the human will often finds itself in difficulty. The Apostle Paul says, To will is present with me, but to perform is not always possible. (Rom. 7:18.) We should will to do perfectly, although none is able to do perfectly. On the other hand, one might will to do wrong, but might be more or less hindered in executing his will. In either case, the will is free.

There is such a thing as a dominated will. By yielding their wills to occult influences, some persons are mastered by evil spirits. Such practically lose their wills, and we call them deranged, insane. It is said that more than half of all the inmates of insane asylums are there, not because of any functional derangement of the brain, but because of being possessed by evil spirits.

God's people are given to understand that the only way in which they come into relationship to God is by full submission of the will to Him. Such a submission of the will would be unwise except to the Lord ; or, in the case of minor children, to their parents, or teachers.

A child might properly reason, I have a will of my own, but I will ignore it and do the will of my parents. This is the proper attitude for a child in the hands of good intelligent parents. The child should be taught to realize that its will is uneducated, and that it should, therefore submit itself fully to its parents and look to them for guidance and direction. But every parent, while recognizing his responsibility as the supervisor of the child, should treat the child from the

standpoint of its free will, and seek to show it the reason why a matter should be thus and so, controlling it as far as possible by the intelligent exercise of its own will.

And so with those who are in the family of God. It is a primary requisite that they first submit themselves to God— give up their own wills. They are first to recognize that they are unholy, born in sin ; that they have imperfect, fallen tendencies, which if pursued, would be injurious. Therefore they should seek to make the will of the Lord their will. They should give themselves fully up to His guidance ; His will concerning them is only for their good. The Lord teaches His followers that they are to reason for themselves ; they should read between the lines in their study of the

Bible, to gain the instruction which He there furnishes. They will thus be better enabled to know His will, and will come more and more to see how much better God's will is than their own, and thus will come more fully into heart-harmony with Him, and with the Lord Jesus.

The freedom of the will is contrasted with the bondage of the flesh. We may will to go to the uttermost parts of the earth; but we may be sick, or lame, or may lack the money or the means of conveyance. While the will may be there, there is not always the power to put it into operation. So also in respect to sin and righteousness, and the will to do one or the other. Each one is hampered more or less by his own imperfections and by the imperfections of others who are under the dominion of Satan, the prince of this world. But when the will is fully yielded to God, He gives us more and more of the spirit of a sound mind—we become more conformed, from day to day, to His likeness.

Concordances

Some copies of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is 7/12/6.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages".—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

"Christ's Return".—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

Revised Standard Version Bible,-1952. Copies of this Revised Bible are available, and will be found helpful for comparison in Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50/-; in red rexine 60/-.

A New Picture Bible.—A Cambridge Bible, containing 30 coloured illustrations, with marginal references, and strong, black, cloth cover. A very good child's Bible; price 15/6.

The Mount of Olives the Kingdom of Blessing.

"And his [Jehovah S] feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."—Zechariah 14:4.

The text refers to the closing of the Day of Trouble and the manifestation of God's Power in connection with that trouble. The literal Mount of Olives may have, and probably will have, somewhat to do with the matter. It is referred to here as experiencing a great earthquake. No doubt the Israelites will be gathered at Jerusalem at this time, and no doubt the Lord's favour will be manifested to them there. This will be at the close of "Jacob's trouble," from which the Lord will be present to deliver them. Our thought is that this will be after the Church shall have passed into glory. The execution of what is here described seems to be a part of the work of the glorified Church.

We understand that the Ancient Worthies will then appear, and that God's favour will have returned to the Jews, and that Israel's temporal blessings will there begin. This would imply that the Jews will then be under the New Covenant arrangement, and hence that the Church must have been completed.

Symbolically, a mountain represents a kingdom. The Scriptures elsewhere declare that Jehovah will make the place of His feet glorious. The word "olive" always associates itself in the minds of the people of the Orient with the thought of light and nourishment. The olive oil they use regularly instead of butter. As the olive furnishes both light and food, the Mount of Olives would represent the Kingdom of God. Olive oil was poured upon the head of the Jewish kings and priests, and symbolised thus the holy spirit. God's Kingdom will be for the blessing of mankind. It will be of two phases—the heavenly and the earthly — and all people may eventually come under its blessed condition.

See "Studies in the Scriptures," Vol. 4, pp. 649-656, for further elucidation of this passage.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Life in Israel.

One of our brethren has sent along the following interesting report on life in Israel which appeared in the Geelong (Vic.) "Advertiser," towards the close of last year. Mr Murray Crawcour had returned to Geelong after several years in Israel, and spoke at a Rotary Club luncheon ; the report is as follows :

Mr. Crawcour spent a good deal of his time overseas working on a banana plantation of a collective settlement in Israel, and spoke of the activities of the group and the problems faced, particularly in agricultural development, and the absorption of Jewish refugees from Europe.

He outlined a way of life entirely foreign to Australians, in which all workers on the settlement carried out the multifarious duties without monetary payment, and lived a simple life in simple surroundings. Each settlement was almost entirely self-contained, with every basic need supplied, thus obviating the use of money.

Crops of tobacco, bananas, vegetables, fruits, wheat, barley and sugar beet were being produced, while other activities such as dairying, beef production, poultry and mushroom cultivation were carried out on the settlement.

Most settlements commenced operations with the barest essentials, often starting by living in tents, and gradually building up their assets. One-roomed houses were established on the settlement on which Mr. Crawcour worked, with two-roomed houses, considered a luxury, in the course of construction.

All marketing receipts were banked in a central fund, from which was drawn the money to finance various development projects and purchase of farm machinery and other equipment.

Emphasising that the communal life was in no way forced upon the workers, Mr. Crawcour said that everyone was allowed to leave whenever they chose, and that because people were there of their own free will, and were almost always working for an ideal, the system of collective settlements in Israel was a success, and helping tremendously in establishing the future of the country.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The friends of the Adelaide Class wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., commencing on Good Friday, 8th April, and continuing till Easter Monday evening, 11th April. The assemblies will be held in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, Weymouth Street, Adelaide, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend this Convention. Further information is obtainable from the secretary — Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

Question Box,

Question : How could justice allow the innocent to suffer that the guilty might go free?

Answer : God did not in any way compel Jesus to become the bearer of sin. Justice could not demand that the innocent should take the place of the sinner and relieve him from the just condemnation. The Bible view would appear to be -that the Son ever delighted to enter into any project of the great Creator, and volunteered even to become flesh to become a perfect man for the purpose of yielding that perfect human nature to death as a ransom price for man.

The whole matter was thoroughly foreknown by the Heavenly Father. The Divine purpose was to have an intelligent human family to fill this earth. That intelligence must ever be exercised along right lines, in perfect loyalty to God and the principles of love and justice. Divine wisdom foresaw that the creation of such intelligence with the faculty of freewill would very generally, for lack of experience, result in sin. Instead, therefore, of producing the whole race in perfection, wisdom and love, in accord with justice, arranged a plan whereby the whole race, though still unborn, could be represented in Adam. God knew Adam would sin, and that he must consequently be condemned to death.

All Adam's posterity then are born in sin, both under sentence of death. The whole race has thus been experiencing the results of sin and disobedience to God. None of Adam's family had any choice ; they were born sinners, not through any fault of their own. It would have seemed unjust that we should have all been sentenced because of our father's fault if the matter had simply stopped there. The balancing of justice comes in when we perceive that God had arranged with Christ, the Logos, the only begotten, to have the just penalty of death paid, in order that Adam and his family might be redeemed and given an opportunity of choosing righteousness and regaining the perfect life lost by Adam. We read, in harmony with this, and according to God's plan, of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

While it was indeed a wonderful example of love, both to God and man, on the part of our dear Redeemer, the Heavenly Father has given Him a great reward, "Because he hath poured out his soul unto death," "I will divide him a portion with the great" (with Himself).— Isaiah 53:12. See also Phil. 2:6-9 (Revised), Col. 1:13-23.

No injustice was done to the Lord Jesus Christ. His was a willing sacrifice; He delighted to do the Father's will, but also, we read, "His delights were with the sons of men." He had been the Great Master Workman in preparing this earth for habitation, and also in the creation of man. He appreciated the loving wisdom in the whole arrangement. He could see that had all men been brought forth as perfect as Adam, that, like Adam, most would have sinned through lack of experience. He could see that by the plan adopted, all would have the necessary experience, and being redeemed and given a favourable opportunity of life, they will profit by the experience, and will choose righteousness and live.

Regarding the first Advent, we read that the "Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many," or, as stated 1 Tim. 2:5, 6, "a ransom for all to be testified in due time." At the second presence of Christ the object is to assist all the willing and obedient back into harmony with God and righteousness and the reward of everlasting life.

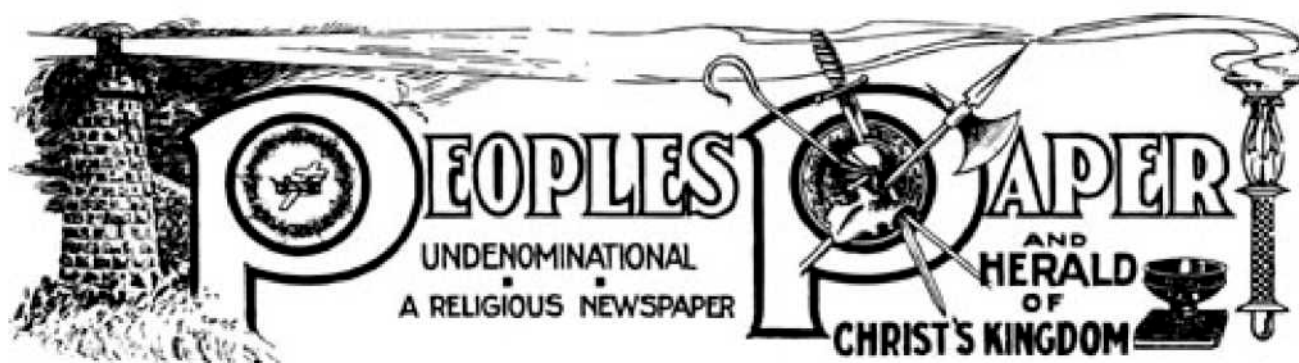
During the 6000 years of human history there have been terrible sufferings, terrible injustices, awful crimes, the innocent continually suffering for the guilty ; but these conditions exist not under God's throne, but because man departed from the protection of God's throne and obeyed Satan, who has been permitted as prince of this world ever since, and justice is not the foundation of Satan's throne. However, the time of Satan's dominion is about running out. Soon Christ's Kingdom will take control and He will rule in righteousness and justice, and stamp out evil.

When Christ's reign shall have accomplished the "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:20-22) it will be recognised by all that God's ways are just and equal, and that even the permission of evil will be thoroughly recompensed by the lessons learned and the subsequent rewards of life.

Get the habit—a glorious one—of referring all to Christ. How did He feel? Think? Act? So then must I feel, think, and act. Should I please myself ? "For even Christ pleased not Himself."

—F. W. Robertson.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.
Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.
Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.
Longreach, 4LG, 273 M: ., 9.15 p.m.



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Sanctify the Lord.

(Convention Address)

“But sanctify the Lord in your hearts ; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and reverence.”-1 Pet. 3:15.

THE word “sanctify” is very familiar to Bible students. The Scriptures apply it to those who are fully devoted to God, the elect. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit.” (1 Pet. 1:2.) It is applied to God,—“I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the nations . . . I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.” (Ezek. 36:23.) It is also applied to Christ, who said He would “Sanctify himself.” (John 17:19.) Again it is applied to inanimate things, as in Exod. 29:36, 44. “Thou shalt cleanse the altar . . . and thou shalt anoint and sanctify it.” The tabernacle and all the vessels were sanctified, that is, ceremonially sanctified—Exod. 40:10. Obviously, this word does not have exactly the same meaning in every instance it is used in the Scriptures.

The dictionary gives the meaning of “sanctify”—To set apart, or appoint to a holy or sacred or religious use ; to free from the power of sin. Professor Strong in his Exhaustive Concordance gives the meaning in the Old Testament—To be, make, or pronounce as clean, (ceremonially or morally). God sanctifies Himself or His name by vindicating His honor from the reproaches and misrepresentation of the wicked, and by manifesting His power and glory.

The English word “sanctify” first occurs in the Scriptures in Gen. 2:3—“God sanctified the seventh day.” Then in Exod. 13:2 we read —“Sanctify unto me all the firstborn . . . both of man and of beast.” In the Old Testament the Hebrew word is translated by four-teen different English words. In the New Testament the word “sanctify” is first used in John 17:17-18. “For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they (His disciples) also might be sanctified (devoted) through (or in) the truth.” The Lord used the Greek word earlier than this, but it is translated “hallowed” in Matt. 6:9. He taught His disciples to pray—“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed (sanctified) be thy name”. Obviously, it does not mean in this prayer, to make holy ; or as in John 17:19 that our Lord’s life needed perfecting in holiness ; what our Lord meant was that He had consecrated, or devoted His life to the truth.

The dictionary gives the meaning of “sanctification”—As the progressive conformity of heart and life to the will of God—as in 1 Thes. 5:23. “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” In its nature it is a divine work accomplished by the influence and power of His Word—“sanctified in the truth.” It is progressive; the endeavor is made to bring every thought and act into subjection to the obedience of Christ and the will of God. “And this is the will of God, even your sanctification.”

To be sanctified one requires a resolute and enthusiastic devotion to the will of God ; all other things and occupations are secondary to this one end. There is a transformation from the natural to the spiritual. “God has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” (Col. 1:13) “God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,” (Eph. 1:3)—spiritual blessings for a spiritual life.

The word “consecrate” is often understood as the meaning or substitute for sanctify. While the word “sanctify” does have in it the thought of definite, complete consecration, and this may be the decision of a moment, when We decide to serve God with our whole being, strength and life, but sanctification seems to take us further, and gives the thought of progressiveness, and refers to the entire process of transformation and maturity of character in preparation for our eternal union with Christ in glory.

In Heb. 10:10, 14 we seem to get both these thoughts—of consecration, or setting apart, and in verse 14 progressive sanctification in holiness. Verse 10 reads—“By God’s will we are (Diaglott—have been) sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus.” It is by our belief in the sacrificial death of our Lord for us that makes it possible for us to consecrate our lives to God, being accepted by the imputed merit of Jesus. -Then in verse 14 the Apostle says, “For by one offering he (Christ) has perfected forever (permanently ; the perfecting under the Mosaic sacrifices were not permanent, but were repeated year by year) , those being sanctified.” (Diaglott.) “Those being sanctified”—that is, progressive sanctification, continuing right to the end of our course.

Sanctification is not justification, but justified believers are urged to sanctify themselves. In order to be effective it must consist of two parts ; God’s part and our part. God’s part alone is not sufficient, and our part alone is not sufficient. These two parts make one whole truth. This is set before us in Lev. 20:7, 8,—”Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy ; for I am the Lord your God . . . I am the Lord which sanctify you.” In Exod. 28:41; 29:33 and Lev. 8, Aaron and his sons were instructed by Moses to consecrate and sanctify themselves. They were ceremonially made clean after being set apart, consecrated to the service of God.

We are urged to “sanctify the Lord in our hearts.” Here the word “sanctify” seems to be used in the sense of veneration. Why should we sanctify or venerate the Lord ? Firstly, He is our Creator and gives us understanding and supplies our daily needs. By nature we were children of wrath, and depend upon His mercy, and are undeserving of His favor. Secondly, He is our Heavenly Father, and has made known unto us His saving power, and shown Himself gracious, and He has not rewarded us according to our iniquities, but His loving kindness, Oh how great, prompted Him to provide a way and hope of life through His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

We hear His call, “My son give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” We, as consecrated Christians, are under special obligation to sanctify the Lord in a very special way, because He has condescended to arrange, and make known to us a very special salvation, not merely a reformation or restitution to that which was lost in Eden, but a special choice portion—a high or heavenly calling, an invitation to become members of His special, inner family circle—and given us promises whereby we, by embracing them and allowing their influence to sanctify us, will become partakers or participants in His own divine nature and joint heirs with His Son. And this is not an invitation and hope to become perfected glorified human beings in heaven. No, the Lord has revealed through the Scriptures that this offer of so great salvation, “the hope that is in you,” is nothing less than a change from human into a new creation—a distinct creation from all others, with the hope of glory, honor and immortality. “This mortal must put on immortality.” “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”

Is not this something extraordinary to offer to mortals ? The Scriptures call it a good hope, and a blessed hope, which the human eye hath not seen nor human ear heard, and never entered the human heart, which God has prepared (in readiness) for those who love Him. (1 Cor. 2:9.) Is not this a good reason why each and all of the consecrated, the matured and the babes in Christ, should sanctify the Lord ? And does not the Apostle Peter urge us in our text “to sanctify the Lord in our hearts and be ready to give an answer to every one who asks you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and reverence”?

As we remember whose we are and whom we serve—what a great, pure, righteous and holy God we represent, as His ambassadors—will surely help us in our presentation and witness of the truth to others in the spirit of meekness and reverence, for He sees, hears and watches our conduct.

The sanctifying of the Lord is to proceed from the heart. The head and the tongue may be always ready to give an answer to others, perhaps too ready at times, and it may be a greater mark of reverence for the Lord to let other members in the body of Christ give the reason for our hope, and the active and forward members in the body of Christ to cultivate meekness, modesty and restraint in this respect. We are all constituted differently; some have the talent of talkativeness and combativeness enlarged, while in others it is dwarfed. Would not a correction or improvement in either case come about by sanctifying the Lord in our hearts?

From Jer. 9:23, 24 we read, “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches ; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth ; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” The cultivation of ‘these delightful qualities in our own lives will show that we want to sanctify the Lord.

Further, the Lord has especially emphasised, through the prophet Ezekiel, the importance of sanctifying Himself. Ezekiel prophesied concerning the fearful and awe-inspiring events with which that age would close—that His great name would be sanctified among the nations as a result of His stern disciplinary judgments and rebukes. The need for

this had arisen through a very sad and distressing state of affairs. The name of the Lord had been profaned among the nations by the very ones who professed great reverence for His name and His laws. The consecrated nation of Israel was guilty of irreverence and a lack of knowledge and appreciation for the purity, holiness and righteous judgments and loving kindness of the Lord. Zeal they had ; tradition they had ; rites and ceremonies they had ; and very particular they were in the performance of these, but how sad, how searching the accusation—"My name is profaned among the nations through you." This was the result of the absence of heart sanctification.

A similar situation and condition exists now. The name of the Lord is not sanctified but profaned by men and women, many of whom claim some church connections. His truth is misrepresented and misconstrued, and a similar fearful judgment will overwhelm Christendom in these last days. However, in the midst of these evil days, what a wonderful opportunity for consecrated Christians to bear witness to the name of the Lord, and to sanctify the Lord in our hearts—to represent His spirit, the spirit of light, truth, purity, devotion and reverence. Although this light shines in a dark place, where the holy name of God and Christ is profaned and misrepresented, yet this ray of light emanating from you, "because the light of the knowledge of God hath shined in your heart," shall never be lost, never be darkened. It has been said, as a result of investigations, that sound waves fade and die out, but light waves never. As a poet has said "Our hope that sends a shining ray, Far down the future's broadening way."

The Apostle Paul urges in Phil. 2:15— "That ye may be blameless and harmless . . . in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights (luminaries) in the world, holding forth the word of life." Only as the light shines into our hearts can we truly and effectively sanctify or venerate the

Lord, and our own lives are thereby being sanctified.. If our readiness to give an answer for our faith proceeds merely from the intellect, then no doubt our relationship to the Lord would be similar to that of a gramophone to its maker—its chief function is to talk or make a noise. As the Apostle Paul says, without love we would be as a sounding brass horn, or a tinkling (clanging) cymbal. (1 Cor., 13:1,2.)

Let us make a resolution that we will sanctify the Lord in our hearts, that we will not forget all His benefits who holdeth our soul in life and suffers not our feet to be moved. "Bless the Lord, O my soul . . . and forget not all his benefits ; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things ; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Psa. 103:1-5.)

Question Box.

BINDING THE BUNDLES FOR BURNING.

Question.—What did our Lord mean in Matt. 13:30 when He said "Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them"?

Answer.—While the work of binding the bundles is evidently part of the Harvest Work in which the Lord's people would be the messengers or reapers, the Lord has not said that it is the duty or work of His people to "burn" the tares. Nor is it the privilege of the saints to decide who are "tares" and who are "wheat". The privilege of the reapers is to thrust in the sickle of truth, preach the message of the kingdom, proclaim the presence of the Lord of the Harvest, and this will accomplish both the gathering of the "wheat" into the garner of truth and the binding of the tares into bundles "for the burning" (Diaglott) . S.S., Vol. 3, page 140,—"The wheat was not to be bundled ; the grains were originally planted separate and independent, to associate only as one kind under similar conditions. But the parable declares that one of the effects of the harvest will be to gather and bind the tares in bundles before the 'burning' or 'time of trouble.' And this work is in progress all around us."

As the wheat class have been liberated from the sectarian bundles, the tares have become more tightly bound in the various denominations, and the time of trouble now impending upon Christendom will burn up these sects and parties, and all human theories, fancies, and delusions will be destroyed, and then the pure language (the true Gospel) will be turned to the people, and they shall all turn to the Lord with one consent. (Zeph. 3:8, 9.)

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Convention News.

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide is now in the past and we have happy memories of helpful fellowship and association with the Lord's people in partaking of the good things provided by His grace. Just two days before the Convention one of our sisters died suddenly, and while this sudden passing of our sister brought to us a measure of sadness, yet we do not need to sorrow as those who have no hope. We can go on with confidence in the word of 'Him who said, "because I live ye shall live also." While our sister will be missed from our meetings, yet we can rejoice that she has reached the end of her earthly journey and has now gone to her reward.

In his words of welcome our brother expressed pleasure at being able to welcome a number of brethren and sisters from Melbourne and Geelong, Victoria ; it is indeed a privilege to be able to meet together with those of like precious faith, and endeavour to assist and encourage one another in the narrow way that leads to life. The Convention was held on each of the four days of the Easter period, and we feel that the Lord's blessing was with us as we met in His Name.

Each afternoon was • devoted to a Bible Study ; the portions chosen being Col. 1:9-17 ; Rom. 6:3-11; Rev. 5:1-14.

The consideration of these portions of God's Word we found most helpful and encouraging.

The evening sessions were taken up with short addresses by various brethren ; the topics of the addresses were as follows—"A New Creation" ; "Considering Jesus" ; "Day of Judgment" ; "Strength and Peace" ; "I will never leave thee" ; "How may we best study the Bible ?" ; "Sanctify the Lord" and "Meditation". Each one of these addresses brought its message of hope, comfort and exhortation, and served to encourage us to faith and hope and endeavour.

Our Programme also provided for a Question Meeting, Praise and Testimony meetings, and the ever popular "Hymns we love, and why" session. The four Convention days seemed to go all too quickly, and came to a close with the usual Love Feast at which we bade each other goodbye, singing "Blest be the tie that binds", and "God be with you till we meet again."

During the Convention some messages were received from brethren in other states ; these were much appreciated, and to those who thus remembered us, and to the brethren generally, the Convention sent as a greeting the words of the Apostle Paul as found in his letter to the Colossians chapter 1, verses 9 to 12. The Convention closed with • a prayer of thanksgiving to God, the Giver of all good, for the many blessings from His loving hand, and for the privilege of being able to meet in this way in His name once again ; "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Convention Notes.

Notes on the Adelaide Easter Convention have been prepared and are now available free to all applying for same to this office.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

ON the evening of April 5th the brethren in Melbourne assembled to observe the Memorial of Christ's death with sincere thankfulness to God for the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer. There was a good attendance, and those who were regular at the meetings in previous weeks had appreciated the Class studies on the important subject of the Passover in type and antitype, thus preparing their hearts and minds for the Memorial observance, and for the days ahead.

The service of hymns (364, 280, 166, 2, 414, in "Bible students Hymnal"), prayers, Bible readings from Mark 14:12-46 ; John 18:12-40 ; 19:1-30, an address covering the important features of the sacrifice of Christ and the privilege of the invitation to the Church to walk in His steps in hope of the heavenly inheritance, in which a number of the brethren assisted, was a means of much blessing preparatory to partaking of the emblems.

The brethren who were likewise remembering the Lord's death at this anniversary, and pledging themselves to continued devotion in laying down their lives in His service, were especially remembered in prayer. Asking for God's blessing upon the bread and wine, that the partaking of these emblems may give a deeper realization of the importance of Christ's death to us, and of our consecration to be dead with Him, the brethren thankfully partook and sang the concluding hymn-

“ ‘Tis finished!” so the Saviour cried
And meekly bowed His head and died.
‘Tis finished! yes, the work is done,
The battle fought, the vict'ry won.

Geelong, Vic.

On the evening of April 5th the brethren in this centre were privileged once more to meet in a quiet room to comply with the dying request of our Lord to “do this in remembrance of Me.” During the observance hymns (437, 2, 401 in “Bible Students Hymnal”) were sung, and three Brothers read in turn the following passages—Matt. 26:1-5, 14-30, 36-49, 57-68 ; 27:1, 2, 11-50—while another Brother gave a discourse suitable for the occasion, prior to partaking of the emblems.

As we partook of the emblems we thanked God for the sacrifice of our Saviour's life and the realization of what it accomplished for us, the Church of the firstborns. We humbly requested too that this appreciation may deepen as we continue in the way, so that a more intense love may prompt us to still greater joy and eagerness in the daily presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices in His service, laying down our little all, which is made acceptable to God by our dear Lord's sacrifice ; faithfully proclaiming our Lord's death, both in confession and practice, till He come.

Adelaide.

The Adelaide Class met on the evening of April 5th to keep the Memorial of our Saviour's death. We feel that it is a privilege to obey our Lord's request to “do this in remembrance of Me.” It serves to remind us once again that all our hopes of future life and blessing are dependent upon the great sacrifice of Christ which began at Jordan and was consummated at Calvary.

The Memorial also serves to remind us of our pledge of consecration to be dead with Him to self and the things of the world. So we seek for renewed supplies of heavenly grace to enable us to press on in the footsteps of our great High Priest, and look forward to the time when, if faithful to the end, we shall be given the great privilege of sharing with Him the great work of uplift for the whole world of mankind. In our prayers we remembered the Lord's dear people everywhere who would be keeping the Memorial in remembrance of our dear Redeemer's death. Perth.

In memory of our Lord's supreme sacrifice a little band of thirteen adults celebrated the Memorial of His death. Remembering that on this very night many centuries before, our Lord had died on Calvary for us all, we again had

brought before our minds the great love of the Father in giving His Son, and of the Son that He should condescend on behalf of fallen man, and become “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:8.) Our hearts were lifted up in gratitude to such a loving Saviour.

Not only did we remember His death, His sacrificial offering, terminating at Calvary, but we renewed our allegiance and common participation with the Lord in sacrificing our earthly rights and privileges, having our bodies continually presented as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to the Lord.

During the service we sang several appropriate hymns. The chairman dealt graphically with Israel's type of Passover, then brought the thoughts forward to show that Christ is our Passover Lamb, and the Church constitutes the firstborns whose names are written in heaven. After partaking of the emblems we sang a hymn and quietly dispersed.

Tasmania.

Four of us gathered here at our home to again celebrate the Memorial and in obedience to our Lord's desire "This do in remembrance of Me." Our studies were in connection with type and antitype, also John 13. Helpful thoughts came from each participant as we meditated on these things, and again rededicated our lives to our Master and Head by solemnly partaking of the bread and wine, and appropriating all that it meant to each one of us individually.

Sydney.

There were fifteen brethren partook of the Memorial Supper on the night of April the 5th. We opened by singing "In Memory of our Saviour's Love," and a short prayer, not forgetting those who were meeting in like manner as we were. The chairman then read Exodus 12:1-14, and the Brother who gave the address explained the antitype, also fully explaining the deep significance of the bread and the cup. Then the blessing was asked on the bread and wine, and after partaking, the closing hymn was sung and the friends quietly dispersed.

Canberra.

In common with others of like precious faith the small group at Canberra celebrated the Memorial as instituted by our Lord. Fast moving and radical changes in a disintegrating world emphasised the solemnity of the occasion. Loving thoughts concerned fellow pilgrims and sincere prayers ascended on their behalf.

The following lines seem appropriate-

O what, if we are Christ's,
Is earthly shame or loss?
Bright shall the crown of glory be
When we have borne the cross.

"Poems of Dawn."

Glenbrook, N.S.W.

Once again at Glenbrook we received a blessing as we partook of the Memorial on the evening of April 5th. Six were present and we realised how grandly comprehensive is the meaning of this divinely instituted celebration, and what a blessing comes to us with the observance of this Memorial. May God's richest blessings rest upon all the dear Israel of God.

Queensland,

With four members present the service commenced with hymn 166. We saw that it was a great privilege to obey the Master and keep the feast in remembrance of Him and to understand what the emblems signified. We traced from the type in Exod. 12:1-14, pointing out that for the firstborns to have the protection of God and to be spared alive, it was essential that they must be under the blood; so in the antitype, if we desire to be of the Church of the Firstborn we must unreservedly place ourselves under the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

Then we considered Isa. 53 to get the connecting link between type and antitype and to identify the Lamb, also to John 1:29-36 for the Lamb of God, and Paul's words in 1 Cor. 5:7, 8 respecting Christ our Passover. Next we considered John 6:29-35, 48-58 for Jesus' words on the bread of life. We saw that He was our "unleavened bread", for He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and if we did not eat this bread we had no life in us. We then considered Paul's words again in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17 on the one bread, and saw that before the wheat can be made into bread it must be crushed and made fine ; so too, we must be crushed and be made humble before the Lord can make us into that one loaf.

Before taking the emblems we read 1 Cor. 11:23-29, and saw that we should not partake carelessly, but we should examine ourselves very carefully. For the emblems we read Matt. 26:26-30 and finished the service with hymn 42.

Here is the warlike trumpet;
There, life set free from sin;
When to the last great supper
The faithful shall come in.

--Bernard.

Pilgrim Ways Ended.

THE majority of our Australian friends, as well as brethren overseas have known Brother R. E. B. Nicholson of Perth, Western Australia, for many years, and all no doubt will feel a sense of great loss in hearing of the passing of our dear Brother on the evening of 22nd March last.

Our dear Brother Nicholson, having reached the age of 84 years, had been in failing health for some time, and while the end of his earthly pilgrimage was expected at almost any time, yet the loss of one who has been such a great help in the truth cause in Australia for about fifty years is keenly felt by the brethren who have known him for various periods during this long time.

While quite a young man, and studying for appointment to a church ministry in England, our Brother Nicholson received the truth message through the volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures" about the year 1890. Warmly appreciating the message of the Plan of the Ages he was soon engaged in the service of distributing these helps to the study of the Bible, and in the years 1904-5 visited Australia with other brethren and engaged in the colporteur work with marked success. It was at this early time that some of our elderly brethren were found by the truth message. Returning overseas to Canada and U.S.A., Brother Nicholson was for a time at the headquarters of the work in America, and had often related incidents in connection with the happy experience at the Bible House in association with Brother Russell. In the year 1909 Brother Nicholson was sent out to Melbourne from the American headquarters to take over the Australian work in association with the brethren in this land.

During the next nine years considerable work was undertaken from the Melbourne office, and many brethren in Australia received the message of the truth during this time, when the, Photo-Drama of Creation was also shown. It was during these years and onward that Sister McMahan (whose passing was reported in February's "Peoples Paper") was also closely associated with the work from the Melbourne office with Brother Nicholson. When the testing time came with the change in the teachings and spirit of the work from the headquarters in U.S.A., following the passing of Brother Russell in 1916, Brother Nicholson, in association with other brethren, including the late Brother Main of S.A., and the late Sister McMahan, formed the Berean Bible Institute in Melbourne in 1918, so that the truth message may still be proclaimed in its purity and in the spirit of tolerance and liberty, as in former years.

About the same time in 1918, the brethren in U.S.A., and England, who discerned the change in the teachings and spirit of the work from the American headquarters, also formed committees to carry on the truth work in their lands, and there has been co-operation between the Berean Bible Institute and the truth brethren overseas ever since, Brother Nicholson being of good assistance in this respect, as in 1922, and again in 1929, he visited England and America and associated with the brethren in those lands.

It was early in the year 1929 that Brother Nicholson, in leaving for his visit overseas, and apparently feeling that he could be of more service to the Lord by being free to travel amongst the brethren, made arrangements for the work at the Berean Bible Institute in Melbourne to be carried on as formerly.

After spending some time in South Africa with the few friends there, and arranging a translation of a pamphlet into the Zulu language for distribution in that land, Brother Nicholson continued on to England, and later to Canada, after which

he visited the brethren in New Zealand and was, of good assistance to the scattered friends there.

For the next ten years our Brother Nicholson resided for periods in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth, and also often visited the Adelaide brethren, and in each center was always of much assistance and encouragement to the friends at the Class gatherings and in association with the Lord's work generally.

After so many voyages to different parts of the Lord's harvest field, during which our dear Brother was equally happy and zealous for the cause to which he had devoted his life—whether it was speaking at public lectures or Class gatherings, attending Bible studies in Class meetings or in homes, or visiting the isolated members of the Lord's family—in July 1939 he left Melbourne for the last time for Perth, Western Australia, where he had resided and associated regularly with brethren in those parts ever since.

The message of present truth was always foremost in the mind of Brother Nicholson, who also had the talent to explain the Scriptures in a very helpful manner, by the Lord's grace, and his good fatherly advice and encouragement will be greatly missed by the friends in Perth, and by others who were in contact with him through the mail. No doubt many of the brethren have happy memories of associations with our dear Brother over various periods, which would be up to half a century for odd members still walking in the earthly pilgrim way.

The desire to carry out the Apostle Paul's advice to Timothy—"Preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season,"—was ever prominent in our Brother's thoughts. With very good reason he declared that it was not sufficient for the Lord's people to enjoy their own Bible studies, and seek to build themselves up by such gatherings, though such is important. His thought was that some of the Lord's people could not gather the same benefit as others from the studies, and the preaching of the truth also should not be neglected in the classes. Likewise, when the radio witness was made possible in Australia over the past twelve years, Brother Nicholson maintained that public meetings should still be continued whenever an opportunity offered, the object being, of course, to continue sounding forth the message by all means to hearing ears, so that the harvest work be not neglected at this end of the age.

We thank the Lord for the lives of His dear people who have labored in His vineyard as we believe our dear Brother Nicholson has for upwards of sixty-five years—with the one object of serving the Lord's cause and bringing honor to His name. Not many have the privilege of a life-long service, but no doubt the Lord chooses His servants at the right times, and places them where they are most needed, and undoubtedly the Lord's cause in Australia has been profited by this servant being provided for so long, to labor with other members who likewise have the Lord's interests at heart, in this part of the harvest field.

Over the years quite a number of helpful articles from the pen of our Brother Nicholson have appeared in the pages of the "Peoples Paper," of which he was editor for ten years, and also other publications previously, and his last contribution to the "P. Paper" was, aptly enough, his reference to the passing of our dear Sister McMahan and the esteem in which she was held by the brethren generally. Less than four months had elapsed between the passing of

these two members of the Lord's family who had worked together for twenty years in the Melbourne office in the truth service

While there is a feeling of sadness in the loss of our dear members in Christ, yet we cannot but rejoice that the long pilgrimage of our dear Brother Nicholson has been brought to a close, with all weariness and trials of the way in the past, and the glorious inheritance entered upon by the Lord's grace and strength. Sincere sympathy is extended to one sister in England and nephews and nieces who also are well acquainted with the Lord's wonderful plan of salvation, and so they will not sorrow unduly, but will give thanks to God, with us, for a life so well spent in the service of Christ.

Practically all the friends in the Perth area were present at the funeral on the afternoon of March 24th, when four brethren assisted with the service in the home and at the graveside. "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly . . . Behold, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed . . . O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth ; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

In recent weeks two dear members of the Adelaide Class have reached the end of the earthly way. Sister McLean had been associated with the Class at Adelaide for over forty years, and will be missed greatly by the friends in Adelaide. Sister McLean was a very earnest and loyal follower of the Lord, and the manner in which she bore her sufferings, during a long and very painful illness, manifested her strong faith in the Lord and, the fulness of her devotion to His cause. One of Sister McLean's daughters, who is also a footstep follower of Christ, said that her mother had shown by her life how a Christian should live, and by her death how a Christian should die.

Sister McLean leaves with us many cherished memories. We think of her as one who was fully consecrated to God, and during the years of her pilgrimage had, by the Lord's grace, developed richly the graces of His spirit. Patient industry, meekness, gentleness, and the sweetness of the Master's own spirit pervaded the life and doings of this dear child of God. We mourn her passing, but we do not need to sorrow as those who have no hope, because we believe that our Sister was faithful unto death, and has now gone to her reward. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . .

. they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Sister Beal also of Adelaide, was called "Home" suddenly on the morning after the Memorial Service. Our Sister had attended the Memorial of our Saviour's death on the evening of April 5th ; then about ten o'clock the next morning, suffered a seizure which resulted in her death a few minutes later. Sister Beal came to a knowledge of the truth as a result of the radio broadcasts about ten years ago, and, always manifesting a love for the Lord, the truth and the brethren, was zealous to get others interested in the precious truths which had brought such blessing to her own heart and mind.

Sister Beal will be missed by her friends in Adelaide, but it is good to remember that the Lord knows those who are His, and He is now "making up His jewels" in preparation for the great and wonderful work of bringing in the "times of restitution of all things." We want to be faithful to the Lord as we believe our Sisters have been, and to press on with zeal and diligence in the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, and laying aside every weight, so that we may be well pleasing to the Lord.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various- States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street) —Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—The Literary Institute:1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages".—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4 / 6. post paid.

"Christ's Return".—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A . Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Revised Standard Version Bible,-1952. Copies of this Revised Bible are available, and will be found helpful for comparison in Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50 / - ; in red rexine 60/-.

A New Picture Bible.—A Cambridge Bible, containing 30 coloured illustrations, with marginal references, and strong, black, cloth cover. A very good child's Bible; price 15/6.

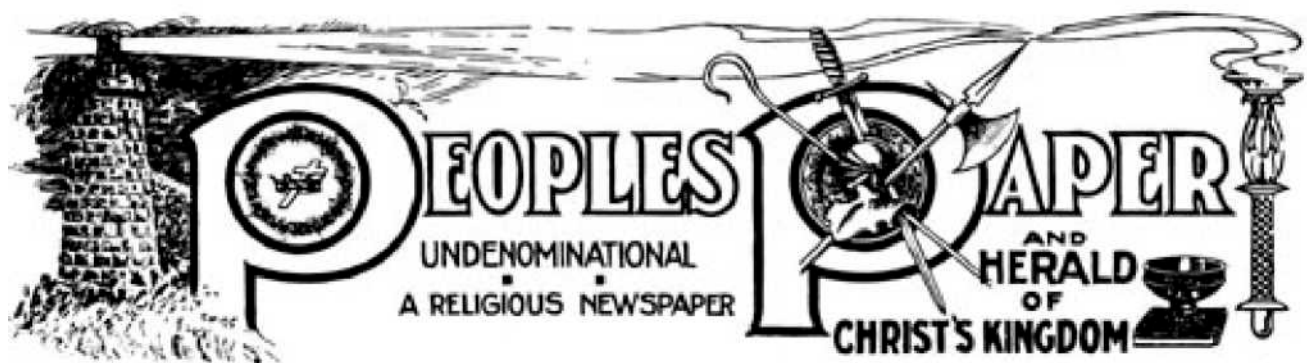
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m. Longreach, 4LG, 273 M: ,, 9.15 p.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ,, 4.45 p.m.

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Considering Jesus.

(Convention Address)

THERE are many aspects in which we could study, or “Consider Jesus.” And no one person or government could consider Jesus without it having some effect. Most folk realise that there is now to be a new order, but the majority leave Jesus out of their considerations, and it is not long before there is a tossing here and there, and finally their plans end upon the rocks.

“Consider the Apostle,” writes the Apostle Paul, and he referred to “God’s only begotten Son,” “the sent of God .

. . .” What joy and hope it gives us to meditate upon His miraculous birth, His growth, His life, and many invaluable sayings ; words that eat into one’s fibre. We agree with the record, “That never man spake as this Man.”

“Consider the High Priest” . . . Jesus as the antitypical High Priest of God, with His subsequent sacrifices associated with that office enlightens us with the reality of the fulfilment of the typical arrangement. There is much to “consider Jesus” in this respect, which is worthy of further study.

“The High Priest of our profession” . . . yes, there are under - priests associated with the High Priest in His typical work, and there are under-priests in the real administrative work. Much to consider here, too.

“As a Prophet”. Jesus uttered the most absorbing and vital words of prophecy that ever man spoke, recorded for us in the 24th chapter of Matthew, and in other portions of Sacred Writ. Also, meditate on the parables, the words of life that flowed from His lips as He endeavoured to instruct His embryo church.

He had much to tell them, but they were not ready, and unable to “hear” (to “consider”) them up till the time He went away. “Heaven and earth would pass away before His words will pass away,” and so as a Prophet He is worth considering.

It would also make a very full study to compare His life with prophecies that have been fulfilled. This had to be done, He said, “that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.” We could expound to great length if we were to consider Him in respect of fulfilled prophecies. But this, too, is aside from our intention this time.

“As a King.” We are enjoined to note the great man called Melchisedec, who of course also pictured Jesus in glory, when He shall be invested with the glorious apparel after discarding the linen garments of sacrifice. “Consider how great this man was,” writes Paul, and the counterpart for us is to consider how great the antitypical Melchisedec is and will be.

It was on the Mount of Transfiguration that the voice from the heavenly cloud said, “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased, hear (or consider) him.” God truly speaks to us by His Son in these latter days, as real as He spoke in the early days. We have the life of the Prince of Peace before us as an open book, due in no mean way to the sacrifice and faithfulness of many members of the true church. And one who wrote much concerning Jesus, strongly counsels us to consider the contradiction of sinners against the Redeemer, and how He countered that opposition.

“Lest ye be weary and faint in mind.” The opposition would wear us down very quickly did we not have an example before us, and one able to help all to the uttermost who come to Him. “Let us not grow weary’ in well doing, for we

shall reap if we faint not.” It would seem the test of patience is well exercised to not grow weary as we meet the many trials, griefs, heartaches of life. It is at such times we should compare our afflictions with those that Jesus bore—it makes one feel ashamed at how quickly we complain. Until we have resisted unto blood (death) let us continually keep our attention fixed on Jesus—Consider Him. Many faithful folk have had Him as their pattern, and have been called upon to suffer so much it leaves the human mind numb with wonder and praise that such have died praising the Redeemer.

It matters much that in all the vicissitudes of our Christian life we consider Him in all our daily matters, and with such meditation the following considerations are applicable in a particular sense—to you and me. Just compare our ways and affections with His :-

He was born in an obscure village of a peasant mother and father (Joseph adopting), denied even the barest necessities at birth. There could be no boast of wealth or riches for Him. The town in which He grew up was no beautiful city, etc., that people like to remind us of when they tell us where they were born. He probably knew what it was to go hungry, and what food was available would without doubt be plain and ungarnished with spices and delicacies. His clothes would be common to all villagers. His job was a carpenter, apprenticed to Joseph, to which He adapted Himself until about thirty years of age, when He then began His ministry. No high school training belonged to Him. “How knoweth this man letters, never having learned ?”

How our lot stands out in comparison; we love pomp, pride, show, and vainglory; we frown on plainness and obscure folk ; we prize highly comfort and convenience, and glory in prominence.

There were no labour-saving devices in His day ; all was bare and plain, just the common necessities of life with which to be thankful. With the discovery of printing and electricity, etc., we find in our world many modern wonders. Population has grown in every country, and to supply the needs of extra population science has come to the aid in creating laboursaving devices in great numbers. We have washing machines, refrigerators, electric fires, cookers, vacuum cleaners, etc., not to mention the luxury and comfort of just the ordinary home of our day. Another name for all these contraptions is “servants”. Jesus had no servants, not one. In fact, He who was and is the greatest of all, came to serve. Our world is a strange one, with the growth of population, labour-saving devices are created, and with each creation the shortage of labour grows more and more ; so the call is more and more for labour-saving devices until they become necessities in most homes. It is like a vicious circle, going on and on without satisfaction. One gets an article and then a better one is wanted, or a newer one, or one better than So-and-So’s. Discontent, envy, dissatisfaction or pride of possession could easily be ours. Consider Jesus, and these things won’t hold us.

Have you ever thought of the transport of Jesus’ day? The ordinary folk, the working people, mostly walked. The rich and well-to-do would frown on the pedestrian from the camel or the ass. The poorest of the poor would frown on such transport in our day. How things change. If there is no tram we don’t go; if it is a few minutes late our complaints are loud and nasty.

Jesus, despite all His ability to do so, never wrote a book. We, as soon as we begin to think we know something above our fellows, desire to rush into print. Some folk qualified in the art of writing are denied the privilege and others with no ability at all may both relax in that they have a good Exemplar in Jesus.

Some of us may appreciate music : Jesus wrote no symphony or concerto, so there is no need to be disconsolate on that score. Others may appreciate art, or sculpture (Jesus left us no Rembrandt or Michael Angelo masterpieces). Cultivate by all means your appreciation of these lovely callings, but not at the expense of character.

It is noticeable how the University folk covet the degrees and honours of their respective sciences. These honours are without doubt the reward of hard work, well merited, etc., and possibly in many cases fall short of the real reward for the price that has been paid to gain such honour or degree. Jesus had no degree.

Have you noticed how people like to boast that they have been here or there, or visited such and such a place, especially should it be a foreign country? This is an ever-green boast with many people. Take a compass and mark off on a map the farthest points that Jesus journeyed, the farthest points in which He had any particular interest.

It will astound you the small radius of His travels. And what travelling He did indulge in was full of trouble and discomfort—no luxury that we look for, and complain of, if lacking. “The foxes have holes in the earth, the birds have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”

“The fear of man bringeth a snare.” How some folk “play up” to people of high social standing, or wealth, etc. Jesus had no partiality for the golden ring; He spoke the truth wherever He went, pleasing all and sundry far their good unto

edification. “He went about doing good.” Those who came to Him He did not reject, and many of those who did come were social rejects or outcasts. “Blessed are the poor, for they have the Gospel preached unto them.” There is no need at all for you to feel inferior (or superior) to anyone. Our Guide and Companion welcomes us; who is he that rejects?

We are quick to bemoan our many ills and complaints. Let us endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Eyes off self ; eyes on Jesus. The time is short ; keep on. “Consider Him . . .”

Have we a duty to perform? With its repetition we begin to tire and make excuses to change for something different, or novel, or exciting. Jesus had a duty, and ceaselessly kept on keeping on. The Christian who follows Jesus will be let in on one of the most enviable secrets of life ; he learns to turn duty into joy !

“Arm yourselves with the mind of Christ, who pleased not himself.” Do dwell on these things—He pleased not Himself. Many times we do things just to please self, and how it pains us afterwards. Seeking to please God in all things, we can well afford to put our preference aside in many little non-essential matters.

“Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? They say unto Him, We are able.”

Able to suffer, without complaining, to be misunderstood without explaining;

Able to endure without breaking,
To be forsaken without forsaking;

Able to give without receiving,
To be ignored without grieving;

Able to ask without commanding,
To love despite misunderstanding;

Able to turn to the Lord for guarding,
Able to wait for His own rewarding?

— “Herald of Hope.”

Convention Notes.

Notes on the Adelaide Easter Convention have been prepared and are now available free to all applying for same to this office.

Tracts Available.

The article, “God’s Solution for the Formosa Problem,” which appeared in a recent “Peoples Paper” will be available shortly in tract form. Friends who can use these tracts to advantage are invited to apply for supplies. Other subjects also available.

“Our Most Holy Faith.”—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of “The Dawn” in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/- post paid.

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The Power of God.

Luke 24:49.—"Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

POWER is one of the attributes of our Heavenly Father, all of which are equally essential in the carrying out of His great Plan of Redemption.

Without Power to act, Wisdom would fail to accomplish its designs, Justice could not be enforced, and Love would be helpless.

There appears to be two words in the New Testament, both of which are rendered by our word, "power." The one refers to power in the sense of rule or authority ; the other speaks of ability, strength of will, power of character. It is the latter of these two words which is used in this passage. "Ye shall receive power, the holy spirit coming upon you." Thus we see the connection between the baptism of the holy spirit and the promised power.

The Apostles had been with Christ, had seen His work, His miracles, and had been taught by Him. They had seen Him in His passion, His death, and resurrection, and were yet to witness His ascension. Yet with all this experience the Master said, "Wait until ye be endued with power."

Our Lord had said, "It is expedient that I go away, for if I go not away the holy spirit will not come."

Thus they were to tarry for the promise of the Father. They did not wait in vain. They were gathered together, a body of men, like ourselves, no doubt, in great expectation, wondering what was going to happen. There was the sound of a rushing, mighty wind (Acts 2:1-3), and these fishermen and others received the holy spirit—the power of God. They went forth endued with power, as the Apostles of Christ, and faced the world with courage. How useless it would be to start out in Christian work, or as a follower of Christ, without the baptism of the holy spirit. Jesus Himself did not begin His ministry until He had received this promise of the Father, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."—Phil. 4:13.

"I cannot do it alone;
I change with the changing sky;
To-day, so glad and bright,

To-morrow, too weak to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win, Jesus and I."

This gift of the holy spirit of power (2 Tim. 1:7) is a constant one (John 14:16, 17). Like the disciples we shall find that by tarrying together and waiting on God and in the study of His Word we shall be renewed in spirit and in power, and enabled to keep clear of the world and its snares.

Having received this power, Acts 1:8 informs us as to the use to be made of it, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." So each one who comes under the same anointing of our Lord Jesus Christ has a responsibility to witness to the truth according to opportunity.

*"We wait, O Lord, Thy power to know,
Before we forth to service go,
Or else we serve in vain.
We trust not human thought or might,
Our souls are helpless for the fight,
Until that power we gain."
"The Fire that cleanseth through and through,
Inspiring every nerve anew,
With energy Divine;
The Fire that burns, its conquering way,
Within, without, and every day,
Doth keep us wholly Thine."*

Used Postage Stamps.

Used postage stamps of all varieties can be sold to support the truth work. Friends willing to assist may forward all the Australian stamps they can procure, as well as other stamps, leaving at least a quarter of an inch of paper around the stamps; that is, do not remove stamps from the paper.

(Quite a number of friends have sent in used postage stamps; would all please accept sincere thanks for their efforts in this way.)

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.”—Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

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“Do the Dead Know Anything”—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24-page booklet. Price 5d. per copy;

Strength and Peace.

(Psa. 29:11.)

(Convention Address)

ONE of the results of the fall of man into sin and the consequent death penalty (see Rom. 5:12) is that the strength of mankind, mentally, morally and physically, has become sadly depleted. In his weak and undone state, man becomes an easy prey to Satan and his subtle delusions and misrepresentations.

Sin, weakness and imperfection may all be grouped together; they are, so to speak, of the one family. On the other hand, holiness, strength and purity go hand in hand ; they are related to each other ; they are also of one family.

God is presented to us in the Scriptures as a God of strength. (See Exod. 15:1-13.) Verse 2—”The Lord is my strength and my song.” If we are weak and inclined to faintheartedness we do well to remember the precious promise,—”The Lord will give strength unto his people,” and by our faithfulness we shall glorify God, who will deliver us from all our foes, both seen and unseen.

The Lord’s people, like all others, need fortitude and patience, else they might soon become discouraged in the conflict with the world, the flesh and the Adversary. They need strength ; they need encouragement. In our text, the word “strength” means, in large measure, courage. The Lord will give courage to His people. He encourages us in a variety of ways ; He encourages us through each other, as we seek to build each other up in our most holy faith.

How important it is that each truly consecrated Christian should become “strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.” (Eph. 6:10.) We are assured that as a result of our full submission to the will of our Heavenly Father we shall indeed be “strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.” (Col. 1:11.)

We are assured that we shall be strengthened in the “inner man” through the spirit of the Lord. None has this particular kind of strength, that of the “inner man,” except those who have become new creatures in Christ, to whom “old things have passed away, and all things have become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17.) With this particular spirit-begotten class all of the Lord’s dealings are intended to develop Christ-like character.

”Desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby,” and become strong. (1 Pet. 2:2.) This milk of the Word of the Lord is given at first to His children, that the new nature may grow thereby and become able to digest stronger food and thus develop in character-likeness to our Lord. To all His own the Lord provides nourishment—milk for the babies, strong meat for those more developed. (Heb. 5:12-14.) All who would grow strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might (courageous) will avail themselves of the Divine provision.

When God has a work for His servants to do, He first prepares them for it. There is an interesting example of this in the

way Joshua was encouraged and strengthened to become the leader of Israel when Moses was about to relinquish his position as leader. (See Deut.3:28; 31:7, 8 ; Joshua 1:1-9.) Also in Gen. 28:10-15. What comforting and encouraging words in verse 15—"Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee . . . I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

It is along this same line that Paul writes very assuringly to the Philippians, chapter:6,—”Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”. (See margin, “finish it.”) Also we note the Apostle Peter’s words in 1 Pet. 5:10. (See also Phil. 4:13.)

Strength and courage come from God. 2 Tim. 1:7—"God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power (courage) and of love, and of a sound mind".

The Psalmist says in Psalm 18:32—"It is God that girdeth me with strength"; and again in Psalm 27:1, "The Lord is the strength of my life" ; Psalm 28:7, "The Lord is my strength and my shield" ; Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble"; Psalm 73:26, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever"; Psalm 84:5-7, "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee . . . they go from strength to strength."

Is God really our strength? Do we rely upon God fully? Or do we turn to God only after we have tried all other avenues of help? We need to cultivate God’s acquaintance more ; we need to “seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore,” (Psa. 105:4) then we will be able to say with the Psalmist—"The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation."

The prophet Isaiah assures us that "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." (See Isa. 40:28-31.; also Isa 12:2 ; 26:4.)

Let us, then, trust the Lord fully, casting all our care upon Him. Let us remember that our faith is the basis of both our strength and our peace. When the storms of life assail us fiercely we must never let go our faith, our trust in God, but always remember that "The foundation of God standeth sure," that "His truth is our shield and buckler," and "What he has promised he is able also to perform," notwithstanding our human imperfections and frailties ; that, covering these, we have the imputed righteousness of Christ, our Surety and Advocate ; that "the Father himself loveth us," and that "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and so has compassion for the sons of His love and is very pitiful and of tender mercy. Indeed, "what more could he say than to us he hath said," to assure our faith and to steady and strengthen our hearts to patient endurance in the midst of the trials and conflicts in the narrow way of sacrifice,

With great compassion and tenderness our Lord, on the last night of His earthly life, bestowed upon His beloved disciples His parting blessing, His legacy of peace. It was the richest legacy He had to bequeath, and was of priceless value. It was the promise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease of mind which He, Himself, possessed—the peace of God. It was the same peace which the Father has always enjoyed, even in the midst of all the commotion which the permission of evil has brought about. In Jehovah, this peace is self-centred, because He realises in Himself omnipotence and infinite wisdom ; while the peace of Christ was centered, not in Himself, but in God, through faith in His wisdom, power and grace. So also, if we would have the peace of God, the peace of Christ ("my peace"), it must, like His, be centered in God, by faith.

The peace promised is not the short - lived peace of the world, which is sometimes enjoyed for a little season, but "my peace," the peace of God which Christ Himself by faith enjoyed, who, "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor," (2 Cor. 8:9) ; who lost friend after friend, and in His last hour was forsaken by all of the few that remained ; His peace endured through loss, persecution, scorn and contempt, and even amidst the agonies of the cross. This peace is something ,which none of the vicissitudes of this life can destroy and which no enemy can wrest from us.

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked."- (Isa. 48:22.) "The wicked are like the troubled sea, constantly casting up mire and dirt." Their hearts are not in accord with peace and righteousness, but are filled with selfishness. The wicked are self-seeking and grasping, filled with anger if they cannot always get what they want, with malice if they see someone enjoying what they cannot have. All of these things indicate a lack of peace.

To the extent that any of the Lord’s people have any of these evil propensities they cannot have the "peace of God which passeth all understanding" — which passeth all description. It is a rest of heart by faith. In this peace lies a satisfaction for all the various qualities of the mind ; in proportion as the mind develops the ambition of pleasing the Lord, of communicating to others the knowledge of the truth and the blessed opportunity of salvation, it becomes our ambition to do good, instead of evil. So ambition, being turned into a right line, the peace of God, which none can comprehend save those who possess it, comes to the mind and heart.

It is not an outward peace, however, for the Lord's people, individually and collectively, have most distressing experiences. The church has always been persecuted, as Jesus forewarned us—"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (1 John 3:13; John 15:19.)

The peace promised is not such as the world can always recognise and appreciate, for the possessor of it, like the Lord and the apostles and prophets, may have a stormy pathway. They did not have peace outwardly ; they were beset, harassed on every hand ; they were persecuted and obliged to flee from place to place. Some of the saints of old were stoned to death, some were sawn asunder, yet the peace of God, abounding in their hearts, enabled them to endure all these trials joyfully. Indeed, that it must be so with all the faithful until all the purposes of God in the permission of evil are accomplished, we are distinctly forewarned, but with the assurance that through all the storms of life this peace shall abide. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but—"In me ye shall have peace." (John 16:33.)

This promise, that God will give peace to His people, seems to apply only to a peace of heart. Our Lord and the apostles possessed it to such an extent that they could go on their ways rejoicing in spirit, even though outwardly they suffered severe persecution and opposition of those who were blinded by the god of this world. In proportion as we see matters from the Divine viewpoint, and appreciate the precious promises and let them inspire our hearts, we shall rejoice in those promises, and our hearts will be blessed. Even if we have trials and difficulties that we are not able to surmount, if these are working out for us the fruits and graces of the spirit, we may rejoice and give thanks for these evidences of God's love.

We see that the peace of God is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of various kinds, for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances, but upon a proper balancing of the mind and the condition of a perfect heart. Such peace — the peace of God—was enjoyed by our Lord Jesus in the midst of all the turmoil and confusion of His eventful earthly life. This brings us to the consideration of our Lord's last legacy to His disciples, when He was about to leave the world, as expressed in His own words—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you ; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.)

The promise of our text—"The Lord will bless his people with peace,"—seems to belong especially to this age, when all creation groans and travails in pain (Rom. 8:22). When the Millennial Age shall have been ushered in, there will be prevailing conditions of peace, and thus He will give peace to all people.

Let us, then, have for our watchword, Loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness ; and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise—"The Lord will give strength unto his people." Let us be faithfully "His people" and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the strength promised. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." "He is faithful that promised." (1 Thes. 5:24 ; Heb. 10:23.)

So then, if we find ourselves lacking either the strength or the peace promised, the fault is ours, not God's. Either we have not the interests of His service closely enough at heart, or else we do not make use of the strength He provides. "The Lord will give strength unto His people—His trusting, faithful servants, who are using to His praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few those talents may be—the Lord will bless His people with peace."

The strong right arm is only strong
Because an active will Has made it serve.
But were that arm Left idly hanging still,

'Twould lose the hoarded strength of years,
And lose more rapidly
Than it was gained, by Nature's law
Of inactivity.

'Tis true of souls.
They gather strength
With every cross they bear,
With every humble sacrifice,
With every heart-felt prayer,
With every conflict bravely met,
And trial bravely borne;

With every throb of anguish felt
When tender ties are shorn.
The tears and toils of His dear ones
Are wisely, kindly, sent
By Him who knoweth what they need
For soul-development.

The path of idleness is one
By vagrant children trod,
They grow in grace most rapidly
Who labor most for God.

Question Box.

Question.—In 1 Cor. 15 it shows that all who die in Christ shall arise in the first resurrection with celestial or spiritual bodies, immortal or incorruptible. With what kind of body will the wicked or vile arise, and when? For instance, the authors and perpetrators of the holy Inquisition and other villainies?

Answer.—We take it that in this chapter the Apostle first makes plain the wideness of God's mercy in that the death of our Lord Jesus as a ransom for all, provides that "there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust" —Acts 24:15. He shows that if there was no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen, and all our preaching would be in vain. But Christ is risen, and is but the first fruits of the resurrection, for as by man came death, so by man (Christ) came also the resurrection. "For as all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive again." It is the same "all" in both cases, as is clearly shown in Romans 5:12-21.

The Apostle then goes on to show that there will be a difference in the resurrection according to what has been sown. Every seed will receive a body accordingly. Some have sown to the flesh and others have sown to the spirit, and so some will be like father Adam, "of the earth earthy"; they are sown natural bodies and fleshly minds, and will again receive natural bodies in the resurrection. This was the hope entertained by Job, and also Abraham, who believed that though he should slay Isaac, yet God was able to restore him and thus fulfil His great promise. Stephen also, in Acts 7, points out that it will be in the resurrection that Abraham will receive the land which was promised him, of which he has not as yet had a single foot, excepting the small portion in which to bury Sarah, which he bought.

The reward of the worthies mentioned in Heb. 11 will be that they will have a better resurrection than the rest of mankind, and that they will be princes in all the earth. (Heb. 11:35 and Psalms 45:16.) The Apostle in Heb. 11, after speaking so beautifully of these noble characters, concludes by saying that they have not as yet entered upon their reward, but having passed their trial, it is sure for them, but God has first "provided some better thing for us" (the Church of the Gospel Age), who have the privilege of suffering with Christ that we may also reign with Him and be like Him.—Rev. 3:21; Rom. 6:3-8; Rom. 8:17; Heb. 11:39, 40; 1 John 3:2.

So, then, it is clear that only those who are followers of Christ in this Gospel Age have the heavenly hope. How plainly the Master stated this when He said, "The Law and the prophets were until John, since then the kingdom of heaven is preached," and again, "Of all that were born of women there hath not been a greater than John, yet he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11, 13.)

So, then, the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15, from verse 38, states that there is a difference in the resurrection; there are "celestial bodies or spiritual, heavenly bodies, there are also terrestrial bodies or natural, earthly bodies." It is only those who have been begotten of the spirit that will be born spiritual and inherit the heavenly condition. All others will be like father Adam, "Of the earth, earthy."

Your difficulty appears to be as to where the unsaved or the wicked and degraded come in. The Scripture reads that as a tree falls so it lies. There is no wisdom, knowledge or device in the death condition, and they will come forth in a similar body to what they went down. Each will be the same identity, the same character and disposition, and it will be the work of that day of judgment under Christ and the Church (1 Cor. 6:2) to correct the sinful inclinations by punishments for wrongdoing and rewards for righteousness, until all the willing and obedient shall have been assisted up the highway of holiness (Isaiah 35; also Isaiah 52:10, etc.) back again into the image of God from which Adam fell and brought the whole race with him into sin and degradation. Ultimately then the "whole earth shall be as the Garden of Eden," "Filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the great deep." Then the prayer of our Lord will have had its full answer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven."

What a man sows that shall he also reap. The man who lives a good, honourable, kind life will rise with so much less to overcome than the man who has been so degraded through giving way to selfishness and lust. Surely, as the little hymn has it, "The heart of the eternal is most wonderfully kind." How wise and just and true are God's ways. The wicked or the most wicked of to-day are not those who are ill-born, and never know the good influences of a godly home, but, on the contrary, are born with such fleshly weaknesses that it would be wonderful if they were anything but sinful and depraved. It seems only the grace of God can lift such out of the mire and bring them to aspire to better things. The most wicked to-day are those who know how to do right, but do not do it. It is the will of man which determines the amount of culpability. How different are God's ways from our ways. "His mercy endures for ever." Not until a man has shown himself to be incorrigible will he be sentenced to the second death. God has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live.

Divine Paradoxes.

“Because Thy loving kindness [favour] is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee.”—Psalm 63:3.

THERE are two ways in which this text may be viewed, both of which are very proper. One way is to consider ‘it merely from the viewpoint of the Psalmist and what he meant. The other is to consider it from the standpoint of prophecy. We understand the Prophet David to mean that to have God’s favour is more desirable than life : that is to say, he would rather die than live without Divine favour. The other way, of viewing it prophetically, is to suppose that here, as in many other places, the Psalmist represented The Christ, Jesus the Head and the Church His members.

Our consecration is unto death. God has invited us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto Him, and He has given us exceeding great and precious promises for the life to come. Therefore, because of our love for Him and for the principles of righteousness for which He stands, we are not merely Willing to lay down our lives, but glad to lay them down. We are glad to lay down our human lives in doing the things that are pleasing to God.

Another of David’s Psalms gives us the thought that in God’s favour is everlasting life. (Psa. 30:5.) These paradoxical statements are in harmony with the other Divine paradox, that “he that loseth his life shall find it.” He that surrenders his earthly life shall gain glory, honour, immortality, the Divine nature. We are glad that we can appreciate these glorious things represented in the Divine favour extended to the Church ; and we gladly lay down our lives. We have chosen the better part.

“Therefore my lips shall praise Thee.” The Scriptures declare “that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Rom. 10:10.) We may say that to live righteously is one of the best ways of proving our obedience to the Lord. Yet there are some who try hard to live pleasing to the Lord, who might be restrained from making a confession of Him. There are reasons for the blessing which we receive by confession. One reason is that it is a witness to the world—showing forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness ; and a second reason is that this witnessing has a good effect on ourselves. We enlist our natural forces to support this witness, and thus bring into unison all the powers of our nature,

The preaching of the Gospel brings opposition. If our Lord had gone about casting out demons, healing the sick, etc., and had not told anything about the Divine Plan, He would probably have been looked upon as a fine character— as a, man going about doing good. But because He preached differently from the Scribes and Pharisees, and His preaching of the Truth infringed upon the teachings of those about Him, it roused their ire.

So it is to-day. All the persecution comes about from the making known of the Truth. In no time that we know of has this not been so. In the Dark Ages and throughout the Gospel Age, the preaching of the Truth has brought upon those telling the Good Tidings persecutions from those whose minds have been benighted by the Prince of Darkness. In proportion as we open our lips and tell of the Gospel of the Lord, we are opposed by Satan and those who are blinded by him. The lips of this class consecrated to God—those who are laying down their present life in His service—should be devoted to His praise, to showing forth the glorious character and loving kindness of our God, to telling forth the wonders of the Divine Plan, which is marvellous in our eyes.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ,, 4.45 p.m.



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Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?

THIS subject is truly exercising the minds of a great number of people to-day. Most people in the world have physical pains and disabilities of some kind, and a great number have very severe physical afflictions with which to contend. When these people hear that there may be some hope of having their ills removed, it is only natural that they wish to investigate if that hope can be actually realised, not only for their own benefit, but also for the relief of relatives or friends. Now, when the claim is made that the Lord has no pleasure in the pains and aches of people, and that if they exercise sufficient faith in Him, He will heal their sicknesses and diseases, many people, especially those of a religious mind, are drawn to those making the claims of assisting in this healing work, which is declared to be of the Lord.

One text of Scripture which is, used: in this connection is found in Hebrews 13:8—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." But do these words of the Apostle Paul imply that what the Lord did, at His first advent, for example, would always be His good will and plan for all time? Certainly not; there can be nothing binding upon the Lord, that can be rightly taken from the words of Paul in this passage from Hebrews. What the Apostle meant was that the great principles which make up the character of God, and which were demonstrated by Christ at His first advent, would always be adhered to for all time. In other words, Paul implied that Jesus Christ is unchangeable. This does not mean, of course, that what was God's plan at Christ's first advent—yesterday—would necessarily be His plan now—to-day—and for the future—for evens:

However, in examining this subject carefully, we need to have clearly in mind why there are physical sufferings amongst the whole human family, which continue throughout our lives, until finally, each member finishes the earthly life in death. The reason is very apparent in the Bible, as every one who investigates well knows that all physical suffering is part of the dying process—"the wages of sin"—as the Apostle declares in Rom. 6:23. All who understand that the death penalty was a just sentence for the disobedience of our first parents, know that God had a perfect right to enforce this penalty, that it should take effect upon every human being. Further, when we understand that all mankind would have remained dead forever, but for God's plan to redeem the willing and Obedient, then our hearts go out in thankfulness to God that He has provided Christ to be, our Saviour from death—from the just penalty for disobedience.

We see the just penalty of death revealed by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 5:12—"Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And we see God's great, love revealed in providing Christ for our salvation from death in Paul's words—"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. . . . Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5:6-8, 18, 19.)

Our subject, then, has to do with the working out of this wonderful salvation from death, and we might ask, Is God really revealing this salvation from death to-day by miraculous healings of people's sicknesses for a few years, and then allowing them to grow weakly and sick a little later on, and die just the same? Would this seem like the wise and all-powerful Creator to arrange His plan of salvation in this way? Also, we may ask, What was the reason for the miracles of our Lord at His first advent? Further, what was the reason for God's miracles previous to our Lord's first advent? We remember the case of Elijah and the prophets of Baal, recorded in 1 Kings 18:21-39. Undoubtedly this miracle was to demonstrate the true God.

Coming to our Lord's first advent, we find His first miracle was the turning of water into wine, and we read in John 2:11—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus . . . and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." We see, then, the main purpose of this miracle was to demonstrate the power of God in the hands of Christ, and illustrate beforehand what would be possible of Christ in His kingdom. "He manifested forth"—showed beforehand His glory. Our Lord had no glory while on earth, as shown by His words to His disciples—"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24 :26.)

In addition to our Lord curing many afflicted with sicknesses, and performing miracles of feeding the multitudes, etc., there were isolated cases of Christ even raising the dead to life. One of these incidents is recorded in Luke 7:11-17, and it will be noticed in this case that there is no reference to the belief or faith of the mother, but simply—"The Lord had compassion on her." But did not the Lord have compassion on all the other mothers and fathers who were also losing their sons and daughters in death? He surely did ; why then did He not raise the multitudes of Israel from the dead ? Because it was not the due time to start the resurrection of the dead ; neither was it the due time to start a general healing and restoring campaign in Israel. But it was the time to demonstrate the power of the true Lord, and assure His followers that when the proper time did arrive, Christ would heal, restore and raise from the dead all mankind, and give them an opportunity to live forever.

This demonstration of the power of God, manifest by Christ, was referred to by the Master when He said--"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me ; or else believe me for the very works' sake." (John 14:11.) This power was also manifest by the acts of the Apostles and others in the early church, a notable example being found in Acts 9:36-42, where it is recorded that Peter had raised Dorcas from the dead. If it were true that the Lord is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," as respects miracles amongst His people, then it would be in order to have people raised from the dead to-day, as at our Lord's first advent, and in the days of the Apostles. But who amongst the "faith healers" of to-day would attempt to raise the dead, in their claims that the power of the Lord is available in the same way as in the days of Christ and His apostles?

The Apostle Paul also performed miracles, and received the Lord's protection in a very marked way, as shown from Acts 28:1-6, 7-9. There can be no doubt that these occasions were for the establishment of the early church, this being confirmed by Paul when he declared—"God also bearing them (the early Christians) witness, both with signs and wonders, and gifts of the holy spirit, according to his own will." (Heb. 2 :4.)

It is very evident, also, that the Apostles were the main witnesses of the signs, wonders and miracles in the early church ; indeed, they were the only ones commissioned by the Lord to impart the gifts to others. This is an important truth, as revealed from Acts 8:5-17. An examination of this passage shows that while Philip was able to work miracles, in addition to preaching the gospel, as he was not one of the Apostles he did not possess the power to impart the gifts of the spirit to others ; therefore, it required Peter and John (two apostles) to be sent from Jerusalem to Samaria to convey the gifts of the spirit to others in that region.

It may be asked, What happened amongst the Lord's people in the period passing on from the days of the Apostles? It is evident that after the Apostles died no more could have the gifts of the spirit imparted to them, and these gifts automatically ceased in the churches, as the Lord intended. While Paul was still ministering, he wrote to the Corinthian church and sought to wean them away from the desire for outward show in the performing of the gifts of the spirit. The Apostle, while revealing that there were some gifts more desirable than others, would show this church "a more excellent way" than even the best gifts. (1 Cor. 12 :31.) This, Paul proceeded to do in his wonderful 13th chapter, showing that the development of the fruits of the spirit in the hearts of the Lord's followers was the allimportant work for this Gospel Age.

What shall we say, then, of the claims that healings are done to-day in the Lord's name? Let it be understood that claims to do "wonderful works" in the Lord's name is not sufficient proof of the Lord's sanction for such things. (See Matt. 7:21-23.) Many quote the passage used by Peter on the Day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:16-18, and claim that the spirit is being poured out to-day upon all flesh. But not so ; verse 18 is the only part of this prophecy yet being fulfilled. Only God's servants and handmaidens have as yet received the holy spirit, during this Gospel Age, but in the Kingdom Age "all flesh" worthy of God's blessing will receive His spirit to assist them to attain human perfection ; this of course will not be a begetting of the spirit, as is the case now with God's true people during this Gospel Age.

It may surprise some people, also, to know that an amount of healing is going on to-day in various parts of the world by people who make no claim of being devoted to the Lord at all. Some noted cases were brought to the attention of readers of an English periodical some little time ago, which reported the Archbishops of Canterbury and York having appointed a commission to enquire into what is called "Divine Healing." A number of the most prominent healers are mentioned, and the article quotes at length about the work of one, Mr. Harry Edwards, who said it was not he who did the healing, but the "spirit power." There were no prayers offered by Mr. Edwards, which showed that he did not claim

to be a Christian. The article states further that most of Mr. Edwards' work is "absent healing." People all over the world have been healed ; they merely write to him, whereupon he "intercedes with the spirits." He never uses the word "faith" to describe his work, but calls it "spiritual healing." One churchman mentioned in the article as also doing healing work is Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, who visited Melbourne some time ago.

Our Lord gave a guide to the understanding of this "spirit power," mentioned by Mr. Edwards, in Matt. 12:22-27. Satan brought about all the suffering, sickness, sorrow and death into the world by deceiving our first parents, and if he adopts a course to partially remove some of these things for deception, it just fulfils our Lord's words—"If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself." The Apostle Paul also gave us this warning when he declared—"There are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of lights Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness ; whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11 :13-15.) Apparently the Lord permits Satan a limited amount of power to test and prove His true people during this Gospel Age. All the deceptions in spiritism, Christian Science, and other forms of "faith healing" are no doubt permitted to test the devotion of those who have consecrated their lives to the service of God.

If it were the Lord's good pleasure to heal the physical weaknesses of His true followers, then surely the Apostle Paul would have been healed ; but not so. The Apostle had "a thorn in the flesh," and he declared—"I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." However, the Lord's answer was—"My grace is sufficient for thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." How beautifully the Apostle accepted the Lord's good pleasure in response—"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake ; for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12 :7-10) . We notice also that Paul, knowing the Lord's will, did not attempt to heal Timothy of a physical disability, but advised—"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." (1 Tim. 5 :23.) How clear it is that the Christian's course is one of sacrifice of the human life and strength, while at the same time using the spirit of a sound mind to keep as healthy as possible, but never to expect or seek healing of the body by miracles. (See Rom. 12 :1 ; 8 :36.)

Quite often the words of James, in chapter 5:13-16, are quoted in support of healings today. A careful examination of this passage reveals that the Apostle was referring to sin-sickness and not bodily sickness at all.

There can be no doubt that the "gifts" of the spirit were given to the Apostles and other early Christians for the express purpose of establishing the Church in its infancy—to demonstrate the true teachings and teachers of the Lord. With the completion of the ministries of the Apostles, their Epistles being available, as also the Gospels, there was no need to continue the outward evidence of the Lord's power through His servants. So the Apostle Paul declared—"Love never faileth ; but whether there be (gifts of) prophecies, they shall fail ; whether there be (gifts of) tongues, they shall cease; whether there be (gifts of) knowledge, it shall vanish away. . . . When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when. I became a man, I put away childish things." (1 Cor. 13:8, 11.) How clear it is that the "gifts of the spirit" were for the church in its infancy, but with the development and progress by the indwelling of God's holy spirit, acquirement of the "fruits of the spirit" was the "more excellent way" which the Apostle Paul sought to encourage in all the churches. A point of special interest also is the fact that in writing to those churches which had shown considerable progress in the Christian way the Apostle did not even mention the "gifts" of the spirit ; they had apparently progressed from the "childish" condition which Paul sought to discourage in the Corinthian church.

How strange it would be, then, to expect the Lord to use methods amongst His people in the end of the Gospel Age, which His Apostles sought to discourage after the churches were established in the early period of the Gospel Age. Now we have the Bible so freely at our disposal, which was not the case when the "gifts" were used to impress the Lord's true message. How important, then, are the words of Paul—"All scripture given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.) Seeing that God's Word supplies everything that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, let all who love the Lord beware of the claims of those who now seek to attract and deceive by additional outward forms and demonstrations to appeal to the flesh, to deceive if be possible the very elect.

Tracts Available.

Copies of the tract with the article "God's Solution for the Formosa Problem," are now available for all who can use them to advantage where good may be done. The following letter 'from U.S.A., is of interest in this respect

Dear Brethren, — The March issue of "Peoples Paper" was read on the day of arrival by my husband and, myself.

I am enclosing with this letter a postal Money Order for — for which mail me as many copies of this issue as it will cover. My husband does a lot of letter writing and wants to include the copies in his correspondence. We both feel that the message contained in this March issue (“God’s Solution for the Formosa Problem”) will be of great help in our witness work in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Trusting that you will attend to this promptly, and praying God’s blessing upon you.

PEOPLES PAPER ND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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The Institute’s Work.

WITH much thankfulness to the Lord this brief review of another year’s work for the Berean Bible Institute is presented at this time. It is realised very fully that without the Lord’s blessing anything undertaken would be vain indeed, and so we give thanks unto God for His, favors and the privilege of service together with our dear brethren throughout another year just completed.

Our readers generally will know that the Institute exists for the purpose of sounding forth the truths of God’s Word to all who have ears to hear, with the main object of assisting those who are seeking to walk in the steps of Christ in these last days of the Gospel Age.

The publication of our monthly “Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ’s Kingdom” has continued as in past years, and from reports received is appreciated by our brethren throughout this land and overseas. The contributions to the columns of the “Peoples Paper” by various friends are of much assistance the desire being that the “Paper” contain just those things that will build up in the Christian way, with special emphasis on the ‘truths pertaining to the present harvest time for the Gospel church.

Printing costs for the “Peoples Paper,” at present day rates, have not been covered by subscriptions, so the deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund, as in former years. As considerable numbers of the “Paper” are distributed free of charge to interested friends over a wide area, it is felt that the indebtedness to the Tract Fund is well used in the service of the truth. The same applies to tracts supplied from the Tract Fund and distributed throughout the year. Free sample copies of “Peoples Paper” and quantities of tracts are always available to our readers for passing on where good may be done, and the assistance in the checking of proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching of the monthly “Paper” by some helpers has continued., with our sincere appreciation of this work. Friends who provide subscriptions for interested readers, and others who introduce the “Paper” to prospective subscribers are all helping in the work, in the service of the Lord.

Quantities of helps to Bible study have been despatched throughout the year to those appreciating spiritual things.

It is encouraging also to have the co-operation of our friends in supplying the literature where it will be appreciated ; and the continued mailing of the Consolation Cards to the bereaved, by some Classes of friends, has been a means of blessing to a number in sorrow.

Lectures for the public have been arranged regularly throughout the year, and with the message prepared for the brethren as well as for new friends attending, it is felt that these occasions are well worth while when hearing of the appreciation of the messages presented. In this way also, new friends are encouraged to attend the regular Bible classes.

The General Tract Fund below shows the financial position for the general work over the past year (the radio witness being separate) and all the generous assistance to the work, by the Lord’s providence, has been voluntarily supplied through the brethren, with warm appreciation. It is encouraging indeed to receive the loving co-operation in the efforts, as unto the Lord Himself.

As we look forward to the days ahead, there is surely cause for continued thanksgiving for the Lord’s blessings upon His people in these times of uncertainty. How favored are God’s people who know and rejoice in the joyful sound of His truth, and look forward with expectancy to the kingdom, which will fulfil all their desires, as well as bring blessings to all the families of the earth. It is requested that the brethren join with us in prayer for the blessing and guidance of the Lord upon the work, that His will may be accomplished in the hearts of all who are worthy to receive His message in the days ahead. “Therefore, beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,

Meditation.

(Convention Address)

THERE are many forms of meditation, I although unconsciously, we are meditating upon something mostly all the day long. We make plans to do this or that, or we change plans once made because of circumstances ; we have to adjust ourselves ; we are forever “working things out” in our minds or “chewing it over” to use a modern slang expression, and it is all a form of meditation. With all of us, at some time or other, physical and mental health problems, work problems, business and financial problems, domestic problems, etc., cause us much thought, reflection and planning — in other words, meditation.

In secular life our meditations do not bring us all to the same conclusions in any given problem ; the condition of a man’s heart will influence his reasonings, his meditations. Two men may have business or domestic problems very similar. One man is honorable, upright in heart ; the other is selfish, mean, grasping. The honorable man tackles his business problem with desire to acquit himself nobly, to extricate himself from any difficult position by fair means, without exploiting another in the process — his noble aspirations lead him to honorable meditations, as to how this could be done. Whereas the selfish, mean man thinks only of himself ; by fair means or foul he will seek to extricate himself from difficulty ; exploitation of others for his own advantage will not give him a qualm of conscience — his meditations are merciless. One man may tackle a domestic problem from the point of view as to what is just, honorable and fair to all parties. Misunderstanding on the part of others concerned may make his position extremely difficult, may even make the problem impossible to solve, but at least all his meditations will be along just lines, prompting him to honorable, just and loving methods of seeking appeasement. Another man with a similar problem will think only of himself and how he can get the best of the argument ; his meditations resolve cunning and sophistry, he pauses not to consider the other party, as to whether they are getting a fair deal. One could go on soliloquising concerning meditations of men generally, but we leave it there, and look rather to find what should constitute the meditation of Christians.

Here, again, we find that there are many forms of meditation. The Christian has many tasks to attend to daily, the same as other folk, and these all call for time, thought and energy. Although those who live closest to the Lord are often called “dreamers” by the worldly, it is not because of lack of diligence in applying themselves to necessary tasks, but they seem “dreamers” to others because, in mind, they are actually living above the sordid level of those around them. The Christian is desirous of touching as lightly as possible the things of this earth, and to use the words of the Psalmist 1:2—“His delight is in the law of his God, and in it doth he meditate day and night.” Every possible moment, when it is feasible at all, his mind revolves round some aspect of God’s eternal truth. There may be times when duties in hand demand all the concentration of which his mind is capable, but immediately there is relaxation again, the mind reverts to and delights itself in “the law of his God.”

In Luke 14:25-33 Jesus suggested what kind of first meditations a follower of His should have ; He explained that when men of the world contemplated great building schemes — “to build a tower” — they first sat down and considered the cost, meditated, both in money and labor to see if they had the wherewithal to complete the work, and so on. So, likewise, whosoever he be of you that cannot forsake all that he hath, he will never make good as My disciple, and He explained that even such intimate loves as that for father, mother, wife and children could not be allowed to come between. Many other passages also show the narrowness of the road and the difficulties that can be expected. Our Lord did not mention these (nor would we) with any thought of intimidating those who were seeking after Him. He merely wished to state facts clearly and He knew that those who really loved Him would not find such facts a deterrent to their coming to Him. Only the “half and half” Christians would falter, and these would better meditate well at the outset, for to enter the race and not be able to finish it would be a tragedy indeed.

From Matt. 8:28-34 we see the result of the meditations of some people concerning Jesus during His earthly ministry. Two men possessed with devils — madmen — met Him, to whom all in that vicinity gave a wide berth.

Jesus allowed the request of the devils to enter a herd of swine feeding nearby, and the two men were presented sane; but the swine, becoming demented, rushed down the slope and were drowned in the sea. As a result, the whole city came out to meet Jesus — to “chew it over” — and the result of their meditation was “they besought Jesus to depart out of their coasts.” It was nice to have the two demented men amongst them sane and happy again, but the cost was evidently too great —after all, think of the material gain that a whole herd of swine would bring. “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.” Can you follow Me this way? Can you drink of the cup that I shall drink of ? Yes, let there be proper meditation upon such utterances at the outset, and all along the Christian way.

Now, having “counted the cost” and entered the way, resolved with God’s help to be faithful unto death, what blessed meditations are ours. Some of them will be sweeter than others but all will be good as we learn to put right values upon everything. There are wonderful meditations to be had whilst perusing the words of the Psalmist, tracing through the

wonderful deliverances of God when in difficult circumstances ; contemplating too the wonderful effect of God's blessings on the earth and the children of men during the "times of restitution." We may be carried away in our meditations (as dreamers, the unregenerated style us) from all the woes of the present earth or order of things, to a contemplation of the time when the inhabitants of the earth will no more say, I am sick, or sad, or lonely, or "fed up" with life, but shall have a full sufficiency of all good things really needful for happiness, and none shall sorrow any more. Such meditations may well call forth the exclamation of the Psalmist — "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

However, such time is not yet; we are still in this present evil world, and if we did not face up to that fact we would be "dreamers" indeed ; but our meditations may still be sweet, good and helpful all the way along. The stresses and strains of this "evil day" through which the world and the church have been passing for some years have resulted in a tragic state of restlessness and irritability on the part of nearly all mankind. The Lord's people are not free from these influences. It seems difficult for many even to listen attentively to what others are saying. Frequently, people seem stirred to sudden "fits of temper" as we are wont to term it, and when anger takes control of the mind, reason is set aside. In these situations things are said and done which unduly injure others, and often wounds the conscience of the one who allows himself, or herself, to indulge in such fits of unreason.

The Lord's people are often put to severe tests in circumstances like this—circumstances which annoy us to the point of exasperation. What meditations could we helpfully have at such times. Well, we could think of what Proverbs says in chapter 14:29 — "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding ; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." Even if exasperated, does it do any good by "flying off the handle?" Not at all — an outburst of temper does no good at all, except to "exalt folly." If we keep ourselves under control and take time to analyze the circumstances that annoy and irritate, we will usually find that the real facts are not what we at first supposed them to be. Our meditation would be set off in another cycle, as it were, if we asked ourselves — Is the situation such that the Lord would want me to become angry over it. Granted that it is such as to present a major problem, so that we do not know which way to turn, or what to say or do, our meditation might helpfully turn to some of the Old Testament worthies and their difficult experiences. What about Moses and the Israelites at the Red Sea ; the position looked about as hopeless as it possibly could, but they were told to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." (Exod. 14:13,14.) Job learned the lesson also; he was roused to anger by the reasonings of his would be "comforters", but at last he put his trust in the Lord, and quiet and peace was restored within his soul. Jeremiah too was often faced with situations that caused him to despair. In Lamentations (chapter 3) he recalls some of his miseries and what his meditations were while he was passing through them. "Surely against me is he (the Lord) turned ; he turneth his hand against me all the day . .

. . I was a derision to all my people He hath filled me with bitterness And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord." But the Lord eventually delivered him, and as he recalls the deliverances to mind, his meditations are of a different hue, saying, "Surely the Lord's mercies are new every morning ; great is thy faithfulness . . . It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord . . . For the Lord does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men (without purpose) . . . For the Lord will not cast off forever."

The sweetest and most helpful meditation in sorrow, in "the flood of deep waters" experiences, however, are those when we turn our minds to the Saviour, our elder Brother. Sometimes the storms rise like sudden gusts upon the sea ; other times we can see the storm gathering up. We may put forth our best efforts to abate its fury, but unexplainable circumstances seem all against us and at last it breaks with all its appalling horror, and which is most repulsive to our sensitive nature and keen desire for God's abiding rest and quiet. What can we do? Often simply nothing! It is useless to remonstrate ; as stated before, when anger comes in, reason goes out. How can we close our ears to the tirade and keep our meditations helpful? By thinking of Jesus—"I will make his soul an offering for sin." What sufferings are implied by this statement respecting our dear Lord. "If we suffer with him . . . The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant before his Lord . . . I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ . . . That I might know the fellowship of his sufferings . . . Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that shall try you ; but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."

Dear fellow traveller in the narrow way, next time you are pressed beyond measure of endurance, remember the words "I will make his soul an offering for sin," and such meditation will speak a quiet within, as you think of the privilege that is yours in tasting your dear Lord's sufferings. There is no merit in our suffering, but through Jesus' merit we are privileged to taste His sufferings that we may share His glory later on. Our Lord's experiences represent a full cup of sin-offering sufferings, and He drained it to the dregs. It is interesting to note that in 1 Pet. 4:13 the word "partakers" seems to have largely the thought of "share" and is so translated by Weymouth, — "In the degree that you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice." It is a privilege granted unto us that we should share in the sufferings of our Lord, and we should rejoice in such privilege, and later, when we are allowed to share His glory experiences, we will be glad, or rejoice with exceeding joy far above the present joys indeed.

Now, however, the Lord offers the cup to each member of His body to taste. It is merely a sip that each one takes, but as

an experience it is enough to impress upon us most realistically what it cost our Lord to have His soul (His human life) made an offering for sin. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." Such meditations in severe moments will help to keep you from growing weary and faint in your mind. (Heb. 12:2-4.)

It is the knowledge of these "deep things" of God's Word that makes our private study of it so soul stirring and uplifting. Translator, commentator and concordance helps are eagerly scanned and compared, and rich new treasures do we find hidden away in the precious Word. How blessed indeed are the meditations of personal, detailed Bible study. It is listening while God speaks to us. We remember a sister stating how she loved to get into her favorite position and study the Bible, and how disappointed she felt when such periods- were interrupted with unexpected visitors, etc. In the midst of one such period of study so deeply engrossed as to be almost unconscious of anything else, a lady friend opened the door, and on catching sight of all the set-up hesitated about coming in, saying, Why, whatever are you doing? To which the sister replied, I am doing some Bible study, and you have "broken the spell," so you may as well come right in now. How well we understood that sister's remark — You have broken the spell. Precious threads of our uplifting meditation broken by non-understanding interruption. How often we wish that others could appreciate more the true value of much of our meditations and be less hasty to butt in to disturb.

Such rich counsel is given us in the Holy Word, and we are wise in following Paul's advice to Timothy, —

"Meditate upon these things ; give thyself wholly to them." (1 Tim. 4:15.) The sum total of all our meditation is that we may increase in Christ-like character. All that God has for us of richer and still richer meditation is bound up in this required development of being more submissive to the "sufferings of this present time," considering Him whose soul was made "an offering for sin." If we can appreciate that we are partakers or sharers in Christ's sufferings we will not think it strange that we should be so severely tested. Not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done. May God grant to each of us grace sufficient in our times of need. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, (at all times and in every experience) be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

Correspondence.

Space does not permit printing the many responses to the radio witness but the following sample gives an indication of the interest in the broadcasts on the part of listeners

Dear Frank and Ernest, Last Sunday we happened to tune into your broadcast accidentally, or was it a mere accident? I somehow feel something far more powerful gave us the opportunity of hearing your talk. Quite frankly, we laughed a little at first, but then the force and logic of your words quietened us, and the rest of your talk was heard in a stony silence; we all felt the atmosphere to be electric. This is how the Word of God and His only Son Jesus Christ came to us in —ward of this hospital.

We all now have faith, something which none of us possessed before; life has been given purpose, something which had troubled us before, for here in hospital we have much more time than most people to think about life and death and the reason for our existence here on earth. Would it be too much trouble to send us some of your previous talks, so that we may read and discuss them. Your admirers. (Three names listed).

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Christ Crucified.

IN an age when human ingenuity taxed itself to the utmost limit to invent cruelties to torture the victims of public revenge or hate, crucifixion certainly had a bad pre-eminence. Among the Romans it was reserved, with few exceptions, for slaves and foreigners, being considered too horrible and disgraceful for a Roman citizen, no matter what might have been his crime. It was the greatest possible indignity that could be heaped upon any offender whether considered in the light of a public disgrace, or of physical anguish.

Crucifixion was a slow, lingering, horrible process of dying, lasting always many hours, and often for several days. The victim was usually bound to the cross as it lay upon the ground ; the hands and feet were 'then nailed to the wood, and the cross elevated and planted in the socket prepared to receive it. This gave the body a terrible wrench and great was the agony which followed. The hot sun beat upon the naked body and uncovered head, (which in our Lord's case was pierced with additional cruelty by the crown of thorns). The ragged, undressed wounds festered and inflamed, and shooting pains darted from them through the quivering flesh. Added to this was the agony of an increasing fever, a throbbing head and a raging thirst ; and even the slightest movement intensified the anguish. As death drew near, swarms of insects gathered about to increase the torment from which there could not be the slightest relief. As no vital organ was directly assailed, life lingered on until the power of endurance was completely exhausted.

Over the head of the sufferer was usually an inscription describing the crime for which he had been condemned.

This was generally borne before him as he wended his way on foot to the place of execution bearing his heavy cross.

In the case of our Lord, He bore His cross to the gates of the city where they met a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, whom they compelled to bear it the remainder of the way, doubtless because Jesus was too faint and exhausted.

It appears from certain rabbinical writings that a society of Jewish women was formed to alleviate the sufferings of those condemned to die. They accompanied the condemned to the place of execution and administered a prepared drink which acted as an anodyne to allay their pain. It was probably these who offered to our Lord the "vinegar and gall" (more properly, sour wine and myrrh) which He refused, preferring His mind to be clear and awake to the end. The drink offered Him on the cross by one of the Roman soldiers, and accepted, was not the anodyne proffered and refused before, but simply sour wine,

the common drink of the soldiers.

The ultimate physical cause of Christ's death is believed to have been literally a broken heart. Otherwise He would probably have lingered much longer. Crucifixion seldom produced death in less than twenty-four hours, and victims have lingered as long as five days. Pilate and the guard were surprised on learning of Jesus' death so soon. Instead of lingering long, He died suddenly, and before He was fully exhausted ; for He had conversed with the thief and had commended His mother to the care of John ; He had declared His great work finished and then with a loud (literally; a strong) voice which indicated considerable remaining strength both of body and mind He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?" and instantly died. In the agony of Gethsemane the heart and blood vessels were affected. The palpitation of the heart was so intense then as to cause bloody sweat, a phenomenon rare but not unknown, produced by intense mental excitement. Already weakened by such an experience, a repetition of the anguish probably ruptured the membrane of the heart causing instant death.

Such was the awful tragedy of Calvary which ended the human existence of our Lord, who thus gave Himself as a lamb to the slaughter. "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" when falsely accused, condemned and crucified. Had He exerted Himself in self-defence, either in Pilate's judgment hall, or in Gethsemane's garden, to speak again to the people as before, again doubtless they would have said "Never man spake like this Man" and would have hailed Him their king as they did only five days before, saying "Hosanna to the son of David, blessed is he that cometh as Jehovah's king." Or had He prayed to the Father, He could immediately have had a life-guard of more than twelve legions of angels. —Matt. 26:53.

He could have escaped the awful experience, but He did not do so, but willingly gave Himself a ransom for sinners.

He knew that His hour had come, when according to His Father's plan the world's redemption price should be paid. Remember His words to a disciple who attempted His defence — "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He will presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

Yes, the Scriptures must be fulfilled ; they expressed the Father's will which He had come to do, hence the fulfilling of what was written, was the all-absorbing interest with Him ; the plan of God must be carried out at any cost, and to the execution of the plan He submitted Himself in perfect obedience, even unto death, even the horrible, torturous, ignominious death of the cross.

Though our Lord submitted Himself to death at this time because He recognised this to be the hour foretold by the prophets, He did not seem to understand clearly why so much public disgrace and torture of mind and body should accompany it. Hence His prayer, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 26:39) He well knew that baptism (immersion) into death, was His mission, and not for one moment could He think of avoiding it ; and He knew too that with it also must come a bitter cup of suffering and shame ; but not until His hour was almost come, did He seem to fully realise how bitter would be the dregs of that cup. Seeing that death was the penalty for our sins, and not shame and misrepresentation, left room for our Lord to question the Father's wisdom and love, in apparently asking Him to endure more than was needful to redeem mankind. But He bowed to the Father's wisdom and love in it all, saying— Thy will, not mine be done! In the light of the Apostle's words we can see that the perfect "man Christ Jesus" was not only redeeming men, but by His obedience even unto death — even the death of the cross — He was proving Himself worthy of high exaltation to the perfection of the divine nature, which because of this implicit and even blind obedience He has now attained. (Phil. 2:9.) So, too, in His last moments, in being treated exactly like the sinner whose ransom He was giving, when mental communion with the Father was interrupted and He

felt for the moment alone, separated from the Father, cut off and condemned as the sinner whom He represented, it was more than He could bear, He cried with a loud voice, My God ! my God ! Why hast thou forsaken me? This was more severe than all else, the very dregs of this cup of suffering. Not until afterward was the necessity and wisdom and love of this part of the Father's plan made manifest. Up to that hour He had communion with His God. — See John 16:32.

What a lesson on obedience was thus furnished to every creature of God, in every age, and on every plane of existence — an obedience which bowed in loving submission to the will of God even in blindness as to why it should be so, and even under the most heartrending trial. What a glorious character for our example and imitation! perfect submission to the will of God and perfect confidence, which implicitly trusted the Almighty Father where it could not trace Him.

Crucified with Christ

Having above examined briefly the actual crucifixion of our Lord, the actual death of the Lamb of God who put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, let us now glance briefly at a figurative use of the word “crucified”, not by way of setting aside the foregoing actual occurrence, but to learn the proper significance of the figures as used by our Lord and the Apostle Paul in the following passages :—

“Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” — Mark 8:43.

“They that are Christ's (members of the anointed body — the Bride') have crucified the flesh with its affections and desires.” — Gal. 5:24 ; compare 3:29.

“I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not (the old) I (any longer) but Christ liveth in me.” — Gal. 2:20.

“Our old man (our former selves, justified by faith in Christ's sacrifice) is crucified with Christ (that we might be members of His body, spiritual new creatures), and that the body of sin (the entire sin system with all its members and branches) might, be destroyed.’ (Rom. 6:6.) We have seen that actual, literal crucifixion signifies to deliver up to a torturous, slow, but sure death. And the figurative closely resembles this, so that the same definition fits it perfectly. When we say, then, that anyone is taking up his cross to follow Christ, it signifies that such a one is consecrated and is taking the first step of self-denial in espousing the cause of Christ, though it be with fear and trembling ; submitting willingly to painful humbling and contempt in the sight of the world and of the chief priests and their blind followers, to share with the Master and all the members of His body the coldness and the scorn of the world and of many they seek to bless ; to be alone, and yet not alone as was our Head, for we have comfort and sympathy from Him as our High Priest, and from our fellow members of His body. With Him none could sympathise ; He was the fore-runner on this race-course, and of the people there was none with Him.

But where does our cross-bearing begin ? and where our crucifixion? — where does it end ? and how much does it involve? some may inquire. We answer, Circumstances alter cases to some extent, and each must apply the matter in his own case. To enable all to do this, let us notice two notable examples of such cross-bearing — our Lord, and Paul.

Our Lord, born under the conditions of the Jewish Law, could not begin His service (ministry) until He was thirty years old, though His earlier years were spent in studying prophetic utterances concerning God's plan and His share therein. This is made evident by the only record of His boyhood days. When twelve years old, He was seeking information concerning the Father's business and was found among the eminent teachers hearing their explanations of the prophecies and asking them questions.

When He was thirty, was His first opportunity to begin the work which He had come into the world to do. We might say then, using the figure, that He took up His cross when at thirty He came to John to be baptized of him in Jordan. This was a cross, a humiliation, because the masses of the people like John were ignorant of the deep meaning which our Lord attached to immersion as a symbol or figure of death. John and the people, used it only as a symbol of washing, cleansing or reformation from sin. Nor was it proper for our Lord then to explain to them a symbol which belonged to an age and work not proper to be known until Pentecost.

Nor would they have understood Him if He had explained. But it became Him to set the example, which as their leader He would afterwards expect all His disciples to follow, and hence as in His actual death He who knew no sin was counted among the transgressors, so in its symbol, the water immersion, He was “numbered with transgressors,” (Isa. 53:12.) who were there figuratively washing away a sinful past to start anew.

For the sinless Lamb of God to be thus misunderstood was no doubt a heavy cross, but it opened the way to a still clearer appreciation of the Father’s will which He had come to perform. Obedience in taking up the cross proved Him worthy of continuing in the Father’s service — even unto death. The holy power of God came there upon Him, enabling Him to see more and more clearly His future pathway. down to Calvary, but bringing also clearer and clearer apprehensions of the exceeding riches of divine favor and high exaltation in reservation for Him at the end of the “narrow way.”

Under the increased light of His fuller insight into the plan of God and where the narrow way would lead, His spirit of consecration led Him to turn aside into the wilderness, there to more fully consider in private the Father’s plan and His future course in obedience thereto. There the cross grew heavy as He more fully realised the shame, ignominy and self-abasement to which His consecration would lead. And the tempter bore his weight upon the already heavy cross by suggesting other ways of doing good more agreeable to the flesh than sacrifice. But after counting the cost our Lord refused any other methods, either Satan’s or His own, of doing good, and chose to have God’s will done in God’s way, saying, “I have come to do thy will, O my God.” And with His victory He was stronger, and His cross seemed to be lighter as He came out of the wilderness crucified, willingly delivered up to die — hands, feet and all and every talent and power restrained from self-service — all offered up a sacrifice to God in the carrying out of God’s plan, whatever that might involve, whether the dying should prove to be of longer or shorter duration, or of more or less pain. As a man, then, our Lord’s will was already dead to every human hope and ambition — dead to His own plans and control as a man. And yet He was not dead in the sense of being insensible to scoffs and pains and piercing words, but crucified, delivered up unto death. The pinioned, bleeding members (human talents, rights, etc.) quivered and twitched but always remained pinioned (crucified, delivered up to death) to the last, as when He prayed that the cup of ignominy might be omitted.

During all those three and a half years of our Lord’s ministry, He was crucified in this figurative sense; that is, He was delivered up to death — His will, His talents, His all bound and pinioned — in harmony with the Father’s plan. And every deed of His by which “virtue (vitality, life) went out of him” to bless and heal in mind or body the condemned sinners about Him was part of His dying and finally ended in death — even the literal death of the cross.

Brother Paul was not literally crucified but ended his course by being beheaded. Yet figuratively he tells us long before his literal death, “I am crucified with Christ.” That is to say : I am delivered up to death — my will and self-control, my talents and powers, my rights and lawful ambitions as a man, are all pinioned and stopped by my consecration, so that having no will or plan or way of my own, I may be fully able to let the holy spirit or mind (will) of the Master dwell in me and rule my every act to His service — not so dead that I will not occasionally feel a twinging of the flesh, and have a suggestion as to

another way and as to what would or would not be necessary, but I keep my body and its wishes under (1 Cor. 9:27), subject to the will of God ; saying as did the Master under similar circumstances, “Not my will but thine (Father) be done.”

Many get the idea that our Lord and the Apostle referred only to sinful desires being crucified. They read it as though the Apostle meant, My sinful ambitions and desires I keep under and crucify, and as though our Lord meant — Not my sinful will be done, O Father, but Thy holy will. This is a mistake ; our Lord was holy, harmless ; as such He could not have a sinful will or desire. His will was not to kill, steal, blaspheme, covet the things of others, nor to bear false witness of others, nor to backbite, nor to do any sinful thing toward God or man. His will on the contrary was to do good only, to honor God and to bless men. But as a man — a perfect man — He had a mind, a strong mind or judgment as to how good could best be accomplished, how God could be most honored and men most blessed.

Had our Lord followed His own judgment and will as to the best methods of honoring God and blessing men, it would probably have been in the line which naturally suggests itself to other good judgments and wills — in the line of political and social reforms, in establishing hospitals, asylums and colleges, and in cleansing the religious systems of His day. But such a good will, though it would doubtless have accomplished much temporary good, would never have worked out the grand deliverance for the race, which we now see God’s greater comprehensive “plan of the ages” is designed to work out. Such a plan did not occur to the mind of even the perfect man Jesus. It is beyond the scope of human thought and planning. But knowing that His Father was greater than He. He rightly reasoned that implicit submission to Jehovah’s will was the proper course whatever it might involve.

To be God’s messenger and accomplish His will, our Lord must crucify (deliver up to death) all of His own, good, holy, harmless, pure will, and must say fully, “Not my will (Father) but thine be done.” — Thy will in Thy way entirely.

The nearer a person is to perfection the stronger will be his will, and the more difficult to crucify it. The more confident one is that his will is good and for good and blessing to others, the more difficult it is to see good cause for surrendering it. Thus our dear Lord knew that it was needful for Him to DIE as the ransom price for the world and shrank not from it ; but knowing also that pain and public scorn and contempt as a criminal was not part of the penalty, He questioned its necessity, whether the Father was not asking of Him, as the Redeemer, more than the penalty of man’s sin, and therefore prayed, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me” -- nevertheless I claim no rights,

I attempt not to follow My own ideas, nor to exercise My own will; My will is fully surrendered ; I leave all to Thy wisdom — Thy will be done. Our Lord evidently saw not then, what for our advantage and strengthening He has since shown us who are following His footsteps, crucifying our own wills, etc. — that extreme trial of obedience, even unto death, even the death of the cross, was expedient and proper, because of the very high exaltation to the divine nature, for which

His implicit obedience to the Father’s will in giving our ransom, was to be the test of worthiness.

We as followers in our Lord’s footsteps have neither such strong wills to overcome and crucify nor the proportionate strength of character whereby to overcome them. But we have the advantage of knowing clearly why so extreme and exact obedience is necessary, in all who would be accounted worthy of a place in that select “body of Christ,” which is to be so highly honored with its Head, Lord and Redeemer, Jesus.

As with our Lord, so with the Apostle Paul, crucifying did not mean the crucifying of a sinful will, or sinful desires, plans, etc.; for he says “I am crucified with Christ,” and elsewhere he calls it being “dead

with Christ” and having “fellowship in his sufferings”. So, then, if Christ’s crucifixion was not the crucifixion of a sinful will, and desires, neither was Paul’s ; and neither are yours and mine as followers of the spotless Lamb of God, crucified with Him.

True, Paul and all other followers of Christ were by nature sinners and children of wrath even as others, and hence very much less •than perfect in will, compared with the undefiled One. But their first step of faith in Christ showed them that they had no right or privilege, to will or to do wrong, and in accepting of JUSTIFICATION through Christ’s death, they not only confessed sorrow for sins past, but repentance and change from sin for the future to the extent of their ability, realising also that the imputed merit of the ransom not only covered sins past, but also all unwilful weakness and errors of the future. And this justification through Christ and change of will from sin to righteousness preceded their “call” to follow Christ and to suffer with Him and to share His glory and high exaltation to the divine nature. Thus we see that with us as with our Lord, it is our good human wills, our good intentions and good plans, (not actually perfect as our Lord’s but reckonedly so through His imputed merit) that are to be crucified, delivered up to death with, and like Christ to share in His sacrifice.

As our Lord set aside and crucified His own will, and accepted of the Father’s will instead, so we set aside or crucify our wills or desires, no matter how good and wise they appear to us, to accept of the guidance and direction of our Lord Jesus who, now glorified, delights still to carry out the Father’s plan, and the grandeur of perfection which He can now fully appreciate.

All that we are is made tin -four thoughts ; it is founded on our thoughts: it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speak or act with a pure thought, happiness will follow him like a shadow that never leaves him.– Clipping.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Boddington is Over its Crisis

UNDER the above heading, the following news item appeared in the Melbourne “Age” some few weeks ago :—

The small timber and farming town of Boddington, 76 miles from Perth, W.A. has been through a crisis, and 16- year-old Ronald Court is now a cheerful patient in the district hospital because of it. Ron was critically ill with tetanus; there was tenseness in the air and people’s minds were not on their jobs. At the hospital, 100 yards off the main road, there was a state of emergency. On all roads leading past the hospital barricades and detour signs were up to keep traffic away; on the hospital gate, steps and verandah there were red-painted signs saying, ‘Tetanus, silence, please.’ Inside, the door bell was disconnected, the telephone was muffled, and the staff spoke in whispers.

“These precautions were the idea of Dr. Neil Same and Matron M. Browne, who wanted absolute quiet for the patient. There was not a murmur within earshot of the hospital. During the most critical period the doctor and matron maintained a 24-hour vigil beside the boy’s bed. Whispered reports on his condition were passed to his parents from the back door of the hospital. On Saturday Ron was improving; by Sunday he was out of danger and able to speak to his parents. Boddington then returned to its normal routine.”

The above account of the thoughtful consideration of so many people to assist the recovery of the one stricken with the dread disease is surely most refreshing indeed. How it warms our hearts when we learn of such loving measures being taken ; truly such actions demonstrate that the qualities of devoted consideration for fellow human beings, found in full measure in our first parents, are not lacking in considerable degree in a number of human beings today. How different the world would be at present, if the thoughts and actions of the people of Boddington in their crisis could be incorporated into the lives of all people. We are not implying that Boddington’s people are always so thoughtful and kindly towards one another, but rather that the emergency revealed the best in them, and they rose to the occasion magnificently.

How thankful we are to know that the thoughtfulness revealed in that little town in Western Australia is but an example of what all mankind, worthy of attaining everlasting life, will develop for all time in the kingdom age, with the Lord’s help. But how helpful and encouraging it is to find some people, even now, who have that loving consideration for fellow human beings, not only on special occasions, but at all times, that they willingly give time and means for the encouragement and blessing of others. These are, of course, the Lord’s truly devoted followers, and their one object is to serve their Master through His people, especially, as well as doing good to all people as they have opportunity.

Tell Jesus.

Tell Jesus when life's burden seems too great for you to bear;
Go, lay it at the feet of Christ, and know that He will care;

And tell Him all the little things that come to cloud your way,
The puzzles and perplexities that trouble you to-day.

Tell Jesus all there is to tell — about your daily needs —
About the dim uncertainties through which your pathway leads —

About the cherished hopes that lie, crushed lifeless at your feet
The golden dreams left unfulfilled — the labour incomplete.

If you could know how tenderly He makes our cares His own,
You would not stand apart again and bear your pain alone;

You would not miss the joy and peace of walking at His side
Of finding tempest changed for calm and sorrow sanctified.

I tell Him all the story now; no other friend could be,
In morning light or evening shade, what Jesus is to me;

His loving heart is still the same, to-day as yesterday,
And in His love I find my rest and in His strength my stay.

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Kind Master and Good Servant.

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” — Psalm 103:13.

MASTERS and servants in olden times occupied a much closer relationship to each other than they do to-day, a relationship which took on more of paternal sentiment. The change has been brought on gradually, and is not the result of great men of to-day having less heart than great men of the olden times, nor of employees being less faithful. Rather is it the result of changed times and conditions — the result of greater individuality and independence which leads the employee to prefer to sell his time and energy on a strictly commercial basis rather than on a paternal basis. Nevertheless, the general influence is unfavourable in many respects : first, because men of great mental power and influence are to some extent, under present arrangements, cut off from fellowship and sympathy with their employees, and although the class distinctions are not less marked than in the past, nor even as much so, yet class rivalry and animosity is possibly greater than ever.

The employer, under present conditions, feels no responsibility for the employee since he has made a bargain with him for so much money per day without other responsibilities, and the employee feels that, having obtained the wage bargained for, and having used it according to his will, he has no further claim upon his employer in case of sickness or other adversity. But the system has also its good features as well, for it should cultivate independence, self-reliance and prudence, but all must discern that this division between masters and servants stands closely related to the great time of trouble which now impends.

The lesson of the healing of the centurion's servant at Capernaum strikingly illustrates the affectionate interest that prevailed between some good masters and good servants in the past. True, we do not have any record that the servant was a good one, but the inference is there because the centurion was an orderly man, and such men usually seek for, and obtain, orderly servants. Also in his conversation with our Lord he declares that he was accustomed for his servants to do as he bade them (Luke 7:1-10).

The centurion was, of course, a Roman -- not a Jew. He was therefore debarred in a general way from the Lord's blessings, which he declared were for the children of the kingdom (Israelites) only and not for strangers. No doubt because he realised himself as outside Judaism, an alien and a stranger and foreigner from the covenants and blessings of God bestowed upon Israel (Eph. 2:12), that he obtained the co-operation of the leading Jews of the city, that they might favour his cause with the Lord and intercede that his petition might be granted.

We notice the good deeds of this centurion. He respected the religion of the Jews, and had used his wealth in building a synagogue, the ruins of which have been found about sixty years ago. Of these ruins, Edersheim says: “The remains now, after eighteen centuries, in their richness of elaborate carvings, of cornices and tablets of capitals and niches, show with what liberal hand he had dealt his votive offerings.”

Perhaps this miracle preceded the awakening of Jairus' daughter, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that Jairus himself was one of the Jew's elders, who came to Jesus in the interest of the centurion and this, to some extent, helps to account for his great faith in our Lord's power to revive his daughter, even the dead.

Our Lord seems to have readily granted the centurion's request, and because it was not presented personally is presumed not to signify any lack of respect, but the very reverse — a realisation on his part that Jews were averse to having any dealings with Gentiles except along strictly business lines. His further modesty and meekness were shown in the fact that before Jesus had reached his house he sent friends (not servants) to hinder Jesus from defiling Himself by coming into a Gentile's house. For although he was a man of influence and power, he realised the barrier between himself and the Jews,

according to which the Pharisees would have considered that they defiled themselves by entering his house. He therefore suggested that our Lord would merely speak the word and that he had fullest confidence that the word could be spoken as well outside as inside the house — that one possessing such power as the Lord Jesus manifested had agencies at His command which would not require Him to personally see and touch the servant in order to heal him, even as the centurion himself was accustomed to perform various matters through the instrumentality of his servants.

This was a wonderful illustration both of meekness and of faith, and it was appreciated by our Lord accordingly. There is a lesson in it for all the Lord's people to the effect that the more we exercise faith in the Lord along reasonable lines, in harmony with the teachings of His Word, the more will He be pleased with us. The same with Thomas, who, being absent at the time of our Lord's first appearance to the eleven, declared that nothing would satisfy him respecting the Lord's resurrection except the putting of his fingers into the nail-prints of His hands. Our Lord, while granting him the demonstration, intimated that he would have a greater blessing if he could have exercised a greater faith, saying, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Let all the Lord's people remember this, and instead of doubting the Lord's willingness to perform what He has promised, and requiring signs and further assurances and evidence, let us rest content that He who has so graciously done for us in the past more than we could have asked or thought, is equally faithful today and will fulfil to us all the good promises of His Word.

The more heartily we shall accept His promises, the more fully we shall trust to His gracious providences, the more peace of heart we shall have ourselves, and the more the Lord will delight Himself in us as His servants and brethren, and the more He will be pleased to favour us and use us.

Our Lord's remark, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," was a grand tribute of approval for the Gentile centurion. It distinctly indicates that the fact that the Lord's favour, which for over eighteen hundred years had been confined to Israel, was not merely because the Israelites were alone worthy, nor because in them alone was found such faith as that on account of which father Abraham was blessed and the blessing pronounced on his children. But, although the Lord found greater faith in the centurion than among others in Israel, nevertheless He could not, and did not, invite the centurion to become one of His disciples because "the gifts and callings of God are not things to be repented of," and the Divine favour to Israel must, and did, continue down to the full end of the "seventy weeks" of favour promised through Daniel the Prophet. However, the national favour ceased three and a half years sooner, in the midst of the seventieth week, five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when He said of that nation, "Your house is left desolate unto you. Ye shall see me no more until that day" (Matt. 23:28; Dan. 9:24).

It is certainly within the range of possibility that this centurion, whose good works and alms were so highly commended by the Jews, and whose faith, spoken so well of by our Lord, might have been removed by Roman authority from Capernaum to Caesarea, (another fortress) that he may have been the centurion named Cornelius, the first Gentile accepted to the privileges and favours of the Gospel Church at the expiration of the "seventy weeks" of favour confined to the Israelites (Acts 10:1-35).

The lesson, therefore, for the Lord's people who are masters or employers is the lesson of kindness to servants. If a Gentile would be so careful for the interests of his servants and so bestir and trouble himself to secure him from pain, much more should every true Christian not only feel a kindness for those who are of the household of faith, but also be ready to do good unto all men as they may have opportunity. We may be sure that all such evidences of the spirit of love and kindness are pleasing to the Lord, and not only so, but that every time we thus exercise ourselves along such lines we deepen them and strengthen, confirm and establish character along the lines of love and mercy. This is one of the ways in which we are to develop ourselves more and more as copies of God's dear Son — Rom. 8:29.

Question Box

MATTHIAS NOT AN APOSTLE.

Question.—What evidences are there that Matthias was not an Apostle ; did he not receive the holy spirit along with the Apostles at Pentecost?

Answer.—There would appear to be no mention of Matthias in the New Testament aside from this incident of his selection to fill the place of Judas. This appointment was made before the holy spirit had been given, and there is no evidence of the Lord's recognition of Matthias as an Apostle. On the contrary, the Lord made His own selection in the Apostle Paul to fill the vacancy. In Rev. 21:14 we read of twelve Apostles of the Lamb only and Paul was clearly the Lord's choice as stated to Ananias, "He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name unto the Gentiles" (Acts 9:15; Gal. 2:7, 8 ; 1 Cor. 9:1, 2.)

"Apostle" means "sent." The Apostles of the Lamb would be those sent out by Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Matthias was never so sent, but Paul was. While on his zealous mission of persecution, he was arrested by a light above the brightness of the sun, and he thus caught a glimpse of the glorified Christ which blinded him. He heard the words "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Being converted he was sent to preach the Gospel.

As we hear no more at all of Matthias, it may be that when the holy spirit came upon the Apostles at Pentecost in the form of a tongue of 'fire, that it did not rest upon Matthias, and in this case the Apostles would be convinced that their selection did not have the Lord's approval. Anyway there are but the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, and as Paul is undoubtedly one, Matthias cannot be. While the eleven Apostles meant rightly and thought they were acting scripturally it is quite evident that they went before the Lord, rather than waiting for His leading. They had been instructed to wait at Jerusalem until "endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49.)

WHO ARE SAINTS?

Question.—Does the word "saint" apply only to the church of the Gospel Age, and can it properly, used for any other than those who have made their calling and election sure ?

Answer.—The word means both in the New Testament and the Old, set apart, separate, holy. and is used undoubtedly in respect of the faithful people of God of ancient days, as well of the Gospel Age. Psalm 16:3 speaks of "the saints that are in the earth"—see also Deut. 33:2, 3. The Apostle also in writing to the Colossians addresses them as saints and faithful brethren which are at Colosse—see also Ephes. 1:1, Phil. 1:1, and 4:21, 22. These are not addressed as saints, because they are perfect or absolutely holy, but because in their minds and hearts they have set themselves apart unto the Lord, and to seek as far as possible to bring every thought, word, and deed into the obedience of Christ; they are holy in purpose, in intention, and their unwilling blemishes are covered with the righteousness of our great Advocate and Redeemer.

“Jesus thy spotless righteousness, My raiment is, my glorious dress;

‘Midst heavenly hosts in these arrayed, With joy shall I lift up my head.”

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

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Perth.—The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

Fear Not.

Isaiah 43:1-7.

“Listen, for the Lord hath spoken!

Fear thou not,’ saith He!

When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee.

“Fear not, for I have redeemed thee;

All my sheep I know;

When thou passest through the rivers,
They shall not overflow.

“Fear not; by thy name
I called thee

Mine thy heart hath learned;

When thou walkest through the fire,
Thou shalt not be burned.

“Thou art mine! oh, therefore, fear not;
Mine forever now;

And the flame shall never kindle

On thy sealed brow.

“Thou art precious, therefore fear not;
Precious unto Me!

I have made thee for My glory,
I have loved thee.

—F. R. Havergal.

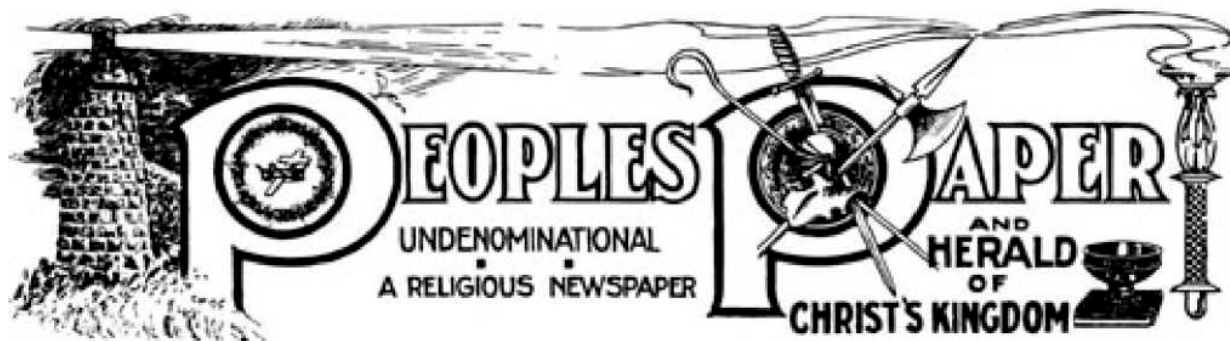
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. 4.45 p.m.

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In the Night Watches.

“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness ; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips : when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches.” — Psalm 63:5, 6.

PSALM 92:1 declares that it is “a good thing I to give thanks unto the Lord,” also to “sing praises” unto the most High. The more we learn about our God through an increasing understanding of His Word, the greater will be our desire to sing His praises. As our knowledge of Him deepens into a personal acquaintance with Him, through the outworking of His providences in our lives and the fulfilment of His promises of grace to help in every time of need, our lives should flow on in endless songs of praise to the God of our salvation.

The Lord referred to David as a man after His own heart, and in many of his psalms the sweet singer of Israel declares his love for the Lord and his delight in the law of his God. In one of them he writes:

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” — Psa. 19:7-10.

David speaks of meditating upon the Lord in the “night watches.” It was these meditations that enabled him to write: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained ; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3, 4) — And again, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.” — Psa. 19:1, 2.

The hours from sundown to sunrise in David’s time presented a somewhat different situation than they do today. Now the electric light and other means of artificial illumination very nearly turn night into day, with the result that the vast majority. of the people keep active, either in work or in pleasure, for such long hours that there is scarcely time left for the proper amount of sleep, and seldom is there any opportunity for quiet meditation.

But this was not the case in David’s time. With the flicker of a dim flame from the burning of olive oil

almost the only means of securing light after the sun went down, probably most people spent much more time in bed than is the custom now. And since the body requires only a certain amount of sleep, there were doubtless many sleepless hours during the night.

In the case of David, while he was a shepherd boy, and later as leader of Israel's army, he no doubt spent many of his nights under the canopy of heaven. It was under these conditions that he rejoiced as he meditated upon the goodness of the Lord, and marvelled at the wonders of creation. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that the subject matter of many of David's beautiful psalms took shape in his mind as he thus meditated during the night watches. How wonderfully such surroundings would prepare him for the influence of the holy spirit which guided him in his inspired writings !

"For Our Admonition"

Truly David was a man of God, and the spirit of devotion and praise found in his writings is a sincere expression of his own heart, a heart that had been given to the Lord. When he wrote, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," he was expressing his own feelings in the matter, giving utterance to his own confidence in the keeping power of his God.

But beyond the expression of his own delight in the Lord, David was inspired by the holy spirit to pen messages peculiarly fitting to the needs of the people of God during the present age. Indeed, in the divine providence, this is the chief purpose of his writings, even as it is of the writings of all the Old Testament prophets ; for, as the apostle declares, not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister. They wrote for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come. — Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor, 10:6, 11; 1 Pet. 1:12.

This being true, we might think of David's experience of meditating upon the goodness of the Lord upon his bed during the night watches as having a counterpart even more blessed in our own experiences. We are not suggesting the making of a type of his experiences, but merely that they remind us of something greater in the divine arrangement than literally lying upon a bed meditating upon the goodness of the Lord during the dark hours of a night.

In God's creative design there are seven "days," six of them having been completed about the time our first parents were created. Each of these days began with an "evening" and closed with a "morning." There is reason to believe that each of these creative days was a period of seven thousand years in length, with the seventh, or last "day," beginning with the creation and fall of man, and ending in the "morning," a morning which will become fully bright at the close of the thousand year reign of Christ.

In each case the "evening" of the creative days marked an obscure beginning, with darkness settling down into a night, until the "morning" marked the close of each period. And so it was when sin and death came upon the scene at the beginning of the seventh creative "day." From then until now, the world has been passing through the long hours of a night of darkness. "Weeping" has continued throughout this night, David tells us, "but joy cometh in the morning."— Psa. 30:5.

Resting by Faith

During this long night of weeping the world has been greatly distraught and unsettled. But those who have had faith in the promises of God have enjoyed rest of mind and heart. This has been particularly true of Jesus' followers during the Gospel age. Paul wrote concerning these, saying, "For we which have believed do enter into rest." (Heb. 4:3). We are keenly aware of the evil with which we are surrounded, and of the motions of sin in our flesh, but we place our faith in the finished work of Christ on our behalf and know that through Him and His kingdom all evil will eventually come to an end, and that even death itself will be destroyed.

Thus we are at rest. It is a rest “by” faith, and a rest “in” faith ; that is, in the “most holy faith,” the foundation of which is the meritorious sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Based upon the merit of the shed blood are all the various features of the divine plan of salvation — its times and seasons ; its heavenly calling for the church, and the hope of restitution for the world ; its prophecies pertaining to the end of the age, and its promises concerning the new age now dawning ; its explanation of the divine permission of evil, and its assurance that evil will not rise up the second time.

Yes, all this, and more, is contained in our “most holy faith,” that wonderful outline of the divine plan in which we find peace of mind and rest of heart. No matter how dark the night, or how far distant the morning hours at times may seem, we can continue to rest in this “bed” of divine promises, and while we rest, continue to sing the praises of our God.

Inadequate Beds

In Isaiah 28:20 we read about a bed which “is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it : and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” Two verses previous to this we are told of some who make a “covenant with death,” and an “agreement with hell.” The Hebrew word here translated “hell” is sheol, meaning simply the death condition. Contrary to this plain scriptural statement, it has been agreed by the moulders of religious thought throughout Christendom that there is no death.

Upon this false premise the creeds of the nominal church have been built — creeds, or confessions of faith, which have been designed to give “rest” to believers, but which, when they are put to the test, fail to do so. These creed “beds” are too short. One who endeavors to find satisfaction in them upon the basis of reason discovers that they are too short. Nor do they provide adequate covering to protect one from the chilling drafts of doubt and fear which plague the soul.

These, apparently, are the beds referred to by Jesus in His great prophecy pertaining to the end of the age, when He said that two would be lying in a “bed,” that one would be taken, and the other left. (Luke 17:34-37). And such was the position of some of us. We have experienced the shortness of these creed beds of Christendom, and have been most uncomfortable under their limited conceptions of the love and grace of God. But the Lord has favored us in that we have been lifted out of these beds and given rest upon the bed of present truth.

This is not because we are wiser than others, nor more worthy, but simply because of God’s grace in permitting us to know “the mystery of the kingdom of God.” (Mark 4:11). Surely this is great cause for rejoicing, and for praising our God, as now, while it is still dark, we are privileged to rest upon this soul-satisfying “bed” which the Lord has provided for us!

Resting but Awake

Our rest of faith in Christ, and in the great plan of God of which He is the centre, is not designed to induce sleep. While we are resting upon this bed of present truth during the world’s dark night of sin, sorrow, and death,, we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Concerning this Paul wrote, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others ; but let us watch and be sober.” — 1 Thes. 5:5, 6.

“Let us watch, and be sober.” In our text David speaks of the “night watches.” In order to participate in a “night watch” one has to be awake and alert. Night watching is a very old institution, made necessary because of the sin and selfishness of fallen man. Darkness serves as a sort of natural protection for prowlers, thieves, opposing armies, or whoever would rob another or inflict damage upon him or his

property. As an offset to this, watchmen are stationed to detect the approach or presence of enemies, and to sound an alarm.

Obviously, a watchman would fail of his duty if he fell asleep. It is not his privilege, during the night, to “sleep as do others.” Rather, he is to “watch and be sober.” And, as Christians, this is our position during the night-time of sin and death. We are “watchmen” in Zion, as it were, and we should keep alert and be on guard against the approach of “enemies” of whatever nature they might be which would rob us, or others of the Lord’s people, of their heritage in Christ Jesus.

Paul continues, “They that sleep, sleep in the night ; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love ; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

(1 Thes. 5:7, 8). This, of course, is all symbolic language. To “sleep” suggests spiritual lethargy, and to be “drunken” indicates an intoxication by false theories, doctrine, and hobbies.

We can avoid these conditions, Paul reveals, by “putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” In his letter to the Church at Ephesus, he admonishes us to “put on the whole armor of God,” that we may be able to stand against the “wiles of the devil.” — Eph. 6:11.

The truth, in its many aspects, and in its various applications in our lives, is the Christian’s armor. The very truths in which we find peace and joy and rest are also our protection against the insidious attacks of the Adversary during these dark hours of the night. It is for this purpose that the Lord gave us the truth.

Not in Darkness

Among the very important truths which guard the Christian’s heart and life today is a proper knowledge of the times in which we are living. It is this that Paul speaks of particularly when reminding us of our privileges as watchmen. We quote:

“Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you ; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety ; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” —1 Thes. 5:1-4.

The reason the “day of the Lord” does not overtake the “brethren” as a “thief in the night” is because they are “awake” and faithfully watching. In this lesson Paul is closely following the thoughts presented by Jesus concerning the time of His second presence and the end of the age. Jesus said, referring to a possible advanced knowledge of His coming, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man.” (Mark 13:32). For this reason He admonished His disciples to “watch.”

Paul says, “Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.” Jesus said that no one would know in advance, and Paul was not assuming that he did know, but he added, “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” The Thessalonian brethren knew this “perfectly” because they had confidence in what Jesus had said on the point.

But the thief-like coming of the day of the Lord was to be true only so far as the outside world and drowsy professed Christians were concerned. “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness,” Paul insisted, “that that day should overtake you as a thief.” When Jesus gave His great lesson pertaining to the time of His second presence, admonishing His disciples to watch because they did not know the day nor the hour, He did not say in so many words that their faithful watching would be rewarded by a discernment of His

presence and the beginning of the day of the Lord. But this is how Paul understood what the Master had said. That is why he wrote, “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

But this can be true only of those who are awake. “Let us not sleep, as do others,” Paul wrote. And oh, the joy with which the faithful watchers are rewarded! Concerning the saints who would be living in this time, and to whom, because of their faithfulness, the Lord would reveal His presence, Daniel wrote, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” — Dan. 12:12.

Yes, “blessed” indeed is the David class in this most wonderful time during which we are now living ! From the human outlook it is the darkest period of all time. In this darkness there is fear and apprehension. So frustrated is human wisdom that peace is feared almost as much as war. It is the time referred to in Psalm 46:2, 3, when the symbolic “earth” is being “removed,” and when the “mountains” are being “carried into the midst of the sea.”

But “we will not fear” wrote David. No, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in [this time of] trouble.” (vs. 1). He is helping in every needed way, and especially by having favored us with a knowledge of the truth. When on every hand there is unrest, nervous apprehension, chaos, and distress, we have a “bed” upon which we can recline and “rest.”

And if we keep properly “awake” during these dark hours, watching the on-moving events in the great plan of God, the very things which increase the world’s fears make our rest more complete. For among the things we see as watchers in Zion is the near approach of morning. Indeed, the Morning Star has already appeared, and through the din and confusion incident to the death of Satan’s world we discern the first gray streaks of dawn!

Singing Aloud

Surely, as David wrote, our souls are “satisfied with marrow and fatness.” The rich feast of truth, the “meat in due season” served to the household of faith by our returned Lord, satisfies our longings as nothing else could do. It is as manna from heaven, sweet, nourishing, and soul-satisfying.

And when we think of the many blessings which the Lord has so abundantly bestowed upon us, we cannot help, while resting upon our “beds” during the night watches, to sing aloud the praises of our God. David makes special mention of this in Psalm 149:5, where we read, “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” Yes, we are “resting” but not “sleeping,” and while we rest, we “sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.”

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,” David continues, “and a two edged sword in their hand.” In Psalm 92, where David says that “it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,” he also speaks of showing forth His loving-kindness. We give thanks to God in our personal and collective prayers to Him, but we show forth His praises when we speak of His loving-kindness to others. So, to sing aloud upon our beds, and for the high praises of God to be in our mouths, call for activity in making known the glorious Gospel of the kingdom.

This is the great privilege of all who have been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the divine plan.

We rejoice in the fatness, the richness of the “meat in due season” upon which it is our privilege to feed. Resting upon our “bed” in the “night watches” we delight to meditate upon the goodness of the Lord, and

to give thanks to Him for His boundless grace.

But this should not be all. The result of our meditations should be a bursting forth in song, even the “new song” which the Lord has given us to sing. And when we take into consideration all that the Lord is doing for us, how can we keep from singing? Surely we will want to praise the Lord with joyful lips !

In Psalm 92:3 David speaks of praising the Lord upon an “instrument of ten strings.” We might think of these “ten strings” as representing the various fundamental doctrines of the divine plan. It is the beautiful harmony of these doctrines, when these “strings” are played upon by those who have learned the ‘-new song,” that really brings praise to our God.

These doctrines reveal the wisdom, justice, love, and power of our God which, blended in perfect harmony and unison, make up His glory. It is our privilege now to show forth this glory, while, resting upon our “beds,” we joyfully contemplate the time now nearing when a knowledge of His glory will fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. Praise ye the Lord! (Reprinted from “The Dawn”)

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Serving the Lord.

“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” (Rom. 12:11).

Whatever we do we are to do all unto the Lord; or rather, whatsoever we do we should do altogether unto the Lord. With the Christian, the chief business of life is to glorify God, to serve Him and, incidentally, as directed by the Lord, to serve the brethren, to serve the Truth, to serve righteousness, to serve all men as he has opportunity, “doing good unto all, especially to the household of faith.” In our text the word business seems to include any occupation, of any kind, that would be approved of the Lord. It would not do for us to say, Be not slothful in the liquor business or the tobacco business, for we are to give our attention only to those occupations which we believe have the Lord’s approval.

The expression, “not slothful,” is equivalent to the expression, not lazy, not indolent. The Apostle’s thought seems to be that any matter proper to be done should have the intelligent and active attention of him whose duty or privilege it is. Whatever is worth doing is worth doing zealously, well. The Apostle’s thought is that we are, first of all, to see that our business is a worthy one; and secondly, to prosecute it faithfully. If it is ‘to provide money for either our personal needs or the Lord’s work, we should prosecute that business with energy, and with appreciation of the privilege, as done to Him. We should not be slothful or careless in any way.

A certain amount of provision for our temporal need is necessary. How much time is to be given thus is a thing for each to determine for himself. After we have made a consecration to the Lord, to give our lives in His service, there is very little we can give at best. We should see that we “redeem the time,” buy it back from the affairs of this life, as far as reasonably possible, in order to secure the more of it for the special service of promulgating the Truth. This does not mean that we should leave our families dependent upon others. We should care for our proper interests. We should not be overcharged, but should have a proper care for those dependent upon us. As for our own requirement, having food and raiment, we should be content and not wish to accumulate for a long period of life.

The word fervent signifies very hot, to boil. The thought that the Apostle gives is that whatsoever we do we should do heartily, with our might, as unto the Lord. The one who takes the course of doing whatever he does in a careless manner forms a slothful habit, which is a drag on him all through life. Whatever we do we should do fervently. We are the Lord’s and whatever business we have is His. The Lord is pleased that we should be energetic in our affairs. If any one is in a business where he is violating conscience, he should get out of it into one in which he could do some good in the world.

The Lord’s people should not worry or take anxious thought respecting tomorrow. The Scriptures imply, however, that we should be provident and careful, laying by in store, that we may be prepared to do something for neighbors and friends who may need. Money laid by merely represents so many days of labor saved. We should not use all of our resources upon the immediate present, but exercise self-control, to the end that we may have good results in the future. This rule will apply to food and clothing, also. If our store is small, we should not wonder where the next suit of clothes will come from. If we had the next suit it might be stolen. Neither should we wonder, If I accept the Truth, what shall I do if my neighbors and friends turn against me? What if I should get into great disrepute on account of the Truth? We should leave all such things to the Lord. If we need persecutions, we hope that He will let them come to us.

If in that way He chooses to make the Truth worth something to us, we should be glad. “All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” — 2 Tim. 3:12.

On the other hand, the Lord does not intend us to go through life in a careless manner, happy-go-lucky, so to speak. We are to have a proper thought for the day. What are the responsibilities of today? What are the

cares? As the Scriptures enjoin, be “not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” We are to have a great deal of zeal. We are not to worry over things that may happen tomorrow, but have faith that God will be with us tomorrow, and give grace sufficient for us when it shall come. If the Lord’s people are living faithfully they will have a great deal to think about every day. They will not need to go out in advance to worry about tomorrow. We shall have plenty to do if we give attention to the present difficulties, and go to the Throne of Grace that we may obtain grace and strength to help today.

Our Lord assures us that if the main thought of our hearts is concerning His service and the promotion of righteousness and the attainment of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him, then we need carry no anxious cares respecting the future. As His disciples we shall have trials and tribulations enough day by day, and shall need daily to lean upon the Bridegroom’s arm as we seek to walk the “narrow way.” Sufficient for each day will be the evil of itself ; and thanks be to God, we have also His promise that daily His grace shall be sufficient for us.

To those who are the Lord’s consecrated people it is the greatest privilege imaginable to serve the Lord. The Lord is looking to see to what extent we are willing to sacrifice earthly things, earthly approval, that we may have His approval and hear His “Well done !”

Full Deliverance for God’s Saints.

“He shall call upon Me and I will answer him ; I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him and honor him.” — Psalm 91:15.

WHEN considering the above text, we are naturally interested to know who or what class would be thus favored of God and whether or not we might become members of that class. The context seems to show that the Psalm is prophetic and refers to the Lord Jesus and the Church — The Christ as a whole. No doubt it has been true in a certain sense of some others. For instance, when Abraham called upon the Lord, God heard him in his troubles and blessed him. And the Lord will yet give him great honor, because he loved and trusted God. The same might be said of the faithful ones all through the Jewish Dispensation. But the Psalm seems to refer especially to The Christ. These are the ones who bear the closest relationship to God. Their love is manifested in a special sense by their faithfulness to the will of God, their faithfulness in honoring His name, their faithfulness in upholding His Truth, in being willing to die in God’s service, in laying down their lives for the brethren, in developing the fruits of the holy spirit ; for all this is included in their covenant.

It is this class, therefore, that the Lord will answer when they call upon Him; it is this class that He will deliver and honor, will care for in trouble. All who come to God, must necessarily, before they can be accepted, enter into a Covenant of Sacrifice with Him through Christ, giving up their will — loving the Lord and His will better than themselves and their own will or the will of any other. Of course, a large proportion of those who proclaim themselves to be Christians are merely nominal Christians — Christians in name only, who never made a covenant with God.

Of those who do enter into this Covenant, not many carry it out faithfully, submitting their lives and their every interest to God’s will. Noticeable examples of the faithful ones of the past were our Lord Jesus and His Apostles. And there have been others, of course, of this faithful class throughout this Gospel Age, now closing. All these are styled by Jehovah His jewels, and are to be made by Him into a glorious diadem, the Lord Jesus being its brightest and choicest gem. These are to show forth during eternal ages Jehovah’s Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. Throughout this Gospel Age God has been working in these to will and to do His good pleasure.

But, God works in no one contrary to that one's own will. If we wish to step out from under Christ's instruction, there is nothing to prevent us. God would that we remain, but is not willing to urge upon us, to press upon us, this matter. God wishes only such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in Truth, because they love Him. This class who seek faithfully to do the Lord's will because they love Him may call upon Him in every trouble and difficulty. His answer will not come in an audible voice, and may not come in the manner that we expect ; but He will answer in the best way the petitions of His saints which are asked in harmony with His will, His Word. That is, as Jesus said, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you [if you remember and act upon My teaching], ye may ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" ; for those thus abiding in Him would ask only those things which God has provided for them, only such things as His providence has arranged for them, only such things as His Word authorizes His saints to pray for. The Lord has promised these that they shall have their requests. He has been blessing and caring for His people throughout the Gospel Age. Their needs are often supplied before they call. They are to have the Word of God clearly in mind that their prayers and endeavors may be in line with His will. Thus their disappointments will be His appointments, and will be accepted as of the Lord.

"I will be with him in trouble," is the promise. The intimation here is that the Lord will not, necessarily, prevent our getting into trouble. We might see the trouble coming and pray to the Lord, but He might not deliver us from the trouble. And we should not ask that we might be spared the affliction if His Wisdom sees it is best for us to have it.

The trouble might prove very beneficial to us.

The Lord has already told us in His Word that we are to rejoice even under tribulation; for tribulation, rightly received, will work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So while the Lord does not promise us that we shall escape trouble, He does promise that with the trouble He will give His children consolation of heart, sustaining grace, that will enable them to rejoice in the midst of their tribulation (2 Cor. 4:6-18 ; 12:9, 10 ; Isa. 43:1, 2.). This was exemplified in our Lord Jesus and in the Apostles. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God in prison, with their feet fast in the stocks and their backs bleeding from the whippings which they had received. They could rejoice in tribulation for Christ's sake.

The Lord is ever with His people ; therefore they should not be discouraged. His children have the comfort and assistance of the letter of the Truth and the spirit of the Truth. But they have all these blessings only in proportion as they are willing to exercise faith ; for the glories promised are not yet theirs in reality ; these are theirs only by promise now.

"I will deliver him and honor him." The deliverance of the Lord's saints, in the fullest sense of the word, will be by their participation in the First, Chief Resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was delivered from all. His trials and afflictions when He was raised from the dead. The promise to the Church also is that we shall be delivered when our resurrection "change" shall come to us. "Sown in weakness," we shall be "raised in power" ; sown an animal body, we shall be "raised a spiritual body." This will be the full deliverance, and with it will come the promised honor and exaltation.

There are deliverances, of course, for the children of God at the present time, according to our need. And the Lord gives us a certain kind of honor, but not usually the kind of honor that the world appreciates. This honor may come mixed with such tribulation as would make it not desirable in the world's eye. But the honor that will come to the saints in the end will be such as all will know and will appreciate. All the members of Christ will share in the Kingdom glories and honors with their Head. He and the members of His Body glorified will reign in the Father's Kingdom, and will be associated together throughout all eternity in the great work of God.

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Question Box.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ELDERS

Question.—In 1 Tim. 5:19 (R.V.) it states—“Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses.” Does this imply that elders are to receive special consideration in the matter of accusations ?

Answer.—The Apostle in this statement recognizes two principles. (1) That an elder has already been recognized by the congregation as possessing a good and noble character, and as being specially earnest for the truth, and devoted to God. (2) That such persons, by reason of their prominence in the Church, would be marked by the Adversary as special objects for his attacks -- objects of envy, malice, hatred and strife on the part of some, even as our Lord forewarned — “Marvel not if the world hate you ;” “ye know that it hated me before it hated you ;” “If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household !” (Matt. 10:25; 1 John 3:13 ; John 15:18.). The more faithful and capable the brother, the more nearly a copy of his Master, the more proper his choice as an elder ; and the more faithful the elder, the more sure he will be to have as enemies, — not Satan and his messengers only, but as many also as Satan can delude and mislead.

These reasons should guarantee an elder against condemnation on the word of any one person, if otherwise his life appeared consistent. As for hearsay or rumor, they were not to be considered at all ; because no true yokefellow cognisant of the Lord’s rule (Matt. 18:15), would circulate rumors or have confidence in the word of those who would thus disregard the Master’s directions. To be heard at all, the accusers must profess to have been witnesses. And even if two or more witnesses made charges there would be no other way of hearing the case than that already defined. Any one person charging wrong against the elder, should, after personal conference failing, have taken with him two or three others who would thus become witnesses to the contumacy. Then the matter, still unamended, might be brought by Timothy or anyone before the Church, etc.

Indeed, this accusation before two or three witnesses, being the requirements as respects all of the members, leaves room for the supposition that the Apostle was merely claiming that an elder should have every right and privilege guaranteed to any of the brethren. It may be that some were inclined to hold that since an elder must be “well reported,” not only in the Church, but out of it, an elder should be arraigned upon the slightest charges, because of his influential position. But the Apostle’s words settle it that an elder’s opportunities must equal those of others.

This matter of witnesses needs to be deeply engraved on the mind of every New Creature. What others claim to know and what they slanderously tell is not even to be heeded —not to be received. If two or three, following the Lord’s directions, bring charges against anyone — not backbitingly and slanderously, but as instructed — before the Church, they are not even then to be believed ; but then will be the proper time for the Church to hear the matter — hear both sides, in each other’s presence ; and then give a godly decision and admonition, so phrased as to help the wrongdoer back to righteousness and not to push him off into outer darkness — (From “The New Creation.”) .

Our Pilgrimage.

A scorching wind, a withering blast,
A desert stern and bare,

A journey long, with scarce a song;
But still my Lord is there.

A sky of blue — no clouds in sight,
A pleasant garden fair

With birds, and flowers, and happy hours;
My Lord is also there.

Then teach us Lord in want, in pain,
In happiness, in rest To trust in Thee, whate'er our lot,

And teach us Lord to murmur not
For what Thou doest is best.

Phil. 4:11-13.

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Concordances

Some copies of Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance are now on hand with strong cloth binding. While the price is greatly increased, these Concordances contain such a wealth of information with the meanings of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible, and are really essential for detailed study of the Scriptures. The present price is £ 7/12/6.

Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?

There has been considerable appreciation of the article appearing in July "Peoples Paper" — "Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?" — and in view of the importance of this subject, especially at the present time, this article is being printed in tract form, to enable all our friends who so desire to have a quantity on hand for distribution as they feel may be helpful to others who have ears to hear.

The following letter received recently from one of our readers is of good interest in this connection — "I am writing to thank you for sending your 'Peoples Paper' to me. I always enjoy reading them, and one you sent me a couple of weeks ago contains what I always wanted explained to me — Does God perform miracles of healing today? A friend of mine tried to get me interested in healing; she says it can and is being done today. I said I didn't think those things were meant for today. I'm glad you sent the paper as it explains what I've felt all along. My friend says she has seen the miracles done at the meetings of the British Israel American News. I went one day with her to one of these meetings, where they had in the service the speaking in tongues, and the men on the platform interpreting what the people said. Well, I didn't go again, as to me it seemed wrong; it just left me cold, and it quite upset me. But your 'Paper' is as clear as the day is long, and my mind is at rest on that subject.

"I wonder would you send me some of Frank and Ernest Dialogues; they would help me very much. Also the booklets 'The Manner of Christ's Return and Appearing,' and 'The Everlasting Gospel.' Enclosed—, use balance as you think fit. Thanking you for your kindness."

By having some of the above mentioned tracts on hand our friends may be in a position to assist many at the present time who are in doubt and perhaps are being deceived by the great increase in what is called the Pentecostal movement in recent times. Order as soon as possible, and mention how many copies can be used to advantage. These tracts are supplied free from the Tract Fund.

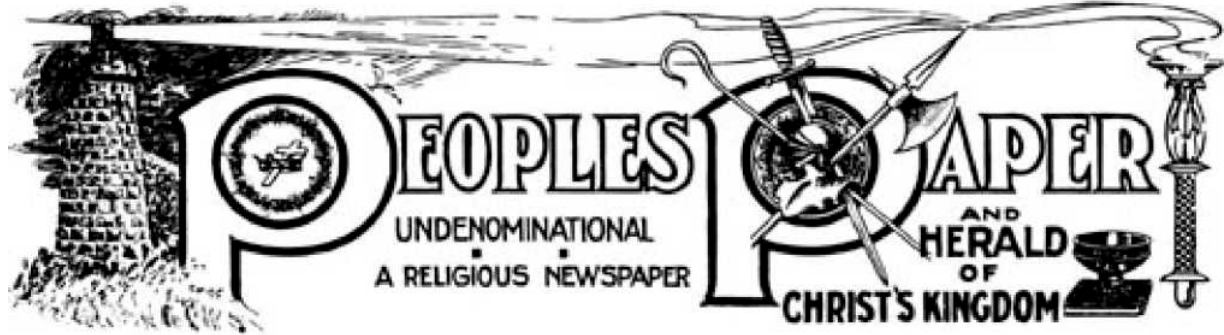
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Perth, 6KY, 227 M. 4.45 p.m.

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What May We Expect from Geneva Conference?

THE recent Geneva Conference certainly created world - wide interest to millions of people in every land in the world, as the leaders of the greatest nations of the earth came together for consultations.

This conference was called the "summit conference," and it was in great expectation that the people of the world looked forward to some lasting benefits being achieved by the highest men of each of the four leading nations of the earth meeting around the conference table for the first time since the ending of the Second World War.

We are well aware also, that as the time for this conference drew near, the religious leaders in many lands offered up special prayers for the success of these deliberations in Geneva, apparently feeling that if these political leaders failed to reach some kind of agreement then the outlook for world peace would be even more precarious than it has been during the past ten years of uneasy peace, since the close of the last global war.

No doubt many of our readers heard over the radio, or read some of the prayers which were offered to God with the object of seeking His blessing upon the assembly at Geneva. We know that these prayers, for the main part, would be sincere and well-meaning, but the impression they gave was, that these heads of the nations, meeting in Geneva, might well have the destiny of civilization in their hands, and surely God would bless their efforts, so that the human creation may be preserved, and not destroyed by another world war with weapons so tremendously powerful that nothing but ruin and desolation would result.

It seemed, therefore, that these prayers offered to God were presented from the standpoint that the world leaders had a plan for world peace, and the Lord was being implored to give His blessing to the conference so that this plan, devised by man, should not fail. There was nothing to indicate that those making these prayers to God had considered the possibility that God may also have a plan for world peace, and that God's plan may even differ from that formulated by the leaders of the nations conferring together in Geneva.

Let us not be misunderstood. We call to mind our Lord's words in Matt. 5:9—"Blessed are the peace makers ; for they shall be called the children of God." While our Lord, no doubt, referred in this verse to His true people who would be peace makers along the lines of His Word, yet anyone who seeks to

promote peace and not war, will in no wise lose a fitting reward. However, the fact that leaders of nations meet in conference to try to ease world tension, while commendable in itself, does not qualify them “to be called the children of God.”

We think of other peace makers. While the 1914-18 war was raging, Woodrow Wilson of U.S.A. chartered a ship and sailed to Europe with the object of seeking to bring peace to the nations. Reading a newspaper article on that peace mission recently, it revealed that disagreement broke out on the voyage between the would-be peace makers before they reached the war area, and Mr. Woodrow Wilson returned to America a sad and disillusioned man. However, his good desires and efforts will not be lost ultimately; he shall receive his reward in the kingdom as the Lord sees fit. Even the development of a peace-loving character will be some important reward.

Now, looking back over the last few weeks, we can certainly be glad that the Geneva Conference seems to have lessened the tense feeling between the Western nations and Soviet Russia, but this does not mean that the world is now due for an era of peace which will usher in the Millennium of happiness, for which Christians have prayed for the past nearly two thousand years—”Thy kingdom come ; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.” No, indeed ; the words of our Lord’s prayer could never be fulfilled while present conditions exist in the world, even if there were no more war. And yet, the Geneva Conference was arranged and the prayers of church leaders the world over were offered with the hope that God would answer those prayers to continue existing conditions in the world, without war.

Someone may ask : If there were no wars on earth, would that not produce happiness ? And would not the Lord’s kingdom come, and God’s will be done here, as in heaven? We answer by asking: Do we think God’s will would be done by establishing a kingdom amongst dying subjects; and could there ever be real and lasting happiness in the world with generation after generation going down into death? No, indeed. However, let us note the words of the Psalmist —”God looked down from the height of his sanctuary ; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth ; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.” (Psa. 102:19, 20. See also Rom. 8:22, 19). This is surely a wonderful assurance from God, and it may be asked: How do the various conferences and plans of mankind fit into the wonderful Plan of God to release the “groaning creation” from death?

Briefly reviewing world events over the past fifty years, it is well known that the claim was made in the early part of this century that mankind was becoming too civilized to go to war. When, however, the 1914-18 war was raging, it was described as “a war to end war.” Many nations greatly disarmed after that war, and this apparently inspired others to grasp the opportunity to try and gain world domination. This ambition led to the 1939-45 World War, as we well know.

Then, during the Second World War a charter was drawn up, which, to put it briefly, sought to guarantee for the future that all people of the earth should be able to die in bed, instead of being bombed to death from the sky. And this is what the world leaders at the Geneva Conference hope they may accomplish also ; they hope that they have greatly lessened the risk of war, and possibly they have, for the time being. And when this hope can be more firmly established, the claim of “peace and safety” for the human race will no doubt be acclaimed. As an illustration of what we may expect in the days ahead, we remember the sincere, yet pathetic utterance of Mr. Chamberlain, the then Prime Minister of Britain, on his return from the Munich Conference with Hitler in 1939, claiming—”we have preserved peace for our time.” Within a few months the greatest war of all time was raging; yet, the peace-loving desires of Mr. Chamberlain will be rewarded in the kingdom, despite the fact that they were taken for weakness by the dictator, Hitler, at that time.

Mr. Chamberlain’s proclamation of “peace” was just one of numerous similar claims over the last forty years, and well reminds us of Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning Israel: “Moreover thou shalt say unto

them, Thus saith the Lord, Shall they fall, and not arise ? shall he turn away, and not return? Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast to deceit, they refuse to return . . . Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times ; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord . . . The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken ; lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord ; and what wisdom is in them? . . . For every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace ; when there is no peace . . . We looked for peace, but no good came ; and for a time of health, and behold trouble !” (Jer. 8:4, 5, 7, 9-11, 15. See also Isa. 57:20, 21.)

The Apostle Paul, in his prophecy concerning the days in which we are living, declared—”For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety ; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape.” (1 Thes. 5:2, 3.) The Greek word translated “sudden” contains the thought rather of “unexpected.” When they feel that they have secured a condition of peace and safety in the world, then unexpected destruction cometh upon them. The same Greek word is translated “unawares” in Luke 21:34—”Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares (unexpected). For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.” In verse 33 of this chapter our Lord had declared that ”heaven and earth shall pass away.” That is, the religious heavens, and the earthly order of society ; therefore — “that day shall come unawares.”

What may we expect, then, from the recent Geneva Conference? We must expect the unexpected, if we are alert Christians — the brethren to whom Paul wrote—”Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” (1 Thes. 5:4.) We remember also our Lord’s words in Matt. 24:37-39. In the days of Noah they “knew not” until the flood came and took them all away—the unexpected happened—”so shall also the presence of the Son of man be.”

Let us note also in 1 Thes. 5:3 that the “sudden (unexpected) destruction” of the symbolic heavens and earth, is to come “as travail upon a woman with child.” The Apostle undoubtedly wished to convey the thought that the destruction would develop in spasms, with periods of easement between. Who cannot see that we have had various spasms of world distress, particularly since 1914, with periods of easing tension, when there have been the proclamations of “peace, peace,” when there is no peace ?

It may be suggested that perhaps some nations may escape the destruction foretold in the Scriptures. We think of the little country of Switzerland where the Geneva Conference was held ; it was not involved in either of the two World Wars, and might this indicate that it may be spared again? Then there are some who claim that Britain and U.S.A. will be spared in the unexpected destruction. The prophet Jeremiah was used to present the truth on this matter, as follows—”For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me ; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the Lord’s hand, and made all the nations to drink. . . And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; and the king of Sheshach (Babylon, Christendom) shall drink after them. Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take thy cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts ; Ye shall certainly drink.” (Jer. 25:15-17, 26-28, etc.) ,

Also in Jer. 30 we have a description of the “unexpected destruction” upon Israel in particular, verses 4-11 being especially significant. We read in verse 7—”Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is

even the time of Jacob's trouble ; but he shall be saved out of it."

From Zeph. 3:8 we also read—"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I shall rise up to the prey ; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Thus, we see from the various prophecies, that no nation of the earth is to be exempt from the unexpected destruction; all need the cleansing and purifying effects of the fiery time of trouble, to prepare the way for Christ's Kingdom.

Just as with Israel,—"he shall be saved out of it,"—so also with the nations ; for following the "devouring of the earth"—earthly order of things—we read—"Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9.) Thus we see that the Lord's blessings follow the complete humbling of the human race, so that they then may, desire God's will to be done, for their everlasting happiness. Then, there shall be true and lasting peace throughout the world, as mankind progress in obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom. The Psalmist was given an insight into that glad time to come, when he wrote—"Give unto the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains (kingdoms) shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. . . He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth." (Psa. 72:1-3. 6.) What a beautiful picture of blessing and refreshment in the new age, as the influences from Christ and the church in glory descend to lift up a wilted but repentant humanity. Then, in due course, will follow the resurrection of earth's multitudes to also enjoy the favours of Christ's Kingdom if they will, during the "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:20-23.)

The prophet Micah was also given an inspired picture of the great transformation in the kingdom age, when he wrote—"Many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off ; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks ; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Mic. 4:2, 3.) "And the work of righteousness shall be peace ; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever," we read from Isaiah 32:17.

Our Lord gave very definite descriptions of the last days of the present age, as well as His prophets and apostles, and in Luke 21 revealed much information concerning the passing of the present order of things which He designated as "heaven and earth passing away," as we have seen. To His own disciples He gave a very comforting exhortation in verse 28— "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh." Words of comfort and encouragement indeed, for all the Lord's dear people in these last days of the age. Surely, they who are able to take the Lord at His word, and look forward with confidence in His strength, fully appreciate and reciprocate the sentiments of the Psalmist—"Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them." (Psa. 119:164, 165.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to advise that their Annual Convention will be held over the Christmas period (D.V.) in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, Melbourne.

It is expected that the gatherings will be held on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, but confirmation of these dates will be announced in the next month's "Peoples Paper."

A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these assemblies in Melbourne, and further information may be obtained from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E., 13, Victoria.

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Romans 7:7-25.

'THE Apostle's thought in Rom. 7:7-25 is this : At the time of Abraham, God said, "Abraham, I intend to bless the world, and I will tell you about it in advance. Through your posterity I will do it, for I have found you faithful as a servant." St. Paul was one of those included in that promise (see Heb. 7:9-10). Abraham was not under sentence of the Law ; but he had the promise that a blessing would come to him and all others.

Several hundred years after this God entered into a special covenant with the nation of Israel. They bound themselves by the Law Covenant that they would do certain things ; and God promised that the reward would be eternal life. But they could not fulfil the conditions, and consequently they came under the sentence of death. Therefore, they were worse off in that respect than if they had never come under the Law Covenant, for they had already received, prospectively, the forgiveness of sins ; but now, being unable to keep the Law Covenant, they came again under condemnation to death.

The remainder of the world of mankind was condemned once. God had said that He would bless all those who kept the Law ; and the Jews had their opportunity, but failed because of inherent weakness. So the Law, St. Paul states, brought them death instead of blessing. How did this awaken in them what He says here? "I had not known sin but by the Law." Suppose that before the Law was given, a man did not know it was wrong to steal or kill. Not knowing it, and not having come under any law telling about it, he had not sinned against the law. Before that Law Covenant came, says the Apostle, not having the Law specified to me, I was not under it. But now I know; and sin came upon me because I could not keep what I saw and what I agreed to do.

Sin lives. What sin? Original sin, Adamic sin, which passed from Adam through heredity upon all his children. God said to Abraham, I intend to bless all the families of the earth. I intend to remove the curse. Those who failed to keep the Law had come under the curse of the Law, as well as under Adam's curse, so that in addition to the curse that came upon all of Adam's children, the Jew came under the curse of the Law. That which the Jew thought to be unto life, he found to be unto death. The Law Covenant promised that if the Jew would do these things he would live. But he could not do them, and the Covenant brought condemnation and death upon him. The Apostle does not say that the Law Covenant was just and good, but that the Law was just, the Law was good, not the Covenant. God's Law is always the same, but He will make a better Covenant ; for finding fault with the Law Covenant, He said: "I will make a new Covenant." If God was not finding fault with the Old Covenant, why make a new one ? (Heb. 8:8-13.) The unsatisfactory feature of the Covenant was that it could not give life to Israel. God knew this beforehand, but they did not. God wished them to learn this great lesson that because of their own deficiency they needed the merit of the sacrifice of the Redeemer. This lesson must also be learned by the whole world, when in due time all the blind eyes will be opened and the deaf ears unstopped, and all understand the condition of God's arrangements and the provision He has made.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards.

If Thy Light Become Darkness.

Matthew 6:23.

ALL who are truly God's people have come to value and love the Word that God has given to us. We love it because it is His Word, and His Word is truth. Men seek and value knowledge ; at great cost they pursue light on many subjects. The Christian places greatest value on God's truth ; for it is of the greatest importance, emanates from the highest authority, and is of eternal value. But this greatest of all truth is little sought by men, and no doubt this lack of desire and appreciation is caused by the theory that the Scriptures cannot really be understood nor explained. Satan's business is to suppress light; he is the prince of darkness. His kingdom survives through the darkness of men's minds and hearts. The god of this world hath blinded them. On the contrary, "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all." We may not always understand Jehovah's ways ; but "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

Light never comes from Satan ; though we are warned, he is, in his efforts to deceive, ready even to put darkness for light, and light for darkness.

Christians to-day enjoy a great measure of light; a measure which continually increases, leads on and satisfies. As we behold the darkness on every hand, we greatly appreciate this light, for it is as true now as in Jesus' day that these things have been hidden "from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes" (Matt. 11:25). We are glad to have just that simple, complete faith in God and His Word; and in the eyes of many to be foolish, credulous and old-fashioned. As Peter expresses it (1 Pet. 2:9), "God has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light"; yes, called us out, blessed and gifted us. Let us never forget the favour of the light, but rather ask ourselves—"Why this favour to me? Am I walking worthy of it? Is the Divine purpose for which I was enlightened being fulfilled?"

We remind ourselves again of the question—From whence did I get my light? Perhaps we may reply—"from a friend of mine, or a certain book, or some special meeting." It may be that one of these instruments has been used; but, further, we must be able to say, "I received my truth from the Word of God; I have come to know it as His truth ; it is my solid foundation, and therein I can give you a reason for my hopes and beliefs." Our thought is that while God uses agencies to dispense His truth, yet we really do not have the truth as our own, to trust in and adhere to inseparably, till we have seen it, proved it, and understood it for ourselves. We are then rooted and immovable. Even the great Paul said (1 Cor. 3:5-7), "Who then, is Paul, and who is Apollos but ministers by whom ye believed; even as the Lord gave to every man." Let us be supported by the Word and not by the instrument.

Because Satan is the prince of darkness of a kingdom of darkness, selfishness, and death, he hates to see anyone enlightened. He will, where possible, prevent anyone from obtaining the light, but if unsuccessful in this, he does not cease his evil work ; he will endeavour to rob such a one of their light, to draw away, to make the light become darkness. Because the light so commends itself to us, we would not want to let it slip; hence Satan's working along the lines of deception.

Let us take for a moment a retrospective view of the Church's history. She started off as depicted by the Revelator, the conquering warrior on the pure white horse, in purity and truth. But Satan was busy early ; the true light had come, and was now to make progress. He would war against it, and it was just as though he laid his plan, and said, "I will counterfeit it all. I must get my darkness in amongst this light and extinguish it; I will sow my tares and deceive men, and aim to capture these leaders of the people to really serve me and my cause of darkness and bondage." He met with success early. In his day Paul said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." The Gospel Age has seen throughout its centuries a conflict between light and darkness, between Christ and Satan. The light has oft shone forth but feebly, particularly in the dark period of Papacy's power, when God's Word prophesied, "clothed in sackcloth."

But we rejoice that brave champions of light and liberty hath stood forth to declare and defend the truth; but Satan never flagged, and these noble efforts seem to have been obstructed by the wily adversary. Time and again there has been a falling away, and Satan seems to have captured each movement, and held up progress. He is no less busy and clever today; hence we remind ourselves of a few of the stirring exhortations to hold fast to the truth. (See 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Col. 2:6, 8, etc.).

In our day, there has been a great awakening and an unfolding of the truth ; a searching after and a feasting on things "both new and old." The Bible has been studied and understood, and darkness and mystery have been dispelled.

How does Satan behold all this ? Is he, do we not think, still anxious to retain the movement, check the progress, and the increase of truth ? Yes, indeed, and succeeding in robbing many of their liberty and beclouding their light.

From the earliest history Satan, the one through whom the great enemy death has come, has endeavoured to blind men regarding it. To our first parents it came, "Ye shall not surely die." All men have grasped the lie ; preachers have preached it ; "man has an immortal soul." Poets have written it—"Call it not death, 'tis but transition." In a new form, but still deceptive and misleading, the same old story, "Ye shall not surely die," is being still loudly proclaimed. Satan's snares grow more and more wily ; for the brighter the light the more subtle and, like the truth, the snare needs to be.

What, we ask, leads to a loss of light and truth ? If we look back over the Church's history we will see that Satan's mode has been to stifle the individual searching and proving of truth. It has been the method of exalting human teachers and leaders. It was thus in Paul's day, for Paul warmly combated the spirit of it, declaring emphatically that it was God to whom they should look, and give the glory.

So down the Reformation days, people have taken the name and message of their chosen leader, who has really become their "head." They have epitomised his doctrines, and formed their creed. They have said, "I like these views, and I like this form of worship. I accept this, and will try to live up to it. I will bring up my children in this belief. I have it all now ; there is no need for me to study ; those who are teaching have more talent and time to do so." Hence these have stood while the light has progressed. Satan today wants to stifle our individual searching and proving if possible, and if he can ensnare our leaders and teachers, he will thus have us all as his prey. And God permits testings ; He holds us responsible for what we accept, and why we believe it. Every teacher is responsible for what he proclaims ; but this does not relieve the hearer of his responsibility to "prove all things." Let us not today depart from the example of the "Noble Bereans," nor allow Satan to beguile us of our reward "in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels (messengers)" (Col. 2:18, 19). "Let no man glory in men" (1 Cor. 3:21).

Let us resolve not to be influenced by the opinions of others, no matter how they may appear to be, nor from whom they come. "Let the truth commend the man, never the man the truth." Do not, of course, let us despise the help of others ; God has provided helpers in the Church ; but do let us see that our whole

structure of knowledge and faith is seen by ourselves to be entirely Scriptural; for if Scriptural-immovable.

Again, we need also to remember that unless we are faithful to the light already given, we may not expect to receive any addition. Faithfulness to light received will lead to increasing light. The truth is something affecting both the heart and the head ; to possess the truth means to have a knowledge of God's Word ; but that is not all, nor is it the real thing. To really have the truth means the possession of its spirit, as well as the knowledge. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up." Again, we have it well expressed in 1 John 2:9, 10: "He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness, even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Can we not see the thought and its reasonableness ? Have we merely knowledge and not the spirit of the truth Are we but as "sounding brass" ? Have we missed the real thing about the truth, that is, its sanctifying power ? God is rather pleased, we are sure, with the lesser knowledge, but abundance of love, than with the profusion of knowledge unaccompanied by its spirit. Yes, this is really the divine will and purpose, and unless we develop with our knowledge the spirit of the truth in the outworking of true Christian character, we are really unfaithful. Can we stand this test? Have we really imbibed the spirit of the truth, or are we denying its purity and loveliness and God-likeness ?

And God does test this way, for see 2 Thes.2:11, 12, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Do not let us think this applies only to those who have never received the light ; it refers to those who have received the truth—but how? Do we really love what is behind the truth—the Divine will and principles of character? Do we really love these, and are we willing to sacrifice all to hold to these naked principles, to entirely merge self into Christ, and to prove our love and loyalty and usefulness? God will, as He here states, send such strong delusions (the world does not need strong delusions ; it is those who have seen a measure of light), that all but those who love the truth for truth and righteousness sake will be sifted out. If it were possible even the very elect would be deceived. Let us aim more and more to see God in His truth, and let His Word dwell in us richly, that God may more and more be able to see Himself in us, and we shall show forth the "virtues of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light" (for that purpose).

Of course retrogression into darkness is not sudden, but gradual at first ; a little inattention to the only sure guide, a little allowing to grow of a wrong spirit, a little relinquishing of our right of individual judgment, but, while gradual at first, it is amazing how rapid grows the confusion and error once the path is fairly entered upon. "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness." Satan himself was once a prince of light and purity ; now he is altogether dark, the prince of darkness and the father of lies.

And we note, too, that a darkening of the knowledge will be followed by a certain effect on the heart. When the light of truth is lost, the spirit of truth will depart also. Error does not sanctify, and "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." When the Christian enters into confusion of doctrine, unreason, there will be the confusion and unreasonableness in the words, deeds^ and entire life. Where "narrow" beliefs are accepted, the whole spirit and attitude will be "narrow," and so on.

But if we keep right at heart and are living worthy of the truth, we will find our supply of light continually increasing, as the Psalmist says, "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart" (Psa. 97:11). God will continue to bestow His favour and blessing to all who love and serve Him supremely (John 7:17). "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Our retention of the light is not, then, of our own wisdom and ability, but it is God's prolonged favour to us as we use it faithfully to His glory. He would have us "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7; 1 Thes. 5:5).

Furthermore, let us not only separate ourselves from the doctrines of darkness ; let us separate and dissociate ourselves from all works of darkness. The calling voice that bade us come out of Babylon that we might not be partakers of her sins, still bids us to be not partakers of other men's sins, but to keep ourselves pure. Let us preserve around us a pure atmosphere and fellowship, where there is fullest liberty and all is true and righteous.

Let us keep a conscience void of offence; separate ourselves from all works which we cannot approve, and be sure that all that we do ourselves or endorse in others is in line with truth and holiness.

Brethren, let us be in every way careful of all that we accept and believe ; let us hold fast to the truth, and demonstrate to God our unconquerable love of righteousness. Let us aim for God-likeness ; "God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all." Let us keep our hearts right before God, and ever guard our light and liberty to the end.

"Hold fast that thou hast," and Jesus has promised, "If ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed ; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-34).

Luther Finds the Bible.

LUTHER did not labour only to cultivate his intellect; he felt that he depended on God—a simple and penitent conviction, which is the source at once of deep humility and great deeds. Every morning he began the day with prayer; next he visited the church; then he betook himself to his studies, and lost not an instant through the whole course of the day.

The young student passed at the university library every moment he could snatch from his academic labours. One day, when he had been studying for two years at Erfurth, and was twenty years of age, he took down several books in the library, one after another, until he came to one that arrested his attention. He has never seen anything like it. He reads the title—it is a Bible ! He turns over the leaves with the liveliest interest, and, full of wonder and excitement, finds that the volume contains more than those fragments of the Gospels and Epistles which the Church had selected to be publicly read on every Sunday throughout the year. Till then he had supposed that these constituted the entire Word of God; but, behold, page after page, chapter after chapter, books upon books, of which he had not the slightest idea before ! His heart beat as he held in his hand all these divinely-inspired Scriptures. He devoured those heavensent pages, with feelings beyond description. The first that fixes his attention relates the history of Hannah and young Samuel. He reads, and can hardly contain his joy. The child whom his parents lend to Jehovah for all the days of his life ; Hannah's song; the young lad Samuel, who grows up in the temple in the presence of the Lord—all this history, all this revelation which he has discovered, made him feel as he never felt before. He returns home with his heart full. "Oh !" he thinks; "if God would give me such a book for my own!"

Luther did not yet know Greek or Hebrew. It was a Latin Bible that had so transported him with joy. He soon returned to the library in search of his precious treasure. He read and re-read it, and returned to read it again with astonishment and delight. Thus God put the Divine Word in his way. He had discovered the book of which he was one day to give his countrymen that admirable translation in which Germany, after the lapse of over three centuries, still reads the oracles of God. It was the first time, perhaps, that any hand had moved that precious volume from its place in the library of Erfurth. That book, put away on the untouched shelves of an obscure room, was to become the Book of Life to a whole people. The Reformation was hidden in that Bible. —D'Aubigne.

Kept by His Power.

“Kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.”-1 Pet. 1:5.

With kindest wish, and prayerful thought this morning
I offer thee these simple words of cheer;

Whete’er may meet thee, in life’s future dawning,
May they afford thee comfort year by year!

Kept by His power, no human arm upholding,
No human hand outstretched to point the way.

But God’s great love, His feeble child enfolding,
Is all-sufficient for thy need each day.

Be not afraid, for as each need arises,
With strong, absorbing, self-important claim

God it will meet, with His Divine surprises,
If thou but call upon His Holy Name.

“Kept” when the world for thee its smile is wreathing,
When Skies are fair, and life with roses spread;

“Kept” when its frowns to thee it is bequeathing,
And clouds are darkly massing overhead.

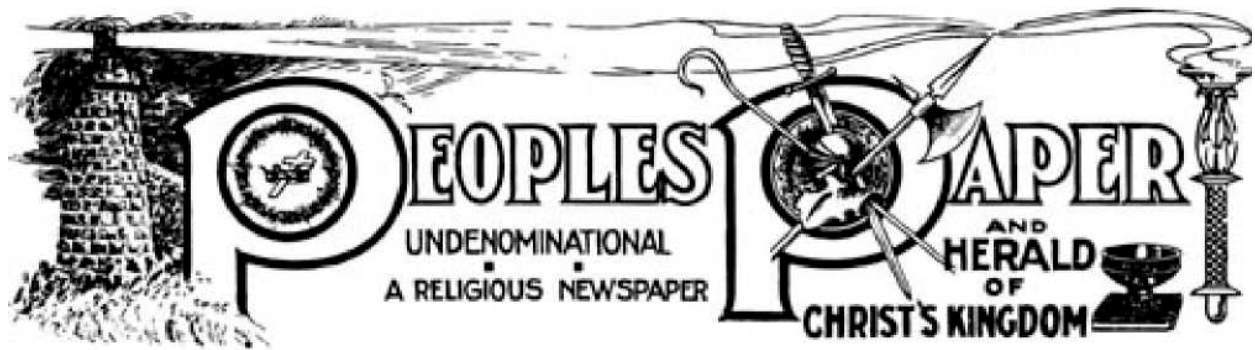
His power to keep is strong, and true for ever,
No length of years can e’er its force abate;

His will to keep can never fail, no never;
Whilst Mercy stands at Heaven’s wide open gate.

Then journey on, leave fear, and anxious worry
To this who know not that the Lord doth reign;

Keep step with Him; forgo impatient hurry;
Trust Him to make the rough, steep places plain. —Selected.

The true Christian is like the sun, which pursues his noiseless track, and everywhere leaves the effects of his beams in blessing upon the world around him. —Luther.



Volume XXXVIII MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER 1955

How Jesus Preached to Spirits in Prison

“Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit, by which [two experiences death and resurrection] he preached unto the spirits in prison.”-1 Pet. 3 :18, 19.

THIS text has been made the basis for some 1 peculiar presentations. From it some have deduced an intermediate state lasting between death and the resurrection. Others have claimed it as an authority for the doctrine of Purgatory. The difficulty in every case seems to be the failure to remember that the Bible always and everywhere teaches that the dead are really dead, that they know nothing, and that, therefore, it would be impossible to do any preaching to the dead humans. Undoubtedly the theory that people are more alive after they are dead than when they were alive is responsible for nearly all the foolish things which we have all at some time professed to believe.

Before dismissing the thought that these “spirits in prison” are human spirits, let us note the fact that to say, “human spirits,” is an absurdity in itself, because human beings are not spirits and spirits are not humans. “Who maketh his angels spirits,” is the Scriptural proposition. True, we do sometimes speak of humans as possessing a spirit of life or energy of life, and the same would be equally true of the lower orders of creation, beasts, fish, fowl, etc.

Again, we sometimes speak of the Church as spirit beings—begotten of the holy spirit. Thus the Apostle speaks of the natural man in contrast with the New Creature, a spirit being. To appreciate this statement we must remember that the Church class receive the begetting of the holy spirit to the end that, if faithful, they may attain unto a spirit resurrection and become spirit beings, like unto the angels and like to the Redeemer. But we are not spirits yet, except by faith—by hope. However, the context shows that the Apostle had no reference to the Church, either: we were not in prison; we received the message of salvation through the Apostles.

The spirits to whom the message was given had proven themselves disobedient, says St. Peter. He even tells us the time of their disobedience, namely, that it was “in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing.” Surely if noticing these particulars mentioned in the , context, no one would be excusable for misunderstanding this Scripture and considering it in any way applicable to humanity of our day, or to humanity in general. However, it is helpful to us to learn the full particulars of the matter. What was their disobedience, and when and how were they imprisoned?

Turning to Genesis 6:1-5, we find there the cause of the disobedience of those angels, who for a time had been permitted to see what they could do for the uplift of humanity, or, rather, permitted to demonstrate that the downward tendency of sin is incurable except in the manner which God has already arranged through Messiah and His glorious reign of a thousand years.

Instead of those angels helping mankind out of sin they helped themselves into sin, and by so doing they increased the depravity amongst humanity until the astounding record is that “the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually.” The particular sin of those angels was that when they were granted the privilege of materializing—of taking human bodies for the sake of helping and instructing mankind — they misused this power and took to themselves the daughters of men for wives.

Thus these angels came gradually to prefer to live as men, amongst men, and to rear earthly families rather than to abide in the condition in which they were created--spirit beings, higher than humans. Not only was this wrong in the sense that it was taking a course in opposition to the Divine arrangement, but it was wrong also because the thing was done for the cultivation and gratification of lust, and it led to their own moral defilement as well as having a baneful influence upon humanity ; for we can readily see that for the angels of superior powers and intelligence, to become leaders in lustful practices would mean a great influence upon mankind toward sin and defilement of mind and body.

We are particularly told that the offspring of this improper union between the angels and the daughters of men were giants, both physically and mentally ‘inferior to the fallen human family — “men of renown.” And this statement, that they were “men of renown,” was at a time when manhood’s estate was reached at a hundred years, and implies that God did not interfere to hinder or stop the progress of sin for perhaps several centuries. In the meantime the race had become so corrupt that apparently only Noah and his family were uncontaminated—all others, had more or less under the influence, directly or indirectly, of these fallen angels or their giant sons. Hence of Noah it was written (not that he was a perfect man, but) “Now Noah was perfect in his generation” (uncontaminated) and his family apparently the same. Hence these alone were saved in the Ark, while all the remainder, more or less contaminated, were destroyed by the flood.

It was then and there that God imprisoned those spirits, angels, who kept not their first estate; they are therefore called fallen angels, devils, demons. They were not imprisoned in some far - off world called hell, nor are they engaged there in stoking fires for the torture of poor humanity. Following the leading of the Scriptures we find that when the flood came they were not destroyed because, while their fleshly bodies which they assumed might indeed perish, yet they would merely dematerialize, or assume their spirit conditions again.

The record is that God cast them down, that He condemned them to an overthrow — that they might not any longer associate with the holy angels, but must be reserved in tartarus —our earth’s atmosphere. Here they were imprisoned, not in a special place, but in the sense of having their liberties restrained, “in chains of darkness.” They were no longer permitted to Materialize and thus to associate with humanity. These things are distinctly told us by St. Jude and St. Peter (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4, 5) an explanation in full harmony with the Genesis account of their fall.

We, of course, cannot know that all of those fallen angels are still in a disloyal condition of heart. On the contrary, in harmony with our text, we may suppose that some of these fallen angels have since repented of their wrong course and it would be none too strong a way to state the matter—that any such repentant ones would surely have terrible experiences as a result. To be obliged to be in close touch and relationship with the more evil and malignant ones and to have the knowledge of all their evil designs and efforts would be a terrible experience and, besides this, we may be sure that the rebellious would not hesitate to

persecute the repentant ones in every conceivable manner,

On the other hand, the repentant ones would be obliged to restrain themselves and to not render evil for evil, knowing that this would be contrary to the Divine will. In other words, repentant ones amongst those fallen spirits, influenced by the preaching of Jesus or otherwise, would have a kind of purgatorial experience, and the very thought calls forth our sympathy.

When imprisoned or cut off from the privilege of materialization, many of the fallen spirits, we know not what proportion, continued their active opposition to God, after the manner of Satan. Hence they are spoken of as his angels, his messengers, his servants and spoken of as Beelzebub, the Prince of Demons. Satan, who sinned, much earlier than other, and' in a different way, the Scriptures tell us was an angel of a higher rank, or a higher nature, and this superiority of his has made him the Prince or ruler over the hosts of fallen spirits.

The fight of Satan and his fallen angels is against God., against all who are in harmony Him, against all the regulations of righteousness, and against all the channels and servants whom the Lord may use. St. Paul's words along this line are forceful; he remarks that God's people contend not merely "with flesh and blood," but also "with wicked spirits in high positions and the question arises, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The reply is that none is sufficient; without the aid of the' Redeemer, His church would be quite overcome and vanquished by evil.

Likewise, without the Redeemer's aid through His Kingdom, without the binding of Satan, without our Lord's releasing of the world from the bondage of sin and death, there would be no hope of the world's recovery from present bondage. But with the Apostle we exclaim, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. 8:31.

Satan's original plan of attack was to bring our race under his influence by misrepresentation—by putting darkness for light and light for darkness — for instance, the temptation under which Mother Eve fell. Satan there represented himself as Eve's friend, giving her sound advice. He represented God as having a selfish motive behind His command that our first parents should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan declared that man cannot die.

And has he not since kept up the same line of falsification? And has he not deceived the whole world upon this very subject? Do not most people in every land believe that when a man dies he does not die, but lives on--exactly Satan's lie of the first instance? How few have believed God, even amongst His people who truly loved Him, and who truly desire to believe the teachings of His Word. We have all been under a kind of "hoodoo." "The god of this world [Satan] has blinded our minds" on this subject. We now see .that death is the penalty for sin and that the resurrection is the salvation which God has promised and will provide.

Satan has had powerful allies and servants in the fallen angels, and it is through their persistence that this lie has seemingly triumphed over the Divine Word--"Dying, thou shalt die." These fallen spirits have made various manifestations in every land for centuries, and thereby have apparently substantiated the theory that a dead man is more alive than when he was alive. Knowing that mankind would have nothing to do with them if their real personality were known, they hide their personality and represent themselves as our dead friends who desire to speak with us, either directly or through mediums.

A further desire of these angels is to obsess or to get possession of a human being. Being chained or restrained from the privilege of materialization, the next most desirable thing in their estimation is to gain control over a human being and to use his body instead of their own. This is styled obsession, and persons so afflicted today are sent to an insane asylum where, it is estimated, they constitute at least one half of

the entire number. In the days of our Lord these were not mistakenly supposed to be insane, but rightly declared to be obsessed. All remember the New Testament account that our Saviour and His Apostles cast out legions of fallen spirits from humanity.

□ We need not discuss this question with Bible Students, for it is too well recognised to be disputed. We suggest a topical study of this subject by all our readers. We see how many times Jesus and the Apostles cast out demons, and note the particulars. Although we still have with us spirit mediums and many obsessed, we cannot know whether the proportionate number is greater or less than in our -Lord's day. Since the world's population today is so much larger, the same number of evil spirits (which do not increase) would show proportionately less.

But, however that may be, we may assume that some fruitage resulted from the great sermons preached to these in connection with the death and resurrection of our Lord, respecting which S. Peter tells us in our text. Additionally, St. Paul remarks, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3.) We do know that the holy angels need no judging or testing, no trial, hence the Apostle must in some way refer to a trial or judgment or testing of these spirits in prison who were once disobedient, in the days of Noah. And if the judgment or testing is a part of the divine plan, it implies a hope for them, and in conjunction with St. Peter's statement in our text it gives the reasonable inference that the preaching which Jesus did to them was not wholly in vain.

Here arises another question: If Jesus was really dead, as the Scriptures declare, if "He poured out his soul unto death," and "made his soul an offering for sin," and He was, not raised from the dead until the third day after His crucifixion, how could He in the meantime preach 'to spirits in prison, or to anybody else? We reply that He could preach in the same way that the Apostles refer to in respect of Abel, saying, "He, being dead, yet speaketh." (Heb.

11.4) ; and again, in the same way that the blood of Abel is said to have cried to God—figuratively. Of one thing we are sure, namely, that Jesus gave no oral address while He was dead. He preached in the way we sometimes refer to when we say, "Actions speak louder than words." •

It was the great object which the fallen angels saw that constituted to them the great sermon that gave them a ground for hope. On several occasions the fallen spirits, when commanded to come out of human beings, declared that they knew Jesus. In the long ago they had known Him, when, as the Only Begotten of the Father and His representative, He had created them and all things that are made, and was also the mouthpiece for all divine orders and regulations.

The fallen angels realised that He had come into the world to be its Redeemer; they perceived the great stoop that He had made from His lofty position on the heavenly plane to the servant on the human plane. They admired His loyalty and faithfulness to God, but doubtless believed Him to be foolish; they never expected Him to arise from the dead. But when they perceived His resurrection on the third day to glory, honour and immortality, "far above the angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named," His sermon to them was complete, namely, that "the wages of sin is death," but that "the gift of God is eternal life." (Rom. 6:23.) And as they realised thus the power of God and the love of God for His human creatures, the Apostle's words imply that this constituted to them a message of hope. Perhaps if they would show full contrition God eventually would have mercy upon them, even as He had had mercy and had provided for humanity.

The lesson is one for all. God's power is infinite, so is His love, His mercy, His goodness. Nevertheless, every wilful sin will have its punishment, a just recompense of reward, and only the willing and obedient shall have the divine favour and everlasting life.

Tracts Available.

The article “What May We Expect from Geneva Conference?” which appeared in October “Peoples Paper,” will be available in tract form shortly. Friends who can use these to advantage should apply for supplies. These tracts are provided free from the Tract Fund.

Other tracts also available in quantities

“Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?” “God’s Solution for the Formosa Problem.”

“Is there a Second Chance for Salvation After Death?”

“Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon? — Will Australia Be Involved?”

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to advise that their Annual Convention will be held over the Christmas period (D.V.) in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, Melbourne.

The days of Convention have now been confirmed for December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, with additional gatherings on the New Year weekend for December 31st and January 1st.

A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these assemblies in Melbourne, and further information may be obtained from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

“All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have I given Thee.” Both the ability and the will of giving to Him is from Him.

—Leighton.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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The Treasure of the Humble

UNDER the above heading the following article appeared in the Adelaide "Advertiser" on October 8th, having been received here from one of our brethren, and it is felt that the thoughts will be appreciated by all of our friends. Apart from one or two deletions the article is reproduced in full, as follows :-

"Humility has been called the Cinderella of the virtues.' Who, then, will rescue her from her lowly estate and set her in her rightful place as queen of them all? This is indeed a daunting task, for she is, by her very nature, a shy and retiring maiden, never at home in the limelight of publicity. This may explain why her charms are so imperfectly appreciated by the general public; they do not lend themselves to advertisement.

"The Greek sages were ready enough to exalt such masculine virtues, as wisdom, temperance, fortitude and justice, but tended to disparage humility as being linked with weakness, if not with weak-mindedness. Plato and Aristotle passed her by ; the Stoics knew her not. Nor had she any lodgment in the Roman mentality. Thus, in ancient time, the Cinderella of the virtues' was constrained to make her abode with women, children and slaves, if even these were willing to entertain her.

"The Teacher of Nazareth was seemingly the first to celebrate her beauty ; He was certainly the first to enthrone her. This may explain why so many thought Him mad. With the spread of the new religion, millions, even among the warlike barbarians, were taught to pay her tribute of admiration. St. Paul, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas championed her name and talked of her glory. Yet, even among professing Christians and churchmen, few have caught much of her disposition. She wears indeed a garland of praise, but is rarely attended by an imposing retinue of courtiers. . . . It has even been maintained that our Cinderella is more at home with the Asian mentality than with the European. This, however, is a matter on which it is unnecessary to adjudicate.

"Certain it is that few modern authors have much to say for her. Friedrich Nietzsche, somewhat unnecessarily, warned his German compatriots against her. He despised the Christian ethic as 'a sheeplike morality' ; his 'Super Man,' being the incarnation of ruthless egotism, scorns any thought of humility. George Bernard Shaw could see no beauty in her that he should desire her. Apart from composers of sermons and suchlike pious effusions, the only modern author to say much in her favour is Maurice Maeterlinck, who wrote a book significantly entitled 'The Treasure of the Humble.'

"In the world largely dominated by the doctrine of 'Get on or get out,' the Cinderella of the virtues is desolate indeed. Who wants to cultivate a maiden whose acquaintance is so obviously a handicap in an age of blatant selfadvertisement and competitive pushfulness? The gentle voices of those who know her charm are drowned in the babel of phonographs and loud speakers.' Those whose delight is to blow their own trumpet' can find no pleasure in Cinderella, who bids them, reduce the trumpet to a 'pianissimo' and even shut it off altogether. In the dance of modern life, what place can there be for a maiden who detests anything in the nature of 'showing off'? Even Mrs. Grundy is hardly at a greater discount than Cinderella.

"Yet, though Cinderella is never out to 'make a splash' or 'raise a dust,' she is by no means unsociable. She is always ready to fill offices and do jobs which others think 'beneath' them. Being a thorough democrat, she loves the common people ; it is among them that she finds most of her limited circle of friends and acquaintances.

"Nor is she a stranger to those who are really great. Artists, scientists and thinkers of noblest eminence are among her chosen lovers, for they have learned her secret and caught her spirit. Only the 'second - raters'

need to vaunt themselves. He who is obsessed with his own importance can never do the best work. Rather is he like a narrow - necked bottle; the less there is in him, the more noise he makes in pouring it out. Acquaintance with Cinderella would be the best medicine for a swelled head, which is generally a muddled head. Simplicity, sincerity and service are the recipes she offers to a world which is very sick.

“Cinderella is no company for cowards; it takes rare courage to confess errors and shortcomings. Only as we become aware of our ignorance are we likely to seek knowledge. Only as we ‘own up’ to our failures are we likely to repair them. Thus Cinderella may teach us to snatch the rose of victory from the thorns of defeat. Her company has an astringent quality which wakes us from self-complacent dullness. By making us ashamed of what we are, she helps us to become what we ought to be. Poor as Cinderella may seem to the eye of the world, she waits to bestow on everyone of us ‘the treasure of the humble’.”

Christian Conduct.

“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” -- Matt. 5:16.

IN connection with the discourse on the beatitudes, recorded in the fifth chapter of Matthew, our Lord referred to the traditions of the ancients, which evidently had a great control over the people at that time. The important lesson for every Christian to learn is that the fact that a matter is ancient, that it has been long believed, is no positive proof of its correctness. There is one standard for the ancient as for the modern—the Divine Revelation. “If they speak not according to this word it is because they have no light in them.”— Isa. 8:20.

The traditional teaching to which our Lord referred was not wholly erroneous, just as the traditions of the “dark ages” contain some elements of truth. Error alone is weak in comparison to error mixed with a little truth ; hence our great Adversary usually endeavours to interweave some measure of truth with all the injurious falsehoods which have burdened the world for centuries, and still burden us in proportion as we are deceived by them. This was true in respect of the matter the Lord was discussing: The Law had something to say respecting the taking of God’s name in vain, and tradition had modified the law and limited it to false swearing. Our Lord pointed out that the third commandment had a broader and a deeper meaning than the tradition implied—that it meant that God’s name should never be used in any irreverent manner, and not merely forbidding its use in connection with the violation of an oath in the Lord’s name.

Our Lord extended the thought, teaching His followers that they should not continue the custom of their day, of proving their assertions by appeals to God, to heaven, etc. The same lesson is for the followers of Jesus today ; others may feel it necessary to emphasize their statements by oath, but the followers of Jesus are to so live, so act, so speak, that their words pass for par anywhere and with anybody. To this end they must be absolutely truthful, so that whoever may hear them may know that their yea is yea, and their nay is nay.

Oaths and solemn assertions in the ordinary conversation of life imply that the truth of the speaker is questionable that his yea is not always yea, and that his nay is not always nay. The tendency is to make him less careful in the ordinary statements of his conversation that are not thus solemnised; the effect is also to make him less reverent towards the Lord or the other holy things which he may have called upon as witnesses, as evidences of his truthfulness. As the word of such people becomes common and liable to be broken, so their oaths would soon also become common and liable to be broken. Such matters go on from bad to worse, usually. On the contrary, where the word is held sacred, the avenues of sin and error and falsehood are measureably stopped.

Nothing in this injunction can properly be understood to apply to the, taking of an oath in a court of law.

Such oaths, commanded by the law of the State, are necessary, because all have not the high standard of truth desired. To one of the Lord's people an affirmation must mean exactly the same as an oath; he would not affirm what he would not be willing to swear to.

While the Lord's injunction is good for all who have ears to hear it, it is especially appropriate to the little flock who have applied themselves to hearken to all His commands and be taught of Him, and, to whatever extent is necessary, to suffer with Him in following the course of righteousness. Truly, all such should be models of truthfulness and uprightness, and thus be burning and shining lights, glorifying our Father in heaven in their homes and in the communities where they live.

Another of the teachings of the ancients was that absolute justice should be rendered — an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Some features of the Law did imply this. If one caused an injury to another intentionally, he should be maimed himself correspondingly. Our Lord said: "I say unto you resist not evil (do not retaliate, rendering evil for evil), but whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Who can obey this astounding proposition? Even if we modify it all that language will permit, it is still apparently beyond the reach of any fallen human being it teaches the ideal requirements of the Divine law of perfect love.

In seeking an interpretation of this expression, let us look to our Lord as an example. We find, for instance, that our Redeemer was smitten upon the cheek, and that while He did not literally turn the other, He did not attempt to retaliate, even in words. In this indirect way He did turn the other cheek. He expostulated with His smiters in kindly terms, however, and we may properly follow His example and consider it in full agreement with His instruction in this lesson.—John 18:22, 23.

The Apostle Paul, also, learning of the threats of the Jews against his life, did not make threats against them, nor pray evil upon their heads; but he did use such steps as were at his command to thwart their evil desires, sending word to the governor and invoking the power of the civil authority. The lesson for us is that we may use all lawful and legal means in our self-defence, and may even wisely run away from dangers and persecutors, as the Lord directed and the Apostles exemplified. Remember our Lord's words: "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The lesson evidently is: "Follow peace with all men."

"If any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." The revisers translated this to mean that if anyone is disposed to go to law with you and take away your coat, you should settle with him, even though it deprive you of both coat and cloak. This lesson of submission, nonresistance, is surely a difficult one to thoroughly learn. We cannot doubt that many would take advantage of such a disposition, and that as the result he would have the bad end of many a bargain. However, this would not prove the Lord's counsel unwise even as respects the present life. We know, too, that the Lord would be quite able to compensate us for anything we might suffer in way of loss in obedience to His directions, to whatever extent He might see would be to our advantage. He who is for us is more powerful than all they that be against us, and undoubtedly loyalty to Him and obedience to His Word would prove eventually the better part.

The next injunction, to "go with him twain," is not generally understood. It does not mean that we should be turned aside from the duties and affairs of life at anybody's bidding. In olden times certain magistrates, governors, etc., had the authority of law to press the service of the people for governmental work. For instance, note how Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross of Jesus a certain distance. Our Lord's injunction is that His followers should be so broadminded, so liberal, so generous, that they would not only obey the legal commands, but be ready to go farther—to do more than had been required. A Christian measure of anything must be full, never skii-dp. is an element of the higher law, the law of love, and its spirit of generosity in our hearts.

In similar strain, the great Teacher enjoins that we shall give and lend to those requesting. We cannot suppose that our Lord meant that our loans or gifts would be such as would be injurious to the recipients. Love must be the basis of our conduct, as it is the very essence of the Master's law. We cannot think, either, that He means that we should neglect the interest of our homes and families in giving to others, or loaning to them. We are bound to suppose that our Lord in this, as in all things, wished His followers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. What He wished to enjoin evidently was that spirit or disposition which would have pleasure in loaning or giving to the needy, and which, being so circumstanced as to be able to comply with such requests, would be glad to do so, using proper discretion and judgment as to time, place, and persons. In other words, the spirit of Christ is a benevolent spirit and not a mean or stingy one, and all the Lord's people, more or less selfish, need to learn this. There are few, perhaps, who would be in any danger of injuring themselves or others immediately dependent upon them by any acts of benevolence.

The requirement to "love thy neighbour" was a feature of the law, and in enjoining this the tradition of the elders was quite right; but they added to it that an enemy should be hated, whereas the law said nothing of the kind, but, on the contrary, enjoined that if an enemy's ox or ass or property of any kind were seen going astray, or about to be injured, they should be protected and assisted and held for the owner, even though he were an enemy, and even though at a considerable cost of time and trouble. We are to be generous with those who transgress against our rights and interests, our enemies. This does not mean that the Lord recognises or treats His enemies with the same degree of blessing that He grants to His friends or His children, nor does it mean that we are to love our enemies in exactly the same sense that we love our bosom friends and companions. The Lord gives special blessings to those who are especially His, and we also may properly give more of our love and favour to those who are in accord with us. The lesson here again is large-heartedness and generosity. To "love them that love you," the Lord points out, would come far short of the standard He sets us, and of the lesson we must learn if we would be His joint-heirs and companions, in the glory, honour and immortality of the kingdom.

The last verse of our lesson caps the climax of all instruction, telling us that the copy which we are to consider and follow is that of our Heavenly Father—we are to be perfect as He is perfect. Ah, yes! It would have been impossible for the Great Teacher to have set us any other pattern or example or standard than the perfect one, with instruction that, in proportion as we love Him and desire to have His approval, we should endeavour to pattern after the Heavenly Father's character. The Lord will judge us not according to the flesh, but according to the endeavours of our hearts as new creatures.

Question Box.

USE OF BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS.

(Reprinted from "The Dawn".)

In Genesis 9:4 we read, "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Do you believe that this is a command against giving blood or accepting blood transfusions?

We do not. The instruction God gave to Noah undoubtedly emphasized the value to be placed upon blood. In Lev. 17:11 we find the statement "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls." Every student of the Bible knows there was no actual sin-atonement value in the blood of the animals slain in the typical sacrifices, for the Apostle in Heb. 10:4 declares, "For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins."

The great respect required to be shown toward the blood of the animals during the time that they were being used for symbolic sacrifices, pictured the great esteem in which Christians must hold the blood of Jesus, which represents His entire perfect humanity, sacrificed for us. The death penalty was the sentence passed upon any who showed disrespect for the blood in those days.

This also was a picture of the second death which will befall those of this dispensation, of whom it can be said, he "hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace." (Lev. 17:14 ; Heb. 10:26-29.) It is this lesson of the ransom through the precious blood of Jesus which we are taught by the texts here quoted, and not the idea that it is in any way sinful to give blood or accept blood transfusions.

The types of the Old Testament pointed to the fact that all hope of life, real, perfect life, for either the church or the world of mankind, abides in His blood through whom we have redemption. Just as the blood of the animal had greater value in its symbolic significance after the animal's death, so Jesus' right to life, as pictured by His blood, is used after His death, as the great ransom for all the human race.—Eph. 1:7; 1 Tim. 2:4-6.

No one could ever think it wrong to protect another from a vicious beast, even though in so doing he was bitten and therefore lost some blood; and we can find no Scriptural authority which says that it is wrong, as some claim, to give a small amount of blood in order to save the life of another from a dread disease. In fact, to refrain from doing so would appear as though one were callous to the needs of his brother or ruled by religious ignorance. Certainly it would be incompatible with the law of love as set forth in the Scriptures, for love is the perfect expression of unselfishness. Of course, many cannot give blood because of their own physical condition; but certainly no sin is committed by either giving or accepting a donation of blood.

Correspondence.

The Secretary, Dear Sir—Just a few lines to let you know that when possible I listen to your Frank and Ernest Talks, 3GL Geelong; often the reception from this station is not the best on the radio that I have, but I get your “Peoples Paper” and I must admit I get wonderful information by reading same, and if I find someone interested I pass it on to them.

I am enclosing £1 note to assist your finances, for I realise it must cost a lot of money to pay for those broadcasts; you must have some very generous people highly interested in the wonderful work you are doing; for I have never heard you appealing for financial assistance at any time that I have been listening-in to Frank and Ernest. May they long be spared to continue the wonderful work they are doing. Kind regards and best wishes to all concerned. I am, Yours sincerely.

(No appeals for funds are ever made, as all the work carried on from the Institute, including the radio witness, is supported by voluntary contributions from friends who have been blessed by the truths of God’s Word, and desire to serve His cause as they have opportunity—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have been listening to your sessions of a Sunday morning and have found them very helpful. My reason for writing this letter is that I was wondering if you could send me a copy of each week’s message.

You say at the end of your session, “If you are interested in today’s talk, write for a free copy,” but the trouble is I am interested in all of them, and was wondering if there was an annual subscription or something. If my request is unreasonable, please do not hesitate to say so, and I will understand. Yours sincerely.

(Copies of the broadcasts are gladly supplied regularly to all who apply for them.—B.B. Institute.)

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends in Christ—It is a long time since I was in touch with you; however, my interest is as great as ever. I listen to the broadcasts whenever possible and every spare moment is spent with the Bible or some of your papers. The articles are so comforting and so beautifully written. I still marvel at the rich blessing that came my way when I received my first “Peoples Paper.” . . .

Isn’t it a sad world, and one feels so helpless. I pray for the end of these troublesome times--unhappiness all around one and seemingly no way out. Then I think of my own inner peace, and yet I fall far short of my calling. I would like the book “Our Most Holy Faith,” also “The Everlasting Gospel.” Enclosing money for same. Is it possible to get literature in German; I have a dear friend that finds it hard to read English, who is just ready for the truth. It would be nice if the “Divine Plan” could be obtained in German.

I am worried sometimes as I do so little financially to assist the truth. Although I have a really big expense at present . . . I feel I am not doing enough; perhaps you could give me some guidance in this matter. I hope to be able to send something regularly next year, but the cost of living is almost frightening . . . You never ask for donations, but I would like to know if money is needed; I think we should be told, as it is our privilege to assist. Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

(Literature in the German can be supplied quite free. In July’s “Peoples Paper” a report on the general work and radio witness, together with balance sheets covering the previous year’s work were presented, and this “Paper” is available to all, upon request.—B.B. Institute.)

It is easy enough to be pleasant
When life flows by like a song,

But the man worth while is the man who will smile
When everything goes dead wrong;

For the test of the heart is trouble,

And it always comes with the years;

And the smile that is worth the praises of earth
Is the smile that shines through tears.

—Selected.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.



Volume XXXVIII MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 1955

The Man Born to be King.

(See Matthew 2:1-15.)

THIS subject is certainly a most important one, and we feel that a correct understanding of our Lord's life on earth is of vital value to all of God's people who are seeking to walk in the steps of our Saviour and Redeemer.

To all who are acquainted with the birth of Jesus as the Babe of Bethlehem, His earthly mother being used to nourish and rear this Babe into boyhood, it is evident that the Heavenly Father chose this means of giving His dear Son to be the Redeemer of mankind, as being the best way in keeping with His plan of salvation for a dying human race.

We have no doubt at all that God could have sent His Son as a fully developed man, direct from heaven, had His wisdom seen that it would have been the best way ; but inasmuch as Jesus came into the world, born of an earthly mother, this must be considered as the very best way, not only to accomplish God's plan of redemption, but also as the best means of conveying to the minds of earthly beings the great truth that our Saviour was the Messiah from heaven.

Supposing that Jesus had appeared suddenly in the midst of the Jewish people, as a fully developed man at the age of 30 years, and claimed to be the Messiah, the Saviour to Israel, there would have been some reason for the majority of that nation to believe that He was more than a man, and this lingering supposition would have been a great hindrance to the faith of those who longed and yearned for the Messiah, and desired to walk in His steps, in hope of the kingdom. Even as it was, we remember that it was difficult enough for the most sincere in Jesus' day to understand (after they had witnessed an outstanding miracle by our Lord), that He was really human. We call to mind the instance in Matt. 8:27—"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

What our Lord ever sought to impress upon His disciples was the fact that the works He did, the miracles He performed, were accomplished by the power from above—not by His own bodily power. In John 14:10, we read—"The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Also in regard to His teachings, He declared—"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:16, 17.) How this helps us to understand the philosophy of the ransom—that our Lord was a corresponding price for the life of our first parent, Adam. How important it is that this truth be grasped and understood in our hearts and minds,

because until we do see that our Saviour was a perfect human being, at His first advent, we cannot really and truly co-operate intelligently as members in the Body of Christ.

It was to assist the disciples of Christ in particular, we may be sure, that God sent Jesus as the babe, so that He may grow up as other children, only of course, He was a perfect child, and was not affected or influenced by the imperfections of the dying human race. God knew, of course, that some in Israel would stumble at the lowly manner in which the Saviour came into the world, and would ridicule the suggestion that He was the Messiah. No doubt many thought of Him as stated in Matt. 13:55—"Is not this the carpenter's son?" They would reason—He is just one of us; and yet, as verse 54 shows, they could not but ask — "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?"

While, then, the lowly birth of Jesus stumbled some to conclude that He was just one of the ordinary children in Israel, as He grew up, those in right heart condition could see that He was no ordinary man, because He was guided and directed of God so fully, and the miracles He did marked Him out as God's special messenger, even the Messiah.

However, how many sincere people to-day conclude that our Lord was more than a human being while on earth. Some seem to feel that it is belittling to think that our Saviour was not Divine in some way. A sincere person once wrote—"I cannot have any thing to do with teachings which tamper with the Deity of Christ." It is sad to note this attitude, for how necessary it is to really study God's Word, and not be so sure of having gained the truth in regard to any matter, that we are not open to correction, as the truths of the Scriptures are revealed to those worthy of them.

How clearly did the Apostle John explain our Lord's nature when He came as the Babe of Bethlehem. In 1 John 4:2, 3, 'we read—"Hereby know ye the spirit of God ; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come ; and even now already is it in the world." It is most important, surely, to understand this matter of our Lord's perfect humanity at His first advent—that He was truly the Man born to be King. In 1 Tim 2:5, 6 we read—"The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." It is absolutely clear that our Lord gave His humanity for the life of the world—a man's life for a man's life, that He may pay the death penalty against Adam, and the race condemned to death in Adam. (See Heb. 2:9. "A little lower than the angels," was the same nature as that possessed by man in his perfection; see verses 6, 7.)

Some sincere believers who are able to grasp the fact that our Lord gave His human life in sacrifice, feel that in some way He will again 'appear in human form at His second advent. The truth on this matter is of equal importance, surely, as is the nature of Jesus when He came to redeem humanity ; and how definitely did our Lord declare of Himself—"My flesh I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51.) And again, in speaking to His disciples He stated—"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more ; but ye (shall) see me (in the heavenly kingdom) ; because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14:19.) The Apostle Paul also revealed that in His great exaltation our Lord was made in the "express image of the Father's person," — the divine nature ; while Peter adds his testimony that Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened (resurrected) in spirit." (Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:18.)

Someone may feel that it is not really important to know and understand these things, but it is of great importance that we do become clear and definite on the doctrine of the ransom —the corresponding price which our Redeemer gave for the world—and also the manner of His return, so that, as members of His Body, we may be in full harmony and co-operate in all things with our Lord and Head.

When the time came for our Lord to complete His sacrifice, we find that the answers He gave to Pilate are

of great instruction to us respecting His kingship and kingdom. After being questioned by Pilate, we note the answer He gave in John 18:36, 37—"My kingdom is not of this world (kosmos, order of things; this 'present evil world') ; if my

kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

The great purpose of our Lord being born as the Babe of Bethlehem was that He may become the Man, Christ Jesus, to give Himself a ransom, corresponding price, for the world of mankind. He certainly bore witness unto this truth ; and every one that is of the truth (with a heart and mind for the truth), heareth the Lord's voice. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27.)

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

The Ransom and Its Application to Mankind.

THE word “Ransom” is used in respect of the purchase-price of humanity and also in connection with the deliverance of mankind after having been purchased by that price. As an illustration of the two uses of the word, we give two texts of Scripture :—

(1) “Who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (1 Tim. 2:6.)

(2) “I will Ransom them from the power of the grave.” (Hos. 13:14.) In these texts we see the two uses of the word “Ransom”. The word Ransom in the Scriptures is often used in a similar manner to the word “redeem.” The two words, indeed, have the thought of purchase connected with them. To redeem is to buy back ; to ransom, as used in 1 Tim. 2:6, is to buy back, by giving a price to correspond.

The Bible sometimes speaks of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as the giving of the price. The Scripture says that our Lord Jesus gave Himself to be a Ransom-price. (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45.) He gave Himself at Jordan; He completed the giving of Himself at Calvary. In His death He laid down the Ransom-price, the price necessary for redeeming Adam and all of his race from the sentence of death.

But there is a difference to be observed between the laying down of the Ransom-price and the application of that Ransom-price. The price was in our Lord Jesus Himself, but He must lay it down sacrificially before the benefits of it could be given to others. The Scriptures show us that, after He had laid down that price, God empowered Him to make use of it, permitting Him to enter into the Most Holy, even heaven itself, to do so. He makes use of that price, as outlined in the Scriptures, in a two-fold offering to God:

First, He appropriated of that life which He had laid down — the merits of that Ransom price—to those who would constitute His Body, the Church. He Himself had no sins to cleanse, but those who, according to God’s arrangement, were to be the members of His Body, had sins ; and for these He applies His blood as a redemption price or merit on their behalf, securing for them, not only release from condemnation, but also the opportunity of becoming sharers with Him in the Ransom work. He has not applied the merit of that sacrifice as yet to Adam or his children, but merely to those who, in the type, were represented by the under-priests, and to the Levites, the brethren and servants of the priestly family.

Secondly, Christ will make use of His sacrifice on behalf of all the people. As was shown in the type, the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy-seat at the close of the Day of Atonement, which was the second sprinkling, was for all the people. The antitype of this act will constitute a full offset to the Adamic condemnation. Another Scripture, however, shows us that while all the people are to come under the direct control of the great Messiah, they are not to be turned over perfect, but as they are found—in a dying condition, the wrath of God, because of imperfection, still being upon them. Then, under the New Covenant, of which our Lord is made responsible Mediator, the Great Messiah will take charge of “all the people,” even while they are still subject to the weaknesses resulting from the sentence of death. Under this New Covenant, as many of them as will become obedient to the laws of Messiah’s Kingdom, will come into relationship to the Life-Giver, in harmony with the text, which says, “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” (1 John 5:12 ; John 3:36.) All of Adam’s posterity will have an opportunity to accept Jesus, either as His brethren at the present time, or as His children in the next Age.

Coming back, then, to the words Ransom and Ransomed: They are used in respect of our Lord, to indicate, not that He completed the Ransom work when He died, but that He there provided the Ransom-price. During His Mediatorial reign the whole work of Christ will be that of delivering those for whom He

gave the Ransom-price. In this last use of the word, it would be right to say that the Church shares with Christ in this Ransom work of delivering the world. This is the thought everywhere set before us in the Scriptures. But it would be wrong to say that the Church participates in the Ransom-price. The Ransom-price was the perfect Man, Jesus, who gave Himself to be a Ransom-price for all.

In that sacrifice there is a sufficiency of merit for all of Adam's posterity. The Church, therefore, has no participation in the work of giving the Ransom-price, though it is to participate in the work of Ransoming or recovering those for whom the Ransom-price is to be applied.

The sentence of death, passed upon father Adam, was transmitted in a natural way to all of his children. At the end of this Gospel Age, the Great Priest will have finished His atoning work. Then, by applying the Ransom-price on behalf of the world, He will become invested with all the rights and titles to humanity and to the earth. The full price having been paid over on behalf of mankind and their home, and having been accepted by the Almighty, the "world and the fulness thereof" will all be turned over to Christ, who will then be King of kings and Lord of lords. Justice will then have no further claim upon mankind, all of whom will have been turned over to Christ. But He will not recognise those who are in a rebellious attitude toward God's arrangements.

Such, however, will be held in restraint and will still be under Divine Justice, for the Great Mediator will be a representative of Divine Justice, as well as of Divine Mercy. During His reign it will be His duty and privilege to teach mankind a great lesson. In one of the prophecies we read, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob ; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths ; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:3 ; Micah 4:2.) And it shall come to pass that the nation that will not go up to Jerusalem will have no blessing.—Zech. 14:17-19.

In other words, while the Millennial Kingdom will be fully established, its blessings will be operative only toward those who will seek to keep the Divine Law. But as the nations perceive that there is no blessing apart from the keeping of the Divine Law, they will doubtless be influenced to do so. In due time, the light of the knowledge of the Lord will fill the whole earth, and ignorance and superstition will be supplanted by Divine enlightenment.

The Scriptures assure us that this New Covenant will be made with Israel, and with all mankind, who will become Israelites ; for God will also give the heathen to Messiah, who will be Ruler of all the earth, not merely of those who accept His Government. "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance." He will rule with the iron rod, to the intent that all mankind may learn the Divine Law and have the Divine blessing.—Psalm 2:6-12.

"The Story of the Christ Child"—A 24 page book of the birth of Jesus, simply stated, for young children. Colored illustrations on all pages. Price 3/-

Gatherings at Geelong.

The majority of the Melbourne brethren journeyed to Geelong, Vic., on Sunday, 30th October, and spent a very profitable day with the friends in that locality. A number of helpful addresses were given and the Bible study on 1 Pet.

5:5-11 was also instructive and encouraging to all able to attend. We were sorry that sickness prevented some of the friends in both Melbourne and Geelong from attending.

Our brethren generally will be pleased to learn that a Baptism Service has been arranged for Geelong on 26th November also, when four members from the Geelong and Melbourne areas expect to symbolize their consecration to the Lord. This issue of "Peoples Paper" is going to press just prior to the date of the Baptism Service, so it is impossible to report it further. However, we rejoice with these dear friends in their desire to thus signify their hearts' devotion and service to the Lord — to be dead with Christ, if so be that they may reign with Him.

Booklet for January's "P. Paper"

A booklet entitled—"Does the Bible Teach Divine Healing for Today ?", is taking the place of January's "Peoples Paper," and is being posted out to all readers with this issue. Friends will realise, therefore, that the next "Peoples Paper" will be the February, 1956, issue.

In view of the prominence given to the deceptive teaching that the Lord is healing bodily ills at the present time, it is hoped that this booklet, as well as the pamphlet entitled—"Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?", may be helpful to all who desire the truth on this important matter, as on all other subjects. The last mentioned pamphlet is available in quantities for all able to use them to advantage.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to advise that their Annual Convention will be held over the Christmas period (D.V.) in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, Melbourne.

The days of Convention have now been confirmed for December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, with additional gatherings on the New Year weekend for December 31st and January 1st.

A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these- assemblies in Melbourne, and further information may be obtained from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

The Bread of Life-“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HUNGER AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

“Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.”—Amos 8:11.

TO-DAY this prophecy is fulfilled in our I midst! Notwithstanding the fact that during the past century Bibles have been printed and circulated amongst the people by the million, and notwithstanding the fact that education has become so general that rich and poor, old and young, have the ability to read the Word of God, nevertheless we are in the midst of the very famine which the Prophet specifies. It seems almost incredible that we should be famishing now with Bibles in our homes, when our saintly forefathers did not famish, although their education was limited. The secret lies in the fact that increasing intelligence on every hand has awakened our reasoning faculties along religious lines, and the result is the gnawing of hunger in our hearts. Both heart and flesh cry out for a living and true God — a God greater than ourselves—more just, more powerful, more loving. Realising our own impotency, we feel more and more our need of the Friend whose love is closer than a brother’s.

Consequently we cannot find in the Scriptures the rest, the refreshment, and the comfort which our forefathers derived therefrom. Consequently the young men and the purest of heart in the world are repelled by the religion of the past. They are hungry for the Truth, thirsty for the refreshment which they need. Intellectually, many are looking, wandering, from sea to sea, desiring the Bread of Life.

Scanning the creeds of all denominations, they find these practically alike as respects theories of eternal reprobation and damnation for all except the Elect, the saintly few. They grow faint for want of spiritual food and drink. They even look to the heathen world, and examine the theosophy of India, the Buddhism of Japan, and the Confusianism of China, seeking for some satisfying portion of Truth.

In some respects these are like the prodigal son — far from home. They perceive the swinish content with the husks of business, money, pleasure, and politics ; but their spiritual longings cannot be satisfied with the husks which the “swine” eat. Because of their interest in spiritual things they are thought peculiar. They are misunderstood by their best earthly friends. In their wanderings along the highways of science and world-religion they must surely learn that they will get no satisfaction from those sources.

Ho, all ye that hunger for Truth, come ye ! There is an abundance for us all in our Heavenly Father’s wonderful provision—in the Bible. Deserting all the creeds and traditions of men, let us gather at our Heavenly Father’s Board as His family, as His children. Let us prove the truthfulness of His declaration that “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence Him.” Let us seek and find the satisfying portion. Let us satisfy our longings at the table of Divine provision. Mark the words of the Lord and consider how truthful they are—”Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

It is this Truth-hungry class whom we address. We know their heart longings ; for we have had the same experience. We know the satisfaction which they crave ; for we have received it and are therefore doubly glad to hand forth the Bread and Water of Life to those who desire it. There are many who are ready to serve the appetites of those who long for pleasure — ball games, society fetes, chess, travel, etc. Against these we have not one word to say. It is not our thought that they are en route to eternal torment ; hence, we do not frantically beset them or annoy them. Let them have their pleasure. Let them wait for the time to come when something may occur in their experiences which will put them into the class of the broken-hearted and contrite of spirit, something which will cause them to feel after God, if haply they might find

Him as a satisfying portion.

In harmony with the Master's directions, it is our aim to "bind up the broken-hearted and to comfort those that mourn," to tell them of the oil of joy which the Lord is willing to bestow for their spirit of heaviness and sorrow for sin. (Isa. 61:1-3.) As the Master expressed no reproof of those engaged in any sort of moral reform, so it is with us. We desire to oppose no one who is doing any good work, whether or not he follows with us in every particular. There are so many engaged in doing evil works, and so few engaged in doing good, that not one of the latter class can be spared from the ranks of the service of righteousness.

As the Master did not give His time to temperance reform, or to social reform, or to political reform, but gave it to the instruction of the people in the doctrines of the Word of God, so let us be intent to follow His example in this matter, not "teaching for doctrines the precepts of men," but the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever— expounding to the people the Scriptures and assisting them to see the length and the breadth and height and depth of their meaning.

Nevertheless, as the religious teachers of the Master's day hated Jesus and His disciples for this cause, "because they taught the people," and as they persecuted the Master and His followers because they did not walk in the beaten paths of their day, so we may expect that the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law to-day will be grieved because the people are taught the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ is presented to the people as an incentive to love and obedience, instead of the doctrine of eternal torment.

It matters not that all the educated ministers to-day well know, and would not for a moment deny, their disbelief in the doctrine of eternal torment, if cross questioned.

(1) They perceive that the teaching of the doctrines of purgatory and eternal torment has not had a sanctifying influence upon mankind in all the sixteen centuries in which these doctrines have been preached. But they fear that to deny these doctrines now would only make a bad matter worse. They fear that if the Gospel of the Love of God and the fact that the Bible does not teach eternal torment for any were generally made known, the effect upon the world would be to increase its wickedness, to make life and property less secure, and to fill the world with blasphemies still more than now.

(2) They fear also that a certain amount of discredit would come to themselves because, knowing that the Bible does not teach eternal torment, according to the Hebrew and Greek original, they secreted the knowledge from the people. They fear that this would forever discredit them with their hearers.

We ask you, dear fellow Christians, were you constrained to become children of God and to render to the Lord the homage and obedience of your lives through fear or through love? We are not asking you whether you never have feared ; but what brought you to the point of consecrating your life to God? Surely it was not fear? We are aware, of course, that there is a proper godly fear, reverence, and that the Scriptures declare it — "The fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Psalm 111:10.) But this is not the fear of eternal torment, which tends to drive out love. How could we love or esteem or truly worship a God who purposed the eternal torment of His creatures from before their creation!

We could give you many proofs of the power of love over the human heart, in contrast with the ungodly fear of the error. God says to us in so many words, "Their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men." (Isaiah 29:13.) As an illustration : Some years ago at a Convention a well-dressed gentleman in attendance told how his heart had been touched with our presentation of the love of God.

He said, "For years I have been a member of the Presbyterian Church without being really a Christian at

all. Occasionally I went on sprees, sometimes I gambled, and drank, etc. Not until I received a knowledge of the true character of God as set forth in the 'Divine Plan of the Ages' did my heart ever come to the proper attitude of surrender to the Lord. Then I was glad to give Him my little all, and wished that it was more."

The next day, as I was passing to the auditorium to conduct a question meeting, this gentleman put a slip of paper into my hand. Supposing that it contained a question, I thrust it into my coat pocket. On the platform I drew it forth as one of the questions to be answered, and to my astonishment I found it to be a cheque for one thousand dollars. The man had not been asked to contribute, nor had there been any appeals for funds, but the love of God had captivated his heart, and had got control—not only of it, but of his pocket-book and all. He wished to show the Lord his appreciation of the Love Divine, the length, the breadth, the height, and the depth of which he now comprehended as never before.

Another case : Several years ago was a gentleman who had then but recently become interested in our studies of the Word of God. He said in substance: "I will not attempt to tell you how wicked a man I was before I got your literature. My dear wife here, an earnest Methodist, said to me, 'John, John, you will surely go to Hell!' I replied to her, 'Mary, I know it! I know it! And, Mary, I am determined to deserve all that I get. I am not going to Hell for nothing.'

"One of your tracts came to my desk in my store. I read it and perceived that it was different from anything I had ever understood respecting the teachings of the Bible; for it seemed more rational and more God-like. I sent to you for various Bible Helps. The result is that the Love of God has constrained me, has conquered me, in a way that the doctrines of devilish torments could not influence me. Now I see the true teaching of the Word of God; I can honour Him, worship Him, and take pleasure in laying down my life in His service. I have made a full consecration of everything I possess.

"For a time I sent you a fifty-dollar cheque every month ; but it was in the nature of conscience-money. At that time the most profitable feature of my store trade was the sale of liquor. As the grace of God more and more filled my heart to overflowing, it brought me to see that I must love my neighbour as myself, and do injury to none, and those cheques stopped. I ceased to deal in liquor, and have devoted my whole life to the service of God and of my fellow-men."

Three murderers confined in the Ohio State Penitentiary had from childhood been trained in the doctrine of eternal torment by different denominations ; and yet these men had committed murder. Under the providence of God these men received some of our literature, and were cut to the heart when they learned of the Love of God as expressed in "The Divine Plan of the Ages." This knowledge made such a change in the hearts and lives of these , three murderers that the prison-keepers took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and had learned of Him. By and by they were paroled, and two of them started preaching the Gospel of the Love of God, seeking to bring their fellow-men out of the condition of darkness and sin into the glorious sunlight of Divine Love and Truth.

Having tried the Gospel of Fear and Damnation and Torture for the past sixteen centuries, and having seen that under this teaching there is more blasphemy and general wickedness in Christendom than even in the heathen world, should we not decide that it is due time to give the true Bread and Water of Life to the hungry and thirsty ones who, for the lack of it, are searching the earth over, and many of whom are falling into Higher Criticism and other delusions peculiar to our day ?

With shame of face we must all acknowledge that "we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health in us." The proper thing for us to do, dear Christian friends, is to get down upon our knees before the Lord and in contrition of heart acknowledge that we have wrought no deliverance in the earth (Isaiah 26:18) ; that our sectarian

differences are our shame ; that the ignorance in which we have all been respecting the Word of God is humiliating.

When once the eyes of our understanding are opened, we can comprehend as never before the harmony of God's Message from Genesis to the Revelation. Daily the Word of God becomes more precious to us. More and more we realise that it is our duty to fly to the assistance of our dear brethren in Christ, and to call upon them to join in a determined stand for God and His Word of Truth. We must show them that our God has been dishonoured by misrepresentations of His character and of the real teachings of His Word. We must point them to the fact that the Bible does not teach that all mankind except the Elect will be consigned to an eternity of torture at the hands of demons.

We must also show them that the Election of the Church during this Gospel Age does not mean injury to the nonelect ; but that, on the contrary, it is the Divine purpose that the elect saints with the great Redeemer shall constitute God's Kingdom, which will bind Satan, put down sin, banish ignorance, error and superstition, and uplift mankind by resurrection processes to all that was lost in Eden by Adam's disobedience, but secured for him and all his race through the great transaction accomplished on Calvary. All mankind shall yet see that the Divine Purpose shall be accomplished; that the Word which has gone forth out of Jehovah's mouth shall prosper in the thing whereunto He sent it.

Loyalty is the test upon Christian people to-day. The Lord desires not those who merely fear to do wrong, but those who love to do right, and hate to do wrong. —(From "Reprints.")

Tracts Available.

The article "What May We Expect from Geneva Conference?" which appeared in October "Peoples Paper," will be available in tract form shortly. Friends who can use these to advantage should apply for supplies. These tracts are provided free from the Tract Fund.

Other tracts also available in quantities

"Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?" "God's Solution for the Formosa Problem."

"Is there a Second Chance for Salvation After Death?"

"Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon? — Will Australia Be Involved?"

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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The Bible.

THE Bible is the torch of civilisation and liberty. Its influence for good in society has been recognised by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings. The grand old Book is unintentionally, but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf ; and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through traditions of their fathers. Would that such would awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their weapons!

Since the light of nature leads us to expect a fuller revelation of God than that which nature supplies, the reasonable, thinking mind will be prepared to examine the claims of anything purporting to be Divine revelation, which bears a reasonable surface evidence of the truthfulness of such claims. The Bible claims to be such a revelation from God, and it does come to us with sufficient surface evidence as to the probable correctness of its claims, and gives us a reasonable hope that closer investigation will disclose more complete and positive evidence that it is indeed the Word of God.

The Bible is the oldest book in existence ; it has outlived the storms of thirty centuries. Men have endeavoured by every means possible to banish it from the face of the earth ; they have hidden it, burned it, made it a crime punishable with death to have it in possession, and the most bitter and relentless persecutions have been waged against those who had faith in it ; but still the Book lives. To-day, while many of its' foes slumber in death, and hundreds of volumes written to discredit it and to overthrow its influence, are long since forgotten, the Bible has found its way into every nation and language of earth, over eleven hundred different translations of it having been made. The fact that this Book has survived so many centuries, notwithstanding such unparalleled efforts to banish and destroy it, is at least strong circumstantial evidence that the great Being whom it ,claims as its Author has also been its preserver.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding. handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

“The Everlasting Gospel.”—A 64-page booklet dealing with the Sabbath question and other important connected subjects, highly recommended, heavy paper cover, price 1/6.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

Books Available.

The following Books are expected to be on hand by the time this “Paper” reaches our readers :- “Most Holy Faith”—£1.

“God’s Promises Come True”—£1.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“Tabernacle Shadows”—6/-.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“Christ’s Return”.—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid:

Capernaum.

How blest the city which was called “His Own,”
The home of Jesus Christ; happy the street

Which knew the echo of His sandalled feet,
The light of His familiar face, the tone

Of His most gentle voice; happy each stone
And timber of that dwelling, which His sweet

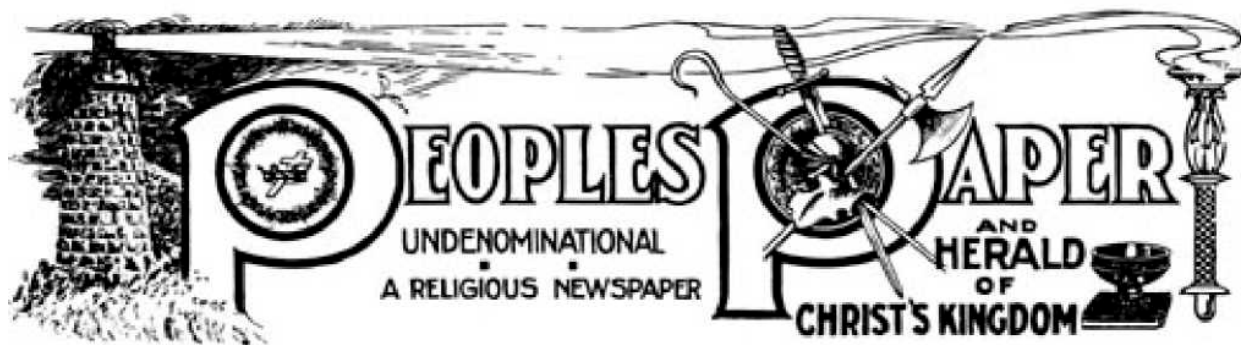
“Peace to this house” was daily wont to greet,
When His dear shadow on the door was thrown.

Jesus, who standeth knocking at my door
Seeking a home in this poor heart of mine,

Oh! lift the latch—enter for evermore;
Here let Thy voice be heard, make Thy face to shine,

And breathe Thy peace, while gratefully I sing
The love and condescension of my King.

—R.W. (M.A.)



Volume XXXVIII MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY 1956

Divine Healing.

In view of the many claims being made, and great prominence being given to the subject of faith healing at the present time, it is thought well to present the following article from our brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A., for the benefit of all our readers.

We feel sure that the Scriptural presentation of this subject in this article, will prove helpful to all who love the Lord and desire to know His truth above everything else in this world.

DISEASE is a terrible blight upon the human race. Nobody enjoys suffering, or being handicapped by one or more of the hundreds of maladies which fasten themselves upon us and eventually drag us down to death. In ancient times little or nothing was known of scientific medical treatment, and this gave opportunity for witch doctors and other unscrupulous practitioners to exploit the people, taking advantage both of their fears and superstitions, and of their very understandable desire to be relieved of pain.

Today the situation is somewhat different. Tremendous progress has been made in medical science, yet withal there still remain millions of incurables who continue to hope against hope that some day a remedy will be discovered, or a means found to restore them to normal health. This understandable hope of finding a cure exposes many of the unfortunate members of the human family to exploitation today, even as in ages past.

Government control over traffic in drugs helps to protect some from: being victimized. The licensing of physicians, dentists and others whose work is to relieve human suffering, is a further protection of the public against exploitation. But these provisions are only a partial safeguard against the evil practice of preying upon the unfortunate and taking advantage of their pitiful plight for selfish purposes.

When medical science fails to relieve pain, cure disease, or restore sight, many begin to wonder about the possibility of a miracle being performed for them. Those who have no faith in a higher power are not tempted along this line, but those who do believe in God, and have faith that He is able to do all things, are often easily convinced that they should expect Him to heal them. With this thought in mind, they appeal to God for help, either directly, or through the assistance of a faith healer. Sometimes improvement is noted. In many other cases the "patient" is sorely disappointed, for no "miracle" takes place.

The healing of disease without the use of medicine or surgery is not new. It was practised by the magicians of ancient Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. Holy men of India perform what they claim are miraculous cures. They did in the past, and are still doing so.

In America and Europe today the idea of treating ailments of the mind and body through psychiatric methods is becoming more and more popular. It is described by some as mind over matter. Sometimes hypnotism is employed. It is said that some physicians and dentists, for example, are able to hypnotize their patients before operating and thus do away with the need of gas or local anaesthetics.

We are calling attention to these various methods of curing disease and killing pain that are outside the realm of medical orthodoxy, not with the thought of either condemning or condoning them, but rather to show that, quite apart from professions of belief in Christ, or in the power of God to heal disease, phenomenal things have been and are still being accomplished. Obviously this leaves us with the necessity of admitting that professing Christian faith healers are accomplishing nothing more startling than are others who, in their practices, do not call upon the name of Christ at all, or if they do invoke the power of deity, it is that of a heathen god.

Christ Performed Miracles

The argument is often advanced that since Jesus performed miraculous cures, and the apostles in the Early Church healed the sick, by miracle-working power, Christians today should be able to do the same. Our attention is called to a statement Made by Jesus to the effect that His disciples would be able to accomplish the same mighty works, and even “greater works.”—John 14:12.

It is true that Jesus healed the sick by miracle-working power. It is also true that He assured His disciples that they would be able to do even greater works than they had seen Him; accomplish. But it is also true that Jesus raised the dead. Lazarus, for example, had been dead for four days and his body had begun to decay, yet Jesus restored him to life. The Apostle Peter, by invoking divine power, raised Dorcas to life. If Christians today are to practise divine healing because Jesus and the apostles did, then it should be possible, by faith, to raise the dead.

No matter how successful faith healers of today may claim to be, they must admit some failures; yet Jesus never failed. And even the most enthusiastic must also agree that they are utterly unable to restore the dead to life. Thus we are presented with inescapable facts which must be given consideration in the appraisal of the modern practice of healing the sick in the name of Christ.

First, we should remember that others are doing the same thing apart from all claims of being Christians, and have been doing so for centuries. Second, there are many failures in the attempts that are being made by faith healers today to restore the sick to health; and third, they cannot raise the dead as Jesus did, hence ‘their claims of following His example come far short of actually doing so, thus raising a question as to whether they are really acting by His authority.

No More Pain

However, there is no denying the fact that the Bible has much to say about divine healing. God is represented as a Great Physician who heals all the diseases of His people. (Psa. 103:3.) The Prophet Isaiah foretold a time when “the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.” (Isa. 33:24.) The same sacred writer prophesied that all the blind eyes would be opened, and all the deaf ears unstopped. He also promised that the lame would leap and the dumb sing.—Isa. 35:5, 6.

Diseases of all kinds are simply an evidence that the human race is dying. They are the concomitants of death, and the Apostle Paul informs us that Christ must reign until He has destroyed death. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26.) The destruction of death will include the destruction of disease which leads to death. The Apostle John, describing the meaning of the vision given to him by Christ on the Isle of Patmos, said that a time

was coming when there would be no more death, that God would wipe away tears from off all faces, that there would be no more pain, and sorrow and sighing would end.—Rev. 21:4.

.Not only do the Scriptures thus promise that it is God's purpose to make an end of sin and death, but the prophecies also reveal that, this would be done through Christ, that through Him health and life would come to the people. The fact is emphasized by a message Jesus sent to John the Baptist. John had been imprisoned, and while previously he had announced

Jesus as the foretold Messiah, and thoroughly believed that He was, he later wondered and sought reassurance.

In this frame of mind he sent two of his disciples to Jesus asking, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"--Matt. 11:3.

Jesus asked the messengers to return to John and tell him what they had seen, that the sick were being healed, that blind 'eyes were being opened, that the dead were being raised, and that the poor were having the Gospel preached to them. Jesus knew that John the Baptist would take these things as proof that the Messiah, the Christ, truly had come, for John knew that these were the works which God had promised the Messiah would accomplish on behalf of the people.

In view of this clearly established purpose of God, through Christ, as we find it in the Bible, no true believer in the Scriptures will deny that divine healing is a part of the Christian programme for the sin-cursed and dying race. On the other hand, a moment of honest reflection upon the experiences ,of Christians throughout the centuries since Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead should be sufficient to convince any sincere searcher after truth that if the divine programme for restoring the human race to health and life is to accomplish no more for the people than has been done by the various faith healers and miracle workers who have claimed to operate in the name of Christ, the divine health programme has been, and continues to be, a miserable failure.

To see and acknowledge this should, in turn, cause us to search more deeply into the Word of God in order to discover, if possible, the manner and time in which His health-giving provision for the people will become a reality. Thus, and thus only, will we find harmony between the testimony of the Bible and the experiences of the followers of Jesus, past and present. Regardless of what our theories and our wishes may be, they should not be allowed to weigh anything as against the facts, and the facts are that no such programme of divine healing as that promised in the Word of God has yet reached the dying race. And why not?

Times of Restitution

As we have already seen, the apostles as well as Jesus practiced divine healing. An example of this was the healing by Peter of the lame man who sat "at the beautiful gate of the temple," asking alms. (Acts 3:1-11.) This man had been lame from the time of his birth, but when Peter gave the words of authority he was restored to soundness of limb. When the people inquired by what authority and power this man had been healed, Peter explained that it was through Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified.

But Peter did not stop with this answer to their question. Instead, he called upon his listeners to repent, telling them that their sins would be blotted out if they did so, and that great refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord. But further, he explained that when Jesus Christ would return, these would be "times of restitution of all things." This time of general restitution, or restoration, Peter further explained, had been foretold by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:20-23.

The lesson here is clear, and the conclusion unmistakable. Peter had healed a lame man. It was accomplished through his belief in Christ. Using this as the basis of his sermon the apostle explained that there would be a time of general restoration following the second coming of Christ, and that it was this which all God's prophets foretold. God's programme of health and life for the people, therefore, was not due to be inaugurated until after the second coming of Christ and the establishment of His kingdom.

This feature of the divine plan has not failed, nor will it fail. When put into operation it will result in a complete fulfilment of all the divine promises of health and life. All the blind eyes will be opened all the deaf ears will be unstopped; all the lame will be healed. No one the wide world over who accepts the provision of God's grace through Christ will then need to say, "I am sick."

Reality of Sickness and Death.

Disease and death are man's greatest enemies. We know this from observation and experience, for the germs of disease and decrepitude are working in all of us leading gradually to disability, old age, and finally death. In spite of the best efforts of twentieth century medical science, millions are struck down by death while they are still young. Every aspect of life is made uncertain by the certainty of death. One of the things which stamps the Bible with the mark of authenticity is the fact that it proclaims the reality of death and explains its origin.

We wish to stress this point, for there are millions in the world today who, in an attempt to escape reality, are trying to believe that disease and pain, and even death, do not actually exist, that these evils are merely figments of the imagination. The further claim is that if one will simply make up his mind that pain does not exist, he won't be afflicted with pain. It is a fanciful theory which does not work out in practice.

Disease eventually leads to death; but those who claim to do away with disease simply by insisting that it does not exist should not, by process of sound logic, need to die! But they do die nevertheless. No matter what viewpoint faith practitioners may have—whether it is believing that the risen Christ works through them to heal disease, or inducing the patient to believe that there is no disease—no one in all the centuries since Christ came into the world, has been kept from dying. On the other hand, the Bible assures us that the divine programme of healing will result in there being "no more death."—Rev. 21:4.

Why Jesus Healed the Sick

No Christian will deny that Jesus actually healed the sick, and that He did so by divine power and in keeping with the will of His God. However, those whom Jesus healed, subsequently died, and those whom He raised from the dead ultimately went into death again. So the question arises as to why even His cures were not permanent.

Perhaps the most Scriptural answer to this question, as it relates to the miracles Jesus performed, is found in the statement recorded by John concerning the miracle of turning water into wine. "This beginning of miracles," said John, "did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory." (John 2:11.) The thought of this text is that by His miracles Jesus displayed His glory to the people of His day, in advance of the time when it would be revealed to the whole world by a health programme that would bring everlasting life to all mankind.

This was then a necessary part of His ministry in order that His teachings and the fact of His messiah-ship might be established. The people of ancient times were more accustomed to displays of the so-called supernatural than is the world today. Oriental mysticism was rife with claims and practices of the occult and the alleged miraculous.

Besides, God had performed many actual miracles on behalf of the nation of Israel. These began with Moses. When this great leader of his people appeared before Pharaoh to demand the release of the Israelites, he presented miraculous signs in order to establish the fact of his divine sponsorship. The magicians of Egypt were quick to duplicate these— that is, all except one which they could not.

Thus we see that the public mind in ancient times expected some outstanding demonstration of divine authority and power on the part of those whom they accepted as having been sent by God. Israel's God had fought for them in battle and destroyed their enemies. Some of His prophets had raised their dead. Could they be expected to accept Jesus as the greatest of all their prophets, the One indeed who all their prophets said would come, if He could do less than those who had promised His coming.

This was one reason that Jesus' ministry was accompanied by miracles—the healing of the sick, and the raising of the dead. And in doing this, He was also giving object lessons of what He, as the promised Messiah, would do for the whole world, and upon a permanent basis, when God's due time would come for this feature of the divine plan to be inaugurated.

It is God's will that ultimately all who accept Christ and obey the laws of His kingdom will be restored to health and live forever as human beings. Each of the holy prophets, in one way or another, foretold a world wide programme of health and life. Jesus referred to it as a time of "regeneration." (Matt. 19:28.) As already noted, the Apostle Peter described it as the "times of restitution of all things." (Acts 3:20, 21.) But Jesus did not initiate this programme at His first advent, nor did He promise any of His disciples that they could expect to be divinely cured of their physical ailments because of their faith in Him.

Invited to Die

An interesting case in point is that of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and asked ' what he could do to inherit eternal life. In addition to telling this young man that he would need to dispose of his wealth, using it for the benefit of others, Jesus told him to take up his cross and follow Him into death. He promised the young man that upon this condition he would have treasure in heaven. Jesus said not a word about physical healing. The only assurance He gave this young man was that if he laid down his life in sacrifice he would receive a heavenly reward in the resurrection.— Matt. 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27.

And thus is brought before us the divine programme for this present Gospel age. It is not a programme of healing physical ailments, but rather the sacrifice of human life by following in the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus asked two of His disciples, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with (Matt. 20:22; Mark 10:35-40). To the church at Rome Paul wrote: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." —Rom. 12:1.

There is no way to lay up treasure in heaven except by sacrificing treasures on earth, and some of the earthly treasures which Christians are called upon to sacrifice in the service of the Lord might well be physical health and strength. We do not mean by this that a Christian is recklessly to throw his life away, yet physical health and strength are not to be his chief consideration.

It should be freely acknowledged by all Christians that God has the power to heal diseases, and that He does restore the sick to health when it is His will to do so. God is abundantly able to perform miracles now, through whatever agencies He may choose, even as He was able to perform miracles through His beloved Son Jesus nearly two thousand years ago. The point we are stressing is that the main objective of God's programme for the present age is not that of physical healing.

In this connection some interesting facts come to our attention in the New Testament. Take the case of the Apostle Paul. At the time of his conversion he lost his eyesight as a result of the blinding light which shone from heaven— above the brightness of the sun at noonday. At first he was apparently totally blind, but partial vision was restored a few days later.

However, after his conversion Paul was never able to see well. He spoke of his affliction as a “thorn in the flesh.” (2 Cor. 12:7.) Apparently he reasoned that if this “thorn” could be removed — if he could enjoy normal eyesight—he could accomplish a great deal more in the Lord’s service. So he prayed to God to remove his affliction. In fact, he made it a matter of special prayer on three different occasions. Finally God answered his petition, not by restoring his sight, but by explaining that His grace would be sufficient for him. In other words, so far as a miraculous restoration of Paul’s physical sight was concerned, the Lord’s answer to Paul was “No.”

We cannot suppose that Paul’s failure to have his sight restored by divine power was in any sense due to a lack of faith, nor inability to present the matter properly to the Lord. Nor was the apostle disheartened over the fact that the Lord did not restore his sight, which he certainly would have been had he understood that physical healing was the divine programme for this age, for it would have proven his own unworthiness of the blessings God had promised.

Paul knew that God had not promised to give physical health to the followers of Jesus during this age. He knew that it was his privilege to suffer and to die with Jesus. He did not expect to be favoured above His Master and Lord. As he saw it, he thought he might be able to render more efficient service if he had better physical vision, and he therefore made it a matter of prayer. But when the Lord ruled otherwise, Paul was contented, and explained that since it was the divine will for him to continue being handicapped by this “thorn in the flesh,” he would glory in his infirmities.

From this standpoint it is proper for every Christian to leave the matter of his physical health in the Lord’s hands, even as he looks to Him for guidance and blessing along all other lines. There have doubtless been many cases when the Lord used His power to give physical health and strength to His sacrificing people. In many instances the Lord designs certain work for individual followers of the Master to accomplish, and He gives them strength until that job is done. But in all such instances; the work to be accomplished is the important consideration, not the physical health of those whom the Lord may call to do it.

Spiritual and Human Life

Broadly speaking, there are to be found in the Bible two separate and different sets of promises pertaining to life everlasting. The best known of these are the promises of God which assure Christians of this present age that upon conditions of faithfulness they will be rewarded with immortal life in heaven, being raised up in the “first resurrection” to live and reign with Christ a thousand years. But there are also many divine promises which present the hope of being restored to physical health as human beings, and of living forever on the earth. In an effort to harmonize these with the promises of heavenly life, most students of the Bible spiritualize them; but when this is done, their real meaning is lost.

Others, by taking these promises of physical healing and health out of their setting, use them as a basis for their claims that the Lord will now heal His people of their sicknesses while they are waiting to die and go to heaven. But in this also, the real meaning of these many promises of physical health is overlooked, and the Bible made to appear contradictory.

The harmony of these two lines of thought is found only in recognition of the fact that in the divine plan for human recovery from sin and death, two salvations are promised—one a heavenly salvation, and the

other an earthly, a restoration to health and everlasting life right here on the earth. Promises of the heavenly salvation belong to the followers of Jesus during this present age, while to the human race as a whole the promises of perfect human life apply.

These promises of perfect and unending earthly life are not applicable in human experience today, but present a wonderful hope for the future—that future age during which Jesus will reign as King over the earth and His faithful followers of this age will reign with Him. This restoration of the human race to life on the earth is the great objective of the divine plan, hence much consideration is given to it in both the Old and New Testaments.

The work of restoring the human race to life is to be accomplished during the thousand-year reign of Christ.

The Scriptures clearly teach that Christ's kingdom is not established until after His return. (Acts 3:20, 21.) During the short period of Jesus' first advent ministry, and in connection with His oral message He gave many practical demonstrations of what kingdom blessings would mean for the people when the due time arrived for the promises of God to be fulfilled.. Jesus' miracles, as we have already noted, were not designated to initiate a programme of miracles for this present age, but were intended to be illustrations of the divine programme for the kingdom age.

Leprosy was prevalent in Jesus' day and, even as now, it was considered incurable. Because of this, it was a fitting symbol of sin which, from the standpoint of human ability, is also incurable. Death came into the world as a result of sin, so when Jesus cleansed the lepers of His day, He was illustrating the divine intention ultimately to remove the blight of sin from the earth and to destroy death, the result of sin.

On this point the Lord had promised, through the Prophet Isaiah, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." (Isa. 1:18, 19.) Notice the promise does not assure a home in heaven, but that the willing and obedient shall "eat the good of the land," and this, because their sins have been cleansed away.

Blind Eyes Opened

The Prophet Isaiah, in his forecast of the time when the human race would be restored to health and life, wrote that all the blind eyes would be opened. It was in keeping with this that Jesus, in order to show forth the glory of His coming kingdom work, restored sight to some of the blind in His day.—Isa. 35:5, 6.

Isaiah also prophesied that the time would come when "the lame man shall leap as an hart," and Jesus restored some of the cripples of His day, and thus foreshadowed still further the coming "times of restitution of all things."

Even death itself will be destroyed by divine power. The Lord "will swallow up death in victory," we are assured in this same Old Testament prophecy, "and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isa. 25:8.) Jesus illustrated this promised victory over death by awakening some from the sleep of death, thus demonstrating that death does not stand in the way of the divine plan for restoring the people to health and life.

Greater Works

Jesus promised that His followers would be empowered to do even greater works than He, had undertaken up to that time. (John 14:12.) What did He mean? One explanation of this promise is that it has reference to the work of converting sinners and thus saving them from eternal death. Associated with this would, of course, also be the work of co-operating with the Lord in healing the ailments of the mind and hearts of those who are converted—their spiritual diseases. The thought is that this work is on a higher level than that of healing physical ailments, hence is referred to as “greater works.”

This promise is sometimes associated with Mark 16:17, 18, where Jesus is quoted as saying, “In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

However, all Bible scholars agree that this passage is spurious, having been added to the inspired text by some unauthorised person long after the original manuscript was penned.

It is true that the holy spirit later empowered some to speak with tongues. This was in order that those of other tongues could have the Gospel witnessed to them. It is also true that some in the Early Church were given the gift of healing. But this was to serve a temporary purpose only, and the Apostle Paul makes it plain that these special gifts of the spirit would cease, and they did. (1 Cor. 13:8.) There is only one recorded instance of a disciple being protected against the bite of a ‘serpent’ and that was the case of the Apostle Paul when, together with other prisoners en route to Rome, he was shipwrecked on an island. There is nothing about this incident that suggests a fulfilment of Mark 16:18.

James wrote that if anyone in the church was sick the elders should be called, that they would anoint him, and that “the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord would raise him up.” (James 5:14, 15.) The word “sick” in the 15th verse of this passage is from a Greek word meaning “faint,” or “weariness.” It is the same word translated “wearied” in Hebrews 12:3, where the apostle admonishes Christians not to be wearied and faint in their minds. This Greek word is also used in Revelation 2:3, and is translated “fainted.”

The evident meaning in James, as in Hebrews, is spiritual illness, not physical disease. Discouragement and other forms of spiritual weariness might well lead to a measure of physical sickness. Where this occurs, the curing of the spiritual sickness would automatically result in better physical health. Certainly it is the privilege of all the elders in the church, and of all the brethren, to help one another along these lines whenever and wherever possible.

While this explanation is reasonable, and may well have been included in what Jesus promised, we think, nevertheless, that His chief reference was to the work of His thousand-year kingdom, that great project of restoring all mankind to health and life. Many promises of the Bible assure us that the faithful followers of the Master will share in that future kingdom work. Together with Him, they will minister to the people as the promised “seed of Abraham” through which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.—Gal. 3:8, 16,

And how, much “greater” will be that future work of the kingdom than that represented in the few miracles performed by Jesus as examples of what later is to be done for all mankind! He opened only a few blind eyes; but in His kingdom, all the blind eyes will be opened! And this will include the spiritual blindness of the people as well as their physical blindness. No matter what form of disease may be involved, the future work of healing will be universal, not merely dealing with a few individual cases as at the time of Jesus’ first advent.

And not only so, but that future work will also be “greater” in that for all who believe and obey, it will be permanent, whereas in the case of illustrations given by Jesus it was temporary. There was no assurance then that those whom Jesus healed would not become ill again. But this will not be the experience of those who are restored to health during the thousand years of Christ’s reign “the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”—Acts 3:20, 21.

Besides, while Jesus awakened some who were asleep in death, they did not remain alive, as will be the case with all who are awakened during the Millennium and who then obey the laws of that new kingdom. The purpose of their awakening will be to give them the opportunity to believe and obey and live forever. It will be only those who do not obey that will be “destroyed from among the people.”—Acts 3:23.

Truly that will be a “greater” work than anything accomplished by Jesus at His first advent. And yet the mighty works which He did perform were quite ample to give assurance that when the due time comes there is nothing which the Lord has promised that will not be possible for Christ and His church to do. It is obvious that if divine power was able to heal a few of the sick, it will be able to heal all the sick. If it was able to awe Ices a few of the dead, it will be able to awaken all the dead. And it is also plain that those same provisions of divine grace will enable all the willing and obedient to live forever.

What a wonderful programme of healing and restoration that will be ! It is symbolically described in the prophecy of Malachi as the rising of the “Sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings,” (Mal. 4:2.) What a meaningful illustration! For about 6,000 years the people have been enshrouded in the darkness of sin, sickness, and death. Satan, the god of this “present evil world,” has blinded their minds concerning the true God of love. (2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4.) Not knowing God, they have stumbled on in darkness over the “broad road” that leads to destruction.--Matt. 7:13, 14.

But when the kingdom of Christ becomes operative for the blessing of the people, how different it will be! The “Sun of righteousness” will then be shining. Associated with Jesus in this work of enlightening and blessing the world will be His church. Concerning these, Jesus Himself said that they would “shine forth as the sun” in that glorious kingdom.—Matt. 13:43.

Yes, they will share with Him in these “greater works” which Jesus promised. And how much better that will be than, the healing efforts sometimes attempted today in the name of Christ! God’s ways and plans are always better than those of men, so let us continue to pray for His kingdom to come, and for His will to be done on earth, even as it is now done in heaven. When this prayer is answered it will be true, as foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, that “the inhabitant (of that day) shall not say, I am sick.”—Isa. 33:24.

Of Jehovah, the Great Physician, the Psalmist wrote, “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” (Psalm 103:3-5.) How clearly is thus set forth the Creator’s ultimate purpose concerning the human race. It was sin—disobedience to divine law— that brought sickness and death to the human race. But in this reassuring promise we are informed that through the redeeming love of God iniquity will be forgiven, resulting in the healing of all diseases.

And how wonderful is the promise that those who are thus blessed by the Lord shall renew their youth! This blessed experience will be literally true in the case of all who, during the thousand years of Christ’s reign, accept the grace of God as represented in the atoning blood of the Redeemer and obey the righteous laws of the Messianic kingdom.

No one then will need to grow old and die. No one then will need to die of disease. No one then will need

to die at all, for, as so clearly stated by the Revelator regarding that time when the divine provision of health will be available, “God shall wipe away tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”—Rev. 21:4.

Another comprehensive promise of the blessings of health and life that will be vouchsafed to all under the administration of Christ’s kingdom is that of Revelation 22:1, 2, 17. Here the provisions of divine love are symbolized as a mighty “river”—“a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.” The “throne of God” is symbolic of the divine authority that will be exercised in the earth through Christ’s kingdom. The association of the “Lamb” with this picture reminds us that the blessings of life represented by the river will be available only because of the shed blood of the “Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

And note the reference in verse 2 to the “tree of life,” and that the leaves of this tree (or trees, as it is in the Greek text) are for “the healing of the nations.” Yes, thank God, the people of all nations are to be given an opportunity to be healed, to partake of the “tree of life” from which the human race was once barred because of sin. (Gen. 3:24.) In verse 17 we are informed that when the “river of life” is thus flowing for the blessing of the people, the invitation to partake of its life-giving waters will be extended to “whosoever will.” Then “the spirit and the bride shall say, Come . . . And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” The “bride” who says “Come,” is the church of Christ united with Him in glory, having proved worthy of this high position by suffering and dying with Him during this age. In the divine plan these are rewarded, not with physical health now, but with glory, honour and immortality to live and reign with Christ for the purpose of sharing with Him in healing all mankind of their diseases, and extending everlasting human life to all who will accept the invitation, “Come, and take the water of life freely.”

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord ‘ with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Convention News

It is a pleasure to report a very profitable four-day Convention arranged and conducted by the brethren of the Berean Bible Class in Melbourne over the recent Christmas period. All the friends able to attend these gatherings gave evidence of receiving much blessing, and we thank God, the Giver of all good things, for His favours granted especially throughout this season of refreshing.

Very good attendances were maintained throughout the gatherings; the presence of visiting brethren from Adelaide, Canberra, Tasmania, and other parts of Victoria added greatly to the benefits received. All these dear friends were welcomed by the Melbourne brethren and made to feel at home in the spirit of true fellowship. We were very sorry also that illness had prevented some other dear brethren from attending in person this year, but we felt that they were with us in spirit.

Each day's gatherings were opened with praise and prayer, and each day a selected passage of Scripture was taken for Bible Study, in the following order:—Psalm 46; Rev. 19:1-9; Dan. 12:1-4; and 2 Cor. 5:1-10. These studies proved most helpful and instructive, and gave scope for covering a great amount of Bible truth. In both the Old Testament passages the end of the present order of things was found to be well defined, but God's loving provision for the protection and care of His people gives much consolation and encouragement, as the streams of heavenly truths "make glad the city of God"—the Church of Christ, during the closing years of her pilgrimage. The assurance also that the Lord would ultimately cause all wars to cease, when the needed lessons were learned by all mankind, also gave confidence respecting the future for the whole world of mankind, at which time also they "that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," to inherit the earthly kingdom. The portion in Rev. 19 revealed God's judgments upon the false religious systems of earth, and showed what rejoicing there will be when "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready"; while the passage in 2 Cor. 5 gave hope and encouragement to all who are "walking by faith, and not by sight" as they long for their heavenly home—"a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Addresses were given during the Convention days by twelve of the brethren, and these provided very helpful thoughts on many subjects of Bible truth. The selected topics were—"Love, the Final Test"; "Changed Into the Same Image"; "From Bethany to Calvary"; "The Presence of God"; "The Wise Shall Understand"; "What Does the Bible Teach?"; "How Readest Thou?"; "Boldness and Assurance"; "Rejoicing in the Lord"; "Awake"; "Fruits of Obedience" and "Peace and Good Will." Some of these addresses will be appearing in later issues of "Peoples Paper," while a brief outline of all these addresses and other sessions of the Convention will be found in the Convention Notes, compiled by one of our brethren, and now available to all who desire copies.

The Fellowship Meetings were also helpful periods during which the friends took the opportunity to express their appreciation and thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessings and care over them during the past year in particular. This also gave them good hope and renewed confidence for all the days ahead, despite the gloomy outlook from the natural standpoint. The session on "Hymns We Love and Why" was equally as popular as at past Conventions, as the friends selected their favourite hymns and sang them wholeheartedly, also adding their reasons why particular hymns gave special appeal.

The friends were very pleased to receive the messages with greetings and Scriptural passages from other Classes and brethren in various other parts of Australia; one letter being also received from a deaf and dumb brother in Germany through another member in another State. By this means the friends in Convention were assured of the vital interest in the gatherings being manifest by a goodly number of brethren in other parts of the harvest field. At the closing fellowship session, the friends in Melbourne

selected the passage in Psalm 46:1-5 as a Convention message to be sent to our brethren in every place, with the warm Christian love of all who were present at the gatherings.

The four days of assemblies around the Lord's table were thus concluded for another year in Melbourne, the appropriate Love Feast being accompanied with the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," as all the friends filed round in a circle, and with a hearty handshake wished each other the Lord's blessing in all the days ahead. With the closing hymn "God be with you till we meet again," and prayer of thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for all mercies and favours, with petition for His protecting care to be over His people everywhere, another Convention season of refreshing was brought to a close.

Convention Notes.

Notes covering the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free from this office to all who apply for them.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren of the Adelaide Class wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., commencing on Good Friday, 30th March, and continuing till Easter Monday evening, 2nd April. The gatherings will be held in the Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and all friends able to attend this Convention are cordially invited to do so. Further information is procurable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

Passover Memorial, 1956

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 25th

March; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by the true followers of the Master.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably early in March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

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Perth.—Sunday, 25th March, at 5.30 p.m., at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets, Perth.

Books Available.

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“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“Tabernacle Shadows”-6/-.

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“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”--Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Further copies of this “Peoples Paper” are gladly supplied free; also the booklet “Does the Bible Teach Divine Healing for Today?” and the tract—”Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?” The last mentioned tract is available in quantities for all who can use them to advantage. Apply to-

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Our next of kin, our Brother now, Is He to whom the angels bow; They join with us to praise His name,
And we the nearest interest claim, —John Newton.

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9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 N. ., 4.45 p.m.



Volume XXXIX MELBOURNE, MARCH 1956

Passover in Type and Antitype.

“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”—1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

THE Passover ceremonies, the first institution of Divine favour with the nation of Israel, prefigured the first institution of Divine favour inaugurated by our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion. As the Apostle indicated in our text, the Jewish Passover was a foreshadowing, or typifying of the better things, the real Passover, with which we Christians have to do. We are not wholly dependent upon the Jewish type for our information, however; for we have clear, Divine statements by our Lord and His Apostles respecting the relationship between Christ and His Church and respecting the special salvation of the Elect. Nevertheless, we find in the Passover type many details which assist us greatly in the understanding of the Antitype.

First of all we should notice that the Passover directly affected only the first-borns of Israel, although it indirectly affected all the remainder of Israel. That is to say, the last plague upon Egypt was the death of all their first-borns; and the Passover celebrates the fact that the first-borns of Israel were spared, or passed over, by the destroying angel in that night. As the younger children of the Egyptians were not endangered, neither were the younger children of the Israelites. Hence the latter were not passed over; yet they were certainly interested in the passing over, or sparing, of the first-borns, not merely because of their relationship, but because in the Lord's providence those first-borns became leaders and deliverers of the people on the next day, as they went forth from Egypt.—Num. 8:17, 18.

Furthermore, those first-borns of Israel, exchanged by Divine direction for the entire tribe of Levi, were thereafter represented in them; and they, as the sacrificing priests and the teaching Levites, became the ministers of the Law Covenant for that nation. The anti-type of this was distinctly pointed out by the Apostle Paul; namely, that the elect Church of this Gospel Age is “the Church of the Firstborns, which are written in heaven.” These are to be the “able ministers of the New (Law) Covenant.”—Heb. 12:22:2 Cor. 3:6.

These first-borns are being dealt with during this Gospel Age, or “night”. These alone are in danger of a death penalty. As the Apostle declares, if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour us as the adversaries of God and of righteousness. (Heb. 10:26, 27.) Nevertheless, the whole world of mankind is certainly interested in this Church of the First-borns, in its successful passing over, its attainment of everlasting life; for these are the Royal Priesthood and the

instructors of the New Covenant, which is shortly to be sealed, and by the terms of which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. All mankind will receive the blessing of reconciliation to God through the knowledge of the truth and through the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom, associated with the New Covenant.--Jer. 31:31-34.

Having noted the first-born class, we should discern clearly also the Passover lamb, through the merit of whose blood the passing over of the first-borns was effected. The lamb is a peculiarly innocent animal, wholly unprepared for defence or resistance, and thus a suitable picture, or type, of our Lord, who was non-resistant and who fully and freely surrendered His rights and His earthly interests on our behalf—on behalf of the First-borns. True, others than the Firstborns will ultimately profit by His sacrifice, but these especially and peculiarly so. Thus far God's only dealings during this Gospel Age are with this class. These alone have an Advocate with the Father —Jesus Christ the Righteous. (1 John 2:1, 2.) These alone thus far are reconciled to God.

All of God's blessings to the unbelievers must come in the future under the New Covenant; for only believers can be justified by faith and receive the blessings of the Faith Covenant —the Abrahamic Covenant. "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," first saves, or passes over, the Church of the First-borns, and later in the Millennium will bless all who become Abraham's seed.

There are pictures of the Church which represent her as participating with the Lord in His sacrifice; but this Passover type is not one of these. The Passover lamb represented our Lord Jesus Christ as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29.) But the sin of the world has not yet been taken away. Our Lord has not yet applied His merit for the world, but only and expressly for the Household of Faith. In another sacrifice, which represents our Lord and the Church conjointly sacrificing, as Head and members, the body of the animal was cut into various pieces and laid with the Head upon the altar, thus typifying Christ Jesus as the Head and the Church as His members, (Exod. 29:15-18.) But provision was made that the Passover sacrifice was not to be divided. It was to be eaten whole—not a bone was to be broken. It represented, not Christ and the Church, but Christ alone in His sacrifice.—Exod. 12:46; John 19:36.

Be it remembered that the passing over took place in the night, not in the daylight. When the morning arrived, the Israelites went forth out of the land of Egypt to liberty, to freedom from bondage. But during the night they were still in bondage, waiting for the deliverance which could come only after the passing over of the first-borns. That night of the type represented this Gospel Age.

This same thought is given by our Lord when He says, "Let your light so shine before men"; again, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (Matt. 5:15, 16.) The Apostle Peter expresses the same thought, saying, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light That shineth in a dark place, until the Daydawn and the day star arise in your hearts." (2 Pet. 1:19.) Again, the Prophet, speaking of the Church, says, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Psa. 119:105.

Numerous other Scriptures refer to the new Millennial Dispensation as the Morning in which the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams, and in which the shadows of superstition and works of darkness shall all be driven away. The appropriateness of this figure must be evident to every reasonable mind. God's people are children of the Day in the sense that their hopes and sentiments belong, not to the darkness of sin, not to the night-time but to the Day, to the Reign of Righteousness, for which they are praying, "The Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Eighteen centuries ago our Lord said that He had come as a Light into the world, but that men loved

darkness rather than light. (John 8:12; 3:19-21.) Only a few yet recognise Him as “the true Light.” But eventually He will “lighten every man that cometh into the world.” (John 1:9.) Indeed, His Church are invited to become associated with Him as lamp-bearers; and if faithful in • permitting their light to shine now, they will by and by be parts of that great Sun of Righteousness which shall heal the world with its beams. Our Lord pointed this out in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. He declared that in the end of this age He would gather the wheat into the barn; and that then should “the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.” (Matt. 13:43.) Alas, that so few have “an ear to hear” and accept the wonderful teachings of the Divine Plan!

The Israelites were instructed that the blood of the lamb must be sprinkled on the doorposts and the lintels of their houses that night. This indicated that all who would belong to the Household of Faith must believe in the precious blood of Christ, and thus be “justified by faith” irrespective of denomination. To believe thus would make us members of the Household of Faith; but it would not determine whether or not we would be of the First-borns. The Very Elect, the Saints, the Royal Priesthood, have this place of seniority in the Household of Faith—not by reason of natural years, but by reason of spiritual development. They are priests, elders, in the sense of their primacy of development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, which also indicates their faith and obedience.

We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that this is the Scriptural teaching. We are not merely to believe that Jean’s lived, that Jesus died. We are especially to believe that He died SACRIFICIALLY, “the Just for the unjust,” and are to accept our share of the redemption which He secured by His precious blood. The sprinkling of the blood upon the doorposts in the type implied public confession of the precious blood of the Lamb of God, in His death and in its efficacy for us, which is thus signified.

It will be remembered that the Israelites were enjoined against going out of the house during the night; for when the Lord would pass through to smite the Egyptians, He would see the blood upon the lintels and doorposts, and would not suffer the destroying angel to come into their houses. (Exod. 12:1-3.) The injunction that those under the door sprinkled with blood should not go out from under it during that night had special application and force with respect to the first-borns. Antotypically it signifies that if any of us who are of the first-borns should go out from under the blood, in the sense of denying the merit, the efficacy, of the blood of Jesus, the penalty of such a course would be death—the Second Death—hopeless extinction.—Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31.

As the blood of the lamb marked the household of faith, not merely the first-borns of that household, so the eating of the lamb was not merely for the first-borns, but for all the household. So our Lord said, “My flesh is meat indeed”; and again, “This is the Bread which came down from heaven; he that eateth of this Bread shall live forever.” (John 6:55, 58.) In other words, not only was it necessary that Jesus should die, a meritorious sacrifice, but it is also necessary that all who would have profit from His sacrifice must feed upon Him —must appropriate the merit of His sacrifice.

The eating of the lamb pictured, or typified, the appropriation, by the Household of Faith, of those earthly rights and interests which were forfeited by Adam’s disobedience and redeemed by Jesus’ death. In other words, it signifies our appropriating justification from sin. We eat by faith, and therefore are said to be “justified by faith.” By faith we are permitted to count ourselves as fully reinstated in God’s favour through the merit of Christ’s sacrifice, even as we were debarred from Divine favour through the demerit of Adam’s sin. The eating of the lamb signifies the appreciation of these things and the appropriating of them to ourselves. The more we eat, the greater is our feeling of satisfaction in respect of our freedom from condemnation and our reinstatement in Divine favour through the merit of our Passover Lamb.

Year by year for more than sixteen centuries the Jews kept the Passover by, Divine decree—not merely the sacrifice of the lamb and the eating of it on the same night, after the doorposts had been sprinkled with

blood, but additionally a feast of seven days following. That Passover feast represented the joys and rejoicings, the blessings and favours of relationship to God, based upon the merit of the Passover lamb—its sacrifice and the eating thereof. Yet the Jews understood not the meaning of what they did. It was not necessary that they should understand. When God's due time came, the explanation would be granted.

That due time came on the night in which our Lord was betrayed—the night of the fourteenth day of the first month, the very night of the typical killing of the Passover lamb. The Master gathered about Him His twelve Apostles. They had their usual Passover supper of roast lamb; and afterwards our Lord introduced what we familiarly term “The Lord's Supper” —a new symbolization of the anti-typical Passover.

What our Lord introduced was to take the place of the Jewish ceremony with His followers, to carry out the same thought, but on a higher plane, as representing a clearer, better understanding of the matter. Instead of the lamb would be the unleavened bread, representing our Lord's flesh. This He distributed to His Apostles, saying, “This is My body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.” (Luke 22:19.) The eating of that unleavened bread represented their appropriating to themselves of the merit of Christ's sacrifice —their justification by faith.

Then our Lord added a new feature — “the cup.” For while all might partake of the bread, might realise justification through the merit of His sacrifice, yet only a certain class of believers were invited to partake of the blood. The cup represented death. Ordinarily, under the Jewish Law, the partaking of blood would represent blood-guiltiness, or responsibility for the death. (Lev. 17:10-14.) But our Lord gave His disciples fruit of the vine as symbolic of His blood; and He urged upon them its appropriation, saying, “This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you, and “for many.” “Drink ye all of it.”—Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:27, 28.

This invitation to drink of His blood signifies a participation with Christ as His members in a sacrifice of earthly life, earthly interests, hopes, aims, ambitions—everything. All who accept this invitation to drink of His blood thereby pledge their lives in the same service for which He gave His life. This thought is entirely additional to anything in the Jewish Passover type. There is no intimation that any of the household were to partake of the blood of the slain lamb. Nevertheless we who now accept our Lord's proposition to share in His blood and lay down our lives with Him in defence of the Truth, thereby mark ourselves as elder brothers in the Household of Faith, members of the First-borns with our Lord, our Redeemer, and as prospectively the Royal Priesthood.

Therefore whoever intelligently partakes of the Memorial Supper thereby indicates two things: (1) His faith in Jesus as the Passover Lamb, and his appreciation and participation in the merit of Jesus — his justification by faith; and (2) his membership in the Body of Christ, all the members of which agree to be broken — membership in that “little flock” whose faithfulness is manifested by drinking of the Master's cup—sharing with Him in His sacrifice, suffering with Him in order to reign with Him.”-1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

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Adelaide.—Sunday, 25th March, at 6.45 p.m., at Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Sunday, 25th March, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield_ Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Perth.—Sunday, 25th March, at 5.30 p.m., at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets, Perth.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

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Spiritual Mindedness.

“To be spiritually-minded is life and peace.—Rom. 8:6.

ABILITY to understand the Scriptures, to talk fluently upon them, and to expound them clearly is a qualification which we think should follow in the wake of spiritual-mindedness; but some might be able to expound Scriptures very well, and to express truths in very good form, who are not necessarily very spiritual-minded.

To be spiritually-minded is to have a mind in harmony with the spirit of God, and fully surrendered to the Divine will — fully consecrated to the Lord.

In Rom. 8:6 the Apostle uses the expression “spiritually - minded” in describing a certain class who have become followers of Christ, who have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord, and who, in harmony with this consecration, have been begotten of the holy spirit. These are spiritually-minded. These are granted a spiritual insight into Divine things.

This was true of our Lord Jesus. Having left the glory which He had with the Father, and having humbled Himself to take the human nature, He was found in fashion as a man. We read that He was not imperfect man, but “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26.) Yet with all these special qualities He did not have the spiritual mind to which the Apostle has reference. Our Lord had a mind such as Adam had before the fall—a mind in perfect harmony, perfectly balanced. Our Lord received the spiritual mind, however, at the moment when He was begotten of the spirit, when He made full consecration at baptism, and as a consequence the holy spirit descended and lighted upon Him in bodily form like a dove.

Following that begetting, the Lord had an enlargement of understanding, and was granted to see certain deep things of God which He had not seen before His consecration; so we read in that connection that “the heavens were opened to Him — the higher things became clear to Him — the more spiritual things, the things St. Paul calls “the deep things of God.” “The natural man,” St. Paul says (the natural man would be a perfect man; fallen man is imperfect, unnatural), “receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14.) Then he proceeds to say that we have received the spirit of God through the begetting of the holy spirit; and that, having the new mind—this spirit begetting—we are enabled to understand the deep things of God.—1 Cor. 2:11, 12.

So, then, the one who has been begotten of the holy spirit is spiritually-minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it.” (1 John 2:20.) Whoever receives this begetting of the holy spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and mind which is different from that which any natural man would have, a quality that will progress with him. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God; and he should grow. The apostles Peter and Paul explain (1 Peter 2:2, 3; Heb. 5:13, 14; 6,

1, 2) that one thus begotten of the spirit of God is at first only a babe, and, as a babe, should desire the sincere milk of the Word the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; but as he goes on he should feed upon the strong meat of God’s Word and desire more and more to tell forth the blessings which he has received from the Lord.

It has been noted that some who speak with stammering lips have sometimes accomplished wonderful things, while some with a great deal of eloquence have failed to obtain the same results. The victory is not always to the strong nor to the swift; for the Lord may grant His blessing to the feebly spoken word,

particularly if the whole life be in harmony with the message given out.

Sometimes those who have apparently considerable understanding of spiritual things in the sense of being able to tell about them, do not always give evidence in their lives that they really have the spirit of the Lord. Sometimes in their lives there is that which is contradictory. We should bear in mind that whoever speaks the words of the Lord with his mouth should uphold it in his every act, word and thought in private life, as well as in public. The Truth should be the standard, and we should daily live in conformity with it.

Peace and Goodwill.

(Convention Address)

THROUGHOUT many centuries the Christmas season of the year has been set aside as an occasion for special celebrations, and the sending of greetings and gifts to one another by the peoples of the earth. Christians alone understand the true significance of these celebrations — that it is not an occasion for revelling and drunkenness, but rather a time for sober reflection and joy as our minds traverse back to that great Gift, and the Giver of that Gift over nineteen centuries ago. We realise that He, who, in God's plan and purpose was destined to be the Saviour, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, was transferred from a spiritual to an earthly existence and nature, and those who bore witness said, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14.)

They beheld the glorious perfections of His manhood. Others wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth, and said, "Never man spake like this man." Is it any wonder that His introduction to the human family, a race of condemned and dying sinners in a hopeless condition, was heralded by an angel. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. . . A Saviour is born, which is (destined to be) Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10, 11.) Then, with great enthusiasm the angelic host burst suddenly into song of praise and good will—"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will toward men."

This good news and the power to accomplish salvation for mankind was centred in that tiny Babe 'n the Bethlehem manger. He was born to be a Saviour and a King. In prospect He was the long expected Christ, the Messiah, the King of kings. Jehovah's government would be upon His shoulders; that which was foretold was now on the way to fulfilment. (Isa. 9:6, 7.)

Towards the close of our Lord's ministry, when the position seemed utterly hopeless from a human standpoint, the question was put to Him when He stood bound before an earthly ruler of this world—"Art thou a king then?" Jesus replied, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should witness unto the truth, (unto this truth)". What a favour it is for us to proclaim this same message and bear witness to this truth also, even though the world is now filled with gloom and foreboding, with evil and calamity, and cannot appreciate, as yet, the Kingship of Christ.

The human family is threatened with destruction by the development and stock-piling of devastating weapons of war by the angry nations that control the human family. The driving force toward this disaster is the fear and distrust between nations, not good will toward men; and the more we know of the world, the less hope there is of peace and good will through human governments. Hence, the Scriptures represent the powers of this world as great and terrible beasts, absorbing wherever possible the peoples of smaller nations into their systems of governments and empires.

In Daniel 7:1-8 a forecast of these world powers is given. These, as universal governments, have passed into history. (1) The lion with eagle's wings; (2) the bear with three ribs between its teeth; (3) the leopard

with four wings and four heads; (4) The fourth beast was so terrible and strong to behold that Daniel could not find a suitable name for it. It had iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces and trampled the residue underfoot, and it had ten horns. In other words, these represent the four great world powers ruling in succession during the Times of ' the Gentiles; namely, Babylon, Medo - Persia, Greece and Rome. The last mentioned was in power when our Lord was born, and Israel was subject to its universal rule.

All these ruled by God's permission until the King of kings shall take His great power and brake in pieces the nations as a potter's vessel, and rule the people with a rod of iron at first, which will be necessary because of the existing state of emergency, rebellion, confusion and anarchy, prevailing for a period during the closing days in the end of this age into which we have already entered.

Rev. 11:15-18 applies from this time forward—"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. . . . Thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come, etc." Because of the oppression, injustice and misrule of these empires, the Scriptures speak of humanity as a whole waiting and groaning in pain and bondage (Rom. 8:22), under one central authority and control—the unseen prince of darkness, Satan, the God of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2.) The Apostle John also says, "The whole world lieth in the wicked one." (1 John 5:19, R.V.)

We need not wonder, therefore, that there is such appalling lack of peace and good will among men and nations. Only a dozen years ago it was denied that the world was becoming more wicked, the claim being that the people have ever been so, and that the evil deeds in our day are simply given more prominence in the daily papers. But now it is admitted that our days are more perilous, disorderly and godless than formerly. For instance, child delinquency is becoming a very acute problem, and is discussed in the press, radio and pulpit. These children are to be our future citizens, members of state and local governments. Are the prospects very bright for peace and good will among men, or that justice and truth will be given its place among society, communities and nations? No! However, the Scriptures are an authority on this matter, and in the beginning of the age accurately forecast the trend and prevailing conditions during the end of the age, which has now arrived. Long centuries ago, then, the Bible forecast our very days as a ,sign of the end of the age. See Tim. 3:1-7 —"Know this also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away . . . Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Note verse 5; all these characteristics are found where there is a form of godliness, an "appearance of religion." Also verse 7 where there is an "ever learning but never able to arrive at a recognition of truth." (Fenton.)

Note again a further description of the religious world of our day in 2 Tim. 4:3, 4—"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts (desires) shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Why has this state of affairs, these perilous days, come amongst us? Because the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures have been ignored or denied as something out of date in this modern age of achievement and learning. This is what Paul says— "Sound doctrine cannot be endured," because of selfish doctrines substituting teachings which tickle the ears—new ideas and schemes. With no hearing ear for the truth of God's plan and purpose for suffering, perplexed and fearful humanity, the ear and mind is thus open to fables, falsehood.

There is a proverb which says, "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 16:25.) In this instance the death of the spiritual; itching ears develop into deaf ears; learning has developed into ignorance of God's Word—His times, seasons and methods. In our times these are known as modernists, as distinct from the fundamentalists. We may not look for peace and good will, nor even a message of glad tidings for all people from this quarter, even though many of these leaders are apparently very sincere. At most, they would promise that after an atomic war a few people may survive and later reorganise a society again; others are pessimistic and see only total destruction.

Neither can we get over the difficulty by translating our text, as is sometimes done—"Peace' on earth among men of good will." Have men of good will lived in peace during this age? Consecrated Christians only are men of good will, and their peace is not physical, but a peace of heart, a spiritual peace based upon faith in the Lord and His promises. The Apostle Paul states in Phil. 4:7—"The peace of God shall garrison your hearts through Christ Jesus." Jesus said to His followers—"In me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation." And again, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." (John 16:33; Matt. 10:36.) Paul further declares—"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.)

For centuries the Lord's people were betrayed, afflicted, persecuted and killed by false Christianity—false Christs would rule over them. Christians do not expect to live in an atmosphere of peace and good will among men; neither do they expect this condition to be established on earth during this age. This can be verified by reading carefully our Lord's great prophecy in Matt. 24, which describes conditions during the Gospel Age down to the time of His second advent. There would be wars and rumours of war, trouble and pestilence, famine, etc. These would not be a sign of the end of the age, but the beginning of sorrows, troubles and deceptions. Verses 4-6—"Take heed that no man deceive you." Even though Jesus' followers would not be popular He exhorts them—"Be not troubled." Verse 9—"They shall kill you . . . and ye shall be hated of all nations for my sake." The Christian's life and environments are not peaceful but rather opposition from an unfriendly world is experienced.

Then the Lord goes on to give definite signs indicating when the end of the age arrives; for He arrives then also, and makes His presence known after arrival; but, as in Noah's day the world "knew not," so the same is true today—they know not this truth, that a change of dispensation is at hand. Nevertheless, the gleaming angelic message still glows in the midst of darkness—"I bring you glad tidings . . . to all people . . . a Saviour . . . peace . . . good will toward men."

But is it the good will of men the angel refers to? Does it not mean the good will of God is now toward men in a way it had not been shown since the fall of Adam into sin and death? The Scriptures put it in that light; for instance—"The kindness and love (philanthropy) of God our Saviour appeared . . . according to his mercy he saved us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Tit. 3:4.) Also in 1 John 4:9 we read—"For this (in the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem) was manifested the love (good will) of God, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might be saved through him."

In this Gift, the good will and love of God was revealed to man as it had not been previously, and peace with God was now attainable through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it any wonder the angels ascribe—"Glory (honour) to God in the highest."

The mysteries of the types and shadows of the Law Covenant were soon to come to an end by fulfilment in the one efficacious sacrifice of His only Begotten Son—one offering, once for all men. This was indeed glad tidings. The good will of God toward men was there manifested, and angels rejoiced that permanent life-giving benefits would now come to the sin-stricken human family.

During the Gospel Age the good will of God is especially shown to the saints, the consecrated in Christ. These do not expect peace to prevail now among the nations, nor do they labour to that end. The Christian knows that the present confusion, discord, strife and wickedness will continue until the Prince of Peace takes control of the angry nations, and speaks to them through the operation of His mighty power. He will vex them in His sore displeasure, until thoroughly humbled; then they will be ready to learn war no more. Speaking through the prophet, the Lord says—

”My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” (Zeph. 3:8, 9.)

In Isaiah 2:4 we also read—”He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

We see the angelic announcement of good tidings of great joy, of peace and good will toward men is a prophecy. It is the shape of things to come in the near future.

These things shall be; a loftier race
Than e’er the world hath known shall rise,
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes.

They shall be gentle, brave and strong
To spill no drop of blood, but dare
All that may plant man’s lordship firm
On earth and fire and sea and air.

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall lip, as comrades free;
in every heart and brain shall throb’
The pulse of one fraternity.

The Creator has placed the fulfilment of these glad tidings of man’s salvation not upon our worthiness, effort or ability, but upon the sacrifice and worthiness of His own Son. “To you is born a lifegiver which is Messiah the Lord.” (See 1 Tim. 2:4-6.) There are many sincere consecrated Christians who long for the opportunity and time to engage in the world’s uplift, and to see definite results when justice truth and righteousness are enthroned permanently, and all ills, sorrows and wrongs corrected; when bad tidings give way to good tidings, when strife and discord give place to peace and harmony, and sin and death give place to obedience and life.

Dear brethren, these yearning hopes will not be frustrated. This Christmas message is the key—Christ, a Saviour, born to be a king. “The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” And He will have associates--”If we are his children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.” (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12.)

The Lord is preparing us, training us, sanctifying us for this future work. Christ, our great High Priest, was touched with the feeling of human infirmities, weaknesses and disorders; so do we need to be touched with, afflictions, trials, corrections, discipline, in order to be sympathetic underpriests in the great work of the next age. Then the time to give gifts to men will have arrived, and they will receive them with

joy. "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price." "Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." "And the spirit and the bride say, Come; let him that heareth, say, Come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." (Isa. 55:1; Isa. 12:3; Rev. 22:17.)

This is indeed glad tidings of great joy to all. The angelic message will be applicable in a double sense—peace and good will of God toward men, and peace and good will among mankind. "The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this." (Isa. 9:7.)

Correspondence..

Dear Brethren in the Lord—Please find enclosed cheque for sum of — for the work, preferably the Radio Fund.

That seems such an important part of the work, reaching the hearing ears with the wonderful message; I often wonder what response there is to it.

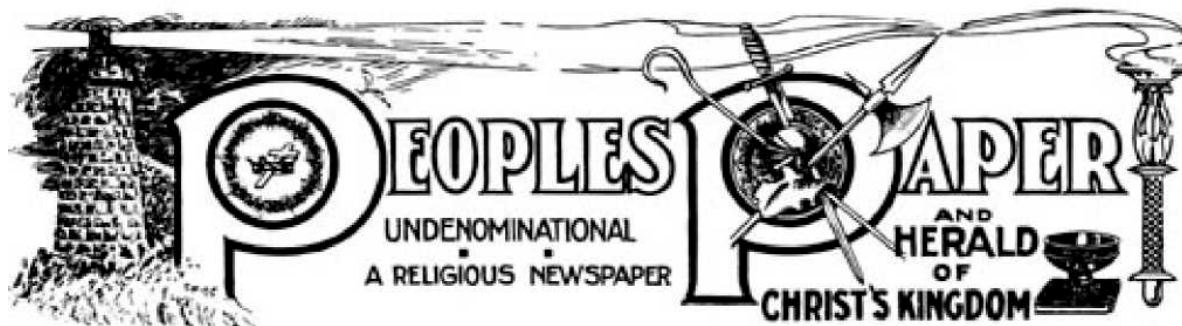
Have had occasion to send your paper "Does the Bible teach Divine Healing for Today?" to a friend who wrote that she and her husband intended to attend Oral Roberts' meetings in Sydney, and follow him to the Melbourne meetings, and expected a blessing. I find he is a Pentecostal. How natural that poor humanity longs to be cured of their many physical troubles, and how good to be assured that soon the desire of all nations will come.

I trust the Lord's richest blessing will be on you both. With kindest regards; your sincere friend.

(From the response to the radio witness it is encouraging to know that many are appreciating the messages over the air from week to week. Supplies of various literature on the Scriptural teaching regarding Divine Healing are available free to all.—B.B. Institute.)

The Secretary, Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Enclosed please find my donation towards the Radio work. We continue to appreciate the message each Sunday morning, and we are sometimes surprised when mentioning the session to friends to find that they already listen and derive help from it. Yours sincerely, in Him we love.

Messrs. Frank and Ernest, Berean Bible Institute—Thank you very much for your generous sending of Biblical literature. Enclosed is 10/- (small as it is, though we know the value is not in terms of money). Everything you have sent me is most wonderfully interesting, and I have much to learn—seemingly I have everything to learn, and trust I may so do by the goodness of God and Jesus Christ our Saviour .. . Again thanking you for your valuable writings. Yours sincerely.



Volume XXXIX MELBOURNE, APRIL 1956

The Christian's joy.

(Contributed)

AS we come to God's Word to examine this matter, of Joy and Rejoicing we find there are many quotations made in regard to it. Moses was directed by the Lord to instruct the children of Israel to render their services to the Lord with joy and rejoicing of heart. (Sec Deut. 12:7; 16:14, 15.)

In fact certain punishments came upon the children of Israel if they failed to serve the Lord with joy. (See Deut. 28:45-47.) shows how important was this matter in the Lord's sight. In the Psalms we find very great prominence given to the matter of joy and rejoicing. Turning to Psa. 5:11; Psa. 35:9; 63:5-7; also Psa. 16:11; 32:11; etc., we find some further exhortations to serve the Lord with joyful hearts. Many more references in regard to the value of cultivating the joyful spirit could be found in the Old Testament, but we will content ourselves at this time by referring to Isa. 29:19; and Nell. 8:10.

In Dr. Strong's Concordance we find that the meaning of "rejoicing" is, "to be cheerful", "to be calmly happy". Coming to the New Testament we find our Lord and His Apostles had a great deal to say on the matter of Christian rejoicing. Turning to St. Paul's words we read in Phil. 4:1-7—"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say Rejoice!" Surely this represents the very essence of Christian living. Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice always in the Lord must have faith in the Lord—trust, hope, love. Without these we could not so appropriate to ourselves, the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused and misrepresented, and when slandered and evilly entreated the truth's sake.

The only ones who can rejoice always are those who are living very near to the Lord, can feel always their oneness with Him, and that His protection and care are over them, and that His promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their best welfare, as new creatures today and be cast down tomorrow; only the faithful in Christ Jesus are privileged to rejoice always. The thought of the Lord's favours, past, present and future make all the trials and difficulties such to be very light afflictions, as but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory, honor, and immortality promised, and the blessed privileges of divine service, both here and hereafter. The Apostle emphasises the matter by saying, "Again I say, Rejoice." nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice in the Lord. This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, and does not mean that noisy demonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think.

The Apostle further exhorts that the faithful let their forbearance, be manifested, not just toward the brethren, but toward all with whom they have to do. The Greek word here rendered moderation seems to carry with it the thought of reasonableness and of not exacting our rights too rigorously.

Mercy, and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be members of the Body of the Anointed.

We should strive to be faithful in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in respect of all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for He is kind to the merciful and to the unthankful.

“The Lord is at hand.” The thought seems to be that we who are the Lord’s are not living for the present time. We are expecting great changes to be ushered in when our King shall take to Himself His great power and begin His great reign. We are not to be struggling for the last inch, or for the last penny, nor for the extreme of our own rights; but, rather, to be so full of rejoicing in the good things coming and already ours by faith, that it will make us generous as respects the things of the present time in our dealings with the brethren and others. We are not expecting justice from the Lord for nothing that we have done or could do would justly call for such exceeding great and precious things as He has promised us. And as we are expecting grace or bounty in so large measure we can well afford to be generous and liberal in our sentiments toward others—especially toward the household of faith, because they are our brethren and fellow-representatives of the Lord Himself, from whom our bounty is to come; and toward the world without, because they have not the future prospects which we possess, and hence set their hearts upon the things of this present time; and we can well afford to accord them their full share of these or more, since we are so rich through our Heavenly Father and our Heavenly Bridegroom.

That the Apostle did not mean to be understood that the Lord’s second advent might be expected immediately, nor before his death, is evident; for elsewhere in his epistles he clearly sets forth his expectation to die, and to wait for the reward, the crown of righteousness laid up for him. Evidently, therefore, his only thought in this exhortation, “The Lord is at hand”, was, that we are living in the close of the reign of evil, that the dawning of the day of the Lord is not far distant, and that to the eye of faith it is so near that its influence should affect even the smallest affairs of the present light.

“Be careful for nothing” is the next exhortation, but since our English word “careful” has lost its original meaning, there is danger of getting the wrong thought here. The word originally had ‘the thought of being full of care—anxiety, trouble. The Apostle’s words correspond exactly to our Lord’s injunction, “Take no thought,” and signify—Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord’s people should be careful, in the meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the Body of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, members in the Divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful, all things shall work together for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not.

When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith, and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed “earth-born clouds” and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence that they are abiding in His love and in His care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the divine promises, and obtaining mercy and help they should grow strong in the Lord and in confidence in Him, and their corroding cares

will give place to faith, confidence, peace of heart, whatever the outward conditions.

Such is the counsel of the Apostle—that instead of continuing in the anxious condition, we should lay all of our affairs before the Lord, supplicating His promised providential care, acknowledging our own lack of wisdom, and gladly accepting His wisdom and the provisions of His love we should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which we are, have been supervised of the Lord, and that we are appreciative of His care, and trust it for the future. Thanksgiving for what we have, and a full appreciation of the Lord's leadings hitherto and now, will preclude any anxiety for the future, for the thankful heart will conclude that He who favored us and redeemed us while we were yet sinners, will much more favor and do for us now that we are His, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

The question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which He sees us to need without our making petition to Him and claiming the promises of His Word? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive His favors and be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known. It is the same with natural hunger. Unless we were so constituted that the gnawings of hunger would show us our need of food we would probably appreciate it less, even if we ate as much and with the same regularity.

If we have the spirit of rejoicing and trust in Lord, and make all of our requests, so far as we are able to discern, in harmony with His promise, and accept with gratitude and thanksgiving, whatever His providence may send us, then the Apostle assures us—"The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." The thought here is distinct. It is not our own peace that is referred to. We may by nature be more or less indisposed to peace, we may be restless, dissatisfied, discontented, fearful, foreboding or quarrelsome, but, following the counsel outlined in the Apostle's words, we learn to trust God in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God—the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness, and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children—that comes in, to keep us from worry, from anxiety, etc. The -thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. 'It keeps the Christian's mind, so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion; and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures us of our standing in divine favor through Christ Jesus--His worthiness, His sacrifice; His aid and strength.

Turning to the 5th chapter of Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians verses 16 to 18, we read, "Rejoice evermore, Pray without ceasing, In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." One of the striking peculiarities of the Apostolic Epistles is that a large portion of them is devoted to an unfolding of the future high, exalted station that God sets before the consecrated ones of this Gospel Age; and the remainder of the epistles are given to a description of the effects that an acceptance of the call to run in the race for the great prize should produce in the lives of such. This we find to be true in the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonian Christians. It is a fact well known that great truths may be taken into the head, may be intellectually discerned, and yet produce little or no effect in the life. In such cases it is not the truths that are at fault, but it is those who imperfectly receive them.

It is therefore proper and reasonable to conclude that if these wonderful truths do not produce the effects that the inspired Apostles describe; if they do not effect a change in the every-day life of those professing to be the recipients of the same, then such have not yielded, or are not yielding up their wills, all their

ransomed power to the One who purchased them with the pouring out of His life. “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”, are the solemn words of Christ’s chosen Apostle Paul.

In order to know whether we are truly consecrated or not, it is absolutely necessary to have instruction not only concerning the high and heavenly calling itself, but also concerning the effects that a Scriptural reception of these blessed truths have, when received into the heart and life. This Thessalonian epistle, like all the others, has much to say about the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” and the heavenly hope of the Christian. The words, “Rejoice evermore” are the first of seven exhortations which close the epistle. And how helpful it is to the Christian to be in this condition of “rejoicing always”. In days of sunshine and in days of gloom, in life’s bright scenes, or in life’s dark scenes, in times of peace and quiet, and in times of tribulation and distress, when the heart is bounding, and when it is mourning, in times of prosperity, or in times of adversity, it is always possible for the mature Christian to rejoice, to be unceasing in prayer, and in everything to give thanks. These characteristics describe one whose affections are centred upon the things above; one who is closely united to God, and is thoroughly in earnest in his efforts to please Him. They describe one who has a deep sense of his own unworthiness and deficiencies; but more than all this, they describe a whole-hearted appreciation of the Divine arrangement in Christ to make him acceptable, and to cause him to have fellowship and communion with the infinite God as a loving and kind Father.

In the words “Rejoice evermore” we are reminded that true Christianity is not a gloomy thing, not a depressed state of existence. It is true that pure Christianity does have the effect not only to separate one from the evils of the world, but to a certain extent also to separate from what may be termed legitimate, worldly pleasures, pursuits, and amusements. The thought of this, however, is not that the giving up of these things is depressing to the Christian, or that it is depriving him of pleasure; rather, that he has come into possession of higher enjoyments—pleasures that are eternal—enjoyments that have only their beginning in the present life, and continue in a fuller and richer

In whatever the Christian gives up, he suffers no less of real pleasure than he is not more than compensated for even in this life, in the enjoyment and pleasures of a spiritual kind. The Christian is not exempt from the trials and tribulations, the adversities and perplexities which flesh is heir to, but he has One who is with him in all these circumstances and conditions, and the great ambition and purpose of his heart ever is that he may evidence by his life that this One who is with him lifts him above these trials and adversities, and enables him to bear them all with patience and fortitude. He knows that these earthly experiences that seem from the natural standpoint to work against him are being over-ruled for his development into the likeness of his Master; he is enabled to see that these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while he looks not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. He is enabled to see that these seemingly adverse things, are Providential occasions for him to show what faith in his Lord can do for him, and thus give a witness, a testimony to God’s favor and power in Christ. One has truly said that even “the saddest aspects of a Christian’s daily life, are but the showers of spring that usher in the bright and beautiful summer—the everlasting and the heavenly sunshine.”

To many, perhaps to the great majority of those who take the name of Christian, the Christian life seems more like a penance than a life of fellowship with God. The Word of God does not so describe it; but rather does it describe it as a blessed privilege. It is true, that if it were not for the “blessed hope” that looks beyond this vale of tears, the Christian would not be able to fulfil the exhortation of the text and “rejoice evermore.” The Christian life, therefore, cannot be separated from the hope of the life beyond. The more firmly this hope is laid hold of, the more it becomes a living reality, and the more the Christian is enabled to rejoice in all conditions.

How beautifully the Apostle John describes this “hope” and the effect which a proper appreciation of it has on the consecrated Christian. (See I, John 3:1-3.) The hope that expresses not only desire, but confident expectation that it will be realised in “due time”, has the effect of causing the Christian to rejoice in tribulation, and even when experiencing bitter sorrow, to “joy in God”, knowing that “all things are working together for his eternal good.”

Hope is an element that to a greater or less extent, exists in all, although to the children of the world, because of not understanding God’s love as revealed in His purposes for them, it does not reach beyond this vale of tears. It does serve, however, to tide them over many of earth’s sorrows and trials. The poet has expressed this in words:

“Soft as the voice of an angel, Breathing a message unheard, Hope with a gentle persuasion, Whispers the comforting word—Wait ‘til the darkness is over, Wait ‘til the tempest is done; Hope for the sunshine tomorrow, After the showers are gone. Whispering hope, O, how welcome Thy voice Making my heart in its sorrow, rejoice.”

The Christian life is not a reluctant sacrifice wrung from us, but a joyous, freewill offering, gladly and gratefully rendered by us. The Christian’s joy is not in the trials, difficulties, tribulations, and sorrows that he encounters, but in spite of them all, and in the midst of them all, he has a deep and abiding joy. His joy is in God—in the thought that he is in union with God through Christ, that he has been accepted by Him. His joy is enhanced as he remembers that he is a branch in that heavenly vine that the Heavenly Father is pruning that it might be fruitful. “These things (that is, that you are a branch in that vine) have I spoken unto you,” said the Saviour, “that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” The Christian’s secret of a happy life is in knowing and ever keeping in mind that he is a child of God; that Christ is his Elder Brother; that his standing and acceptance are in Him; that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is his Father; and that it is not by works of righteousness that he has done, but by His own mercy He saves him “In the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the holy spirit.”

Why is it the privilege of the Christian to “rejoice evermore?” What is the foundation for his rejoicing? What has he in which to “rejoice evermore?” We answer—So far as he personally is concerned, the Christian as such has much in which to rejoice; he has nothing that need make him sad and dejected. God has forgiven all his past sins; in Christ he has redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. We have a throne of grace to which we may approach that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. We are frail and weak, and cumbered with infirmities; but we have a great High Priest who is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” We have received of God’s own Spirit, which bears witness with ours that we are His children, His sons. We have the blessed privilege of knowing that the great God of all is dealing with us as He desires: and while He sees best at times to chasten us, we know that these chastenings are necessary and for our good, in order that we might become a partaker of His holiness. We are made aware of the fact that there is a special providence over us—that all things work together for our good because we love God, and are so called according to His purpose. Jesus tells us that the Father loves us, and that He Himself will love us to the end. The inspired Apostle tells us that he that hath begun a good work in us will complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Another Apostle tells us that “all things that pertain unto life and godliness,” are freely given to us of God.

If persecution comes to us because of our identification with Christ, or for His sake, He tells us to rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is our reward in heaven. We not only have the Spirit witnessing with ours that we are the children of God, but witnessing also that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him. We know that we are no longer under condemnation, no longer subject to bondage, for “we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of

adoption (sonship) whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” We have the witness that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. We are enabled as our faith lays hold of these exceeding great and precious promises, to rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit that is given unto us.”

As for spiritual blessings, -which are the greatest of all blessings, we are told that even now by faith we are raised up and privileged, to sit with Christ in heavenly places. We have the blessed privilege of having made known to us by God the mystery of His will, according to the good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that it is His purpose in the dispensation of the fulness- of times to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.

We have the promise of Christ that He will come again and receive us unto Himself that where He is there we may be also; that when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. Furthermore, we have had made known to us God’s wonderful Plan of the Ages--that all mankind are objects of His love; and that He gave His Son to be a ransom for all to be testified in due time; that our loved ones, who in the present life are not able to see His love, will in a due time appointed be privileged to learn of it, and profit by it to the extent of being offered the privilege of attaining everlasting life; in other words that there is a hope to be set before the world, that of obtaining restitution, or earthly glory. And we are told that nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. “What more can He do for me?” says one, “He has given me His word to guide me, His holy spirit to teach and comfort me, and the bright promise of an inheritance’ incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. And as if to make me sure of all, He has said, “All things are yours, Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas; the world, things present, things to come; life or death—all are yours, because ye are Christ’s.”

There is nothing in the Bible to depress the Christian, but there is much in every page, much in every providential arrangement of heaven to cheer him and make him respond with joyous utterance to the prescription of the Apostle, “Rejoice evermore.”

While the Bible does not teach that the full assurance of faith is an absolute duty, it does teach that it is a blessed possibility. There are unquestionably Christians that can say with unfeigned lips, “I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day,” and there are doubtless others who can say, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee; and when heart and flesh fail, Thou wilt be the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.” As one has said, “Faith believes in Christ for salvation; assurance, which is a step higher, believes that in Christ we already have salvation. Both are saving. The first is saving only, the second is saving and comforting too.” And an Apostle writing says,

“These things I write unto you (wishing them to have full assurance) that your joy may be full.”

The Christian’s joy may be increased even beyond that of full assurance of joy, on account of his own acceptance and hope of the eternal inheritance in the future. A Christian has something to give to others. If we wish to retain and keep this full assurance of joy, we must give out liberally of that good we have received of God; we must remember and practise the words of the Lord Jesus—“it is more blessed to give than to receive.” We do well to ponder the lesson to be drawn from the incident of the four starving lepers recorded in 2 Kings 7:3-11. At the time of this incident there was a great famine in the land of Samaria. Being leprous they were compelled to live outside the walls of the city.

Read the account in verses 3-11 noting particularly the lesson in verses 8 and 9. What is the lesson here for us as Christians? Are we not in a condition somewhat similar to that of the four lepers? As children of Adam we have all been tainted with the leprosy of sin. Yes, and in our needy and undone state we have

been guided by the Lord's good providence, to a wonderful supply of food. Now what are we doing about all this? Let us examine ourselves dear friends. Are we selfishly hoarding the precious truth? Are we inclined to keep it to ourselves? If so, let us correct this tendency. Let us ponder the words of the lepers in verse 9. "They said to one another, We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: If we tarry till the morning light, some mischief (mg. punishment) will come upon us; now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household."

We mentioned a while ago that a Christian has something to give to others; and if we wish to retain and keep our full assurance of joy, we must give out liberally of the good we have received of God. The Apostle Peter has said, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Commenting on these words a recent writer has said, "The very object of our being called into this light is that we may let it shine. if we do not let it shine we are unworthy of it, and the treasure will be taken away and we will be left in darkness. If indeed we have received the light and have consecrated ourselves fully to God, let us ask ourselves, What am I doing to show forth the praises of Him who hath called me out of darkness? Am I going forth with these tidings to my neighbours near and far? Can I truly affirm that I am:—'All for Jesus, all for Jesus—All my being's ransomed powers; All my thoughts, and words, and doings, All my days and all my hours?' "

In these days when the kingdom message may be had in such handy printed form, it is the privilege of all the Lord's people to be on the alert to grasp opportunities of telling the good tidings to all who have the hearing ear. In all you give to the needy, in all you give to those in distress, whether the giving is of the spiritual food and raiment, or of the temporal necessities, in all you lay on the altar of sacrifice, there is not the slightest ground for boasting, but there is much in it that will increase your joy evermore. It is the great unchanging law of God, that the more you give out of a heart that is moved by the spirit of the Great Giver Himself, the richer the harvest of joy will be reaped now and evermore. The one who gives most, enjoys the most. It is a grand and blessed law in God's holy providence, that if you try to increase your own joy by gratifying your desires and appetites, you find that you stimulate them by indulgence, and the more you give them, the more they necessarily crave. But, on the other hand, if you wish to increase your own joy by denying your own desires and appetites, and giving as a ministry to the wants and necessities of others, you will find that though your desires are thus unstimulated, yet will your gratification increase, and the more you can give, the more you will swell the current of your happiness, and multiply the joys of your heart. To rejoice always, therefore, give always. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

One of the old saints of God when brought under circumstances in which everything of earthly comfort was slipping from his grasp gives utterance to the beautiful words, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Hab. 3:17, 18.

Let the followers of Jesus therefore hear the Apostle's exhortation and "Rejoice in the Lord always." It gives honor to the one who bought you, to rejoice. Indeed, you owe it to God, to show to the world that your Saviour enables you to rejoice. It is in this way that perchance you may draw others to that spring from which you have received the lifegiving medicine that makes even the present life one of joy and rejoicing.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

“Take Thine own way with me, dear Lord
Thou canst not otherwise than bless;
I launch me forth upon a sea
Of boundless love and tenderness.

“I could not choose a larger bliss
Than to be wholly Thine, and mine,
A will whose highest joy is this,
To ceaselessly unclasp in Thine.

“I will not fear Thee, O my God!
The days to come can only bring
Their perfect sequences of love,
Thy larger, deeper comforting.

“Within the shadow of this love,
Loss doth transmute itself to gain;
Faith veils earth’s sorrows in its light
And straightway lives above her pain.

“We are not losers thus; we share
The perfect gladness of the Son,
Not conquered—for, behold, we gain,
Conquered and conqueror are one.

“Thy wonderful grand will, my God!
Triumphantly I make it mine;
And faith shall breathe her glad ‘Amen’
To every dear command of Thine.

“Beneath the splendour of Thy choice,
Thy perfect choice for me, I rest;
Outside it now I dare not live,
Within it I must needs be blest.

“Meanwhile my spirit anchors calm
In grander regions still than this;
The fair, far-shining latitudes
Of that yet unexplored bliss.

“Then may Thy perfect, glorious will
Be evermore fulfilled in me,
And make my life an answering chord
Of grand, responsive harmony.

“Oh! it is life indeed to live
Within this kingdom strangely sweet;
And yet we fear to enter in,
And linger with unwilling feet.

“We fear this wondrous rule of Thine,
Because we have not reached Thy heart;
Not venturing our all on Thee,
We may not know how good Thou art.”

Parables (Matt. 13:31-35)

THE object of these parables was not to depict to our minds what the kingdom would be like after it has been established in the world, but rather to picture before our minds something respecting the processes of development by which the kingdom-class would be selected from amongst mankind and made ready for the kingdom.

The Mustard Seed

In the parable of the mustard seed we have the picture of what happens during the process of the gathering of the kingdom-of-heaven class from the world of mankind. The Lord likens the kingdom-work to a grain of mustard seed, which from a small beginning would become quite a large bush, and the birds of the air would lodge in its branches. This evidently was intended as a picture of the outward appearance of the church—very prosperous, so prosperous as to invite the birds. The “fowls of the air” in the preceding parable of the sower represented Satan and his agents (Mark 4:4, 15) and we are, we think, justified in making a similar application here, and interpreting this to mean that the church planted by the Lord Jesus flourished rapidly and exceedingly, and that because of its attainments, strength, etc., Satan through his agents, came and lodged in the various branches of the church. They have been lodging in the various branches of this Gospel church for these many centuries, and are still to be found in her, a defiling element. They come in, not for the benefit of the mustard-seed tree or shrub, but for their own convenience and benefit. It is in harmony with this that in the present time the Lord speaks of Babylon, nominal Christendom, as “the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”—Rev. 18:2.

This contamination of the original good planting by the adversary and his agents, is as prominent in this parable as in the parable of the tares, merely showing it from a different standpoint.

The Leaven

In this parable we have brought to our attention the Lord’s provision for the necessities of His people during this Gospel age—He did not leave them without a proper supply of food. The three measures of meal, equivalent to one ephah, constituted a good, liberal household supply. Like all of the Lord’s provisions, it was good and pure, but as in the other parables the adversary introduced impurity, falsity, etc., so in this one leaven is introduced into the meal. Leaven represents corruption throughout the Scriptures; in every other instance of its Scriptural use it is represented as an evil, an impurity, something that is defiling. For instance, the Israelites were to put away all leaven, all impurity, at the time of the Passover, that they might come the nearer to the Lord in holiness, etc. Again, our Lord Jesus refers to leaven as a corruption, bidding His disciples “Beware of the leaven Of the scribes and Pharisees”—beware of the false doctrines, the corrupt influence, proceeding from the scribes and Pharisees. Again, the Apostle Paul represents the leaven’ as an evil thing, saying, “Purge out the old leaven.” —Exod. 13:7; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:7.

It would not seem reasonable that our Lord should use the word leaven here as Christian people generally suppose, in a good sense, as implying some grace of the holy spirit. On the contrary, we recognize consistency in all of His teachings, and we may be as sure that would not use leaven as a symbol of

righteousness as that He would not use leprosy as a symbol of holiness.

How then shall we apply this parable? We answer, that the grace of God given to His people in the beginning of this age. (1) the faith once delivered to the saints, (2) the hope set before us in the Gospel, (3) love, the bond of perfectness, summed up in the three measures of the Lord's provision for His people—in partaking of which they were to become strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. But gradually a woman arose, a false woman, represented in Revelation as harlot, and as “that woman Jezebel.” This Roman Catholic system obtained great power over the three measures of meal provided for God's household, and proceeded to mix therewith the leaven of her own impurity. The result was that all the family food, all the holy doctrines were contaminated with her false doctrines—nothing was left pure and clean, as handed to us originally by the apostles. The faith once delivered to the saints was distorted out of all semblance to its original simplicity; the hope set before us in the Gospel was changed to another hope entirely, unlike the original; the spirit of the

Lord, love, was perverted to a selfish love of creeds of men and human institutions. Alas, no wonder all Christendom is spiritually sick, because of this adulteration in its food supply.

Tracts Available.

The article “What May We Expect from Geneva Conference?” which appeared in October “Peoples Paper,” will be available in tract form shortly. Friends who can use these to advantage should apply for supplies. These tracts are provided free from the Tract Fund.

Other tracts also available in quantities

“Does God Perform Miracles of Healing Today?” “God's Solution for the Formosa Problem.”

“Is there a Second Chance for Salvation After Death?”

“Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon? — Will Australia Be Involved?”

“Christ's Return”.—This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2 / 3 , post paid.

“The everlasting Gospel.”—A 64-page booklet dealing with the Sabbath question and other important connected subjects, highly recommended, heavy paper cover, price 1/6.

Christian Way Ended.

WORD has been received of the death of Brother Neville of Perth on the 25th February last. Our dear Brother had been associated with the brethren in Perth for some years, having originally come from U.S.A., and appreciated the truth very much. In recent times ill health had prevented Brother Neville from attending all the gatherings, but his devotion to the Lord was ever manifest, and it was a pleasure to have fellowship with him. The following has been received from the secretary of the Perth Class.

“Brother Neville had appreciated the truth for quite a few years, and was very keen to understand prophecy for the last days. He was not fearful of death, for he had that assurance that there is a reward to all those who live the life of faith. Knowing that his sojourn on earth was short, he often spoke of the eminence of his change, and it was good to behold his confidence in Christ Jesus, ‘Who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.’ (Phil. 3:21.) We will miss him very much, no doubt, but understand that all God’s faithful must be taken ere long.”

Collins’ Clear-Type Bible.—A new supply of these very serviceable Bibles is on hand. With good, clear type, margin references and Concordance. Price, 24/-. Same Bible with 31 coloured illustrations, price 27/6.

Revised Standard Version Bible,-19 5 2. Copies of this Revised Bible are available, and will be found helpful for comparison in Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50/-; in red rexine 60/-.

A New Picture Bible.—A Cambridge Bible, containing 30 coloured illustrations, with marginal references, and strong, black, cloth cover. A very good child’s Bible; price 15/6.

Books Available. “Most Holy Faith”—£1.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“Tabernacle Shadows”-6/-.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

Put thy trust in God,
Fear not, but onward move,
Since all things work for thee
An everlasting good. put thy trust in God,
Thy needs He will supply,
His fulness is for thee,
His grace will satisfy. put thy trust in God,
Doubt not His love for thee,
Since Everlasting Love Himself Encircles thee.
—Anon.

Correspondence.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends—Quite by chance I tuned in to 6KY this afternoon and heard part of your broadcast and was very interested. Unfortunately, we do not get that station very clearly here, but from now on I shall certainly try to hear you each Sunday afternoon, because I believe you can help me to understand the Bible better.

For practically the whole of my thirty years in Australia I have lived in the bush, with no way of attending a church. Just recently we have settled near town and have been able to attend church here, but, while it has been a joy to once again meet with fellow Christians to worship, I have been very distressed because their interpretations of part of the Scriptures are not mine, and from my own personal experience I know some is wrong. Like so many older people, families married and gone, I'm finding I now have time to study my Bible more, regretting wasted years, when I should have been a more active Christian, and hoping for whatever years may remain to Me, to be of use for the Master, if only in little ways, and I must understand my Bible, to help others to understand. I should be very glad to have a copy of today's talk and booklet or any literature. God bless your work. Yours sincerely-

To Frank and Ernest.—Please forward me last Sunday's and today's addresses delivered by you, and any literature you have on Bible subjects. And I would like my name and address kept by you to forward your weekly Sunday address. Do you receive donations for your Gospel work from listeners? Thanking you. Faithfully yours.

(All assistance for the broadcasts and general work of the Institute is carried on by voluntary donations from those who desire to co-operate in this service, as unto the Lord.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Frank and Ernest.—Thank you for sending me "God and Reason" and all the other publications. One of your papers answered a question I had asked when I was a Sunday School scholar; now, I am 77 before I have seen the answer to Genesis 6:2—"Then the sons of God took to themselves the daughters of men." Nobody knew the answer.

Will you send me "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and "The Everlasting Gospel," and I am enclosingf or same, the change in payment for any papers already received. Yours in Christian fellowship.

To Frank and Ernest—Owing to illness I have not been able to thank you for the parcel of reading you sent me about Xmas time. I enjoy your broadcast every Sunday and seldom miss them, and shall appreciate the reading you have sent me. Please accept small gift of 10/- in recognition of your kindness and would like you to mail me from time to time some reading; I enjoy reading them over again. Many thanks for the message you give every Sunday. Thanking you in anticipation. Believe me.; yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Thank you for all the wonderful and enlightening talks, and also the literature you sent along. I would like you to send along "The Everlasting Gospel" dealing with the Sabbath question. Enclosed 2/-. Thanking you sincerely.

Dear Friend.—I am writing to thank you for the two copies of broadcasts I have received; the booklets, etc. will probably be at the Post Office for me when I go into town again. I was very pleased to get the copies and I have very much enjoyed the reading and the study of them, and I do not think I have ever had a parable so clearly explained. Actually, I have had very little opportunity to study the Bible with others,

and certainly the majority of it was over my head. . . .

It's so wonderful to know of what is in store for us who love the Lord, and that helps us on our earthly journey. Also, one gets more help from the Bible if one understands it is the Bread of Life. You most certainly are not "trying to press your thoughts" in sending me quite a few papers; I have been reading anything I could get, and listening to whatever broadcasts I could, to get enlightenment, and finding some of it very conflicting, still felt very "hungry for the Word." But I am now looking forward to studying with you.

I could not hear today's broadcast, owing to interference, so I should be glad to receive a copy. Actually, I should be very happy to receive a weekly copy and any booklets concerning, to study at leisure, but I cannot expect you to send them for nothing shall be passing them on to various people who would be interested, and then file them for future reference. Again thanking you for copies and your very kind letter. May God bless you in your work for Him. A Sister in Christ.

The Anvil and the Hammers

Last eve I paused before a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring, the vesper chime,

And looking in I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all the hammers so."

"Just one," said he, and then with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so I thought, the anvil of God's Word
For ages sceptic blows have beat upon

Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.

—Anon.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.4 5 p.m.



Volume XXXIX MELBOURNE, MAY 1956

How Readest Thou?

(Convention Address)

FROM Acts 8:26-35, our text is taken for a short discourse on "How readest thou The man of "great authority, who had charge of all the treasures of the Queen of Ethiopia" was no mean citizen to occupy such a position. He no doubt had a keen intellect, had as good a sense of discernment as anybody his equal or otherwise. Yet he puzzles over the Scriptures and confesses his -inability to read aright: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" Would that there were more of his disposition. We all have our own opinions, tainted with the superstitions and traditions of the ages; excited with our own uncontrolled imaginations which sometimes conjure up for us fanciful pictures of what we call "Prophecy."

The wisest among the sons of men, all and sundry, need help, guidance, to understand aright the Word of God. God has appointed His own administrators in this respect, just as in our text He appointed Philip to unravel the. mystery.

Let no one deceive you. His appointed agents are the Apostles and Prophets; their words are with us to assist us in this greatest of all quests: the understanding of mysteries kept secret since the world began, but now made manifest to His saints. (Col. 1:26.)

To read partially is comparatively easy: we take that which merely appeals to us; we concentrate upon some particular phase to the exclusion of other portions of the Word. We err in not considering the whole. The whole armour of God is necessary. We are vulnerable to attack when we leave off parts of the armour. When all parts of the Word are in harmony, in conjunction with that which is fulfilling, we shall have no difficulty in interpreting aright.

Can you see how easy it would be for a misconception to arise in our understanding if we merely took a part (most do) ? This fault is not confined to the wayfarers, but honest, true, righteous men have made the common mistake. Let us take a few examples:

Moses, you know, read God's will aright; he was to be the instrument to effect the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. Things for them were well nigh unendurable; Moses knew his own strength; skilled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians . . . the sons of Israel groaning under the heel of Egypt. Why not unite and go forth ? He would forcibly reconcile brethren. The time was too early; he had

read incorrectly, prematurely, and needed to wait a further term of forty years before the actual time of deliverance. When he is referred to as the meekest man in the earth it must mean his great teachability, for he is keen to know God's will and continually sought to read it aright.

Another prominent character, who no doubt was asked this same question when things were going amiss after correctly interpreting the Word up to a certain point, was that prince among men, John the Baptist. He was a keen student of the Word if ever there was one, and faithful in his part that needed person-1 application. "Of men born of women there had been none greater" than this stalwart. But glance at the circumstances that no doubt brought forth this question from his disciple, of "How readest thou?" or "what do you make of this?"

He introduced the Messiah to his followers and recognised Jesus as One of whom he was not worthy to unloose His shoe latchet. From John's standpoint everything was going to plan, all his parts of the Word seemed harmonious up to this point. He had fulfilled the Voice in the Wilderness part, introduced Jesus, baptized Him, declared the "Lamb of God" to his followers, and as the friend of the bridegroom was glad to hear His voice. Nothing was amiss even when his followers left him for Jesus; this was Scriptural—"He must increase; I must decrease." And so from now on Jesus went about His work and John continued with his. He would no doubt be more alert to the indication of the Scriptures now than ever before, although previous to this his was a full-time occupation. So much was written of the Messiah, the Word was full of Him and His works . . . was it reasonable to look for the fulfilment? Yet something seemed amiss. Israel was travailing under the heel of the scum of the earth, and if it was not in John's power to convert Israel it was his lot to admonish and reprove unrighteousness. This he did so well and without respect of persons that very soon he was cast into prison. Enforced leisure drove him closer to the Word, the few remaining disciples who frequently visited him in his prison would read together concerning Messiah, and while no doubt marvellous things were happening . . . some things continued as ever before. Something had gone amiss . . . or had it? After reading such prophecies like Mal. 3:1, 2, 3, 5; 4:1, 5, 6, can you wonder why they asked one another, "How readest thou?" "What do you make of this?" They would rightly meditate on these portions, and we would again point out the inadvisability of concentrating on a portion rather than meditating on the whole. Doubts are liable to creep in, as in John's case (and others'), and one's peace and serenity are disturbed.

According to their understanding, when Messiah came He would deliver Israel, and as they were suffering so wrongfully and shamefully under Herod, John in particular, they appear to be confused because of their inability to apply the whole rather than a portion of the Word to that which was fulfilling. Some think John sent his disciples to Jesus with the question, "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?", because John's work had been curtailed. But it appears rather that when they read these Scriptures that were so definite as to the work of Christ, they concluded they must have read amiss, and the position needed clarifying. To them (viewing these Scriptures in Malachi) nothing was happening. So much was expected. Granted so much had been and was being fulfilled, but interpretation in many things had gone amiss.

Doesn't it remind you forcefully of the anti-typical John's experiences during the last 40 years or so? So much correctly viewed, yet in some respects nothing is happening. The old continues as did John's, just as grotesque and unrighteous as ever. Its roots seem as deep and undisturbed as ever. John and his followers would see things just the same as this. Let us take a lesson from the numerous examples recorded for us, and ask ourselves about the Word as a whole rather than a portion,— "How readest thou?" It would prepare the way for meekness and teachableness to grow unabated.

The Pharisees and Sadducees of our Lord's day could read the face of the sky correctly and forecast the weather of the morrow, but He upbraided them for not being able to discern the "signs of the times." (Matt. 16:2, 3.) He well could have referred them to all that was happening in Jerusalem and Palestine and

asked the question: “How readest thou ?” But because their vision was partial it was distorted.

Also do you remember how the Apostles interpreted incorrectly some of the last words Jesus uttered on earth ? He told Peter how he would end his days while serving the truth, and Peter, ever curious concerning others, too, asked Jesus concerning John. Jesus politely told him to mind his own business and get on with his own work; what did it matter to Peter if John remained till His second coming? “How readest thou ?” . . . it soon became common belief that

John would not die.

We could go on showing the inability alone to correctly interpret the Word, and the importance of the whole perspective rather than a portion. So what is the lesson for today, for us ? Jesus supplies the answer in the oft-repeated exhortation: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.” We are sure to err if we merely concentrate on what the spirit says concerning one or two churches, and those because of relationship towards the end of the age, the Philadelphian Church or the Laodicean Church. All are worthy of consideration, so that should any ask us concerning the last church-period in history, “How readest thou?” we could give them the correct relationship of all the churches down through the ages, beginning with that most important one, Ephesus. (Rev. 1:11.)

To what could we liken our position today in view of all that we have said? The most potent is a similarity with John the Baptist’s experiences. Many will say, after long years of endeavour to serve and please Him, “nothing is happening.” Some may even begin to wonder if “the harvest is past and we are not saved.” But ponder the whole, and who will contradict that the great time of trouble is yet future?

It is a common mistake of practically every expositor who has essayed to interpret prophecy, to contract the fulfilling of the main events into his own life-span.

Friends, have you ever been out walking, maybe on some rising ground and then glanced at the lowering clouds that have somehow made their unexpected appearance on the horizon. They become blacker and blacker, and you begin to make plans; you either hasten to get home before the fury breaks, or alternatively, make preparation to escape its violence by taking the necessary precaution to offset or nullify its effect upon you. In the great scheme of things do we not see the big storm of life on the horizon? Have another look at Matthew 24, and ponder on verse 33. “When ye see all these things (coming to pass or being fulfilled), know that it (the Kingdom) is near, even at the doors,”—close at hand to those who read aright. To those who doubt, they are sure to err in reading aright. So near . . . so far away. To the wise virgins the Bridegroom is welcomed; to the foolish virgins, they will have to retrace some ground and enter into joys later.

In conclusion, since all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for instruction in righteousness, let us acknowledge, as did the man of great authority in our text, “How can I understand except some one help me?” We know from experience that “no prophecy of the Scripture is of private interpretation.”

What, then, is the answer? Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together. It is the influence of corporate study that will yield an understanding that must be experienced to be appreciated.

HOW READEST THOU? Acts 8:30, 31.

'Tis one thing now to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read, to learn to do;

'Tis one thing now to read it with delight,
And quite another thing to read it right.

Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay but little, heed;

Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek;

Whilst others read it without common care,
With no regard to how they read or where.

Some read it as a history, to know
How people lived three thousand years ago.

Some read to bring themselves into repute,
By showing others how they can dispute;

Whilst others read because their neighbours do,
To see how long 'twill take to read it through. '

Some read it for the wonders that are there,
How David killed a lion and a bear;

Whilst others read—or rather have a look—
Because, perhaps, they have no other book.

Some read the Blessed Book—they don't know why,
It somehow happens in the way to lie;

Whilst others read it with uncommon care,
But all to find some contradictions there.

One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;

Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what they thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;

And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.

Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of to be taught.

Convention News.

THERE is no doubt that the friends who were I privileged to attend the Easter Convention in Adelaide, S.A., received a rich blessing from the Lord. The Psalmist says, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The Lord's spirit was surely bestowed upon His people and upon our gatherings in His name in copious measure, and our hearts were warmed and made glad with the many evidences of His love and favour as the successive days, with their various sessions, each contributed their portion, making the store of blessing very rich indeed. Surely "the Lord hearkened and heard" as those who feared His name spake to one another, and a blessing beyond our capacity to retain was bestowed by His gracious hand.

There seems to be a special blessing upon these Annual Convention gatherings, and we have come to regard the Christmas Convention at Melbourne, and the Easter Convention at Adelaide, as landmarks, or perhaps more suitably, as little oases, where thirsty pilgrims may meet and rest awhile and receive from their blessed Lord, and from each other, those consolations and ministries of love which only the spirit of the Lord can supply.

There was a goodly number of visitors from the eastern States, two dear elderly brethren coming from far away Queensland, one sister from Tasmania, and one brother from New Zealand, and quite a large number of dear brethren and sisters from the Melbourne and Geelong Classes. The presence of these dear friends was much appreciated, and we trust that each and every one received a very rich blessing from the Lord, and that the precious truths from God's Word may be a real refreshment of mind and heart, and enable each one to press with vigour along in the narrow way that leads to life.

Portion of each day was taken up with a Bible study, and some good help was gained from the portions of Scripture chosen, which were as follows:—John 17:15-24; Phil. 2:1-11; Rom. 11:11-21 and 2 Pet. 3:10-14. Each of these studies brought its helpful lessons, and we trust much benefit was gained from our meditations upon these portions of God's Word. We do desire that the Word of the Lord may dwell in us in ever richer and fuller measure, and that the spirit of the truth—the spirit of love and Christ-like zeal and humility—may be developed in each heart as the days go by.

Various brethren also gave us some helpful addresses which added to the interest and encouragement generally. The topics for the addresses were as follows: "Some Kingdom Thoughts"; "Resurrection Meditations"; "The Grace of Humility"; "My Peace"; "One Hindrance to Immortality"; "Events in Israel—Past, Present and Future"; "Unstopped Wells"; and "The Tabernacle which the Lord Pitched". Also a Brother who had recently been to Palestine gave us an account of his travels through that land, and it was good to hear his description of conditions, places and happenings in the Holy Land.

Various other interesting features of the Convention were the Praise and Testimony meetings, and many brethren and sisters spoke of their appreciation of the Lord's goodness and grace in their daily experiences. The ever popular "Hymns we love and why" was again fully appreciated and entered into heartily, and a Question and Discussion session also proved helpful and instructive.

A number of Classes and brethren sent messages of greetings to the Convention, and these were much appreciated. The message chosen by the Convention and sent to the brethren and classes everywhere is found in Phil. 2:1-5.

The Convention came to a close after four days of really helpful Christian fellowship, and as usual we sang the hymn "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," as we each shook hands bidding each other goodbye, and then singing "God be with you till we meet again," and closing with prayer of

thanks and praise to God for all His blessings, and requesting His grace and guidance upon each one present and upon His dear people everywhere. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

"Our Most Holy Faith."—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/- post paid.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered on the anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death, 25th March, to observe the Lord's Supper with much thankfulness to God and our Lord Jesus Christ for the loving sacrifice of our dear Redeemer, whereby we, at the end of the Gospel Age, may also participate in the benefits of His atoning death in equal measure as did those dear disciples who beheld Him put to death at Calvary.

The attendance was very good, many dear friends coming quite a distance to be present with other members in the Lord's household, including two visitors from Tasmania and New Zealand. The one desire of all in attendance was to honour the Lord's request to keep the Memorial in remembrance of Him, and also to demonstrate their continued willingness to walk in His steps, as they seek to fulfil their vows of consecration faithfully unto death.

Previous studies on the 53rd chapter of Isaiah were very helpful and impressed how much it cost our Lord to pay the sacrifice for the sins of the world, while enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself.

Suitable hymns were sung; prayers were offered up in thankfulness and praise to the Heavenly Father for the Gift of our Saviour, and on behalf of the brethren everywhere; passages of Scripture were read; and an address was given with reference to the type and anti-type of the Passover, with special emphasis on the value of the atoning merit of Christ's sacrifice for His people during this Gospel Age, and ultimately in the kingdom age for all mankind.

Following the prayer of blessing upon the bread and wine each one solemnly partook of the emblems representing our Lord's body and blood given in sacrifice, and we praise God in the victory that Christ thus attained, by which He was highly exalted, and to which the faithful overcomers may also look with confidence as they seek to walk in His steps day by day.

Geelong, Vic.

In the evening of 25th March a number of friends gathered in the home of one of the brethren to observe the Memorial of our Lord's great sacrifice. In recent times some brethren from other parts have come to reside in Geelong, thus the number of those meeting here was greater this year.

Each seemed to appreciate the privilege of joining in this solemn observance, and blessing undoubtedly accrued to every sincere heart.

There have been many difficulties for some time since we last met in this observance, but it is good to note the quiet confidence and trust still exercised in the Giver of every good thing, and particularly did all appear to appreciate the greatest gift of all vouchsafed to man —Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Prior studies in Isaiah 53 had helped all who could attend them to come to the Supper Table of our Lord in loving devotion and in the spirit of consecration.

The simple service comprised the singing of three hymns — 280, 166 and 414 from the “Bible Students Hymnal,”— prayer, the reading by four brethren of the following passages Exod. 12:1-14, 21-33, 40-42; Luke 22:7-16; Matt. 27:27-50 ;—and an address by a brother, at the close of which the emblems were partaken of with thankful hearts.

As we took leave of each other we seemed very conscious of the implications of discipleship in these closing days of the Gospel Age, but in quiet faith and hope each seemed resolved to lean upon our Lord so that our weakness may be changed to the strength that will enable us to be amongst the “overcomers”— the strong ones with whom our Lord will delight to divide the spoil in all the glory of the kingdom. (Isa. 53:12.)

Adelaide.

The Adelaide Class met on Sunday evening, 25th March, to keep the Memorial of our Saviour’s death. It is a privilege each year at the anniversary of His death to thus remember Him, and the great sacrifice which He made for His church and for all mankind.

We had studied the prophecy of Isaiah 53, and what a remarkable prophecy that is, giving in such detail the circumstances and conditions which surrounded our Lord during the time of His earthly sojourn amongst the people of Israel. Truly, “He came unto His own, but His own received Him not.”

What grand example our Lord has left us of meek submission to indignity and cruel suffering; what patience, and faith, and humility, and love He exhibited. How it helps us to carefully “consider Him,” and the manner in which He received and “endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds.”

After appropriate Scripture readings and hymns in keeping with the occasion, and a brief review of the Passover in type and anti-type, and prayer for the Lord’s blessing upon all His dear people everywhere, we partook of the emblems with grateful hearts, appreciating the great favour given to us not only to believe on Jesus Christ as our Saviour, but also to have a share in His sufferings in the present time, in order that we may, by His grace, share also in His grand future work of assisting and uplifting the whole world of mankind in the Kingdom Age. “Thanks be to God, for His unspeakable gift.”

Perth.

We remembered our dear Saviour’s death on the 14th of Nisan-25th March. A small gathering of 18 adults in an upper room looked back to the time when our Lord with great desire partook for the last time of the Jewish Passover, then instituted a Memorial of a greater Passover which was to be accomplished the same day. The emblems of the bread and wine well represented our Lord’s broken body and shed blood, as He explained.

The sacrifice of our Lord’s life terminating at Calvary, and of our Lord’s desire that His followers would

follow Him into sacrificial death, made it possible for Him to not only offer the unleavened bread, but to offer His “cup” to the disciples, so that it could represent them not only having the merit of His blood, but additionally to share or participate in the same sacrifice.

Gladly have Christ’s followers heeded our Lord’s admonition—”Do this in remembrance of me,”—and gladly have they renewed their consecration vows by showing in symbol that they are fulfilling their “covenant of sacrifice.” Psa. 50:5.

Sydney.

In similar fashion to previous years twelve brethren assembled together to partake of the Lord’s Memorial on the evening of 25th March. The number was smaller than usual; one dear Sister who usually attended had passed away during the year, and several were absent due to sickness.

The hymn — “In memory of the Saviour’s love”—was sung in opening, and was perhaps the theme of the Memorial in which love was the keynote; this was emphasized in the following addresses, together with our participation and communion (common-union) in both the loaf and the cup with our Lord.

All the absent ones and all everywhere partaking were remembered in prayer, and Divine blessing upon the assembly was entreated. In the chairman’s address passages read from the Scriptures included—Matt. 26:17-30; 1 Cor. 11:27-29; 5:7, 8; 10:16, 17; Exod. 12:1-11. A Brother then gave an address in which he passed from the type to the antitype, from the shadow to the substance, stressing the need to humble ourselves and to forgive one another in its ultimate sense before partaking.

The emblems were partaken of in silence after a Brother had prayed for Divine blessing on both the bread and the cup. The hymn “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” concluded the service, the brethren dispersing with perhaps mingled feelings of sadness and rejoicing; sadness at their past failures to be like Him, and yet rejoicing in the added strength to walk in the narrow way.

Canberra.

Having spent a profitable time in the previous weeks studying the Passover, type and antitype, it was our privilege to observe the Memorial of our Passover Lamb. Although few in number we believe the occasion paid rich dividends spiritually.

We tried to sense the deplorable conditions of Israel in bondage to Egypt, also the solemnity of the occasion prompting the sacrifice of a Passover lamb. From thence, our next vista was that staged at our Lord’s first advent when surrounding conditions seemed ripe for another deliverance, but to the dismay of those awaiting the “Consolation of Israel,” their hopes were premature, but the antitype, the Passover Lamb, was slain. Finally, we took a survey of world conditions at the close of the age, as the brethren gathered together to celebrate the Memorial, joyfully awaiting the deliverance.

Tasmania.

Once again we received a blessing as we partook of the Memorial on the evening of the 25th March. Three were present and we realised how grandly comprehensive is the meaning of this divinely instituted celebration, and what a blessing comes to us with the observance of this Memorial. Loving thoughts concerned fellow pilgrims and sincere prayers ascended on their behalf.

Changed to the same Image.

(2 Cor. 3:18.)

(Convention Address)

MOST of us will recall in our youth hearing the expression, “You are a copy cat”—meaning that the one referred to was endeavouring in manner or speech to “copy” another. The hero - worship observed when youth endeavours to imitate their favourite film stars and prominent sportsmen is similar; we often hear the expression, “He’s apeing so and so.” We may recall further the amusing episode of eavesdropping on young children playing “school,” especially observing the one adopting the role of teacher. The desire to imitate those who appeal to them is especially noticeable in the young, and in the main it is much to the credit of the teachers who so wisely control their pupils as to create this desire to imitate them. There must be something that appeals or attracts, or else this desire would not be there. If one disliked a person there would be no desire to copy him.

While in the Scriptures we do not find the actual term “school of Christ,” it is one that is often used in reference to Christians. It means that we are Christ’s disciples—that He is our Teacher. In this school there is no compulsory enrolment. In secular schools pupils have no choice of a teacher, but none is compelled to enter the school of Christ until he knows the Teacher and elects to become subservient to Him. Indeed the desire in entering this school is that one might become exactly like Him,—”be changed into the same image.”

The schooling process in effecting this change has some correspondencies to our secular schooling, which we might profitably consider. In secular schools a teacher may not always have the right temperament—the model teacher is one who can keep proper control, and hold the full confidence of his or her pupils. He must have sympathetic understanding of all, and especially backward pupils, for some are slower to learn than others.

In the school of Christ we have in Jesus the perfect Teacher—one who is never difficult of approach and whom we can be assured is always sympathetic to our needs, and who never unnecessarily chides or rebukes. He is never guilty of favouritism with His pupils, but is always impartial; nor do moods cause inconsistency: in reprimands or punishments meted out—every reproof is just.

Human fathers often send their sons to specially selected schools in the hope that one day they will become successful assistants to them in their business. Our Heavenly Father has need of assistants too in His business and Christians are His sons. (Read 1 John 3:1, 2.) The school He sends us to is the school of Christ, and we are required to become like Him; for when He shall appear (to do a particular, great work for the Father) we shall be like Him—we shall have been changed into the same image.

In secular schools we start in the baby grades with simple things—the alphabet and how to use it, etc.; then we progress to deeper understanding through harder lessons and more intricate subjects. No teacher would be pleased with pupils whom he had to keep teaching the A.B.C.

In the school of Christ we master the easier subjects first, the milk doctrines. If good pupils we go on to understand the deeper subjects—the deep things of God, the strong meat. The Apostle Paul ministered to some whom he felt spent far too long in the baby grades. (Read 1 Cor. 3:1, 2; Web. 5:12, 13.) Such are always reciting the alphabet over and over, and seem never able to get down to solid Bible study. in secular schools we are set examinations from time to time, which, if we pass successfully will promote us into a higher grade. Some examination lessons are easier than others, and we generally apply ourselves to the easier ones first, before dealing with the harder ones. These term examinations do not require a 100

per cent. pass; a certain percentage is sufficient to pass us into a higher grade, and it is not always detrimental to fail in a subject. The teacher will then often render special assistance so that we are able to do better next time. It needed the examination to reveal the weakness.

In the examinations we are set in the school of Christ some are more exacting than others, too. We might have an affinity for some subjects and get through with flying colours; but in others it is evident that we have to learn the lesson over again. The Christian will find some of the lessons hinted at in Gal. 5:22, 23. We are getting along fine until across our path comes one of those grumpy, unjust, unbearable persons, all ruffled up—and oh, how our subjects tumble, long suffering, gentleness, meekness, self control; our marks that day make us blush for very shame. Drifting down as it were from heaven we hear a gentle voice like a line of one of the poems we know, “you must learn the lesson again, my child.”

Our secular teachers are interested in our conduct at all times, out of school as well as in. Generally, while under the direct influence of the teacher, conscious that he is watching us, we at least try to conduct ourselves properly. But let him leave the room, what happens then, or if we are out at play? Somehow, teachers always seem to learn about unseemly conduct, and of course punishment follows.

In the school of Christ there are times when we are more conscious than others of the direct influence of the Head— while in the company of fellow members of the Christ body, at class meetings and the like; but how do we conduct ourselves out in the world in the daily round and common task. Are we like schoolboys out at play, apt to forget the standard of conduct our Teacher desires to be maintained at all times?

Many a schoolboy is led into mischief through listening to the enticements of others. Left to himself he would have been alright, but his companions whispered suggestions to him, and he listened and entered into them.

Do we allow the whisperings of ‘the world and its spirit, and the enticement of the flesh to lead us into evil practices displeasing to our Teacher who has our eternal interests in mind in all our schooling? In this connection please read the poem in “Poems of Dawn” entitled “The Nominal Church.” How true ‘this has been of God’s professing people down through the age. And what punishment to befall the apostate church. Let us who are in the school of Christ see to it that we are not involved in it, but heed our faithful Teacher’s voice—”Come out of her, My people.”

Sometimes in our secular education we cannot discern the value of the lesson we have to master, but long years after we see more clearly the wisdom of the curriculum our teacher followed; we wish then that we had been more attentive and mastered the subject better. In the school of Christ too, our Teacher makes no mistakes—there is good reason for all the experiences and lessons set. The subject of suffering for righteousness’ sake seems a difficult and mysterious one to many. Why must we suffer so? Our text Book is plain enough, “If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him.” No cross, no crown. But why ?

In our secular schooling, algebra, for instance, is a very complicated subject, and we are not expected to master it in the lower grades; but later on if we can understand it, it is very useful knowledge. Likewise, in ‘the school of Christ, if at first we do not understand why we suffer so for doing good, let us keep on and not be discouraged; and as we progress into the “higher” grades of the deep things of God’s Word we will be shown why we suffer now, and how we “fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ” (Col. 1:24).

If in our secular education we decide to matriculate, we have to attain a very exact knowledge of all subjects. A very exact knowledge must be acquired in the school of Christ too, if we are going to’ matriculate for a place in the Kingdom—be among the little flock of overcomers, and ‘not finish up

amongst the great multitude who take second place. A translation of Col. 1:9, 10 reads: “. . . that ye might be filled with an exact or accurate knowledge of the Lord’s will, that thus you might lead a life worthy of our Lord and be fully pleasing to him,”—nothing less than being changed into the same image.

In the secular life some of the cleverest and best educated men have continued in their youthful days against great odds of adversity, poverty, etc. Those in the school of Christ are often poor too—not many noble, wise and mighty, but the weak, base and despised of this world ‘path God chosen for His sons, (1 Cor. 1:26-28); and we must not allow ourselves to become discouraged on this score, for He who has begun the good work in us, will finish, perfect it. (Phil. 1:6.) By close attention to our Teacher we will be kept from falling (failing) and finally we will receive our “degrees”—”be presented faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24)—changed into the same image.

This is the will of God, even your sanctification (1 Thes. 4:3)), and this is a progressive work. The adding of a word in Heb. 10:10 gives the proper thought, “. . . by the which will we are (being) sanctified through the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” That is why we are in the school of Christ.

Briefly summing up: How is it all accomplished? We progress best in secular schools by submitting fully to the teacher, learning by his methods. We cannot take short cuts, our lessons are set for each day, and are well calculated how to instruct us in the most impressive and lasting manner. In the school of Christ there are no short cuts either; we cannot run before the Lord. Our text reads, “. . . we are changed into the same image (likeness) . . . even as by the spirit of the Lord.” We read elsewhere, “As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” We ourselves cannot do any changing. Vain is all effort of salvation by works; but by believing into Jesus and following His leadings we will attain unto good works—be changed into His likeness.

One has used photography to illustrate the matter. To obtain a good likeness, great care in the preparation of the plate that is to take the impression is needed; and precision is required to get the relative position of the object to be portrayed. Then, carefully adjusted, face to face with the object, the photographer leaves the light to do its wonderful work. The light must enter only at the right place or it will mar the photo, spoil the likeness.

So in the school of Christ, to have His likeness impressed, we must come face to face with our Teacher, listen to and obey Him implicitly, and carefully peruse the text book, the Holy Word of God. All this corresponds to the preparation of the plate that is to take the likeness. Then we leave the light, the holy spirit of God, to do the rest, and when fully developed and printed it will be a perfect likeness of our great exemplar, our Teacher. But we must guard well that the light gets in only at the right place—from the Word of God, for even Satan’s messengers can appear as angels of light (2 Cor. 11:13, 14). We must shun all vain babblings, philosophies, and oppositions of the spirit of this world; for to the extent we allow such in, it will be sure to mar the likeness and we will not reflect the glory of the Lord as we should. To conclude, a free translation of our text reads—”So we all, with unveiled faces (our Christianity is not hidden) are reflecting as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, as we are changed little by little, more and more to his likeness, by the spirit of the Lord.”

Christian Way Ended.

AS one by one the Lord calls His people “Home” we are reminded of John the Baptist’s words—“He must increase, but I must decrease.” The number of the Christ in glory becomes greater as the true members of the Body of Christ on earth become fewer in number.

Our elderly Sister Annie Kirkwood of Adelaide, S.A., answered the “Home call” on the 17th of April. Our dear

Sister had been rejoicing in the light of “present truth” for over forty years, and her kindness and gentleness of disposition was much appreciated by her fellow members of the Adelaide Class.

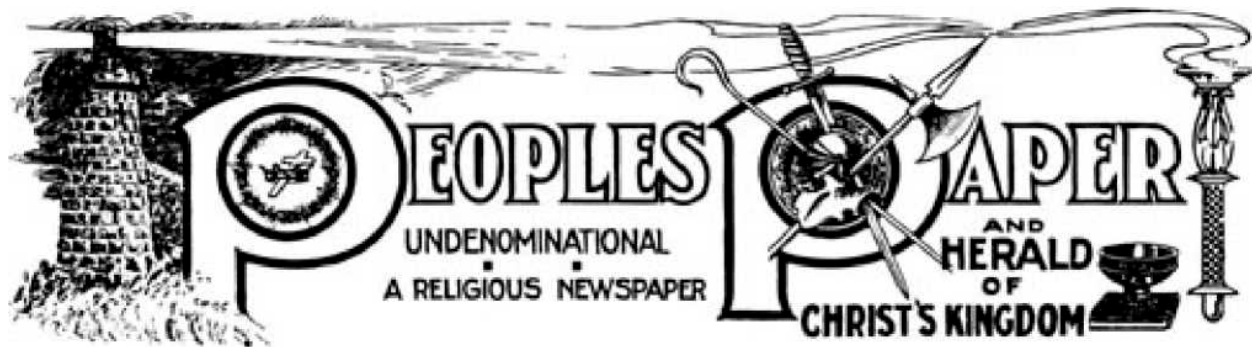
Much sympathy is felt for our Sister’s relatives, and especially towards her sister, Sister Lucy Kirkwood, who also is a member of the Class at Adelaide. “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

It is good to remember that the “Lord knoweth them that are His,” and that the great Head of the Church is supervising in respect of all the interests of His body members. Soon the number of His elect will be complete, and the church glorified with her glorious Head will be privileged to participate in the grand work of restoration of all things.

“To take away of sin. each trace, To make of earth a perfect place; With glory everywhere.”

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

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Seeking the Heavenly Kingdom.

“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.”—Matt. 6:33.

THESE words are part of the Lord’s Sermon I on the Mount. He knew that He had come to fulfil the Law, and to open up “a new and living way” to eternal life. A way which, while requiring even a higher standard of character than that of the Law, would be a way by which life could be gained because provision was made for imperfections of the flesh, so that the heart and will would be accepted instead of actual perfection of deed or word.

John the Baptist had been the forerunner of Christ, and realised his privilege of introducing the Bridegroom, saying, “He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, the friend of the Bridegroom greatly rejoiceth to hear the Bridegroom’s voice.” This my joy therefore is fulfilled.” (John 3:29.) Our Lord Himself confirmed this thought when He said, “Of all that are born there hath not arisen a greater than John, yet he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Up to that time Israel as a nation had represented God’s Kingdom — an earthly kingdom. From that time the heavenly kingdom was proclaimed. “The kingdom of heaven is at hand” was the message of that time. The Law and the prophets were until John, since then the kingdom of heaven is preached and all men began to press into it.

That is, that the earthly typical kingdom was to pass away and a new age was commencing, during which time the Church class, the Spiritual Seed, the Israel of God, would be chosen to be joint-heirs with Christ as the great Abra- hamic Seed which would in the Kingdom Age (to follow this Gospel Age) bless all the families of the earth.

Our Lord was then present directing the closing down of the Law Dispensation. As the “Lord of the Harvest,” His fan was in His hand to thoroughly purge the threshing floor, gathering the wheat (the Israelites indeed) into the garner and separating the chaff for the burning.

In this beautiful Sermon on the Mount, He had been explaining the principles which were to operate in this Gospel Age, and which would prove whether or not a follower was really an overcomer and ultimate sharer in the kingdom. While the principles of God’s throne are always righteousness and truth—Justice—yet the new way of harmony, or of attaining harmony or atonement with God, was different from the way which was offered under the Law. There was no fault to be found with the Law itself, and yet by the deeds of the Law no man could be justified. The righteousness of the Law was unattainable by poor,

frail humanity weakened by the fall, seeking but ever failing to attain the righteousness which was required. Paul describes the pitiable conditions of the Jews under their Law (Rom. 7:14-25), saying, "That which I do, I allow not, for what I would, that do I riot, but what I hate I do. For the good that I would, I do not, and the evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death, I thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Here then was the way out, as Paul again declares (Gal. 3:13)—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law." "He was born under the Law that he might redeem them also which were under the Law." The Law (he says) was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

That is, that the Law proved that man by his own works, even under the favourable conditions of God's Law, could not attain righteousness. "Having therefore, brethren, liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a high priest, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." (Heb. 10:20-22.)

It was this new and living way, with its heavenly hopes and spiritual life, "glory, honour and immortality," as the reward of faithfulness that Jesus came proclaiming and inviting "Israelites indeed" to enter.

During the Law dispensation it had been right for them to look for earthly rewards and to labour for such things as food and clothing, as did the nations of the world, but those coming into the kingdom of heaven were to sacrifice the usual ambitions of the world and seek the things which would qualify them for the spiritual conditions, not by the way of the Law which was by works but by the new and living way, which was justification by faith; not the righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ. (Gal. 2:16.) So we are not to seek to justify ourselves by any good deeds we might be able 'to do, but seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, which is by faith.

That does not mean, however, that we are to be careless about good works. While recognising that "Nothing in our hands we bring, simply to Thy cross we cling," our faith in Christ would be dead if we did not strive to live as He lived, to walk as He walked, and 'to speak as He spoke, and thus to show our faith by our works.

During this Gospel Age it has only been "such as the Lord our God doth call" that could seek the kingdom. We were all born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and it was in the Lord's grace that somehow we were led to realise our need of salvation and a longing to be at peace with God, free from sin. When thoroughly longing for holiness and to be right with God, it was indeed impressed upon our minds that this was the thing of first importance, "to seek first the kingdom."

It was only when we came to recognise God's mercy in Christ, in providing the means for our justification. that we found the peace and joy of reconciliation with God. This, however, did not gain for us the kingdom. It was but the first step towards it, and unless the next step was also taken, this first step would be in vain.

Thus far we had sacrificed nothing. Certainly we had turned away from the sinful course and determined to live righteously as far as possible, but now came the invitation to "take up the cross and follow Christ," to deny ourselves, or, in other words, to offer ourselves in full consecration to God, devoted like Jesus to do God's will even unto death. This is a great step to take, to step away from all the prizes which the world can offer, of pleasure and gain, comfort and ease and repute, and to accept instead the way of negation of self. To be willing to be nothing, to be counted, as Paul says, as the off-scouring of the world, to suffer persecution and be ignored and misunderstood and suffer loss for Christ's sake. Indeed, to die

daily, to be dead with Christ, to endure just whatever the Lord may permit to come to us.

From a human viewpoint the true Christian life is not inviting, but even the appreciation of the loving sacrifice given for us to redeem us from death, would lead the grateful heart to say, “Lord, I am thine, entirely thine.” “I am not my own, I am bought with a price, the costly price of the precious blood of Thy dear Son.” It is but the reasonable thing to do to give myself entirely to Thee, so “here I give myself away, ‘tis all that I can do.” “And so beside Thy sacrifice I would lay down my little all, ‘cis lean and poor, I must confess, I would it were not so small.” It does us good to look back to the time when we thus consecrated our lives to God, and realise how to us it was the chief thing. How it was with us “God first in everything.”

No doubt all who have entered the narrow way entered it in earnest peace and joy—we all meant to make God first in everything—to seek first the kingdom. However, the kingdom is not gained by our consecration, our promise to do God’s will even unto death. It is a wonderful hope, a wonderful prize, but our contract must be carried out, our consecration was but the entrance into the race—we must so run as to obtain. It was but the beginning of the good fight of faith. We must so fight, not as one that beats the air, but as one in deadly earnest beating down every stronghold of error in our hearts, in our minds, and casting down every vain imagination and bringing every thought into the obedience of Christ.

It was comparatively easy to seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, which is of faith and not of the works of the Law, but it is more difficult to keep all our thoughts, our words, and doings in line with this motto, “Seek first the Kingdom of God.” How is it that there is danger of losing our first love, the great impulses of the heart that responded to the Lord’s invitation to “seek ye my face?” “Thy face, Lord, will I seek.”

It is one thing to express such love and zeal and sacrifice for the Lord, when filled with the sense of His pardoning grace and under the smile of His reconciled face, when there is no cloud to bedim the sunshine of His countenance. Our love, our faith, must, however, stand the stress of trial. We must, like our Master, learn obedience and be prepared in the fire of experience, of endurance, and must prove our loyalty under the severity of adverse circumstances. It is easy to sail on a fair sea, or to flow down the river stream, but we must have a perfected character which will be true to our duties, staunch against the storms, loyal to our Captain and Lord, when things are against us.

Thus it is that the Lord permits the testing of our faith and loyalty of heart, and as a “father pitieth his children,” so the Lord “pitieth them that fear him.” So “the trial of our faith is more precious than the trial and purifying of gold,” and the Lord is evidently watching in loving interest to see how well we may stand the tests, to see us come off victorious — conquerors by the grace which He supplies. He is surely watching to see if we are seeking first — foremost — chiefly “the Kingdom of God and its righteousness.”

There are so many by-paths, so many other interests, so many pleasures, so many opportunities in life, that our great enemy will take every advantage to crowd out our one great aim. The parable of the sower indicates the ways in which the Adversary will seek to prevent the proper fruition of the Word of God sown in our hearts.

The seeds that fell by the wayside never got to root at all. The enemy’s messengers, worldly attractions, crowded out the good impulses that had been stirred by some message of the Lord’s Word.

Some seeds fell on stony ground. This represents some who are touched by the message; it takes root and shows some growth, but there is not much nourishment in stony hearts. The heart must be mellowed and kind and full of love to God and to man to develop the perfect fruit. The stony heart is a selfish heart, and

though for a time it might have been stirred to “Seek the Kingdom,” if it was even the chief aim of life, selfishness, the most abominable thing, stirs within and desires to grasp some of earth’s good things—they cease to seek first the kingdom.

Then there are those represented by the ‘seed sown among thorns.’ The Word of God had taken root in good hearts. There is no indication that the ground was not good. The trouble was that thorns were also in the ground. The thorns sprang up and choked them. Such would seem to have earnestly sought first the kingdom, and had devoted their lives to God, but these earthly thorns got too strong. They choked the growth of the Word, “they quenched the spirit.” The kingdom was no longer the chief aim of life. Earthly joys, or earthly sorrows, pleasures of life, or business cares, pride of home or domestic worries, losses of riches, or friends, or the acquirement of prosperity and affluence with social arrangements, one thing and another, either of adversity on the one hand, or of prosperity and social pleasure on the other hand, just choked the operation of the Word of God in the heart; the heart became divided. The kingdom was no longer just the chief and one aim. They could no longer say, like the Apostle, “This one thing I do. I count everything but loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.”

The good seed in good ground are those who seek the kingdom, and ever preserve their first love. They can always say, “I love Thy will, O God,” and keep God first in all their doings, in all their thoughts. These will be the ones who “seek and find,” who “knock and it is opened unto.” They are the ones who seek for and obtain the glory, honour, and immortality and inherit the promise of divine nature, and passing from this world of woe and sadness shall awaken to joy and gladness.

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him and see him as he is.” (1 John 3:1-2.)

We have no doubt all, over and over again, resolved to more earnestly make God first in everything, and no doubt all have been astonished to find how much they have come short, how often they have failed, and allowed self to step in and imperceptibly usurp first thoughts, first attention. Self is so easily swayed by influences around us. Good friends, good from a human viewpoint, may be the means of hindering us in this way. Allowing our tastes whether in homes, goods, clothes, occupations and recreations or other inducements to have consideration before the essential things of the kingdom can only work our undoing as Christians. We must judge ourselves in these matters, and correct ourselves. Only if we keep God first, shall we obtain the kingdom. How serious is the warning (Heb. 2:1-3), “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by messengers (under the Law Covenant) was steadfast and every transgression

received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.”

So that, while we have so much to encourage us in promises of grace and strength for every time of need—all along the way—and by so great reward of joys to come, how serious is our position if we “having put our hand to the plough should look back.” Remember Lot’s wife. Oh, how trivial are the things that cause us to look back. We counted the cost when we made our consecration, and signified it in the water of baptism, our willingness, our desire, our promise to be “dead with Christ.” Having made that consecration, should we allow the drawings of the world, or the flesh, or anything else, preventing from “God first”? Let us ask ourselves, “What will be the end of it?” Let us count the cost if we turn again towards the doomed city, as Lot’s wife turned towards Sodom.

Could we adopt any motto so good as this one, which the Lord gave at the beginning of His earthly ministry, at the opening up of the call or invitation to the Kingdom of Heaven—“Seek first the kingdom

and its righteousness"? Do not let anybody or anything come between. "He that loveth father or mother, sister or brother, wife or husband, son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

God has a right to our whole attention, to all our talents, all our wealth, all our powers of mind or body. When He says, "My son, give me thine heart," He is asking for His own. Yet God is not at this time demanding our attention, or our consecration. He has, however, privileged us with the most gracious and wonderful call or invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ in His kingdom.

"God has called us to a station
We could ne'er by merit win."

If we do not appreciate the invitation we need not accept it.
The privilege will pass to another.

O God, Thy life is mine!
Dwell ever more in me,

And let me see
That nothing can untwine

My life from Thine.
Thy life in me be shown!

Lord, I would henceforth seek
To think and speak

Thy thoughts, Thy words alone,
No more my own.

Thy love, thy joy, Thy peace,
Continuously impart Unto my heart,

Fresh springs that never cease
But still increase.

It just depends upon how far we really act upon these words of the Lord as to how peace and joy will, attend us along our Christian way. If we are successful in keeping our hearts thus set in affection to God, we shall have such peace and joy that we shall never want any other way. But this one thing we will do.

We shall find how much it will help us in our sorrows, perplexities and hard places, for God has pledged Himself to take care of such as so love and trust Him. It will help us in danger, in temptation, when almost encompassed by the enemies' darts and influences, just to remember, "I am seeking first, chiefly, the kingdom." "God first in everything." No one has loved us so much, no one has such claim on our hearts, our love. Even in adversity and in the deepest clouds of distress, keep God first, and though He may permit much affliction and gloom as a trial of our faith, He is watching to see us victorious, and soon the sunshine of His countenance will dispel the clouds and comfort our hearts and supply all our need and bring us joy and peace.

Convention Notes.

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are available free from this Office.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows (1) "Just for To-day," (2) "One Here and There," (3) "How Readest Thou?," (4) "The New Leaf,- (5) "The Best of Wishes—Faith
Hope--Love,"

(5) -Drop a Pebble in the Water,"

(5) "My Bible and I," (8) "Love's Victory,"

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The Early Ministry of Jesus.

“And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power.”—Luke 4:32.

WE have before us in this lesson the greatest teacher that ever lived, and if we enquire wherein His power consisted, the answer is, It was the power of the holy spirit, which He had without measure. (John 3:34.) This is the secret of all power in the work of the Lord. Learning and worldly wisdom, or natural talents of fluency of speech or oratory, are no substitutes for this indispensable requirement for the Divine service. No preaching, no teaching is of value except it be in the power of the holy spirit.

In this power our Lord Jesus came up from the wilderness into Galilee. How did He obtain this power? He obtained it in the same way His followers may obtain it, namely, by entire consecration to God, faithfulness to that consecration, and by communion with Him in prayer and meditation upon His Word. This complete consecration our Lord had made and symbolised at Jordan; and while carefully studying the law and the prophets in order to attain an exact knowledge of the will of God, He had just endured a most subtle and severe conflict with the powers of darkness for forty days alone in the wilderness. Through implicit faith in the wisdom, love and power of the Father, He came off that battlefield victorious, and filled with the power of that holy spirit which had given Him victory. Thus He was equipped with power from on high for the great work upon which He immediately entered. It was no wonder, indeed, that the people “were astonished at his doctrine, ‘for his word was with power.’” “He taught them as one having authority” (as one who knew the truth by an implicit faith in God, which admitted of no doubt, and by the practical demonstration of its power upon His own heart), and not as the Scribes, who had no such insight into the holy things of God.

It is thus, and only thus, that the followers of Christ may also gain this power, which will mightily convince men of the truth, and which will compel respect for it, even in those who are not prepared to receive it into good and honest hearts. The preacher or teacher acceptable to God must, therefore, like the Lord, be first sincerely and fully consecrated to God. Then, when tried and tempted, he must prove his faithfulness to that consecration. Then let him go forward in the work of the Lord with a resolute purpose, to do His will at all hazards, with human approval or disapproval, or of human praise or persecution. Most likely, like the Lord Himself, he will have some of both—at first some of the praise, but afterwards the bitterness of persecution.

At first Jesus “taught in the synagogues, being glorified of all,” “and all bore him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth,” but very soon His faithfulness to the truth, which rebuked their unrighteousness, turned the praise into wrath, and persecution. This is the reward that faithfulness to the truth is sure to bring in the present life, and those who find it so should rejoice in this fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. Every new trial of faith, patience and perseverance, and every new victory in such trial, brings to the soldier of the cross added power of the holy spirit—a courage born of endurance, a confidence in God born of experience, and a zeal born of an appreciation of the power and intrinsic worth of Divine truth and a fuller appreciation of the righteousness of God and of all His ways. In this light the Christian should view every trial that comes to him, and, by drawing near to God in it, seek that measure of His holy spirit which will enable him to overcome, and in the conflict to gain new strength.

The text of our Lord’s discourse on this occasion was chosen from Isaiah 61:1-3, which declared His commission from God to preach the Gospel—“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach,” etc. This was the object of His anointing with the holy spirit. And this anointing needed no supplement of human authority. No Jewish ecclesiastics or councils had anything to do with giving Him this authority. It came, as He showed, from God alone, through His inspired prophet.

In this connection, we are also reminded that through Him this same anointing has come upon every true member of the body of Christ, which is the Church—"The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you." (1 John 2:27.) This anointing began at Pentecost, and has continued upon all who are truly the Lord's even to the present day.

And not only so, but every member of the body, however humble, or obscure, being "anointed to preach," is failing in his mission if he does not preach. Indeed, if he be filled with the spirit he must preach, being impelled to that service by a burning zeal, like Him who said, "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." "It is my meat and drink to do thy will, O God." But preaching is not always public declaration. Every influence that we can send out from within the radius of our talents, be they one or many, or be they humble or brilliant, is preaching the Gospel. Let us all, therefore, diligently apply ourselves to it, and let it be "in the power of the spirit."

It is very significant that our Lord, in quoting this commission, quoted only so much of it as was to be fulfilled by Himself, the last phrase being "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord"—the Gospel Age, the time wherein the presenting of our bodies as living sacrifices would be acceptable to God. With this He closed the book, and sat down, and said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Had he read the remainder of it, He could not have claimed its fulfilment that day; for it was not yet time to preach the day of vengeance, nor yet to begin the great work foreshown in verse 3. The proclaiming of the day of vengeance belongs specially to the end of the age.

Fruits of Obedience.

(Convention Address)

“Being ’found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:8.)

YOUNG’S Concordance gives the meaning of “obedient” in our text as “harkening submissively”. God has created and formed all things, and for His pleasure they are and were created, and in His great wisdom and love He has subjected all creation to certain fixed principles and laws. All the heavenly bodies obey His voice; yes, in Isa. 40:26 we read “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.” Indeed, if it were not so, we realise that only confusion and chaos would eventuate, but the Psalmist exultingly exclaims — “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.”

On the earth also, we see all around us this principle of obedience to our wonderful Creator. In insect life it is evident in the ants and bees; This instinct which God has implanted in their tiny breasts gives them an uncanny to organise and work for their sustenance and preservation in such a way that also helps us as we consider them. They understand that to obey this instinct means to them life and happiness: to disobey, death. In all other kinds and varying .?,-attitudes of life, we see this law of obedience carried out —in plant life, bird life, animal life, and so on.

With man, the highest order of God’s creatures on this earth, it is different; in His great wisdom God has allowed man a the choice to be able to obey or to disobey. God created Adam perfect, with full ability to love and obey Him as he should have done. In his trial and judgment, as we know, Adam disobeyed and brought upon himself and his children the condemnation and sentence of death, fulfilling the Lord’s warning that, “In the day thou eatest of the fruit thereof, thou shalt surely die.” So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Rom. 5.:12.)

In the ancient worthies we have set before us an example of faithful obedience to the Lord’s commands; they believed in the Lord’s promises and carried out His instructions to the very best of their ability, and under such trying circumstances. Of these Paul says, “Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection . . . And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better_thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Heb. 11:33-35, 39, 40.) The Psalmist tells us also, that these shall be made “princes in all the earth.” (Psa. 45:16.)

To the children of Israel God said, “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” (Exod. 19:5, 6.) However, they proved themselves to be a disobedient and stiffnecked people, rebelling against the Lord; they walked not in His statutes, neither kept His judgments. So the

Lord repeatedly chastised them, in raising up the various nations against them, who led them away captives into bondage. When they cried to Him for deliverance, He harkened to them and released them, but because of their idolatrous ways, they were finally left in bondage. At the time of our Lord’s first

advent only a remnant was able to see in Jesus their longlooked-for Messiah; but to those who received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to those who harkened submissively to Him—Israelites indeed. (John 1:11, 12.)

In our wonderful Saviour, we see perfect obedience; it was His greatest joy to carry out His Father's will; He found all His happiness in completing and carrying to fruition God's plans. Of Him it is written—"I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is written in my heart." Before He left the heavenly mansions to become man for the suffering of death as our ransom price, as the great Logos, the beginning of the creation of God, Solomon wrote of him—"Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth. Then I was with him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." (Prov. 8:22-31.)

In God's due time, the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1:14.) And "though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect he became the author of everlasting salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:8-10.) Thus the Apostle Paul explains that our Lord, already undefiled, perfect, already a Son, already fully obedient to the Father under favourable conditions, learned what it means to be obedient under the most adverse conditions; yes, He was despised and rejected of men, made Himself of no reputation, had nowhere to lay His head, bore the oppositions of sinners against Himself with such humbleness and patience, and is such an inspiration to Christians everywhere. Thus our Lord Jesus demonstrated before the Father, before angels, and before His brethren, His obedience and fidelity to the Father, and to the 'principles of the Father's government. He magnified the Father's law and made it honourable, demonstrating that it was not too exacting; that it was not beyond the ability of a perfect being, even under adverse conditions. Wherefore, because of His great obedience, God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. (Phil. 2:8-10.)

We, His followers, may well rejoice, saying—"Worthy the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing." Yes, well may we rejoice in the wonderful privileges that the Father has extended to the Bride class in this age; those whom He has called and drawn to Jesus, begotten by the Word of truth, shown the way to present their bodies living sacrifices, and helped and encouraged in every conceivable way to press forward towards the mark for this wonderful prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. Our finite minds are indeed staggered at the greatness of the prize, to partake of His nature, the highest form of spirit beings, next to the Creator Himself, to have immortality, deathlessness, to see Jesus and to be enabled to engage and co-operate in the wonderful work of the kingdom. This latter thing in itself would be a wonderful privilege—to be able to help the poor groaning creation of mankind up out of the degradation of sin and death, along the highway of holiness, back to the lost dominion in paradise; to help in the restitution of all things spoken by all God's holy prophets since the world began; to assist mankind to harken submissively to the voice of that great Prophet, that they too may become sons of God.

These are some of the fruits of obedience, and as Paul expresses it, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon

every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile, but glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh good.” Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” Yes, love is the spring of obedience, and our love is manifested to everyone by the way we try to walk humbly in His steps; we are living epistles, known and read of all men; may we so walk that our every thought, word and action will bring honour to Jesus, and glorify our loving Father in the heavens. We will also experience great joy in doing these things in obedience to His commands.

So the Psalmist bids all the anointed body rejoice, saying, “Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright.” And Isaiah, speaking for the same class, says, “I will greatly rejoice in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with jewels.” (Isa. 61:10.) Even though, for the time, we must suffer certain trials and testings, which are necessary for the testing of our faith, we can, like our Master, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross and despised the shame, say through the Psalmist—“Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” (Psa. 16:11.)

To those, then, who abide in Jesus and obey His voice have that legacy of peace, for He said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” This is not a worldly peace, not the peace of indifference nor of self-indulgence, but is the peace of Christ, His peace. It is a peace that implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, which remembers all these precious promises made to the Lord’s faithful, that nothing shall by any means hurt His jewels, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine love permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the fulfilment of all that the Master has promised, and of which the present joy and peace are merely foretastes. As Brother Paul says, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us,” and as Jesus said, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

The light of the Word shines brighter and brighter,
As wider and wider God opens my eyes;
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,
And fairer and fairer the heavenly prize.

My waiting on Jesus is dearer and dearer,
As longer and longer I lie on His breast;
Without Him I’m nothing, seems clearer and clearer,
And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

My joy in my Saviour is growing and growing,
As stronger and stronger I trust in His Word;
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

The wealth of the world seems poorer and poorer,
And farther and farther it fades from my sight;
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer,
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

My praise and thanksgiving are swelling and swelling,
As broader and broader the promises prove;
The wonderful story I’m telling and telling,
And more and more sweetly I rest in His love.

Perth Meetings.

The Perth brethren wish to announce that they are meeting at a new address for their Class gatherings on Sundays at 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m., as follows:—No. 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opp. Parliament House).

Books Available.

“Most Holy Faith”—E1.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“Tabernacle Shadows”—6/-.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“Christ’s Return”. This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

“The Everlasting Gospel.”—A 64-page booklet dealing with the Sabbath question and other important connected subjects, highly recommended, heavy paper cover, price 1/6.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic. Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—

Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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Volume XXXIX MELBOURNE, JULY 1956

The Grace of Humility.

(Phil. 2:3.)

(Convention Address)

THROUGHOUT the Scriptures the quality of humility is consistently commended to us as an element of character to be earnestly desired and carefully cultivated. The Apostle Paul says, "Follow after love" and understanding that humility is a component part of love ("love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up") therefore Paul is saying in effect, "Follow after humility." Yes, humility, like all the other beautiful graces that go to make up the Christ-like character, must be carefully cultivated by the children of God. Paul says in Romans 12:16, "Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly." (R.S.V.)

The wise man in Proverbs 16:19 says, "Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." Again, "A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit." (Prov. 29:23. See also Isa. 57:15; Mic. 6:8.)

All grand and noble-minded characters whom the Lord has used in the past have been humble-minded. "Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination in the sight of the Lord." "God resisteth the proud and sheweth favour to the humble." "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, and he shall exalt you in due time." In 1 Peter 5:5 the Revised Standard Version states, "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was a living exponent of the grace of humility. See Him leaving the courts of heaven to take the lowly estate of man in order to be the sin-bearer and Saviour of fallen man. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich." (2 Cor. 8, 9, R.S.V.)

The opening sentence of the Sermon on the Mount is "Blessed are the poor in spirit (the humble minded) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Again, He said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." (Matt. 11:29.)

Paul's words in Philippians 2 help us in seeking the grace of humility—"In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." (Phil. 2:3.) Those who naturally have a humble mind have no particular difficulty in esteeming others better than themselves, but there are some who naturally have

another attitude of mind. This is not necessarily their fault, for they may have been born with larger self-conceit than others. But even if we were born with humbleness of mind, we should take care that self-conceit and pride do not come in. Sometimes in their own heart some people feel boastful of the knowledge they possess. They like to shine, even though they know they have no more brilliancy than others.; they would like to obscure the shining of others that they might be the more noticed in the darkness. It would, therefore, be a safe matter for each of us to follow the Apostle's suggestion to cultivate this humility of mind and never allow it to be lost. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (1 Pet. 5:6; Luke 14:11.) God would do this abasing, not in a vengeful spirit, but because the one who would vaunt himself must be brought low.

There might, however, be circumstances when some who appear to be vaunting themselves really are not doing so, but circumstances and conditions make it seem so. Therefore, to best fulfil the Apostle's injunction, we should, as he suggests in this text, cultivate the spirit of humility — not considering our own good qualities so much as those of others. If we have some good qualities, let us be thankful to God, and remember that every good gift comes down from the God of all grace. We have nothing that we have not received, whether it be by natural endowment, or by the grace of God in Christ; so we do well to remember Paul's advice "not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think," but to think soberly of ourselves, remembering that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." We stand only by virtue of God's grace in Christ; without Christ we can do nothing. May we guard well our humility, dear friends, remembering our own unworthiness and insufficiency except as Christ is pleased to work in and through us.

In comparing ourselves with others, let us look at our own blemishes. There are very few in whom we cannot see some good qualities, good traits. If, therefore, we look at our own imperfections and the good qualities of others, we shall find ourselves more and more appreciative of others; and this will, be of assistance to us in running the race. The consideration of our own imperfections would tend to make us very humble of mind, and keep us in this attitude of mind. This might cause us some discouragement unless we had the proper relationship with the Lord and His Word.

We know that "all things work together for good to those who love God." Through His Word our Lord has provided for such the "Balm of Gilead" for their encouragement, and the anointing oil and the comfort of the Scriptures.

The Lord does not cast us off if we are not wilfully wrongdoers, and if we take the humiliating things in the right spirit; that disposition is what He wants. Those things which would humiliate us in the sight of others and in the sight of the Lord Himself, will, if we are rightly exercised by them, work together for good to us. Such He will bless and lift up and give an appreciation of His love. This He purposes to do; we have every evidence that the Lord will give the necessary encouragement, and we have the assurance of the Scriptures that those who obey His Word to the best of their ability shall not be overcome.

For each one to look merely upon his own things, interests, welfare or talents, and to ignore those of others, would manifest a general selfishness and, consequently, a dearth of the spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love and generosity. In proportion as we are filled more and more with the holy spirit, love, we shall find ourselves interested in the welfare of others. This was the mind, disposition, or spirit which was in our dear Redeemer, which He so wonderfully manifested, and which we must copy and develop in our characters if we would be of the "little flock," who shall be joint-heirs with Christ in His glory, concerning whom God has predestinated that to be accepted with Him to this position we must be "copies of his dear Son." (Rom. 8:29.)

See Mark 9:33-35; Matt. 18:1-5. The subject of this lesson is one for the most careful and prayerful

consideration of every child of God, and especially of all who are in any way tempted to ambition and rivalry, or vainglory in the Lord's service. While the humility of the Lord's apostles is very marked in their subsequent careers, in the beginning, of their course they were all to some extent influenced by the old ideas which it was the object of Christ's teaching gradually to eradicate.

After the peculiar experiences on the Mount of Transfiguration and the selection by the Lord of three of their number for that notable occasion, the question of relative prominence in the kingdom was naturally suggested to their minds, and apparently it led to a dispute which manifested some selfishness. It was to correct this disposition, and to show its antagonism to the spirit which must prevail in the kingdom of God, that our Lord sought an opportunity to converse with them on the subject. "And he came to Capernaum, and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed about among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace, for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest." By and by one of them inquired, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Then followed the lesson, so important to the apostles, who were subsequently to be exposed to great temptations to ambition and rivalry among themselves for the chief place in the estimation and in the hearts of the people of God—the kingdom in embryo—among whom they were all to be leaders and teachers, chosen witnesses of God. And the Lord would have them be not only witnesses of His truth, but exponents also of the power of His spirit in transforming the heart and moulding the character into graceful conformity to the divine will. But if the lesson was thus important to the apostles in their position as leaders, it is also important to the whole church, all of whom are, to a greater or less extent, exposed to temptations to rivalry and ambition.

"And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith to them, If any man desire to be first (i.e., if he manifest the spirit of rivalry), the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." The spirit of rivalry being the very opposite of the spirit of love and meekness which must characterize all who shall be counted worthy of the kingdom, this statement is seen to be the logical sequence of such a course; for if such a one shall ever enter the kingdom he must first have that disposition thoroughly eradicated; and if it be deep seated or long cultivated, it may take considerable time and discipline to accomplish it, while, meantime, others, not so afflicted, may be engaged in the more rapid development of those graces of character and of mind which fit them more and more for extended usefulness and service, thus necessarily leaving the one under discipline to be the last and least, instead of the first and foremost. Thus viewed, the saying, He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be abased (Luke 14:11) is seen to be the statement of a philosophical principle of divine law. Let us, therefore, as the Apostle Peter urges (1 Pet. 5:6), "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time."

"And he took a child and set him in the midst of them, and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you (the manner is impressive and solemn; it is as though He would say, I want you to take this lesson to heart and ponder it well), except ye be converted (i.e., unless you turn away entirely from this self-seeking spirit of rivalry), and become as little children, ye shall not (even) enter into (much less be greatest in) the kingdom of heaven." The special characteristics of a little child are simplicity of heart, meekness, truthfulness, freedom from ambition and rivalry, faith, confiding trust, love, obedience, teachableness, indifference to social distinctions and popular opinions, and guilelessness.

The maintenance of such a spirit after the dormant powers of childhood have expanded and brought the world with all its attractions, allurements, ambitions, hopes, etc., within the mental grasp of the man, after the intellect has been quickened by the pulsations of life until he begins to realise that he is the peer of his fellows, and that he has advanced in the acquirement of knowledge and the development of skill and ability even beyond many other men, is indeed the evidence of that self-control and self-discipline which invariably bespeak a noble character. The possession of such a spirit indicates that the man is not overestimating himself. He views himself as God sees him—as a very imperfect man, striving in much weakness to measure up to the standard of a perfect man, and realising that his best efforts still leave him

far short of the mark of perfection. And so he is humbled, in consideration of his failures, rather than puffed up by comparing himself with those of still lower attainments.

The parable of a man with a beam in his own eye trying to pick a mote out of his brother's eye was a forceful method whereby the Master inculcated the necessity of humility on the part of those who would be taught of God. Humility is here, as elsewhere, put as a foundation virtue. The Latin word for humility is "humus"—ground. This implies that it is soil out of which other virtues are produced. One has said, "The more a man does examine, the more does he discover the infirm ties of his own character." Another has wisely commented, "Ten thousand of the greatest faults in our neighbours are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves." Let us give earnest heed to the wisdom of the Word of God and "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God," remembering that "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble."

The Apostle Paul urges us to "Consider Christ" in Hebrews 12:3, and in Phil. 2:5 he says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," and goes on to describe and explain that the mind which was in Christ Jesus was the mind of humility. Although He was in the form of God, He thought not by robbery to be equal with God,—He did not meditate a usurpation of Jehovah's power or position. On the contrary He humbled Himself; He made Himself of no reputation; He divested Himself of all His power and honour as the pre-human Logos; He took upon Himself the form of a servant; He humbled Himself; and Paul goes on to show that the humbling of Himself did not end with His step down from a very high form of spiritual life to the lowly estate of man. Consider His utter self - forgetfulness; nurtured by a humble maiden, born in an obscure manger; lovingly cared for by lowly parents to whom He was subject until He became 30 years of age—manhood's estate under the Law.

Even then, when our Lord appeared as a man—a perfect man—crowned with the glory and honour of perfect manhood, the humbling, process continued. He had not only laid aside the symbols of His glory and become man; but when He was a man He humbled Himself. Humiliation was a constant characteristic of Him as a man; He did not aspire to high honours; He did not affect pomp and parade; He did not demand the service of a train of menials, but He condescended to the lowest conditions of life. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "I am among you as he that serveth."

Heavenly Father, Holy One!
May Thy will in us be done;
Make our hearts submissive, meek,
Let us ne'er our own way seek.

Loving Saviour, we would be
Ever more and more like Thee,
Free from pride and self-desire,
Fervent with a holy fire.

Jesus, Master, we would bear
In Thy sufferings a share;
Help us, Lord, to follow Thee,
Heavy though the cross may be.

Fill us with Divinest love,
With Thy spirit from above,
May we patiently endure,
Trusting in Thy promise sure.
Blessed Lord, Thy saints defend,
Watching o'er them to the end;
Day by day their faith increase,
Keep them in Thy perfect peace;

Comfort, strengthen, guide and bless,
Lead them through the wilderness,
And when Thy due time shall come,
Gather all Thy loved ones home.

“Our Most Holy Faith.”—

This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of “The Dawn” in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/- post paid.

Convention Notes.

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are available free from this Office.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.” --Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages. paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

“Christ’s Return”.--This 38 -page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2 / 3, post paid.

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“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4 / 6, post paid.

“My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me.”

O tenderness divine!
O glorious love of Thine!
That bids us come to Thee!
Thy sheep.

Those wondrous tones we hear—
And banished is our fear,
Our Guide will never leave His sheep.
Each one Thou call’st by name,
And each Thou lov’st the same;
Thou gav’st Thy life for all
Thy sheep.

Can earthly power withstand
The might of His strong hand!
Nay! we are safe for aye!
His sheep.

—Selected.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia
While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word,
we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons
reported.

The Year's Work.

ANOTHER year's work for the Berean Bible Institute has been completed, and once again the privilege of having a part in the service of the Lord and His truth is greatly appreciated with thanksgiving to God for His favours and blessings upon the efforts which have been undertaken in co-operation with our dear friends in various parts of the harvest field.

Contact with the Lord's people generally has been maintained in various countries of the world through the medium of our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom," and the, reports, over the past year, of help and blessing being received from the "Paper" have been encouraging. The contributions to the pages of our periodical from various brethren, in the form of Convention addresses and other articles, have been of much assistance in providing the truths of God's Word presented from various aspects.

Considerable numbers of the "Peoples Paper" are distributed free to all who enquire for literature, and while the subscriptions fall far short of meeting the publishing costs, yet it is felt that the making up of the deficiency from the General Tract Fund is expense well used in the service of the Lord, in the interest of those who are feeling after the truth, which alone can satisfy. Brethren who forward subscriptions for friends, and others who use Sample copies of the "Paper" to pass to those who desire to read are all assisting helpfully. Also the good help rendered in the checking of proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching, the "Paper" by some friends is warmly appreciated.

Quantities of tracts have been produced throughout the year past, and friends in the --various states are distributing as they think good; further supplies are available to all who -'desire to co-operate in this work. The mailing the Consolation Cards to the bereaved has also been continued by some of the brethren and this is surely a means of bringing comfort to those in sorrow who are looking for the glad message of truth.

A number of public lectures were arranged regularly throughout the past year, and while attendances from the public were comparatively small, yet it has been encouraging to realise that some new friends have been encouraged and assisted by the truth in this way. Our regular friends also have testified to receiving benefits from these lectures which are arranged to provide messages of help for the brethren as well as for new friends.

The financial position for the general work is revealed from the General Tract Fund below, and all the good assistance has been provided, in the Lord's providence, by the voluntary contributions of the brethren who desire to use their talents in providing the message of truth for others. This loving co-operation is warmly appreciated, and is certainly most encouraging in the efforts in the service of the Lord and His truth.

Apart from the Lord's sure Word of prophecy how uncertain and dark would be the outlook for the days ahead, but knowing that the Lord's kingdom is shortly to solve all earth's problems in a way that will bring blessing to all mankind, truly it is the greatest privilege ever offered to the Lord's people to serve His cause while the opportunities are still with us. At this time again the prayers of the brethren are requested that the Lord's guidance and blessing may be upon His work in these closing days of the age, that God's will may be done in all things, and His people comforted and supported by the truth, to His praise. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. 6:10.)

By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples

Paper" ..	£95	17	6
Allowance Printing Paper	25	0	0
Hall Rents, Advertising Circulars, etc.	42	9	6
General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	57	0	0
Towards Personal and House Expenses	325	0	0
	37	10	0
Free Books and Booklets ..	6	15	6
Travel and Sundries ..	12	17	6
It Credit Balance, 1/5/'56	54	3	2
	£656	13	2

RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/'55	£85	19	9
„, Donations ..	775	10	9
	£861	10	6
By Radio Stations:3GL, 2KY, 4KQ, 4LG .	£691	3	2
•• Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ, 6KY, and		10	6
„, Freight Charges	5	16	6
	.17	10	0
	8	10	0
Bank Charges ... ,.....	1	10	0
	.80	10	4
	£861	10	6

Only some act of devotion, Willingly, joyfully done,

“Surely, ‘twas naught!”

(So the proud world thought,)

But yet souls for Christ were won. --Charlotte Murray.

The Radio Work.

THE witness to the message of the kingdom has also been continued over the radio for the year past, and we give thanks to the Lord for this privilege of service also, as unto Him.

Throughout the past twelve months it has been encouraging again to realise the benefits being received from the witness over the air on the part of a number of earnest listeners in the various states. The truth in all its beauty has been appealing to quite a few, and we give thanks to the Lord that their hearts are responding very fully in appreciation of His goodness to them and all mankind. It has been of particular interest to find some listeners in Australia who had heard the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts in other lands, and they are delighted to hear the same message here in Australia.

To all enquirers to the radio witness, printed copies of the broadcasts and other free literature, followed by several months' issues of the "Peoples Paper" are gladly supplied. The Lord, of course, gives the increase in the hearts of those who are really hungering and thirsting for His truth, but it is a great joy to be used in some small way in His service, and all our friends within range of the radio stations being used are invited to encourage others to listen, by distributing advertising slips, or using other means available. Up to the present time the broadcasts are continuing over the radio stations-3GL, 2KY, 4KQ, 6KY, NA, the Western Australian friends being responsible for the financing of the sessions over 6KY 'NA.

From the Radio Fund appearing below the financial position of the radio work is revealed, and by the Lord's provision through His people all expenses are met; the loving assistance for this work is also warmly appreciated. It is requested that our brethren join in prayer for the Lord's continued blessing upon His message going forth, that it may accomplish that which He desires in these last days of the harvest time.

The Love of God.

WE are impressed with the truth that there is no unwisdom, no injustice, no lack of power with God. All the wisdom in the world, and all the justice, as well as all the power, originated from Him. Consequently, all these qualities, although more or less found in man, are not of man, but of God, and Love is of God.

We may, therefore, affirm, not only that “God is Love,” but add that He is Love’s author and the giver of every good and perfect gift. If, after having been persuaded that God is all-wise and all-powerful, we stopped short, we would have arrived only at a very incomplete definition of His character, but when we recognise that He is just and loving, we have a revelation of God’s absolute perfection.

In the light now shining on the Word, we see that His leading characteristics consist of these four qualities, but although we admire Him more particularly on account of His wonderful love, still God’s love can hardly be regarded as the strongest element of His nature, as if it held sway or predominated.

Of the graces that pertain to the body members of Christ, such as Faith and Hope and Love, the Apostle has singled out Love as the supreme possession; but with men, because of lack of wisdom and power, Love and Justice often conflict. Man’s love often has gracious designs, which he has not the wisdom nor power to accomplish, except by violating justice. But the plan of redemption, which was devised by Divine wisdom, based upon uncompromising justice, and which will be accomplished by Divine power, is the essence of unfathomable love. So far, only the justice of God has been manifested to the world, and very much of its glory has been beclouded by human traditions. God’s love for His creatures, the wisdom of His plan, and His power to save are as yet only partially revealed and distortedly seen. His plan began to be revealed over 1900 years ago, but not seeing the Divine plan as a whole, few have appreciated His love. Then, again, it has not been the custom to regard God’s love for the world, apart from the love of the Lord Jesus, but the Father’s love was independent of that which was shown by the Son. Hence, we should esteem the love of Christ as something additional rather than to hold that the love displayed was foremost on His part in His capacity as the dear Redeemer.

God’s great love was surely behind all, so that His pre-eminence, even in connection with the love manifested by the coming of Christ, should be duly recognised. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,” etc. Commenting upon this Scripture, one has said, “Orthodoxy says it was Jesus who so loved the world as to throw Himself between us and His angry Father . . . and thus receive the fatal blow.” Such false reasoning as this has, no doubt, led many from the discrediting of the love of God to the denial of there being a God. The following extract from another commentator shows how our Heavenly Father’s Wisdom, Justice, Power and Love have been combined on our behalf. “Love is the keynote of the Bible, notwithstanding the fact that it contains threatenings as well as promises—and manifestations of justice—as well as declarations of mercy.” If God’s love should override His justice, it would testify weakness of character instead of strength. It is the fact that God’s wisdom, justice, love and power operate—in full harmony—in coordination—that gives us admiration for Him, love for Him. How thankful we should be that we live in such times, when God has made His plans and purposes known, which knowledge came to our relief just when we were losing faith in His love and power to save. The views we previously held were not only unworthy of God, but unworthy of our better selves.

Surely, we, who have been favoured with an insight into the vastness of the preparation made by Jehovah, can most heartily testify to His being a God of infinite love, and to His being great in wisdom and great in heart, as well as being equally powerful and just. Nothing could be more inspiring to us than to have had our minds enlightened by such a knowledge of the loving purpose manifested through His Son, our Saviour, to ensure the eternal happiness of whosoever will.

The coming of Christ did not change the character of the Father, but it certainly did change our viewpoint of Him.

He was a God of Love, not only before the coming of Christ, but also before Christ (the Word) was brought into being.

As the beginning of the creation of God, Christ was the first object of God's love, but the Father's love did not begin and end there, and that which has rejoiced our hearts in these latter days is the truth that the Father's love does not end with the selection of the Church, but that it is in the world's interests that the present call is going forth. And so, we adore Him for the gifts of His grace, believing that the arms of love that now encompass us "will all mankind embrace." The world does not love God now because it does not know Him. He has been misinterpreted by false doctrines, but some day all will understand. We trust the time is not far distant when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to the wisdom, justice, power and love of God the Father, and to His son, through whose redemptive work the world will be reconciled to Him. The assurance that the world is to receive a call through the Church, when, glorified with her Lord and Head, came to us as a very great delight, especially as we were giving up hope of the world ever being converted. We thought it, was too late for this ever to be achieved, but, found it was too early for this event, and this is the secret of God's wonderful love.

Pilgrimage Ended.

THE following has been received from the secretary of the Perth Class.—"Our dear Sister Ross finished her course at 7 a.m. on 3rd June, and we believe that her change came then, 'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.' (1 Cor. 15:52.) We all rejoice that her trials and weakness are all over and that she is alive forever more.

"On coming to Australia from Scotland in 1925 with her family, she started attending the Bible Class in 1926 and from then on was a regular attendant, except when she was away in Victoria and N.S.W. This enabled her to be well known to many of the brethren throughout Australia.

"We looked upon Sister Ross as a good student who had a good ear to hear 'what the spirit saith unto the churches.' She was a good help to the. Class, and contributed very well with her mature thoughts. As with all the saints, she went through her testings and trials with rejoicing, and we looked upon her as ripened grain of the harvest, ready and gladly anticipating the first resurrection. She was longing for Home and her wish was, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.' "

The brethren in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, as well as those in Western Australia, no doubt have very happy memories of our dear Sister Ross, for our Sister resided for various periods in Victoria and N.S.W., particularly. Our dear Sister dwelt in the homes of friends and was truly appreciated by all with whom she associated for her devotion to the Lord and His truth, and the loving and gentle disposition manifested which indicated her close contact with the Lord in spirit and truth.

While there is always a measure of sadness in the passing of our dear members in Christ, and we sympathise with the relatives of our Sister's family in their loss, yet we rejoice that the trials and frailties of the earthly pilgrimage are passed for our dear Sister Ross who ever longed to be with the Lord, and see Him as He is in the glorious inheritance of the heavenly kingdom.—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Perth Meetings.

The Perth brethren wish to announce that they are meeting at a new address for their Class gatherings on Sundays at 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m., as follows:—No. 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opp. Parliament House).

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid “Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Folk—I much appreciate the privilege of having the reading matter you forwarded me, from which I have derived much help in getting a better knowledge of our Lord and Saviour and what His great sacrifice can mean to us all.

I would be pleased if you could send a bundle of literature to as I think he would appreciate it, and also his son whom I was talking to about the “Peoples Paper” and Frank and Ernest Dialogues. He seems to think along the right lines, and can remember how my father used to talk to him about these matters. My father used to talk to me about prophecy and naturally I am also interested in all these things that could give me a greater knowledge of our heavenly Father.

Please find a little enclosed to help with your good work, which I’m sure is furthering the Lord’s work. Yours sincerely, with many thanks.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I listen with great interest to your very clear Biblical Dialogues which we receive from 3GL at 10 a.m. on the Lord’s Day. Your subject on 27th May, “Princes in all the Earth,” was to me unusual, and I would like very much to accept your offer of a free copy of that broadcast. The excellent details you give I wish to study, and I think they will be of great spiritual benefit, not only to me, but to all listeners. I trust you have every success in your valuable work. Yours sincerely.

P.S.—I subscribe to your “Peoples Paper,” and find it very helpful in my study of God’s Word.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—I read with great interest a Biblical Dialogue concerning “John the Baptist Not in Heaven.” This I understood, but gained much knowledge of God’s Divine Plan by reading it.

I believe you people have a booklet “God’s Plan,” which I hope could be sent to me by return early mail, if you have one available, for if I can understand His Plan some of His power and wisdom might be revealed to me. Also I would like you to send me more of those Frank and Ernest Biblical Dialogues: They are very interesting. Awaiting an early mail; I am, Yours faithfully.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I am very interested in your broadcast from 4KQ on Sunday mornings. It was given out that the booklet “God and Reason” was free for the asking, and also I would like the booklet “The Plan of God.” I have from time to time received some very interesting reading from you, for which I thank you very much; it has helped me to understand the Bible and to know what is coming. I will be very grateful if you will send me these two booklets and other reading if you can. I am; Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I am in receipt of your note in connection with the “Peoples Paper.” I often intended to send you a contribution, but was not certain to whom to make it payable; I was inclined to make it payable to Frank and Ernest whose Dialogues I enjoy on 4KQ. There is a book often mentioned in their Dialogues—“God and Reason”—and I would like to get it, if you have any to spare. I do not do much reading as my eyes are getting dim now, well advanced in my 91st year. . . The one in whom I put my trust is my Lord and Saviour; I know that He will not let me down. Enclosed please find a small donation towards the work. I remain.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Thank you very much for the “Papers” and booklets that you have continued to send to me. I have enjoyed studying them, for they have been very helpful to me in understanding portions of the Scriptures which were difficult to me. I do pray that God will bless your work in Radio as well as in writings, that many people will be led to honour Him. Enclosed please find cheque for £5 towards expenses incurred in your good work, and I trust you will continue to send me the “Peoples Paper.” Thanking you very sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—It is quite a few months since I received the book “Our Most Holy Faith.” It is a wonderful book, packed with knowledge, and I have spent many profitable hours searching it from cover to cover. Thank you also for letter and offer of help . . . I send extra “P.Ps” you send me to my daughter, and they do help her a lot; she said “Christian Joy” smoothed over a number of rough patches, and really made her rejoice.

At present I am reading (again) “Three Great Covenants” and feel it would be helpful in tract form; in fact, all the sermons would. I am enclosing money to assist with the work. We (my daughter and I) are still hoping to meet you at a Convention. Thanking you for help received, and wishing you all the best. Yours sincerely.

The Secretary, Frank and Ernest Session, 3GL—I have just heard the discussion on “Christian Baptism” and found it most interesting and very helpful. Could you please forward to me by return mail a free copy of this broadcast, as it will be extremely helpful to some of my friends. Thanking you in anticipation; I am, Yours in Christian fellowship.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ., 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ., 4.45 p.m.

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When Christ is King! THE HOPE FOR HUMANITY

MANY have thought that Christ is King of Earth to-day, and that He has been trying to gain control of His Kingdom through the activities of His people. People have been urged to 'win the world for Christ,' and evangelists have taught that the more conversions that were made the more Christ's Kingdom was extending, and that when all the world had become Christianised then Christ's Kingdom would have come.

As we view the world in comparison with even fifty years ago, we have to confess that it is less Christian to-day than then. Not only is there a larger percentage of heathen and avowed agnostics and atheists, but we have to deplore the fact that there is less real earnestness among professing Christians. There are fewer real, consecrated Christians understanding what it means to take up the cross and to follow Christ in the churches to-day than there were. We realise that if all the heathen of India, Africa, China and Japan were converted to the present condition of Christendom they would need still to be converted to be Christians, for there is probably more evil and wickedness in what are called the Christian nations than among the heathen.

In view of this condition of things, it should be evident to all who will consider the matter that if we were to wait for the coming Kingdom of Christ until the churches should "win the world for Christ," we should wait in vain, for it would never come at all.

Yet all men have a hope of a better day coming, and socialists and others have a hope of establishing such a system of national economy that will mete out justice to all and recognise that every man should have a good opportunity of providing for the necessities for himself and his family without so much worry and anxiety and sweat of face—that there must be less of class distinction and luxury and waste on the one side, and less of poverty and need on the other.

Leaders of such thought may not be Christians at all, yet no doubt it is with good purpose they think to bring in a better day. While some alleviation of those who have been oppressed has taken place, yet the results of their schemes only demonstrate that man by his own effort cannot establish an arrangement that will mete out justice to all and make the world a happy brotherhood. Even if that could be done, there is still the fact of calamities, sickness and death, which only the lifting of the Divine curse on account of sin can stop.

It is to the Bible that we must turn to learn of the sure hope for the poor “groaning creation.” Here we find a clear

plan for ultimately releasing mankind from the death sentence and leading all the willing and obedient up the highway of holiness (Isaiah 35) back again to the perfection and happy condition enjoyed by our first parents prior to the fall.

We see that in God’s wisdom- mankind was represented in Adam, on trial in Eden, and therefore all were condemned by that one man’s offence (Romans 5:12-19) , so that in due time, when all shall have tasted of the baneful results of that disobedience to Divine Law, they might be released from that penalty of death by one man’s righteousness and death (Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:3-6).

In this way, justice, which is the foundation of God’s throne, could be satisfied—life for life—so God provided a way that, while still being just, He might be the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:23-26).

Nineteen hundred years ago the great sacrifice was made; Jesus “bore our sins on the tree”; He bought us with His blood; His flesh He gave for the life of the world, as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” Thus, “He is the propitiation for our sins (the Church’s sins) and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

Without the cross of Christ there was no hope for humanity; death would simply have swept us all away. There would have been no resurrection and no hope beyond the tomb. Thus the mission of Christ at His first advent was to lay the foundation for His intended work at His second coming. The effect of the cross of Christ would have been no use to mankind generally without the work to be done at the second coming. To have released man from the condemnation to death, while so weak and erring through hereditary taint, would only have meant that he would soon have sinned again and so each would have personally incurred the second death penalty.

It is on this account that God has arranged to leave the world in the hands of His Son during the Kingdom Age of 1000 years, so that He may lead them step by step towards righteousness (Psalm 72; John 5:22-29; 1 Cor. 15:22-28).

As steps towards holiness and righteousness are taken there will be rewards of life and health and prosperity, while wickedness and disobedience will have corresponding punishments. This course is termed in John 5:29 a “resurrection (raising up again) by judgment.” (R.V.).

The seeming delay since the first advent has been on account of the Divine purpose to select the Church, the Body of Christ, or the Bride Class, to be “joint heirs” with Christ in the Kingdom, to reign with Him, to bless all the families of the earth (Gal. 3:8, 16, 29) .

Soon now the Gospel Age will close, its purpose being accomplished, and then “the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15).

Our Lord foretold (as did also the prophets, particularly Daniel 12:1-2) in Matt. 24:21, 22 and Luke 17:20-23, that just such days as we see about us at this time should come at the end of this dispensation and precede the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom on earth.

How Christ Comes

Many people expect our Lord to reappear in human form, but such is not in accord with the apostles' teaching, for 1 John 3:2 informs us that we do not know what our Lord's glorious body is like (since His ascension) and we are to see Him "as He is." When He came to earth as a babe, He changed from the spiritual body to the human "for the suffering of death"; "made a little lower than the angels." Jesus said, "My flesh (human nature) I give for the life of the world," and again, "The world seeth Me no more, but ye shall see Me because where I am shall ye be also" (that is the Church) (John 14:19, 3). Paul said, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we Him (so) no more." No one ever saw Jesus in human form after His ascension. Paul, in order that, as an apostle, he should be a witness of His resurrection, was granted a sight of Christ in His glorious spiritual body. ("There is a natural (human) body, and there is a spiritual body.")

Prior to His ascension Jesus appeared in different forms to His disciples in order to converse with them, but never after His ascension.

So now we do not look for Him to return circumvented by a human body, but in His glorious spirit body, "in the express image of the Father's person," "in all His glory and all the holy angels with Him."

Thus He comes to dethrone Satan and all the wicked spirits that have been so long deluding mankind through witches, necromancers, medicine men, mediums of spiritism, and the oracles of paganism. Satan has been the prince of this world (age) and so selfishness, lust, strife, wickedness, superstition, and error have prevailed to ruin and deceive mankind.

What a relief it will be when Christ is King instead of Satan, when all the evil influences are restrained, when all inducements to sin are taken out of the way, when error and superstition are exposed and when evil and wickedness are quickly detected and justly punished.

Then, "when the Kingdom is the Lord's and He is Governor among the nations will the people learn righteousness" (Psalm 22:27, 28; Isaiah 26:9) .

Instead of selfishness, ambition and greed, the spirit of the new King will prevail, the spirit of love and care for one another, a spirit of brotherhood among men. No more will false teachings deceive men, for when the fiery time of trouble is over, the high-minded, the proud and hard-hearted will have been humbled and melted, and the pure teachings of God's Word, showing His great and good purpose respecting mankind, will be made known and "all with one consent will turn to the Lord" (Zeph. 3:8, 9) .

Just prior to His crucifixion our Lord had cursed the fig tree—a symbol of the curse on the Jewish nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate." In Matt. 24:32, 33, He tells us that when we see this fig tree (the Jewish nation) budding again, then know that the time is near for the accomplishment of the matter connected with the questions of verse 3, which He was answering—"When shall these things be? What shall be the sign of thy presence (Greek), and of the end of the world (Age) ? He adds that the generation living when these things are discernible will not pass away until all be fulfilled.

The Jews are to be fully restored to their own land, and will be the visible earthly representatives of the invisible heavenly kingdom of Christ. We read that the Law shall go forth out of Zion, the spiritual phase of the kingdom, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. The prophets are full of rich promises of that time of blessing when evil and wickedness will be stamped out and the way of righteousness will be made easy. The stones of temptation will be taken out of the way and there will be no lion in the path, for Satan as a roaring lion will no longer be at liberty, but is to be restrained (Isa. 35; Isa 25:6-9; Isa 62:10-12;

Micah 4:1-5).

There will be no more war, no more strife, no more the innocent suffering for the guilty, no more oppression, no more injustice. There will be full opportunity for every man and woman to do all that is right and kind and good, and “the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land,” while the proud, the arrogant and evil doer, shall be destroyed in the second death (Psa. 72).

Finally there shall be no more curse, and no more death. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21 4).

Micah 4:1-5 very beautifully describes the happy condition in the earth, when Christ is King instead of Satan, when justice and love prevail instead of hatred, jealousy, strife and iniquity. “In the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains (kingdoms—Israel will again represent God’s kingdom on earth) , it shall be exalted above the hills (lesser nations), and people shall flow unto it; and many nations shall say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths; for the law shall go forth out of Zion (Christ and the Church, the heavenly phase of the Kingdom) and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the earthly capital). And He shall judge among many people and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.”

Not only are those who are fortunate to be living at that time to enjoy this happy condition, but “all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth” (John 5:28, 29; R.V.). This is particularly promised regarding Israel in Ezekiel 37:12-14: “O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel.” Jeremiah 31 beautifully describes the joys of returning favor to Israel and the establishing with them of the New Covenant under which they, and all who will, may find Divine favor, blessing and life.

The Apostle Peter speaks of the same matter in Acts 3:20-22; “He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear (obey) in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.”

(It is expected that the above article will be printed in tract form. Friends desiring a supply are asked to state how many they could use to advantage.)

O Lord, grant unto *me* . . . such moderation in all enjoyments, such diligence in honest labour, and such purity of mind that, amidst the changes, miseries, or pleasure of life, I may keep my mind fixed upon Thee, and improve every day in grace, till I shall be received into Thy kingdom of eternal happiness.—Dr. Johnson.

The Cross is no longer a cross when there is no self to suffer under it.—Henelon.

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Inside Atoms and Stars.

The following article appeared in the Melbourne “Age” some few weeks ago, and permission has been granted for republishing in our “Peoples Paper”. It is knowledge of this nature which helps us to grasp the immensity of creation, and the wonderful fulfilling of prophecy in our day.

The core of the atom is the tiny, unseen particle called the nucleus. Its size is measured in million-millionths of an inch, and it weighs less than a million-million million-millionth of an ounce. If the whole length of the earth’s equator (25,000 miles) were taken as an inch, the biggest nucleus would still appear less than the breadth of a human hair.

Yet this insignificant mite—what the layman may well rate as one of the most absurd fantasies of science—has been the leading “villain” on the world stage since the end of World War 2.

No other scientific factor has so excited politicians, called conferences and conventions, preoccupied the United Nations and stirred up such public apprehension. For all its enriching peacetime uses, the atomic nucleus stands unrivalled as the most deadly threat to civilisation of all time.

Mushroom clouds billowing skywards over the Monte Bello and Marshall Islands are recurrent reminders that the tiny nucleus is a mighty force in human affairs. Atomic bombs draw their prodigious energy from nuclear reactions. The small war-time bomb dropped on Hiroshima was equivalent to the explosion of 20,000 tons of T.N.T. The so-called “hydrogen bomb” is rated in mega tons (millions of tons of T.N.T.)—a terrible testimony to the very practical consequence of tinkering with the inside of the atom.

But let us shift our gaze for the moment from frightening visions of destruction to the tranquil hilltop observations where astronomers have trained their telescopes on distant galaxies for rather longer than physicists have studied the nucleus. Now just what astronomy and galaxies have to do with bombs and atoms you have good cause to wonder. On the face of it, they don’t have much in common except a proclivity for excessively small numbers.

From superlatives of smallness we swing to superlatives of bigness. Here, in the realm of the galaxies, distances are measured in “light years”—the convenient yardstick for six million million miles. The giant grouping of stars which makes a galaxy such as our own Milky Way may be 60,000 light years across or even larger. Within the limits of space probed by America’s 200-inch Mount Palomar telescope there are a hundred million such galaxies; each probably numbers something like 100,000 million stars.

Now think of the energy which this represents. The sun radiates about 50 horsepower for every square inch of its enormous surface, which amounts to a grand total, if we use electrical units, of about 466,000 million million million kilowatts. These are numbers to make the senses reel. The sun pours into space every second more energy than man has used in the whole of his history. Its huge furnaces have been doing that for numberless years, yet the sun is just one of all those myriad stars. What is the source of this profligate outpouring of energy through the universe? Nothing delights the orderly mind of the scientist more than finding evidence of a unity underlying the seemingly unrelated ranks of nature. From the ultra-small of the nucleus to the ultra-large of a stropornical space involves writing a fantastic number—10 followed by 39 zeros. Yet this is the range over which studies of the nucleus have been both fruitful and important.

The main stream of astronomy met the main stream of modern physics in the 1930’s. Astronomers studying the temperatures, chemical composition and energy output of stars had made common cause

with the physicists who were steadily accumulating data on what happens when the nuclei of atoms collide. The outcome was a theory (chiefly due, by the way, to German-born Hans Bethe working in the United States) which located all the energy of the stars right in the heart of the atom.

Subsequently, by one of those strange twists to which science is vulnerable, this same theory of atoms and stars paved the way for the hydrogen bomb. Most stars, including our sun, consist chiefly of hydrogen, a fairly ordinary gas which comes, as welders know, bottled in steel cylinders. Temperature is the crux of the matter. The higher it becomes the faster hydrogen atoms move about and jostle one another. At temperatures between ten and a hundred million degrees strange things begin to happen.

Colliding at speeds of about 600 miles a second, some of the atoms stick together. What is known as a “fusion” process occurs. Leaving out all the details, the overall effect is to combine four hydrogen atoms into one helium atom. Each time this happens, energy is released instantaneously. Here is the secret of the furnaces of the stars.

However, even though this has been recognised for many years, no process known to man could generate temperatures of millions of degrees on earth—until the atom bomb came along. Explosive fissioning of uranium or plutonium (the original A-bombs) produces a central temperature exceeding ten million degrees over a volume of a few cubic yards during the instant of detonation. In short, a fission bomb can be used to trigger off a fusion explosion, and it is now common knowledge that some such device forms one stage of the H-bomb.

We have now turned a full circle—from the tiny nucleus of the atom to the giant spread of the universe and back again to man’s unhealthy co-existence with atomic weapons. The inter-relation of two sciences illustrated by the story is interesting and instructive. One can never tell where research will throw down roots for nourishment—nor yet where it will lead.

In Thy Name.

“There were only two or three of us
Who came to the place of prayer
Came in the teeth of a driving storm;
But for that we did not care,
Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
And our earnest prayers were said,.

The Master Himself was present there
And gave us the- living bread.
“We noted His look in each other’s face,
So loving, and glad, and free;
We felt His touch when our heads were bowed,
We heard His ‘Come to Me!’

Nobody saw Him lift the latch,
And none unbarred the door;
But ‘Peace’ was His token in every heart,
And how could we ask for more ?
“Each of us felt the relief from sin,
Christ’s purchase for one and all;

Each of us dropped his load of care,
And heard the heavenly call;
And over our spirits a blessed calm
Swept in from the Jasper Sea.
And strength was ours for the toil of life
In the days that were yet to be.

“It was only a handful gathered in
To that little place of prayer.
Outside were struggle and strife and sin,
But the Lord Himself was there.

He came to redeem the pledge He gave
Wherever his loved ones be,
To give His comfort and joy to them
Though they count but two or three.”
—Selected.

Unstopped Wells.

(Convention Address)

IN Genesis 26:12-25 there is an interesting account of some of Isaac's experiences. It shows the problems associated with this man of faith; how he met them, and how, with God blessing him, all annoyances and inconveniences of the flesh were overruled for his good. Isaac was a man of peace, without doubt; he preferred peace to strife, even when his was a just cause against opposition. So peace-loving was he that with superior power he accedes to a request from a weak, but vexatious opponent.

In the account are also records of Isaac's greatness and success as an agriculturist, a cattle farmer, and in addition, a leader among men. He became so prominent in his activities, God granting an abundant increase in every direction, that soon he became the object of envy. The Philistines envied him, not only for his greatness, but because of the water that issued from precious wells that his father Abraham had dug. They probably argued that to take away this source of life would cripple the object of their envy; and therein hangs a story with many implications.

It will be noticed that Abraham was primarily instrumental in opening these wells. He, too, encountered opposition because of the copious supply of water that was his, to guarantee survival in times of famine. Two periods of famine are connected with our story, the first in the days of Abraham when he moved into this section and dug the wells; the next in the day of Isaac, which drove him to the part occupied by his father. He immediately set about digging the same wells, for the Philistines had stopped them after Abraham's death, probably to discourage any would-be neighbours. Isaac set about unstopping the wells, not without opposition, but succeeded in providing for all his camp that most necessary and vital commodity—water. We appreciate water at all times, but at no time would it be more precious than in a time of drought and famine. How a parched, dry, starved land will drink in the life-giving showers.

In the two periods before us there was also another kind of famine prevailing, "not a famine of bread, nor of thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." His wells of faith and love had been stopped; so much so, that Abraham was advised to "move on". He left all his kindred and came to this Valley of Gerar where he enjoyed the Well of Faith as well as the wells of water for his camp and herds. Isaac's was a similar experience, for although the Philistines recognised in him a "man of God" and that "God was with him", they asked him to move on. Note the subtle way it was done. The herdsmen quarrelled with Isaac's servants because of the wells; they had stopped them, not having the use for additional water; and when the wells were unstopped they argued that they were theirs. What a dog-in-the-manger attitude. Fearing civil war and all its evil consequences they entreat Isaac to "move on" rather than cause the pain and suffering of war. Peaceful-like, he consented, and moved further down the valley, and then there was a repetition of the first contention. Surely there was a famine in existence besides the famine of water. Isaac moved on yet again, and this time seemed to be far enough removed from man-made boundaries that he was not troubled further.

Could we view this record of the wells and the ensuing disputes, etc., in a larger way. Let us call the three wells of water by names. They originally had names; but we'll give them modern names. Let us call No. 1 well "Faith". This well yielded precious and pure water to Abraham. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise with him; for he looked for a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith when he was tried he offered up his only son, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." How deeply he drank from this well is shown when Jesus declared that "Abraham rejoiced to see my day." And the wells of Knowledge and Love are closely related; the water is similar in many

respects—so vital to be pure, unadulterated, and when understood aright, how refreshing, invigorating, inspiring and a source of strength.

After Abraham's death the Philistines stopped these wells with stones, mud, earth and rubbish. But Isaac is not long in discovering that God's promises are all stopped except they spring from Faith, Love and True Knowledge. He immediately set about to unstop these wells—"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." The famine again strikes hard; in a godless world Isaac quickly turned to proven springs of truth. The faith of the fathers, unadulterated, determines that we also drink from waters from which faithful ones have already drunk and been satisfied.

In the re-digging and uncovering, notice particularly that two wells were the source of great strife and contention, and that the third was successfully held. These matters have larger meanings. Transfer these figures to the time when the Great Isaac came, when Jesus at His first advent unstopped the precious wells that had so long been effectually stopped. How He chided them with "taking away the key of knowledge." Instead of love He found hardness of heart; so much so, that it caused Him to weep. Faith was practically non-existent, just a mere spark among His own that He refers to them as "ye of little faith." What a task He began when these old Abrahamic wells began again to gush with precious truths. Remember the incident by the well of Samaria, when He declared to the woman, "If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And again, referring to the literal water, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." It was because Israel had forsaken the fountain of living water and hewed for themselves broken cisterns that could hold no water (Jer. 2:12) that Jesus, unstopping the pure water of truth, cried in the temple, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

In a larger and wider sense we could say, that with the coming of Jesus, and His ministry of reconciliation being preached, the wells of Faith, Knowledge and Love were truly unstopped and their precious waters began to flow to assuage the thirst of righteous seekers. "All marvelled at the gracious words that flowed from his lips," and "never man spake like this man." The greater Isaac uncovered the source and springs of truth. "In him was life, and the life was the light of man."

You remember how they contended about the water in our story? Two wells were taken away while the third remained open. Modern Philistines use more effectual material than earth, etc., to stop wells; they use stones of ignorance, mud of tradition, and the earth of superstition to quell the life-blood of the Church. Think of how the Ransom, the basic doctrine of salvation, has been beclouded with erroneous teachings. Evangelists of international fame, who command tremendous audiences, becloud the doctrine of the Ransom when they teach that Jesus was God in the flesh, or part God and part man. Along with wholesome counsel and good advice this basic doctrine of the Christian faith is adulterated, and a shadow is cast over such a plain Scriptural statement that "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (Tim. 2:5, 6).

The doctrine of the Trinity also discounts the ransom; the coming again of our Lord as a human being also discounts the ransom. The purity and harmony of the Word is destroyed as these two wells of Faith and Knowledge are stopped. Down through the age the well of Love has ever been flowing, and through its waters we taste the quality of the others that generally have ceased to flow. To illustrate: What a blessed hope for the early church was the "coming again of the Lord." His second coming was a topic on everyone's lips. Where today do you hear mention of this blessed looked-for event? The promise of His return might just as well never been given for all the notice that is taken of it. This well has been stopped; except, of course, among a very small minority, who, to avoid strife and promote peace have "moved on" down the valley—moved to "the desert" condition of Revelation. Although their supply is sparse, it is

sufficient and copious enough for their immediate requirements. While sometimes we do hear mention of the second coming of our Lord, yet this too has been diluted with the mud of human-mindedness, and intellectual giants of philosophy and theosophy claim He will come again as a man. Peter mentions how some “wrest the Scriptures,” and surely they must do this to distort such plain, undiluted truth as—”the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” And again, just before His departure, “Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more,” and from the Apostle Paul, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”

Faith, Knowledge, Love—these are wells of God-given water. They had been stopped or diluted to such an extent with mud, earth and stones that their true significance had been lost. But Jesus unstopped these wells, and while the Household of Faith remains loyal these wells will continue to discharge their nutritious and healing waters. May God open our eyes of understanding and keep them open. What sights we should behold! Let us not, as Hagar, be depressed, despondent to a degree of exhaustion, while all the time right beside us are wells of refreshing water in what to all intents is a wilderness. Think of the New Jerusalem; in that glorious and desirable city it is not only the “abominable” who are excluded, but also the “fearful” and “unbelieving.”

Some will say of all the various denominations that exist, “Ah, but there is that little golden thread running through each one.” Yes, it is true, for if there was no truth at all in these erroneous teachings they would have short lives. But the fact is that here is some truth and that is what carries it forward; however, take care, for just as it takes one small particle of corruption only to poison a volume of pure -water, and the partaker seems to become sick with the small corruption rather than being healed with the volume. To drink freely from our wells of salvation means we shall have the promise of one of the Beatitudes fulfilled in us: “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

Question Box.

Question.—Phil. 3:13, “Forgetting those things that are behind.” To what things does the Apostle refer, and why should we forget them?

Answer.—The Apostle had a very definite and clear view of the real Christian life. To him it was no mere expression, but a vital fact that he had presented himself a living sacrifice to God. All that he had, all that he had hoped for, all his ambitions, aims, objects in life, his education, social standing, business prospects, his wealth, his strength, everything was earnestly devoted to God, to be used in His service to His glory. He had indeed experienced the great change; “old things had passed away and all things had become new.” His object in life was to do, not his own will but God’s will; his prospect was no longer earthly gain, but heavenly hopes. Oh, how many things he learned to forget, to neglect, while he pressed toward the mark for the great prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus.

With this forgetting of the old things, such as advantages of birth and station in life, education and wealth, we all come unto Christ on a common level, and find a happy brotherhood irrespective of social standing. How necessary it is to keep forgetting those things that are behind; how easy it might be to long after some of the good things that were laid on the altar. Remember Lot’s wife, remember the things before us. “How vain is all beneath the skies, how transient every earthly bliss.”

Surely there are many things which ought to be forgotten, which will keep coming up. Sometimes personal injuries are apt to keep wrangling in the mind; we have forgotten that we yielded ourselves, our reputation, and our all to the Lord, and, therefore, can cast on Him our every care, all insults and injuries, and leave them at His feet—forget them. Maybe there are lessons for us in the incidents, and we should not forget these lessons. Nor does it mean that we would not remember the circumstances, but we would forget in the sense that all is past, and not a trace of ill-will or unkind thought remains.

Sometimes we may be apt to keep remembering, our own wrong doings, our sins, and become depressed. Let us remember the lessons and grow stronger from the realisation of the failure, but having come to the Lord and laid it all at the foot of the Cross, let us do like the Lord has promised to do for us for Jesus’ sake, “Cast your sins behind My back.”

Let us press forward with more determination, and look to the wonderful hope before us, “Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:1, 2). There are many things we should remember, and by exercising our memories on these lines it will not be so hard to forget things which are better forgotten. Let us remember the pit from whence we were taken, the Grace of God which stooped to lift us up and set our feet on the rock Jesus Christ. Let us remember the patient long-suffering of God towards us, as we have tried to walk the narrow way, with so many faults, weaknesses and falls. Surely His grace has abounded towards us. Let us ever remember what it cost the Father to permit His Son to die for us, and what it cost our Redeemer to pay the price of sin on our behalf.

Question.—In what way should we expect answers to our prayers, when we pray for guidance on any particular issue?

Answer.—We should remember that while we desire to be guided by God, that ours is a walk by faith and not by sight. That is that we would not expect the way always to be quite clear. It is often by perplexities that our faith is tested, and Peter reminds us that “the trial of our faith is more precious than that of gold.” If our way was so plain and clear, and God’s will for us always easily seen, the Christian way would be much easier. It is, however, by hard experiences that character is formed, and we must not forget that that

is the most important thing in life. “This one thing I do, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Evidently our Lord Jesus did not understand at the time all that the Father required of Him. Paul, too, thought he would have been better without the thorn in the flesh, but the Lord saw it better otherwise. So while we should bring everything to God in prayer, lay open our hearts and minds, our joys, our sorrows, our fears and our hopes, our responsibilities, our anxieties, in connection with loved ones, friends, homes and businesses, yet we would not come with the thought of telling the

Lord that it would be better if He would do this or permit that, or make someone else willing for this or that, but it seems that we should spread our difficulties before the Lord, and ask Him to grant us the “wisdom, which He has promised to give to them that ask Him,” and also ask Him to help us to trust and be content with the lot He has marked out for us; content to drink the cup which He has apportioned for us.

If we had not sufficient trust and submissiveness to the Divine will, we might be found praying for things which we should not, but we are sure that it is right to earnestly desire and pray for God’s holy spirit, for the wisdom from above, and for Divine guidance. The Lord taught us to pray, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. “The meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way” (Psa. 25:9); “For this God is our God for ever and for ever. He will be our guide even unto death” (Psa. 48:14).

However, God guides us to-day very differently to the way He guided Israel. Then the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, showed them when to move’ and where to go. The Lord has provided us with His Word, and given us His spirit, and He has taught us His will in righteousness; He has made us to know His purpose for us, and expects us to co-operate with Him in the attainment of the perfect character. As we gauge so much of the Divine will for us, we shall not be so anxious to escape all trouble, but rather that the trouble has its sanctifying effect in us.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

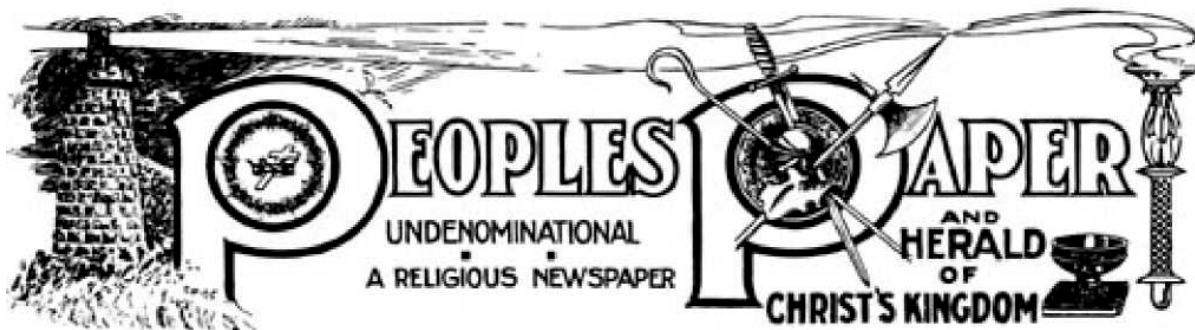
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ., 4.45 p.m.

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Events in the Holy Land Past, Present and Future.

IN all the references to events in the Holy Land, it should be understood that we are thinking not only of the locality known as Israel or Palestine, but have in mind the larger area, also, which at the present time surrounds Palestine, and which we believe in the future will certainly be incorporated in the State of Israel, as the Central State, so to speak, of the Kingdom of God on earth.

The first important event in the Holy Land, so far as humanity is concerned, was the creation of our first parents in the perfect conditions of the Garden of Eden. That God chose that locality on the earth's surface, at once impresses all thoughtful students of His Word that it must have been the most suitable for the purpose of commencing the habitation of this world. It has been suggested that Palestine and surrounding country is about the geographical centre of the earth's surface, and not only was it appropriate for our first parents to be established there in the first place, but also that same locality will be the most appropriate world centre from which "the word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem," in the glorious earthly Kingdom to come. (Micah 4:2).

Be that as it may, the fact is that Adam and Eve were created and dwelt in that perfect garden paradise while they were obedient to their loving Creator. But disobedience came in, as is well known, and we read in Genesis 3:23, 24—"Therefore the Lord God sent him (Adam) forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

While we cannot be sure of the exact location of the Garden of Eden, it is interesting to note that Adam and Eve were driven out eastward in the direction of Babylonia, Persia, and further off, India. This is of interest, because after the recording of the families of Noah, in Genesis 10, following the Flood in Noah's day, we read in Gen. 11:2—"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east (rather eastward—margin), that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there." Shinar, we are told, was a province in Babylonia and thought by some writers to be the plain between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and afterwards called Mesopotamia.

Reading on in Genesis 11, we are informed about the building of the Tower of Babel, and how the Lord put a stop to that building by confounding their language, and we read in verse 11—"From thence did the

Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.” In the following verses[^] of this chapter we find the generations of Shem listed, until we come to Terah, the father of Abram, and we read in verse 31—”And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.”

It has been suggested that Ur of the Chaldees was as far off as India. Terah, Abram’s father, apparently moved by some good impulse, took Abram and other family members in the direction of the land of Canaan, to Haran; Terah died and then in chapter 12 of Genesis we find a direct call from the Lord to Abram, as follows—”Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation . . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Surely this was a very important event in the Holy Land, and we have Stephen’s record in the New Testament giving further testimony. (See Acts 7:2-4; also Joshua 24:1-3.)

To demonstrate that it was a voluntary act on the part of Abraham (God changing his name from Abram—Gen. 17:5), we have Paul’s words in Hebrews 11:15—”If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.” Yes, God leaves His servants a free will in all their service and devotion to Him. “If they had been mindful” —if they looked back longingly for the life that was past they could easily have returned to it, and the Lord would have found others to serve His plans and purposes, and receive His blessing in their hearts.

We remember on one occasion in the ministry of Jesus after He had been speaking of the deep truths necessary for His true followers to understand, it is recorded—”From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?” Had they been mindful, they also may have gone away, and forsaken the Lord and His cause! But how grandly and encouragingly did Peter respond—”Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” (John 6:66-69.) So, with all the Lord’s people; they have a free will, and if they are mindful of the former, worldly life, they have the opportunity to return, if they do not value the privilege of service in the steps of Christ.

As with Abram the call or invitation was—”Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee,”—so, the invitation to the Lord’s people of the Gospel Age to walk in the Christian way is beautifully presented by the Psalmist—”Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.” (Psa. 45:10,11.) “Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house”—Adam’s house, the world in general; human hopes, aims and ambitions.

In Abraham’s case, how beautifully he responded to the call of the Lord; what an example of faith, trust and confidence in God we have in his readiness to offer his son Isaac on the altar of sacrifice, as shown by Paul in Heb. 11:17-19. The outcome was the wonderful covenant promise of God recorded in Gen. 22:15-18,—”And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son. That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

A further detailed outline of events in the Holy Land from Abraham’s time to his own day is given by Joshua, the faithful leader of Israel into Canaan, and this is most informative. (See Joshua 24:2-25.) Again, from the Apostle Paul, we have a brief review of events from the time of Israel’s deliverance from

Egypt to our Lord's first advent, in Acts 13:16-24. Referring to David and the Lord's declaration that he was a man after His own heart, we read in verse 23 of this 13th chapter of Acts—"Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." And what an event in the Holy Land was the coming of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the world! How fitting also, that the Redeemer should come, and pay the sacrifice for the sins of the world of mankind in the very place where disobedience brought condemnation upon all.

We call to mind also, that as Israel was God's chosen nation, the Messiah was sent first of all to that people, as we read from the Apostle John—"He came unto his own, and his own received him not (as a nation); but as many as received him, to them gave he power (privilege) to become the sons of God." (John 1:11, 12.) So, not only were the first human beings created in the Holy Land, but also the first members for the heavenly New Creation, Christ, Himself, of course, being the first and foremost One of these first-fruits unto God of His creatures.

How wonderfully Jesus encouraged and taught His devoted little band as He walked the roads and dwelt in the towns of Palestine—to think that the Lord of Glory spent 34 years sojourning in that dusty land, calling, teaching, blessing and comforting His people for the heavenly kingdom, surely fills us with admiration and thankfulness beyond description. As Paul declared—"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) We think also of the loving words of comfort and cheer the Lord gave to His little band of followers in Jerusalem, just previous to His death. (See John 14:1-3, 27; also John 16:7, 20, 22, 26, 27, 32, 33.)

Then, of course, Jesus had to declare some sad things respecting Israel, and prophesy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, when, with the rejection of Himself, He declared—"Your house is left unto you desolate." (See Luke 19:41-44, and Luke 21:23, 24.) "They shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Students of history well know that the Jewish people have been scattered throughout all nations since about A.D.70, and Jerusalem was truly "trodden down" of the Gentiles until the ending of "Gentile times"-1914-1918. The Apostle Paul also made mention in his day of the making desolate of the Jewish nation, when he commended the Thessalonian brethren for their faithfulness under persecution, just as the Jewish Christians had to endure similarly from their own Jewish people. (See 1 Thes. 2:14-16.)

In the closing days of the Apostles' lives the witness of the gospel passed from Palestine to Asia Minor, and gradually, during the Gospel Age, extended from country to country throughout Europe, Britain, America, etc., and Palestine was truly left desolate, literally and spiritually. Truly did Paul declare in Romans 11:25—"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." That is, until the Bride of Christ is complete, and the members gathered into the heavenly kingdom.

Then, as the end of the Gospel Age approached, and the last members of the "fulness of the Gentiles" were being found in every nation, kindred and tongue, with Israel still blind in part—blind to the fact that Jesus was their Messiah—a wonderful event took place in the Holy Land as a result of the 1914-18 war. Jerusalem was delivered from the domination of the Turks! Truly this was a fulfilment of prophecy in a remarkable manner! The following quotation from the booklet, "Zionism in Prophecy" is of special interest in this respect:-

"When Jerusalem was captured from the Turks in 1917, not merely Jewry but the whole wide world thrilled to the news of the event. Everybody seemed to sense that here was some unusual history in the making—as if some strange spiritual current had sent a wave of wonder around the entire earth. Even the British troops themselves were peculiarly affected as on no other battlefield, said Sir Arthur Wingate; all being eager for information as to the history of each town or hill as it was taken. And so keenly interested

was the reading public the world over, concerning this sector of the Allied campaign, that the army of newspaper correspondents were kept busy for days thumbing through Bibles, fitting Old Testament records to current events, and cabling column after column of dispatches filled with narrations of things that occurred on this same battlefield far back in the great days of the Jewish kingdom.

“If the capture of Jerusalem thus excited the attention of all Gentile people throughout the earth, how indeed must it have thrilled every Jew—especially he who is filled with a traditional passion for the land of his fathers, so great that he instinctively turns his face toward Jerusalem when he prays; who buries his dead facing east; and who purposely leaves partly unfinished every house that he builds for his dwelling, as mute testimony to the fact that he is but a sojourner, a wanderer, a pilgrim in a strange land not his own.

“How Jerusalem was taken on December 9, 1917, without bombs or gunfire, seems nothing short of a divine miracle. Jerusalem is almost impregnable as a natural fortress or stronghold. The Turkish army could have held out for quite a long time, inflicting many casualties upon the allies. In the end, the city might have been destroyed, even as it was laid low by Nebuchadnezzar at the beginning of the ‘seven times’, and by Titus following our Lord’s first advent. But the time had come for God to deal ‘comfortably’ with Jerusalem; for ‘her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.’ (Isa. 40:1, 2.) Hence, in divine providence, not only was the city spared from destruction, but it was actually taken without a single shot being fired, though it was being held by fierce and modernly equipped Turkish troops.

“It was not until after the armistice that the full story behind Jerusalem’s easy capture came to light. As General Allenby approached with his army, he wondered how he could best take the city without too much damage. He had no desire to destroy it, and in fact abhorred the thought of devastation and bloodshed within its sacred walls. But war is war, and he had a duty to perform. While he was thus trying to formulate plans for capturing yet sparing the city, an enemy runner reached his Turkish commandant, and reported that a strong army was approaching, led by a powerful general named Allah-Bey (Allenby). The news quickly spread among the superstitious Moslem troops, and the magic name Allenby was understood by all of them to be AllahBey—which meant, ‘The Prophet of Allah’. Terrified by what to them was a sacred name, they refused to fight against a ‘prophet of Allah’, fearing Allah’s displeasure; and the commandant finally gave orders to hastily evacuate the holy city ere ‘Allah-Bey’ arrived.”

What amazing progress has taken place in the Holy Land since 1917. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have returned to the Promised Land, and Israel has become a State with its own President, and Parliament, as yet manmade, but all in fulfilment of prophecies of long ago, as well as fulfilling the words of Christ and the Apostles. (See Matt. 24:32, 33; Luke 21:29-31.) The words also of the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:25-32 are most revealing. After describing the condition of Israel during the Gospel Age when the number of the Church of Christ are “come in” from the Gentiles, and with “Jacob’s trouble” at the end of this age all passed, the Apostle declares—“And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion (the spiritual phase of the kingdom) the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins, etc.”

The new covenant which the Lord will then make with Israel and through which His blessings will flow out to them when the Kingdom of Christ is operating, is clearly shown by the prophet Jeremiah 31:31-34. What a wonderful time it will be for Israel, and through Israel for “all the families of the earth” when “all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest,” and have opportunity of gaining lasting life by obedience to the laws of Christ’s kingdom. (See also Acts 15:14-18; compare with Amos 9:11-15.)

How wonderfully also have the prophet’s words been fulfilled respecting the methods used to encourage the return of the Israelites to the Holy Land since 1917. We read—“Therefore, behold, the days come,

saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them;

and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain (kingdom) and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.” (Jer. 16:14-16.)

There can be no doubt that the “fishing” and “hunting” experiences upon the Jewish people have been going on for many years, with the results that would have been thought impossible forty years ago. Of course there are yet further extreme difficulties through which Israel must pass, as revealed in Jeremiah 30:3-7—”Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Yes, and the Lord speaks with comfort and assurance to Israel in verses 10 and 11 of this chapter 30 of Jeremiah—”Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel; for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”

The reference in this wonderful prophecy from Jeremiah that “Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and none shall make him afraid,” is one of many assurances of the resurrection of all the ancient worthies of Israel, and indeed, of all mankind, as “all that are in the graves shall hear his (Christ’s) voice, and shall come forth.” (John 5:28.) Truly, what a wonderful future is in store for Israel, as revealed again from the prophet Ezekiel—”Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.” (Ezek. 37:12-14.)

From the prophet Hosea we have additional encouraging words, revealing the response of Israel to all their past experiences and their hope for the future as they obey the Lord in spirit and in truth—”Come, let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days (after the 5th and 6th 1000 year days of the Gospel Age) will he revive us; in the third day (the 7th 1000 year day of Christ’s Kingdom) he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” (Hosea 6:1-3.) (See also Micah 4:1-4; Isa. 25:6-9; Isa. 35.)

Who of the Lord’s people today cannot rejoice as they see the fulfilment of prophecies relating to Israel, and which give confirmation that all that has been spoken by the mouth of all God’s prophets shall be accomplished in the Lord’s good time and way. The time is surely at hand for further startling events in the Holy Land, and all who have their hopes set on things above will delight also in every evidence of the near approach of the earthly kingdom, which shall prove to be “the desire of all nations.” (Haggai 2:6, 7.)

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Diversity Amongst God's People.

“Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?”-1 Cor 4:7.

WHILE it is true that all men are born with inalienable rights and privileges, yet no man is born without sin. The Scriptures very properly declare that the race in Adam was sold under sin six thousand years ago. In this sense, then, we are not born free, but slaves of sin. Neither are we born equal. No two persons are exactly alike in opportunity, talent and ability. We differ from one another. God did not create some better and some worse—some more richly endowed and some less richly endowed.

We are to take the Bible statement of the origin of humanity, and understand that God made Adam perfect. All the imperfections which encumber the human race are the results of the dying process. Sin has made us all to differ, then, from the original image and likeness of God. Satan brought that difference through Mother Eve.

In our text, however, the Apostle Paul has in mind a New Creation in Jesus Christ—a new order—amongst whose members there is a difference. Some in the Church have many talents, others have few talents; some have special talents, others ordinary talents. The Apostle says that it is God who has set the various members in the Body as it has pleased Him; and that both this setting, or apportioning, of the different members of the Body and the bringing forth of the different degrees of fruitage are manifestations of God's grace in our hearts. Thus we are made to differ from each other.

The matter of growth in the holy spirit is one that is dependent in large measure upon each one's zeal to know, to do the will of God. We are put into the school of Christ to learn of Him. Some learn more rapidly, others less rapidly. In proportion as they learn they have greater opportunities and blessings. All are granted a measure of the holy spirit—all granted some blessing. Those who are anxious to know the will of the Lord and to study it grow the more rapidly, and thus have more of the holy spirit. These are zealous to do the Lord's will; their progress is not attributable wholly to themselves, but especially to the favour of God.

The Apostle goes on to say, “Ye are God's workmanship. It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” We could not do this work ourselves. The power that is working in us is of God. He is preparing a glorious Temple. He has provided who shall be the chief corner-stone of this Temple, and who shall be the members of this Temple class. We could not choose the place for ourselves, but in God's providence we each responded to the call to be a living stone. The stones were first cut out of the dark quarry, and now are being shaped and prepared for places in the glorious building.

The great Master-Workman is doing a work upon us; He is chiselling and fashioning us; He is making us what we are. Consequently, there is to be no boasting. There is a certain amount of personality connected with each one, however, and if there is too much cross-grain in the stone it will be abandoned. As the Apostle Peter exhorts, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time. The same Apostle also reminds us that we should look up to God and give Him praise for all that we have and are.-1 Pet. 5:6; 4:11.

We are co-labourers with God. We give God the praise that He has made us to differ from our former selves; that He is making us thus to differ more every day, and that He will continue the good work as the days go by and as we seek to do His will. What have we of ourselves? Nothing! We were wholly dead through Adam's disobedience; we were born in this condition, having no right to everlasting life. But God has a plan which is world-wide in its scheme of blessing. He has offered the blessings of the highest feature of this Plan to us, and invited us to come to Him in advance of the world; and this we receive

through His grace.

Tracts Available.

The article—"When Christ is King"—which appeared in August "Peoples Paper" is expected to be available in tract form shortly. Friends who can use these tracts to advantage are invited to procure a supply without delay.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 25/- post paid.

The Tabernacle which the Lord Pitched.

(Convention Address)

AS we contemplate the doings of God's people, Israel, both in The individual experiences of men like Jacob and others, and in the experiences of the people collectively as they journeyed through the wilderness, we find innumerable lessons of helpfulness. Time and again as they are brought to our mind in God's Word, certain incidents serve as a strengthening and refreshing influence.

"Search we may for many years, Still some new, rich gem appears."

How wise indeed has been our God in so ordering and overruling the affairs of this people, Israel, that His spiritual, antitypical Israel should be so warned, admonished, exhorted and strengthened all down through the age to this day.

While we would question the manner in which some earnest, but sometimes misinformed folk confront men in meeting halls, and even in the street with the question, Are you saved ? we would acknowledge that it is the question of greatest moment to every man's real welfare.

Man has fallen; he is a sinner and is condemned to death—extinction of life. The man is never found who will dispute the fact that death is universal; it comes to all, and none expect to escape it. But if there is a way to be saved out of it, who will be foolish enough to ignore it. The majority of men today remain unconvinced that there is any hope of escape; to them death ends all. But if a glimmer of hope appears, wise indeed is the man who takes his stand alongside Paul's jailer and asks, What must I do to be saved? The answer today is just as simple as was Paul's—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30, 31)—and as uncompromising as was Peter's—"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Adam, as the leader into transgression, was the first one to feel the bands of death taking hold. It must have been a frightening experience for one who, up to that time, had not even to think of death, for he had dwelt in the security of eternal life as he lived in obedience. Adam would be quick to sense the change that had come, and we can assume that he would immediately reflect as to how the damage could be repaired, and he be restored to harmony again with his Creator. Of course it was too late, and he and all mankind were compelled to taste the transgression to the full.

One has commented that Adam instinctively would know the principle of justice and that sacrifice would be needed for redemption and atonement. Genesis 3:21 could have intimated it to him; previously, (verse 7) Adam and Eve had attempted to provide a covering for themselves, apparently unsuccessfully. The animals that were slain to provide the skins for a covering for them would in all probability be the first of

God's creation to be slaughtered and suffer death. The verse is brief and the very omissions are significant.

Adam, a wonderful being physically, mentally and morally, far superior to all other earthly creation, had under his dominion the lower animals; he called them all by name, implying that they responded to his will and word. In the perfections of paradise Adam would love them and they him. What a sacrifice must have been involved in the necessity that had arisen for taking their lives, all because of Adam's transgression.

We have witnessed the grief of children who have lost in death a little dog, cat, bird or other pet animal that had become endeared to them as a companion. Well, Adam's grief must have been accentuated greatly as the blood of these, his faithful companions, was shed. A little later Adam was to witness the actual death of one of his sons, as the result of murder at the hands of another son. Truly the draught has been a bitter one that he, and all his posterity have had to drink because of disobedience to the Creator.

Time went by, and in a tabernacle in the wilderness (a temporary building erected by man's hands under God's direction) was shown forth in type and ritual the method by which God would accept offerings for sacrifice to temporally offset the results of sin. While this arrangement by God for the shedding of the blood of animals in sacrifice continued as a typical covering for sin, it never removed the condemnation, and fresh offerings had to be made from year to year. All this pointed forth to the great antitypical sacrifices which would forever release Adam and his progeny from the thralldom of sin and death, and restore the harmony and perfection Adam had enjoyed before, and had craved again ever since his fall.

What a happy day it will be for Adam when he finds himself restored to the harmony, perfection and glory of paradise again. What lessons he will have learned, and what adoration he will have for God who provided the substitute, and for the Redeemer who made the sacrifice to make it all possible. With what profound interest he and his posterity will follow the story of history, as they trace it through the arrangements of a tabernacle set up in a wilderness, and discern blossoming out from that, the real sacrifice enacted in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.

It is not possible to attempt to trace every feature of the tabernacle in the wilderness that had bearing on the great sacrifice made for sins by our dear Redeemer. The ceremonial sacrifices, seen and carried out in the tabernacle, were the pictures or "shadows" of the real sacrifices that took place in the true tabernacle without ocular demonstration to men.

The words of another serve here, and we quote—"When He (Christ) came, He undertook to carry out the provisions of the Law, not to offer the blood of animals, but to offer Himself. That is why when He came into the world He said, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, but a body hast Thou prepared for me. In whole burnt offerings Thou hast taken no pleasure. Then I said, I have come; in the roll of the book it is written of me, to do Thy will, O God.' (Heb. 10:8, 9) . . . Consider the nature of His humility and sacrifice. It was not necessary for Him to offer anything for Himself, for He was the perfect Son of God . . . All the circumstances of His life were ordained by God and any resistance thereto would have constituted sin. He said, 'The cup which my Father hath poured out, shall I not drink it'? It left no room for the exercise of his own will; therein lay the completeness of His sacrifice . . . Unlike the offerings of Israel, His were done in the heart, in the spirit, and could be seen only with the eye of faith. He did not enter a visible tabernacle, but the one the Lord pitched—the Divine purpose itself. (Heb. 9:11, 12) . He humbled Himself even to death on the cross and the Father who seeth in secret' understood and approved—it ascended to Him as a sweet smelling savor and His approval was demonstrated by raising Christ from the dead . . . Thus, by His sacrificial life He went to the Father and asked' for the redemption of His people. He broke down the barrier of sin so that thereafter they could go to the Father clothed in His righteousness. God's justice was satisfied and there was no further need to offer tokens."

The point desired to be especially impressed from this quotation is the secretiveness of our Lord's sacrifice within the true tabernacle. The deepest sufferings of our Lord were within. A few only of our Saviour's sufferings throughout the 3 years of His consecrated life are recorded in Holy Writ; innumerable others were not mentioned. It would seem that His mental agonies on the cross were more keenly felt than even the physical. What must He have endured when one of His own chosen disciples turned against Him and betrayed Him. The incident of Matt. 12:46-50 might well contain more than we think. Jesus' tender love for His mother could well have caused severe tugs at His heart strings, as He quietly demonstrated that His Father's business must come first just then, and did not allow Him at the time even to enquire the nature of their request; as also the incident of Jesus discerning His mother in the crowd as He was about to die, and His commending of her to John's care. The half has never been told of the mental anguish that our Master must have endured.

The disciples of Jesus are said to "fill up that which is behind" of Christ's afflictions in „their earthly experiences, and in these they need the assistance of their High Priest who ministers to them in the true tabernacle. Many are the proofs that the Apostles endured such experiences, and every one of God's true people down the age have had, or are having them. Despite the fact that Paul, like his leader and Lord, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, he was ever rejoicing (calmly happy) in the Lord, so that he could say, "I would to God that all that hear me this day were both altogether such as I am . . . except these bonds". (Acts 26:29) . The "bonds" were very real and he felt them keenly, and he could not find it in his heart to wish that others should have them; but he knew, nevertheless, that all who took their stand beside the same Lord would have "bonds" of some kind, so he admonishes in other places to regard them as but light in comparison with the glory to be theirs later on.

With Paul it was often prison thongs that fettered him, but though our "bonds" be not so, they can be just as real. Opposition of wife or husband, son or daughter, mother or father, or any other in a home, employer or employee at work, or any such like, can be a severe and continual "bond" keenly felt and giving rise to innumerable incidents that cause extreme mental anguish and suffering. But, dear friends, we are in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, or has prepared, and every incident is witnessed by Him—every hidden sorrow of heart is known to Him. True, the world may know little of our real anguish, and even the brethren be scantily apprised of it, but the Lord knows it all. He who "seest in secret" understands and approves, and it ascends to Him as a sweet smelling savor; and in due time His approval will be openly demonstrated as He raises us in resurrection to participate in our Lord's glory.

Sometimes I almost wonder if my Lord doth know
About the many little things that wound my poor heart so;
I can but wonder if He knows the anguish of my soul

When tempests beat upon my head, and surging billows roll.
Ah; No I do not wonder; I am sure my Lord doth know
About the many, many things that wound my poor heart so.

We may even, at times, when assisting others to a knowledge of God's truth, become apprehensive for fear that one may also receive our "bond". Every Christian may feel like Paul, and could say, My friend, I wish you most earnestly the truth that I enjoy, but not my bond. But we should not falter, for though every Christian will have their bonds, they will also receive the same consolatory joys that has enabled every Christian to continue in the way rejoicing.

Some of you may even have read a letter of recent time, telling of a Brother who had long time diligently searched the truth while still connected to his denomination of the nominal church. Just occasionally he would meet with a little group of Bible Students who did what they could to assist him. At last convinced,

he knew he must take his stand.

He had not pursued his studies secretly from his wife, and she knew something of his struggles to get things straight. Now, in his decision, he was open too, and frankly confessed that he was through with his previous connections, and in future intended only to meet with the little band of Bible Students. His wife replied in the words of Ruth to Naomi in Ruth 1:16—"Whither thou goest I will go." How lovely! That dear Brother and Sister would receive their "bonds" also, we know; but He who (symbolically speaking) walks amid the golden candlesticks of His sanctuary has a faithful oversight of each individual member, and what wonderful things He has in store for each one that "overcometh".

O sacred union with the Perfect Mind!
Transcendent bliss, which Thou alone canst give,
How blest are they this Pearl of price who find,
And, dead to earth, have learned in Thee to live.

And thus, while dead to human hopes I lie,
Lost, and forever lost, to all but Thee,
My happy soul, since it has learned to die,
Has found new life in Thine infinity.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,
And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;
And counting present life and all things loss,
We find in death to self the life of God.

Yes, the life that is ministered to us by our great High Priest, the minister of the sanctuary—all hidden within the true tabernacle.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention is to be held this year over the four days at the Christmas period D.V., in Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. The exact dates for the gatherings will be announced in later issues of "Peoples Paper". This early notification is for the benefit of brethren at a distance who may be assisted in their arrangements by knowing of the gatherings at this time. All able to attend this Convention are cordially invited to be present.

To Be Thine.

“Oh, to be clean, to be pure, to be true!
Cost what it may, to be Thine through and through;
Purged from the promptings of evil within,
Freed by Thy grace from the thralldom of sin!

“Oh, to be simple to that which is ill,
Wise with a wisdom alert to Thy will;
Earnest of purpose and single of eye,
Eager to live and unfearing to die!

“Oh, to be fair, to be just, to be kind,
Sober in spirit, and humble in mind;
Patient, unselfish, regardful of all,
Thinking no evil, though evil befall!

“Oh, to be fervent, unceasing in prayer,
Watching thereunto Thy praise to declare!
Living or dying, this blessing be mine—
Always, in all things, to wholly be Thine!”

—Selected.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”--Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 57/6.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.
Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.
Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.
Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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Reincarnation Versus Resurrection.

“Thou turnest man to destruction; and satest, Return, ye children of men.”—Psalm 90:3.

THREE-fourths of the earth's population believe that the dead are reborn to life on earth, either as human beings or in the form of one or another of the lower animals. The theory of rebirth as humans is known as reincarnation, while the teaching that humans return in the form of one or another of the lower animals is designated transmigration. Belief in reincarnation and in transmigration was, until quite recently, confined largely to non-Christian lands, practically all heathen religionists adhering to either one or the other of these theories.

Now, however, the reincarnation doctrine is rapidly gaining adherents among professed Christians. Thousands are openly confessing it, while probably millions in non-heathen countries are uncertain about it, due largely to the upsurge of interest created by the practice of hypnotists, who claim that under hypnotic spells many persons have remembered one or more of their former lives as humans, and have presented many details concerning them.

What amounts to a wave of popular interest in this subject has been created by the book entitled, “The Search for Bridey Murphy.” According to the story, Bridey Murphy is a woman who died in Ireland about the middle of the nineteenth century, and has been born again, and is now Ruth Simmons, and lives in the United States, but in her “subconscious” mind she is actually Bridey Murphy, passing through another earth-life cycle.

What seems to be convincing proofs are offered to support the claim that the dead do return to earth by means of rebirth. In the case of Bridey Murphy, for example, it is claimed that much which Ruth Simmons related concerning this person who died in Ireland so long ago has been checked and found true—although there are also a number of discrepancies. These partial “proofs” seem very convincing to many, while others have explanations to offer as to how, under a hypnotic spell, she could describe so many things associated with the life of the former Bridey Murphy. Others claim that it is a farce.

Obviously, hypnotism is a practice which very readily lends itself to trickery. It is but natural to ask how much collusion is there between the hypnotist and the subject? How much of that which is described under a hypnotic spell actually entered the subject's mind during the present life-time? It is now claimed by researchers that Ruth Simmons had Irish relatives. Through family folklore or otherwise, these could have known much about Bridey Murphy, if such a person had ever lived, and could have related many

interesting stories concerning her to Ruth Simmons.

Research along these lines finds explanations for much that might seem supernatural. The same is true with respect to the work of spiritualists, who claim, not that the spirits of the dead are reborn as humans, but that they are able to contact and to converse with them. This also is accomplished by a form of hypnotism, the main difference being that the spiritualistic practitioner hypnotises himself instead of the subject who wishes to make contact with a dead friend. Here, also, there is much room for fraud. Houdini, the late world-famous magician, claimed he could duplicate any and all evidences of talking with the dead that spiritualists could produce, thus proving, as he believed, that there is nothing at all supernatural about spiritualism.

However, while we do not doubt that there is much quackery connected with both hypnotism and spiritualism, it cannot all be explained from this standpoint. There are definite evidences of the supernatural in connection with both of these practices. But in neither case are these practitioners aware of the powers with which they are dealing. If they were, they would be horror stricken, and so frightened that they would give up their practices at once.

Hypnotism Wrong

In the first place, the basic principle of hypnotism is contrary to normal human experience, and is therefore wrong. The misuse of any normal function of the human body is wrong? and this is especially true of the mind. Man was created in the image of God and given the ability to think, to reason, to know right from wrong. God invites humans to reason with Him, saying, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.”—Isa. 1:18.

But the subject who gives over his mind to a hypnotist, and allows himself to be “put under,” surrenders his God-given ability to reason. The normal manner in which thoughts are registered upon the brain is through the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. All the nerves and cells of the body, including those of the brain, were created and correlated by the master mind of the Creator to build up a thought bank which, as it develops and expands through the years from infancy on, constitutes the mental background of one’s personality.

To surrender control of this mind, even temporarily, is to discount the value of all that our five senses have taught us through the years of life. It is though an electronic engineer had designed and constructed an extremely complicated and sensitive apparatus—such as electronic computers are today—and, after it was built and functioning satisfactorily, decided he could learn more about electronics by simply short-circuiting his machine and destroying all the functions which he had so carefully designed.

To use this figure of speech, a hypnotist “short-circuits” the brain of his subject, at least to the extent of temporarily destroying its normal function. Then, in an abnormal manner, and contrary to the way God designed, he endeavours to plant new thoughts in the subject’s brain, or else to extract thoughts therefrom which cannot be expressed while the brain is functioning normally. Reason alone tells us that this is malpractice. It is an abuse of the brain, man’s most priceless possession and it is just as wrong, if not more so, than the abuse of any other organ of the body.

Thousands of hypnotists are practising every day, and occasionally one of them produces a remarkable development, such as the Bridey Murphy case. And while there is a natural explanation for much which the hypnotists accomplish, this is not always the case. The only satisfactory explanation of much which they report is the one given in the Bible, which is that the mind of the subject, rendered inactive and passive, succumbs to the control of outside powers.

These outside powers are not, however, the “spirits” of the departed dead, as the spiritualists claim. Nor are they the thought waves, or impressions, of a former existence expressing themselves through what, in these days, is so popularly called the “subconscious mind.” How do we know this? Simply because the straightforward testimony of the Bible is that the dead are dead. They cannot return via the reincarnation route, neither can they speak to those who are left behind, either through a spiritualist, or otherwise.

But Satan told mother Eve she would not die, and one of his great endeavours ever since has been to prove that “there is no death.” Spiritualism and reincarnation are but a part of his “bag of tricks” for use in accomplishing this purpose. Satan has allies in this work of deception. The Bible reveals that in the great creative works of God there is a plane of life higher than the human—many planes, in fact. Man, we are told, was “made a little lower than the angels.”—Heb. 2:7.

Much is said in the Bible about the angels. They are not, however, the spirits of the departed dead as many suppose them to be, but the messengers, or servants, of the Creator on a plane of spirit existence invisible to man. The Bible reveals that at the time of the Flood many of these angels—the record does not indicate how many—turned from obedience to God and allied themselves with Satan, the Devil. Thus Jesus spoke of “the Devil and his angels.”—Matt. 25:41.

They are referred to in Genesis 6:1, 2 as the “sons of God,” and their sin described. Jude refers to them as the “angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation.” (Verse 6.) Jude also explains that these fallen angels are now restrained “under darkness”—prevented, that is, from working openly, as they did when they were in the service of God. Peter refers to them as being restrained in “chains of darkness.” He also speaks of these fallen angels as “spirits in prison,” and explains that their disobedience occurred “when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.”—2 Pet. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:19, 20.

At the time of Jesus’ first advent, these fallen angels, or devils—also called demons—were very active invading and taking possession of human minds. Many of Jesus’ miracles consisted of casting out these demons, or devils. Evidently then, as now, there were those who yielded their minds to occult influences, and these fallen angels were quick to take control.

It is quite possible that today some of the increasing number of insanity cases could be accounted for in this way.

But it seems that now the master mind of Satan has devised a better, more subtle and refined way to take possession of human minds by the aid of these fallen angels. His main purpose in doing it is to “prove” that his first great lie was really the truth, that no one really dies.

Unlike man, these disobedient angels were not at once sentenced to death. As the Scriptures indicate, they have been permitted to continue to live, even though under restraint. Having had a continued existence throughout the centuries, they would be acquainted with the “case history” of any individual they might choose. They could easily know much that Bridey Murphy did, or even thought.

So, when Ruth Simmons surrendered control of her mind to the hypnotist, the fallen angels could take possession and cause her to repeat—as it is claimed she did—many of the details in the life of the former Bridey Murphy. When those details are checked, and found to be true insofar as the names of places and people are concerned, the conclusion is at once reached that Bridey Murphy did not actually die, that while her body died, her real personality continued to live, and has now been reborn in the body of Ruth Simmons.

The same is true in the case of those who think they have conversed with friends who have died. The information received from such messages is so true to facts known only to the one receiving the message

and the one who died, that the conclusion is readily reached that the dead must be able to talk with the living. Little do the bereaved ones receiving these messages realise that the information, which to them proves that their beloved dead are not really dead at all, has been secured right from their own minds by the fallen angels. Our minds have recorded in them even the tone of voice of others. We answer a telephone, and if it is an acquaintance calling, we do not have to ask, "Who is speaking." We instantly recognise the voice. The fallen angels are able to tap the minds of their victims, and reproduce voice and other characteristics which, to the unsuspecting, prove that the dead are not really dead, but are alive, and able to converse with their friends.

And this, even as with the claimed proofs of reincarnation, is the real purpose behind these satanic practices. The Devil said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die," and throughout all the centuries since he has been using many fraudulent and "cunning devices" in his effort to prove that it was God who lied when He said, "Thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 3:4; 2:17.) Therefore, let us not be surprised if now, in the close of the age, Satan's efforts along this line become more widespread, and receive a more popular acceptance.

That "Subconscious Mind"

Hypnotists, psychiatrists, and others, have much to say about the subconscious mind. No one knows that there is such a thing as a subconscious mind until it is probed into by a psychiatrist, or made to reveal its secrets by a hypnotist. A newborn infant has no mind at all. It has a complete little brain structure, but not a single thought is registered therein. Soon, however, through sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch, impressions begin to be conveyed to that little brain, through the delicate and marvellously constructed nerve system which connects the brain with the body's "microphones"—its ears, eyes, tongue, etc.

The little brain is at first too tender to retain for long the impressions which are made upon it, so that few can remember, or "play back" thoughts that were registered during the first two or three years of life. But from then on, the impressions begin to remain. From about ten years old and onward, very little that has made an impression is actually "forgotten." A person cannot instantly recall everything that is registered in his brain, but some circumstances or other will "bring to mind" from time to time thoughts of the past which an individual did not realise were in his mind at all until the "play back needle" of circumstance entered that particular groove.

As a rule, when one passes "middle age" new thoughts are not so readily retained. Things which happened years previously are remembered, but those of yesterday often are forgotten. This is simply due to the ageing brain being no longer so readily susceptible to new thought impressions. It is a physical change, even as graying hair.

What, then, is the "subconscious mind"? Hypnotists practise what they call "age regression," meaning that under a hypnotic spell they induce their subjects to reveal their otherwise forgotten thoughts of previous years, taking them back in many cases, as they claim, to a very tender age. But what can they learn from this except the immature thoughts of a mere infant or, a little better, an adolescent mind?

We grant the possibility that some unhappy experience of the past may have a bearing on present thinking, and perhaps without the individual realising it. Probably through proper explanation and advice a person might be helped over the difficulties in life that to some extent arise out of past experiences. But the subconscious mind usually referred to by mind healers of various sorts means much more than this. The implication of this 'expression usually is that the thing which really controls an individual is a mysterious something which can be discovered only by those who use one method or, another to probe below the surface of normal thinking.

Actually, and normally, there is not a single thought recorded in the human brain except through the five

senses. Why, then, all the talk about the “subconscious” ? We think the answer to this question is contained in the last paragraph of the book, “The Search for Bridey Murphy.” In addition to the Bridey Murphy case itself, Morey Bernstein discusses at length various aspects of so-called newly discovered powers of the mind, which, as he forecasts, will shortly revolutionise life on the earth. Summing it up he says:

“There is no telling how far . . . research will lead us. The proof that there is something extraphysical, or spiritual, in human personality has momentous implications. Eventually the laboratory will answer even that all time prize winner among questions: Does any part of a human being survive the death of the physical body. Already research in extrasensory perception (through hypnotism, and otherwise) has indicated, in its freedom from the effects of time and space, the plausibility of some sort of survival. And remember that this relatively new science has barely begun.”

Here is the reason for it all! The experiments with hypnotism and probing into the “subconscious” minds of men and women are designed by Satan to confirm the conclusion that “there is no death.” The hypnotist who “age regresses” a subject gets back to the infant mind, and finds evidence of understanding that an infant does not ordinarily possess, concluding that another personality must have taken possession.

And he is right. But it is not the personality of a former human who did not die, as the doctor and the undertaker said. Rather, it is one or more of the fallen angels that talks back to the hypnotist for the purpose of deceiving him into believing that the dead are not really dead. And we believe that this danger lurks in all endeavours to probe into the so-called subconscious.

The Resurrection

Death is a terrific enemy, and the world welcomes any apparent proof that it is not what it seems to be. But how much better it is to accept the truth of God’s Word which asserts that death is the divine penalty for sin, and that it is real—that the “dead know not anything,” hence cannot talk to the living, nor enter the bodies of infants. Accepting the truth with respect to death, then we are prepared for the comforting assurances of the Bible that divine power will be utilised to restore the dead to life.

If the theory of reincarnation be true, how meaningless would be the Bible’s promises of a resurrection. And how confusing, for which of the many personalities would be restored ? Besides, there could not be a resurrection of the dead, if no one is dead. Our text sets forth God’s truth on the subject. Because of sin the human race was turned to “destruction.” Adam was the original sinner—”By man came death.” But the love of God through Christ has provided release from that condemnation. Thus through the man Christ Jesus there will be an awakening of the dead, or as Paul wrote, “By man came also the resurrection of the dead.”-1 Cor. 15:21.

Thus will be fulfilled the assurance of our text that the Lord will say to the dead world, “Return (from death) ye children of men.” This is God’s way for the dead to return. And when divine power is exercised to accomplish this loving purpose of the Creator, no one will have to go into a trance in order to talk with those who have been restored to life. Nor will those thus restored have to communicate with their friends through the hypnotised brain of another. Thank God for this definite assurance of life beyond the grave!

The Dead Will Return

The widespread interest in reincarnation and other no-death theories is due to man’s great desire to live. God created man to live. He is a dying creature only because he transgressed the divine law. As our text declares, man was turned to “destruction.” But we are assured that the Lord will ultimately say, “Return, ye children of men.”

Thus, the dead will return, not by reincarnation, but in the resurrection, and by the direct exercise of miracleworking power. Isaiah 35:10 reads, "The ransomed, of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The dead will not return in the resurrection because this is a normal cycle in human experience; they will return because they have been "ransomed." The "destruction" to which man turned because of sin would have been eternal, but for the grace of God which provided redemption through Christ.

In 1 Tim. 2:3-6 the Apostle Paul explains that it is God's will for all the dead to be "saved," or awakened from the sleep of death, in order that they might receive a knowledge of the truth. The great truth they are then to learn is, as Paul explains, the fact that "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all:" The vast majority have died without a knowledge of the "ransom for all," but when awakened from death this information is to be "testified" to them, the apostle explains.

Isaiah says that when the "ransomed of the Lord" return they will "come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads." "Zion" is one of the Bible's symbols of the Messianic Kingdom, particularly its spiritual phase, made up of the glorified Jesus and His body members, the church—those who live and reign with Him a thousand years. (Rev. 14:1; 20:4; Obad. 21.) The "ransomed of the Lord" will "come" to these in the sense of recognising the authority of the kingdom. By their acceptance of divine grace through the "ransom," and by their obedience to the kingdom agencies then in control, "they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." What a glorious hope for the return of the dead is thus held out to us in the Word of God ! (Reprinted from "The Dawn.")

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S -KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue,

Egyptian Crisis

IN recent weeks the world has been stirred by events in Egypt with the Suez Canal problem, and the greatest nations have been trying to devise some plan which will meet with the approval of the former administrators of this waterway and the Egyptian authorities.

There can be no doubt that the move by the present-day leaders in Egypt to nationalise the Suez Canal is but another evidence of the awakening of the more backward nations of the world to what they feel are their rights in world affairs.

Prior to the First World War, and even up till more recent times, many of the colored nations of the world were content to allow the European races to almost control the industries of their countries, and in some cases these colored people were no doubt robbed of their just rights. However, with the increased knowledge on every subject becoming more widely known, particularly during and since the Second World War, many of these backward nations have decided that the profits from their countries should be retained by their own people instead of being collected by the large shareholders of foreign companies.

This is very understandable, but the tendency with all imperfect people is to overstep what may be their just rights, and going to extremes to make up for previous lost opportunities they are capable of creating dangerous situations which not only put pressure on the controls of other countries, but also endanger the receiving of hoped for benefits for their own people.

Students of the Scriptures clearly see in the Suez Canal crisis the fulfilment of Bible prophecy, inasmuch as numerous Biblical passages indicate that disagreement between nations, and within nations, will become more pronounced as the end of this age draws near. Since the close of the Second World War an uncertain peace has been maintained only by the slightest margin at times in various parts of the world. And the present Suez Canal danger spot is but another festering sore, so to speak, on the world's surface, which gives abundant evidence that the corruption of the present evil world must burst forth in fury as the Lord's time arrives for the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world, to make way for the kingdom of Christ.

Further, some who claim to understand the Bible are making rather strong assertions that the present Egyptian crisis is referred to very directly in the Scriptures. While this may be partially true, it is well to remember that the term "Egypt" is quite often used in the Bible to represent the world at large. This seems to be the meaning of such passages as Isaiah 19, where we read—"The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians; and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom." (Isa. 19:1, 2.)

Again, in some prophecies describing the operation of the kingdom of Christ in the world the term "Egypt" is used to refer to the nations of the earth, as shown by the prophet Zechariah—"And it shall be, that who so will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." (Zech. 14:17, 18.)

While, then, the Lord's people are alert to the great importance of world events, and especially those which centre around the area of the Middle East, including Egypt, they realise that the Plan of God is one connected whole and all nations are yet to experience the greatest time of trouble this world has seen, for the express purpose of humiliating mankind in preparation for the blessings of Christ's Kingdom. While

the Egyptian crisis could “set off” another spasm of events in the process of reducing the kingdoms of this world to the dust, so to speak, this all depends upon the Lord’s timetable, for in no way is man in control of his own destiny so far as world events are concerned, and we can be thankful for that. As the Psalmist declared—’Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee; the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.” (Psa. 76:10.)

Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music)—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 25/- post paid.

Correspondence.

Dear Brother.—It is a long time now since I heard from you, and I have often intended writing, but time passes so quickly and the cares and responsibilities of this life keep us well occupied, don’t you find ?

However, since I last wrote I have studied enough to appreciate and accept the offer of spiritual life through consecration, and although I am weak and unworthy I know Christ is able to help me to stand fast, and that His robe of righteousness will cover me. I did not realise until I made my consecration just how far short of God’s standard of perfection I am, and I did not notice how wicked and sinful my thoughts were until now when I try to “bring every thought subject.” Yet, under all the trials I really do feel a deep peace. With my large family I do not get a lot of time to study, and lately owing to sickness, etc., I have had less than usual.

I correspond regularly with Brother and Sister -- and also sometimes Brother and Sister -- write. They have all been very helpful and I do enjoy receiving their letters. Also too the “Peoples Paper” has been a great help to me, and I always feel that there is a treat in store when I see it in the mail. While I think of it; I am enclosing a postal note for £2; will you please send the full 22 of the Greeting Cards you have often advertised, as I think they sound very nice, and keep the balance for the “P.P.” subs., as I always seem to forget when it is due. Thank you so much for continuing to send them, as the sub. must be ages overdue now.

Also could you let me know where the piece of poetry quoted in March 1956 “Peoples Paper” comes from, and if there is any more of it. The first verse is:-

“These things shall be; a loftier race
Than e’er the world hath known shall rise,
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes.”

It is a grand piece, isn’t it? And yet, it doesn’t seem like a hymn. I would like to find out if the poet knows how this is all to come about.

I attended the last Memorial with Brother and Sister but I did not partake of the bread and wine as I did not make my consecration until later; however, if God is willing I will go next year and participate. . . . Do you ever hear from ?

I know she still gets the “Peoples Paper” and enjoys them. . . . Thank you for the Convention Notes you always send, and I always enjoy them; the Brother’s talk and notes on Jerusalem I enjoyed very much.

Thanking you once again; I am, **your Sister in Christ.**

(The lines of the poem mentioned above are found in hymn 395 in “Bible Students’ Hymnal” there being five verses which nicely portray the new order of things on the restored earth in the Kingdom of Christ.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Friend.—It was only when I received papers from you today I realised I had not written and thanked you for the books and letter I'd received, previously. Thank you for all. I certainly have enough literature now for a while. I did at first read through, but now am on a serious study of "Divine Plan of the Ages" and what a wonderful book this is. I know I must go through it several times to grasp it all; the amazing love of God for us all is revealed from cover to cover, and I feel very humble with the Psalmist David. I say, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him."

Also a copy of "Divine Plan" was sent to me by of which I am very glad, because I have been able to lend it, and I have hopes I can pass it to several people, while still having a copy for my own study. What a helpful paper the "Peoples Paper" is; I get so much help and comfort from it, also the Dialogues, especially those received today, which I intend to pass on when I have studied them. I cannot tell you just how glad I am, that I got in touch with the Berean

Bible Institute. My Christianity is a living thing now, and I get so much happiness and peace from my Bible and studies; there is so much one can learn when one has the "key" to the Bible. I was very happy on reading letters in July's "P.P." to see not only others getting help as I am, but also new listeners and readers, and I pray that through the radio many may come to know the truth too and have the happiness that it brings.

I feel it would be so much easier for me if I had fellowship; I feel very much a pilgrim and a stranger, but this too, my Father knows and we are never alone, are we? When at times I get discouraged, that "Lo, I am with you always" comes to me, and with me always is that glorious thought, that perhaps we shall be with Him soon. As one looks around now at the sin and misery in this beautiful world He gave us, one cannot but pray, "Thy Kingdom come."

In closing, I pray for God's blessing on your work; may there be many ears to hear and hearts seeking truth and guidance. **Yours in Christ.**

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs.—Just a few lines to let you know I have received regular copies of "Peoples Paper" and Dialogues, for which I am very thankful. Please find enclosed £1; I should like it to be much more, but I had to give up my work, as I was finding it too heavy.

How sad it is that the church generally speaking has followed Calvinism (heaven and hell teaching); how it detracts from the infinite love of God. They quote our Lord's words in Matthew 5:22—in danger of hell fire and the narrow and broad way which leads to destruction as support of the doctrine. As you are now dealing with the New Testament in the Dialogues perhaps the quotations re hell fire may be placed in a clearer light; probably it has been dealt with in past Dialogues. With gratitude for such Biblical instruction and every good wish. I remain, **Yours sincerely in Christ.**

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs.—I wish to thank you very sincerely indeed for the wonderful "Voice" and "Frank and Ernest" pamphlets you have sent me recently. I have read them all over and over again, and have had tremendous help from them.

Would you please send me any further pamphlets you can spare from time to time. I would also like a copy of "Christ's Return"; "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"; and "The Everlasting Gospel." I am enclosing cheque for £1 to cover costs. **Yours faithfully.**

Berean Institute, Dear Brothers.—The half dozen copies of “Plan of God in Brief” arrived safely, and other papers, thank you very much. Since I was converted last August I have been searching the Word for truth, but found much of it mysterious. My time is limited as I am a busy housewife with three children in my care.

I have tried to keep an open mind and have listened to many types of broadcasts from all denominations and have sent for literature from several; my intense desire has been and is, for the truth, as far as God will allow. I have been afraid of becoming a victim of the deceptions spoken of in the Bible, and no doubt there is a bewildering number of interpretations of the Bible.

Your broadcasts held me from the first, although I have missed many of them for a number of reasons. I begin to feel certain that what you teach is indeed the truth, and I am anxious to tell others. My contacts are limited as we live 19 miles from , our nearest town. Funds too are limited as we do not enjoy the prosperity of our sheep farmer neighbors; I will, however, use my opportunities to the full. If you care to send any tracts to me I will pass them on.

I am enclosing 15/- now as payment for a copy of “Hymns of Dawn” and one of “The Divine Plan of the Ages.” The one copy of the latter I had I have sent to who is in great need of light. . .In Christian faith, I am, **Yours sincerely.**

Dear Friend.—Your very welcome letter arrived safely, also books and tracts. I do appreciate your personal reply.

I found “The Ten Camels” delightful and the children love having the stories read to them. Thank you very much for “The Atonement”; I am reading it with great pleasure.

I posted you a letter recently with money for two more copies of “The Divine Plan” and some questions about Revelation. Will enclose here in payment for “The Atonement” which I am reading, and “The New Creation” which has not yet arrived. **Your servant in His love.**

To Frank and Ernest.—Please accept small donation to help with postage, etc. Many thanks for literature forwarded; we are still enjoying your Radio Talks and pray for their continuance. **Yours in Truth.**

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed.“.

Books Available.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.”—Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d.:6 copies for 4/-.

“Christ’s Return”. This 38-page booklet explains this subject in some detail, and is supplied at 10d. per copy, or three copies for 2/3, post paid.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

“Our Most Holy Faith.”—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of “The Dawn” in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/. post paid.

“The Everlasting Gospel.”—A 64-page booklet dealing with the Sabbath question and other important connected subjects, highly recommended, heavy paper cover, price 1/6.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention is to be held this year over the four days at the Christmas period D.V., in Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th. Also additional gatherings will be held in the same hall on the 29th and 36th December. A cordial invitation is extended to all able to attend this Convention, and further information is procurable from the Secretary, C/- Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

Face to Face with Trouble.

“You are face to face with trouble,
And the skies are murk and gray;
You hardly know ‘which way to turn,
You are almost dazed, you say,
And at night you wake to wonder
What the next day’s news will bring;
Your pillow is brushed by phantom care
With a grim and ghastly wing.

“You are face to face with trouble;
A child has gone astray;
A ship is wrecked on the bitter sea;
There’s a note you cannot pay;
Your brave right hand is feeble;
Your sight is growing blind;
Perhaps a friend is cold and stern,
Who was ever warm and kind.

“You are face to face with trouble;
No wonder you cannot sleep;
But stay, and think of the promise,
The Lord will safely keep,
And lead you out of the thicket,
And into the Pasture land;
You have only to walk straight forward,
Holding the dear Lord’s hand.

“You are face to face with trouble;
And did you forget to look,
As the good old father taught you,
For help to the dear old Book ?
You have heard the Tempter whisper,
And you’ve had no heart to pray,
And God has dropped from your scheme of life,
For—oh, many a weary day!

“Then face to face with trouble;
It is thus He calls you back
From the land of dearth and famine
To the land that has no lack.
You would not hear in the sunshine;
You hear in the midnight gloom.
Behold, His tapers kindle
Like stars in the quiet room.

“Oh, face to face with trouble,

Friend, I have often stood,
To learn that pain has sweetness,
To know that God is good.
Arise and meet the daylight;
Be strong and do your best!
With an honest heart,
and a childlike faith
That God will do the rest.”

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”--Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid



Volume XXXIX MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER 1956

The New Dispensation.

“Of all the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; for, when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief; ye are children of the light.”-1 Thes. 5:1-5.

THE common tendency of the human mind is expressed by the Apostle Peter, who prophesies of the present time that the worldly will be saying, “Where is the promise of His presence? All things continue as they were from the foundation of the world.” Ignorance of God’s Plan is to be expected of the world, but the true people of God have the promise of His special instruction so that they need not be in darkness respecting the Divine Programme.

Our world for about six thousand years has been the battlefield between the forces of light and darkness, truth and error, righteousness and sin; the Prince of Darkness, otherwise styled the “Prince of this world,” has led and is still controlling them. The Prince of Light is represented in a feeble way by ambassadors who are specially cautioned by Him that they must not use carnal weapons nor carnal methods, but must in meekness correct those who oppose them.

They must be subject to “the powers that be” to the extent that their consciences will permit, and so far as possible live peaceably with all men.

This experience of subjection to the powers of evil has been a hard lesson, difficult to learn; a trial of faith as well as of endurance, the value of which has been difficult sometimes to appreciate. But these must walk by faith and not by sight if they would please the captain of their salvation. For centuries the prayer has gone up to God from their hearts, “How long, O Lord !” Reason assures them that it cannot be the Divine purpose to forever permit the victory of sin and death under the Prince of Darkness.

God represents Himself as a great Husbandman. Each Age is a “season” and bears its own crop. Each Age has its own time for the ploughing of the field, the sowing of the good seed, and the harvest work. As Bible students we have already noted the work accomplished in the Age which ended with the Flood, the different work accomplished during the Patriarchal Age, and the still different work accomplished during the Jewish Age, which lasted from the death of Jacob, and particularly from the giving of the Law, down to the death of Jesus.

Our Lord's ministry of three and a half years was a harvest time to the Jewish people in the close of their Age of favour or "day of visitation." He said to His disciples, "I send you forth to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour; other men laboured and ye are entered into their labours." (John 4:38) . The ploughing and sowing connected with the Jewish Dispensation was in the far past. The Egyptian bondage served to do a ploughing work, as also Israel's escape from that bondage and the forty years of wandering in the wilderness before they reached Canaan. The giving of the Law and the establishment of them as a people, the lessons of their sacrifices, and the exhortation of their Prophets, all constituted a seed-sowing, harrowing and cultivating experience. In the end of their Age, Jesus gathered the ripe fruitage of that experience—those sanctified thereby and developed in character and obedience to God.

The crop gathered by our Lord and the Apostles in the Jewish harvest numbered thousands. These were gathered out of Judaism and from under the Law Covenant into Christianity—gathered under a Covenant applying only to the "Church which is the Body of Christ." This Covenant, under which they become associated with Messiah, reads, "Gather together My saints (holy ones) unto Me," saith the Lord, "those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) All coming thus into relationship to Jehovah as members of the Body of Messiah came by way of the cross—through a recognition of their own imperfection, and of Jesus and His sacrifice as the satisfaction for their sins, a covering for their blemishes, by which alone their sacrifices were rendered "holy and acceptable to God."—Rom. 12:1.

The reaping work of the Jewish Age merged into the sowing work of the Gospel Age as the invitation to become joint-sacrificers with Jesus was extended to those having hearing ears amongst nations aside from the Jews. For nineteen centuries this sowing work, with "harrowing" experiences and various cultivations, has been in progress. Now in turn we have arrived at the harvest of this Gospel Age—the reaping time, the time of gathering into the garner—beyond the veil—by the power of the First Resurrection.

"None of the wicked shall understand but the wise shall understand" (Daniel 12:10) , is the Lord's declaration. Our text declares that "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness" respecting this time. This implies, either that the brethren are very few, or that a considerable number of them have not yet become sufficiently awake to a discernment of the times and seasons in which we are living. Many of the brethren and many of the world and many of the "wicked" do realise that we are living in strange times and under peculiar conditions. These try to persuade themselves, however, that what we see to-day is merely a recurrence of what has repeated itself time and again during the past centuries. Thus these lull themselves, saying, "Peace and safety !"

This attitude is what the Scriptures foretold, "When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." It is only "ye, brethren," who are privileged to have the clearer light respecting present and future conditions. We know that we are in the Harvest time of this Age—the reckoning time—the testing time—the time when the "wheat" is to be gathered into the heavenly "garner"—the time when the field is to be cleared of all "tares" in a fiery trouble—the time when the ploughshare of trouble will be run through the world of mankind to prepare the whole world for the New Dispensation.

So accurately timed is every feature of the Divine Plan that part fits to part, and work to work closely. The Harvest of the present time is the gathering of the fruitage of this Gospel Age—the gathering of the "Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven"—those who have made a Covenant with Jehovah by sacrifice.

The Head of the saintly Messiah, developed and glorified nineteen centuries ago, is Jesus. The members of the Body of this Messiah have been gathered from every nation, first from the Jews and then from all

nations. God's call and selection of saintly sacrificers in this Gospel Age ignores all sectarian, all denominational, all national lines—"The Lord knoweth them that are His." The winds of violence, "the powers of the air," which will shortly be loosed, and which will produce the terrific "storm" are being held back until the sealing of God's servants in their foreheads shall have been accomplished.

This sealing in the forehead implies an intellectual appreciation of heavenly things, and is intimately associated with the harvest work—the sealed are the ripe wheat being gathered for the heavenly garner. As soon as the sealing work shall have been accomplished the winds of strife and trouble will be let loose according to the Master's declaration, and the result will be a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation"—no, nor ever shall be the like again. The awful lessons which will then be learned by humanity will be sufficient for all time. The strife, the hatred, the malignity, the anarchy of that day of trouble are depicted in various places in the Word of God.

The trouble time impending is indeed declared to be a time of Divine wrath, and we must not lose sight of that feature of it. Divine Justice has indignation against iniquity and selfishness in general, for selfishness is but another name for sin. All sin is selfish, and all selfishness is sin. The captains of industry, the captains of education, and captains of wealth have to-day greater opportunities and therefore greater responsibilities than the kings of the earth, for their dealings with their fellowmen.

Similarly, there are leaders of the people, presidents, and secretaries of unions, etc., who are also captains, and who also have great responsibility. All perceive that the world of humanity is rapidly nearing a crisis. The almost miraculous opening of the eyes of understanding which God has recently granted has brought to the world mechanical inventions and chemical processes which are making the world rich with amazing rapidity.

Although these blessings are in considerable measure reaching the masses of mankind and uplifting all to a higher plane of comfort, nevertheless general education has opened the eyes of human understanding correspondingly. The "common people" are looking with amazement at the luxury of the rich as the barbarians of old looked upon the much lesser splendours of Rome. They are covetous, they are hungry for what they term their "share" of the bounties being dispensed by Providence with so lavish a hand.

Even if the vast increase of wealth through machinery, chemistry, etc., were to be evenly distributed, we doubt if it would satisfy these new-born minds.

There seems to be two possible solutions: (1) To convert all of the wealthy into saints, whose pleasure it would be to administer the flood of wealth now rolling in upon them for the general blessing of mankind, along the most benevolent lines imaginable, or (2) To convert into saints the masses of mankind and to so imbue them with heavenly hopes and prospects that they would not particularly care for earthly good things nor crave them, but rather rejoice to be "the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the heavenly Kingdom."

We confess that neither solution seems to be practicable. We cannot believe that either can be accomplished; hence we must believe what the Bible teaches, that an awful conflict is to take place between these two classes, because neither one nor the other can be fully converted to the Lord's way. How glad we are that the Bible shows that the culmination of the conflict will bring everlasting peace—a just, loving, equitable and satisfactory adjustment of earth's affairs, under Messiah's glorious reign of a thousand years.

Someone may ask, Would not these same difficulties beset any new government which Messiah or others might institute? Will not the element of selfishness forever persist in the human heart, and will not this imply that to all eternity, there will be a strife of selfish interests? We answer, No. The Divine Plan solves

the problem perfectly. Jesus has demonstrated His unselfishness as respects earthly things. His laying down of His life not only proved His loyalty to righteousness, and to the Father's will, but proved also His unselfishness—His love—"greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13.)

This Friend of humanity is to be the great King of the world in the New Dispensation, and His associates in the Kingdom, the Bride class, are to be such only as have His spirit and disposition of obedience to the Father's will—self-sacrifice and love for fellowman—unselfish love. Under present conditions, these may not always be known, nor their true character and unselfishness be discerned, because they have the treasure in "earthen" vessels which do not always fully represent their true benevolence of heart.

The Divine provision is that such of these as shall demonstrate their unselfishness of heart and loyalty to the Lord shall be given new bodies in-the resurrection—"sown in weakness, they will be raised in power; sown in dishonour, raised in glory ;" sown an animal body, with Adamic weaknesses and fleshly imperfections, they will be "raised spirit bodies"—perfect, complete, lacking nothing.-1 Cor. 15:42-44.

These, in association with their Redeemer, will constitute the Kingdom class which is to rule the world for a thousand years under the Headship of Jesus. Surely, we can trust these, we can have confidence in them. The fact that God has selected them, and that He is pleased to give over to them the rulership of the world for a thousand years testifies beyond peradventure their worthiness and capability.

That Government will not be a republic, but a monarchy, a theocracy, a Divine Kingdom. Christ and His Bride will be the King and Queen of the New Dispensation, supplanting Satan and the fallen angels, who for centuries have been in control. The Kingdom of God will be as invisible as the kingdom of darkness has been. It will operate through human agencies, as does the other. But even its human agents have been provided. The Scriptures inform us that the worthy ones of the Jewish Dispensation and before, will be the Princes in all the earth who will represent Messiah's Kingdom amongst men. Not only so, but they will be perfect men, made so by participation in the "resurrection of life." How grand the prospect !

The time of trouble will be awful, as typed in the terrible trouble which came upon the Jewish nation following the harvest work of their Age. Then will come the levelling process, which in the Divine order will prove to be a blessing to everybody. In other words, the socialists and anarchists are not so far from a correct conception of what must ultimately prevail, but they are far astray respecting the methods by which it shall be obtained. Their attempt to grasp the rudder of the world's affairs shows an awful lack of appreciation of the mighty influences with which they seek to contend. Their efforts will merely precipitate upon themselves and upon others the terrible trouble which the Scriptures foretell.

God's people are distinctly warned that they must keep hands off, must not interfere with the powers that be—their reliance must be upon the Lord and not in the use of carnal weapons. James, writing on this subject, declares the coming trouble, and tells that it will be specially severe upon the rich; "Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." (James 5:1.) No doubt, the troubles will be equally upon the poor; but to them they will seem less severe since they have been accustomed to less. To God's people is the me "Be patient, brethren, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"; "Wait ye upon Me, saith the Lord." (Zeph. 3:8.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention is to be held this year over the four days at the Christmas period D.V., in Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th. Also additional gatherings will be held in the same hall on the 29th and 30th December.

A cordial invitation is extended to all able to attend this Convention, and further information is procurable from the Secretary, C/- Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

Greeting Cards.

One, of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid.

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If We Suffer With Him.

“The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, their heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”—Rom. 8:16, 17.

THE Apostle Jude speaks of “our common salvation”—a salvation from sin, from death, from human imperfection to human perfection—to all that God intended that our race should be, to all that our race lost through Adam’s disobedience. The Divine provision is, as expressed by our Lord, “to seek and to recover that which was lost.” (Matt. 18:11.)

The world is to be sought and to be recovered during the Messianic Age, its period for being judged (disciplined), its trial for life eternal. Then the faithful and obedient of all peoples will obtain full Restitution and life eternal. But now, in advance, this “common salvation” comes by faith to a certain class—to those who have the hearing of faith and the eye of faith, and obedient hearts. These, by virtue of the merit of Christ applied to them when Jesus “ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us,” are reckoned as having all the advantages of restitution imputed to them on account of their faith. They do not get restitution actually, but reckonedly. Their faith is counted to them for righteousness or perfection.,

Why is there this discrimination in Divine providence—that some now hear the voice of the Son of man, and live, through justification of faith, while others will not hear the voice of the Son of man and come to life and perfection until the next age, and then actually and not reckonedly ? “Verily, verily, the hour is coming, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear (obey) shall live.” (John 5:25.)

The answer is that this is a part of the “mystery” of God; that the Lord is now seeking for and electing a special class to be joint heirs with His Son—joint sufferers with Him in His sacrifice, and joint sharers in His kingdom glory, “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.” The special arrangement permitting these to be justified by faith instead of being actually justified (or perfected) is with a view to their being privileged to offer a proper sacrifice—“holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1.) This Justification by faith is necessary because nothing unholy or unclean may come to the Lord’s altar, as the Law clearly taught, and the types clearly showed. Every sacrifice for the Lord’s altar must be “without spot or blemish.” Every member of our race was spotted and blemished by inherited sin and imperfection, and hence the necessity for the Divine provision of justification by faith—faith in the precious blood of Christ, “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.” This faith grasps the fact that while the sin of the world has not yet been taken away by the Lamb of God, and the world still lies under condemnation, nevertheless, the merit of the blood has been applied on behalf of the “household” of faith—and in due time will be made efficacious, under the New Covenant, for the bringing of forgiveness to every creature, with the opportunity of eternal life.

But under which Covenant does God purpose to receive the faith-justified ones as sacrificers? The answer is that the Divine proposal to the Redeemer was that He sacrifice and as a reward of His sacrifice be highly exalted to the Divine nature and glory. This blessing (which belongs only to Jesus and was applied only to His sacrifice) has, by the gracious plan of God, been extended to include all those of this Gospel Age, who have the character-likeness of the Redeemer. They are invited to share in His sacrifice, and are promised that if faithful they shall share in His glory.

These members are “elect according to God’s foreknowledge through sanctification of the spirit and the belief of the truth” (1 Pet. 1:2). Their selection is not a change in the Divine programme, for they were

“chosen in him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). Their selection was unexpected of the angels and of men, and hence was a “mystery”, and still is a “mystery” to mankind. “The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not” (1 John 3:1).

But the selection of this class was always the Divine purpose. “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus foreknew us also by Jesus.”

Whatever, therefore, was the Divine programme for the Master, the Forerunner, the Chief Priest, is the Divine programme for His members—they must “walk in His steps,” they must “suffer with Him,” they must “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” If any decline so to do, he loses his place as a member of the Body. We know, nevertheless, that the full number of the “elect” will ultimately be found, and all of them will be sacrificers, for none others are members of His Body. It is the spirit of the Head coming upon these that produce the sacrifice of the flesh (the justified flesh), “holy, acceptable to God” (Rom. 12:1).

There is only one object in the sacrifice which God has provided for, the sacrifice which Jesus accomplished, and is accomplishing, in all those who will become members—that is a sacrifice for sin. It is presented to God, holy and acceptable. In this respect it differs from other sacrifices which men make, as, for instance, a father or mother may sacrifice comfort or even sacrifice life, on behalf of their offspring, but such sacrifices, however appropriate, are not the sacrifice of Christ—are not of the “better sacrifices” typified in the sacrifices of the bulls and goats.

The Apostle Paul calls our attention to the fact that only those sacrifices which were burned outside the camp were a Sin Offering. Next he shows how our Lord was the Sin Offering. Then he points out how, if faithful members of His Body, we also must suffer outside the camp—as members of the sin-offering—represented in “the Lord’s goat.” This sacrifice is not yet completed. It is in process. Hence the apostle’s expression, “Let us go to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach”—just as the slain goat was carried outside the camp and there consumed, as the bullock had been. (Heb. 13:11-13). These matters, dear readers, are amongst the “deep things of God, which no man knoweth, except by the spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:10). The world knows nothing about them. “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to others all these things are spoken in parables” (Matt. 13:11). The few have been permitted to enter into the banqueting halls and to see the glorious beauties of the riches of Divine grace. Blessed are your eyes that see, and your ears that hear. As for those who never saw, they properly have our sympathy, nor should we expect so much of them as of ourselves, who have been blessed with the knowledge of this important sacrifice, and of its glorious reward. Furthermore, as we are now in the sifting and testing time, it must not surprise us if some who once saw eye to eye with us in these matters become blind to them, and drift into the “outer darkness” as respects these matters and others—we know not how far. Truths so interweave that one lost or perverted injures presently the beauty of the entire fabric.

Let us not forget that He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified (His members) are all one. He is in us all. In our consecration we lose our humanity and all of its rights, exchanging these for our spiritual membership as new creatures in the body of Christ.

Out of the Abundance of the Heart.

(Contributed)

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” (Matt. 12:34, 37.)

THE above words of our Lord indicate that the heart and the mouth are under very special scrutiny, the former representing the individual character, and the latter being an index of the character. It is in this same view of the matter that these words of wisdom were penned—“Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.” (Prov. 4:23, 24.) The indication is clear that a right condition of the heart is necessary to right words, for “out of the, abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,” as experience testifies to every man. It is therefore just that our words should be a criterion of judgment in the Lord’s estimation, as He tells us they are.

Our first concern, then, should be for the heart, that its affections and dispositions may be fully under the control of divine grace, that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, brotherly kindness, faith, meekness, temperance and love may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles be fixed, established in the heart, then out of the good treasures of the heart, the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace. Of our Lord Jesus, whose heart was perfect, in whom was no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, it was said, “Grace is poured into thy lips,” and again, “All bare him witness and wondered at the gracious words that proceedeth out of his mouth.” (Psa. 45:2; Luke 4:22.)

So wise, just, and true were the Lord’s words, that though His enemies were continually seeking to find some fault, it is said, “They could not take hold of his words before the people; and they marvelled at his answers, and held their peace.” (Luke 20:26). And others said, “Never man spake like this man.” (John 7:46.) Thus our Lord left a worthy example to His people, which the Apostle urges all to follow, saying—“Let your speech be always with grace (with manifest love and kindness) seasoned with salt.” (Col. 4:6.) And Peter adds, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,”—wisely and in accordance with the spirit and mind of the Lord. Again, it is written, “Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile.” “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.” “The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious words, but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.” “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few.” (Psa. 34:13; Prov. 21:23; Eccles. 10:12, 13; 5:2.)

Job, in the midst of all his afflictions, was very careful not to sin with his lips. He knew that his words would be taken by the Lord as an index of his heart, and he was careful to keep both the heart and his words right, saying, “What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil (or troubles for disciplining) . The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” (Job 2:10; 1:21.) There was no spirit of rebellion in a heart out of whose abundance came such words of loving submission, patience and faith under severe testings, and that, too, without a clear vision of the divine wisdom in permitting them.

The Psalmist puts into the mouths of God’s consecrated and tried people these words of firm resolution—“I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth in a bridle, while the wicked is before me.” (Psa. 39:1.) How necessary to the stability of Christian character is such a resolution, and the self control which develops under an adherence to it. The world, the flesh and the devil oppose our way; there are fightings within and storms without, and many are the arrows and darts aimed

at the righteous, and the safe attitude of the Christian in the face of the opposition of the world is to be silent, and to allow the Lord to work all these trials for our good, for the servant is not above his Lord. As Jesus took the opposition of sinners against Himself with such humble patience, so we too should “go therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach ;” and He said, “Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake.” So the Psalmist suggests, saying—”I was dumb with silence; I held my peace even from good” (or from doing what seemed good in my sight). Again it is written—”He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life, but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.” (Prov. 13:3.)

So we see what importance the Lord attaches to our words, for if our words are rebellious, or disloyal, or frivolous, or flippant, or unkind, unthankful, unholy, or impure, the heart is judged accordingly on the principle that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Thus, our words in all the varied circumstances of our daily life are bearing testimony before God of the condition of our hearts, and the Psalmist puts this prayer into the lips of all the Lord’s people—”Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Permit not my heart to incline after any evil things. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness. Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. I have longed for thy salvation (and for the perfection and beauty of holiness), O Lord; and thy law is my delight.” (Psa. 141:3, 4; 19:14; 119:171- 174) .

In many things we are all faulty. If any one does not err in word he is a perfect man, able to control the whole body. (James 3:2.) But such a man does not exist; we all need to continually plead the merit of our Saviour and Advocate, while we strive daily to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord. Therefore, let thy words be few; let them be thoughtful and wise, as uttered before God, and not rash, hasty and ill considered. Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Phil. 4:8.) Thus, out of the good treasure of the heart we shall be able to speak words of truth and soberness, and so honour and glorify Jesus and our loving Heavenly Father.

Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what sort soever they be: for thou thyself also hast many failings which must be borne with by others.—Thomas A. Kempis.

The best way to bear crosses is to consecrate them all in silence to God.—Fletcher.

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Question Box'

Question.—To what time would the Sabbath Day refer in Matthew 24:20?

Answer.—First of all it would seem clear that this passage could not refer to the typical Sabbath, because the distress referred to is to come not upon the nation of Israel so much as upon the nominal Christian world, and the Law Covenant with its commandments, the fourth of which relates to the Sabbath, has never been made binding upon any other people than Israel. It would make no difference to those not under the Law, whether they fled on the Sabbath or not: it would be no more hardship to flee on that day than on any other.

It is quite clear that the real fulfilment of this great prophecy is yet to be, and refers to the overthrow of Christendom in the time of trouble spoken of by Daniel 12:1 to take place at the second presence of Christ. The whole passage is in highly figurative language, in which it was customary for our Lord to speak. Were we to endeavour to take the passage in a literal way, how could they flee from Judea into the mountains, if they were not to come down from the housetops (see verses 16 and 17) ? But each expression has its own instruction to those who have “ears to hear.”

So it is in the 20th verse, the Lord is not referring to the literal winter time nor the typical Jewish Sabbath Day. The reference appears to be to the gathering out from the condemned systems, those who are truly the Lord's people.

When the Harvest is complete, the four winds of trouble will be let loose, (Rev. 7:1) and those still clinging to the old associations of nominal Christendom will partake in her plagues in the winter time of trouble. Immediately following upon the great time of trouble, the great anti-typical Sabbath will commence. A day when the poor groaning creation, which has been travailing in pain together for six one-thousand year days of labour and sweat of face to earn a living, will cease from its heavy labour and find that by complying with the righteous rule of Christ and His saints (Satan and the wicked spirits having been bound or restrained), all labouring under heavy burdens, under the bondage of sin, Satan and death, pain and sorrow, will cease. (Rom. 8:19, 22.)

The Church of Christ have by faith already entered into this rest in God's will, the rest of faith. (Heb. 4:1-4.)

The thought contained in our Lord's words of verse 20 seems to be that some may delay coming away from the systems of error which have been “spued out” (Rev. 3:16) and be like the foolish virgins in the parable following. They will be too late to enter the marriage chamber of the Bridegroom and Bride, for it will then be proclaimed “the marriage of the Lamb has come, and the Bride has made herself ready.”

How necessary it is for those who come to a knowledge of present truth and of the second presence of Christ to take a positive stand against the grave errors that are being taught and to enter into the work of the harvest. The Lord being present, is surely controlling matters among His people and judging respecting the use of their talents and exercise in service, which is to “gather the elect from the four winds of heaven,” from the four quarters of Christendom. “Take heed that no man take thy crown.” “Take heed that thy flight be not on the Sabbath,” when the door will be found to have been shut.

The fact of the exhortation to avoid the winter time and the Sabbath for flight indicates the possibility of avoiding both. If, as some imagine, that Christ was coming and would accomplish the judgment all in twenty-four hours, then, however any might watch or “take heed,” they could not alter whatever day it might be, but as we are already living in “the days of the Son of man” and the gathering of the elect is proceeding, the exhortation is most appropriate.

Question.—What is the significance of “baptism for the dead” as referred to in 1 Cor. 15:29-30?

Answer.—This is said to be the most difficult portion of all the Scriptures to understand. One must have a clear understanding of what constitutes the real or true baptism in order to grasp the meaning of the Apostle’s words here. Elsewhere he says, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.” (Rom. 6:3.) The Apostle does not mention water in this connection, and is evidently not referring to water baptism at all. Our Lord’s real baptism, of which the water immersion was merely the symbol, was His burial or immersion into death. His death—which was a sacrificial one, began at Jordan, when He gave Himself in full consecration to God and received the anointing of the holy spirit—was completed when, dying upon Calvary, He said, “It is finished.” His death or baptism was for the dead, the world of mankind, the entire human race condemned to death through Adam’s disobedience. In the Divine arrangements, all the sanctified followers of Christ, those who are baptized into Him, becoming members of His Body (1 Cor. 12:12, 13), are likewise immersed into His death. They are privileged to share with Him in His sacrificial sufferings and death (Col. 1:24).

This baptism or death of the entire Christ, Head and Body, Jesus and the Church, is on behalf of or for the dead, the world of mankind. When the last member of the Body of Christ has been offered up in sacrifice as a sin-offering on behalf of the world, then the entire race will be released from death.

Christian Way Ended.

Our elderly Sister Hammond of Adelaide reached the end of the earthly way on September 24th last. Our Sister was in her 85th year and had been in the truth for a good number of years. Sister Hammond was much loved by the Adelaide friends, and much esteemed for her meek and gentle disposition, combined with a good, clear knowledge of God’s wonderful plan of salvation. Our Sister was one who had trusted the Lord and was very zealous to attend the Sunday meetings, to enjoy the fellowship around God’s Word.

It is good to know that the “Lord knoweth those who are His,” and to feel that He is supervising in respect of all the interests of His people. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,”—the daily dying to self, and to the things of the world—and then when the time comes when His little ones must leave the scenes and toils of this world, how good to realise that we are completely in the hands of Him who said, “Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”

Word has been received recently of the passing of Brother Bray of Sydney last month, and one of our brethren has sent the following information:-

“Our Brother Bray had first appreciated the message of truth when coming in contact with a Brother in the country, at which time a weekly home meeting was held, as a result of which Brother Bray rejoiced very fully in God’s plan of the ages. Coming to Sydney later Brother Bray attended the Sydney Class regularly, and after three years symbolised his consecration to the Lord.

“Returning about five years ago from a visit to England with relatives our dear Brother’s memory began to fail, and had got worse in more recent times. Brother Bray was in the truth for over ten years and was a very devoted follower of the Lord, being very zealous for the truth, and was much loved by all who came in contact with him. Knowing our Brother as we did, we feel sure that he has made his calling and election sure.”

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VolumeXXXIX MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 1956

The Bible Explanation of Present World's Unrest.

THIS subject is surely a very important one. To know of the true Biblical explanation of any prominent subject which affects the world at large, is surely a great privilege, and who will say that the present world unrest does not affect the whole world?

At one time, even fifty years or more ago, if there was unrest amongst the inhabitants of Europe or Asia, for instance, the other parts of the world would not be immediately affected; indeed, they would hardly know that anything was happening on the other side of the world until weeks later, perhaps months later. And so troubles of unrest came and passed without involving other countries at a distance.

Now, however, it is vastly different, as we all know. The various countries of the world are so linked together that distance makes little difference, so that anything along the line of a revolution, or unrest of any kind, in any land, is immediately felt throughout the world, with accompanying distress and perplexity of mind to a vast number of the human family.

Many people may reason this way—We can understand how people in the darker past often created trouble amongst themselves because they were largely heathen, and possibly did not know much better; but why should there be so much unrest and distrust amongst the nations of the earth today, especially when quite a number of these nations are accepted as being Christian nations? Further, it may be reasoned—Are we not living today in the light of this twentieth century, and are we not so much more civilized than our forefathers, and should not civilized people be able to live more in harmony and peace than ever before?

Yes, we will all readily admit that civilized people should be able to live in peace and harmony together in this world. Many of our readers will know of the claim that was made prior to the First World War that mankind was becoming too civilized to think of going to war with each other. That claim was very well intentioned, but just could not be carried out; and why not?

The correct answer is found by a review of the history of the human family from the Bible, and the words of the wise man in Ecclesiastes 7:29 give us a good guide,—”Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright (perfect); but they have sought out many inventions (devices).”

Yes, with our first parents' disobedience, and the Lord's penalty of death being enforced, the human family degenerated, even in that First Dispensation, prior to the Flood in Noah's day. Only a comparatively few of the children of Adam kept God in their hearts and minds, and so degenerated was the human race in the days of Noah, that he and his family were the only ones worthy of being saved in the ark, at the time of the great Flood.

Then, the new dispensation commenced with the family of Noah, and we might think that things should have been better from then on. Conditions were better with some of Noah's children, and his children's children, but the downward course could not be stopped with the majority of the descendants of Noah; and so we find, that, apart from a few of the patriarchs who gave their hearts and lives to the Lord, the majority of mankind continued further and further away from God and righteousness.

The Apostle Paul gives an outline of the condition of the nations at large in reviewing their conduct in his epistle to the Romans, as follows—"When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to the birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearth And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind (margin, a mind void of judgment), to do those things which are not convenient (to improper conduct)."—Rom. 1:21-24, 28.

Truly did the prophet Isaiah describe the majority of mankind in his day, as well as since, in Isa. 57:20, 21,—"The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

We see, then, the great difficulty with the human family was that they were under the control of the great Adversary of God down the centuries, even the majority of those who claimed to be the seed of Abraham, as shown by the words of Jesus,—"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John 8:44.

However with the coming of Jesus and the preaching of Christianity, surely we could have expected something better of the human race. But what do we find? Our Lord gave an outline of what His disciples could expect during the Gospel Age in His wonderful prophecy in Mathew 24, as follows—"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginnings of sorrows." Then, to forewarn His own followers respecting the treatment they may expect in the world, He continued—"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."—Matt. 24:6-14, 21.

What a picture we have portrayed of the years following the introduction of Christianity to this world—wars and rumours of wars; nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and then, finally, instead of improvement in world affairs, "then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time."

But why does the tribulation increase, as the end of the Gospel Age draws near? The prophet Daniel informs us—"At the time of the end, many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Dan. 12:4, 1. How strange many may say, that with more knowledge there should be more trouble.

We realise that the Lord withheld the great increase of knowledge amongst mankind until towards the close of this Gospel Age—the "time of the end." Previously, throughout the centuries, mankind manifested their wrath upon one another with spears, swords, and bows and arrows. With the invention of gunpowder, guns came into being, and so on. Invention after invention has come along and has been adopted by the various nations for defense and offense. With the coming of the aeroplane, and the creation of bigger and better bombs, the destruction from the air knows no bounds, until now, with the invention of atomic and hydrogen bombs, it is possible to wipe out a great city in one blow.

But cannot mankind, with all their intellect—all their increase of knowledge on every subject—devise a way to halt this mad rush down the pathway to destruction? There was a noble effort with the creation of the League of Nations following the First World War but it failed because selfish nations did not abide by its laws, and did not trust member nations. And what can be said about the present day United Nations? Has this assembly of nations lessened the risk of war? The events of the last few weeks prove undoubtedly that man's institutions cannot cure the ever growing disposition of greed and selfishness ingrained within the very being of fallen humanity.

With the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Egypt, Britain and France, in particular, felt that their very life-line was being severed, and they organised a military force to try and put pressure on Egypt, knowing that if they did not do something along this line, with the build-up of Russian influence in Egypt and the Middle East, they would be forced out of the picture altogether. Meanwhile, Israel, also realising that they were being somewhat encircled with military preparations around them, felt they had to do something, and started an attack on Egypt; whereupon, Britain and France, hoping to regain control of the Suez Canal, and also stop the fighting between Israel and Egypt, started their military operations, but issued a cease-fire following threats from Russia and the agreement of the United Nations to send a police force to keep the peace in the area.

Over recent weeks, then, we find the Suez Canal is blocked, and Egypt will not receive the revenue she expected from that waterway, while Britain and France, as well as other nations, will be deprived of the use of that means of trade, and the threat of war on a larger scale is looming up greater than ever. How applicable are the words of the Apostle Paul—"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."—2 Tim. 3:13.

The words of our Lord also apply very directly at this time—"Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke 21:25, 26. The leaders of mankind, in the religious and political systems especially, are indeed in a quandary to know what to do. There was a recent appeal for world peace by the Pope, and this was compared with a similar appeal from the Papacy a few days before the last World War. Meanwhile the newly elected President of the United States has appealed to the Russian Premier to cease the onslaught upon Hungary, while the poor people of Hungary appeal to the United Nations for help in their struggle for freedom. What a picture is presented before us today of twentieth century civilization !

Truly, the Bible explanation of present world unrest is, that mankind, having gone their own way, and allowing the spirit of the Adversary to possess and guide them, have adopted Satan's methods and ways, and are of Christ's Kingdom heading for further destruction and doom, so far as this present civilization is concerned. But the wonderful part about world events is, that the Lord's plan is being worked out by mankind's selfishness and exhibitions of wrath upon one another. How clearly did the prophet Zephaniah speak for the Lord respecting present-day events—"Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."—Zeph. 3:8. "Wait ye upon me," is the message from the Lord to all His people who are trusting in Him, that they be not entangled in the present order of things which must be dissolved, in preparation for Christ's kingdom.

From the prophet Joel we also read—"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. And the Lord shall utter His voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"—Joel 2:1, 2, 11. Read also Jer. 25:15-20, 26-31. Here we see that all nations are to experience the great time of trouble, because "the Lord hath a controversy (time of reckoning) with the nations."

But what about the Lord's people, as they approach the days in which we are living; how are they to act amidst all the injustice and cruelty of this present evil world? Our Lord's advice to His followers in His day is still our guide today, as found in Matt. 10:16—"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." From these words we see that the Lord's followers are not to take sides in the struggle for world power, but are to make known the message of the Kingdom, the only hope for the distressed world of mankind.

The Apostle Paul also gave good advice to the brethren in his day, and which is equally applicable at this time—”For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.” Here we see that God has the matter in hand of revenging all disobedience in the world, and that Christians have no part in this work at all; their time is completely occupied in fulfilling their own obedience—serving the Lord in spirit and truth as they have opportunity, which includes their own upbuilding in spiritual things. (See 2 Cor. 10:3-6.)

As respects the world at large, we have a picture of the Lord’s controlling of the wind and sea to indicate the power that He will manifest when mankind have learned the needed lessons from the great time of trouble, as recorded in Mark 4:39—”And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.” So, the Lord will speak peace to the raging elements of humanity, and will then bless and uplift all who will then obey the laws of His kingdom on earth. The Psalmist gives us the same information, showing that after the Lord has used the elements of human society to bring about “desolations in the earth,” then He will “make wars to cease unto the end of the earth,” and declare—”Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”—Psa. 46:8-10. How we thank God that He will bring order out of chaos and blessing out of the distress of nations for the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth.

Booklet for January’s “Peoples Paper.”

A booklet entitled, “Our Bible Translated” is taking the place of January’s “Peoples Paper”, and is being posted out, with this issue of the “Paper” to all our friends. Extra copies of this booklet may be obtained on application.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention is to be held this year over the four clays at the Christmas period D.V., in Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th. Also additional gatherings will be held in the same hall on the 29th and 30th December. A cordial invitation is extended to all able to attend this Convention, and further information is procurable from the Secretary, C/- Berean Bible Institute, Kew, E.4, Victoria.

Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 25/- post paid.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used. either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

The Story of Jesus.

THE STORY of the birth of Jesus is always refreshing and stimulating to the followers of the Master, no matter how often it is related, though of course this subject comes more particularly before the minds of God's people at this time of the year. Had our Heavenly Father so desired He could have sent our Lord to earth as a fully mature man to pay the sacrifice for the sins of mankind, but apparently God saw some good purpose in Jesus being born as a babe and spending thirty years in contact with fallen humanity as He grew up to manhood's estate.

When we read that Christ was "touched with the feeling of our (the Christians') infirmities," (Heb. 4:15), during the 31 years of His ministry, following His consecration at thirty years of age, we can understand better how He is our sympathetic and faithful High Priest, able to succour with tender feelings all His dear people who strive to walk in His steps of sacrifice. Likewise, the thirty years of knowledge of sinful humanity, which our Lord gained by close contact with the fallen race, no doubt confirmed His desire to endure all things necessary to redeem such a world of sinners lost and ruined by the fall, in addition to delighting to do His Father's will, and at the same time would more perfectly fit Him to become the Mediator between God and mankind when the great work of restitution commences in the age to come.

There can be no doubt that knowledge gained by experience is the most valuable to all God's creatures, and the length of time during which this valuable knowledge is attained and acted upon is usually a test of fidelity as to the worthiness of the recipients. In our Lord's case we may reason that during the thirty years, from His birth as the babe to the time of His consecration, He would have ample time to meditate upon His great mission to earth, and if there entered a thought in His mind to repudiate His contract with His Heavenly Father to redeem mankind by His death, we know there was ample time for it to germinate in those thirty years of waiting. The fact that Jesus so fully delighted to do God's will and entered into complete consecration immediately he attained manhood's estate at thirty years of age proves at once that the waiting time on earth confirmed the devotion of our Redeemer to God's plan for Him.

Further, the fact that our Lord did not complete His sacrifice until after 31 years of "bearing His cross" adds weight to the Apostle's declaration concerning Christ—"Though he were a Son, yet learned he 'obedience (proving His obedience) by the things which he suffered.'" (Heb. 5:8). During this period in which our Redeemer "poured out His soul unto death" there was ample time again for regret that such an undertaking had been entered upon, had there been the slightest inclination' n that direction. The tempter was of course resisted so resolutely at the beginning of Christ's ministry that there was never an opportunity to return with his subtle deceptions, and God's will that our Lord spend a period of time "enduring the cross, despising the shame," revealed the knowledge and wisdom of God that true faithfulness is a quality of character which increases with the passing years, despite the experiences permitted by an all-loving Heavenly Father.

So it is with all God's true servants, even with those whom God used over the centuries prior to our Lord's first advent; they proved their obedience over lengthy periods of devoted service, yet there was freedom of choice, as the Apostle declares—"And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." (Heb. 11:15.) In other words, if Abraham had regretted answering God's call to—"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee," (Gen. 12:1), he had full opportunity to return, for God does not coerce any of His servants.

Likewise, the followers of the Master during this Gospel Age, down to our own day, are necessarily tried and proved over quite lengthy periods of time in most cases, just as was our Lord and Forerunner, and God's ancient people. So as we approach another Christmas season and the opening of another year, we do not do so with any feeling that the Christian way is long and tiresome. Rather do we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for His blessings and privileges in the service of our Master, and take the opportunity of using another Christmas season for witnessing to the angel's message which was proclaimed at the birth of our Lord as the babe of Bethlehem—"Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."—Luke 2:10.

What scope of truth does this prophetic message open up for the Lord's people to proclaim to those who have ears to hear; what joy thrills our hearts as we think upon the lowly birth of Jesus, God's Messiah, coming to earth as the

helpless babe, spending thirty years away from “the glory which he had with the Father before the world was,” and then enduring the further 3- years of “contradiction of sinners against himself,” and being “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” because of His delight to co-operate in the Father’s plan of “bringing many sons unto glory,” and “that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

What joy also it is to realise and proclaim that following our Lord’s great sacrifice “God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” (Phil. 2:9.) “Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Heb. 7:25.) And what a privilege to make known that following the raising up of this “people for God’s name” to the heavenly inheritance, that the “good tidings of great joy,” of salvation from sin and death, should indeed be to all people—all the families of the earth—during the “times of restitution of all things.”

It is well to be reminded of the words of our Lord—“He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved,” (Matt. 24:13), and this enduring is not of a passive nature. No, the Lord requires His people to exercise zeal and activity in His service over any length of time it may be His good pleasure to grant. What if the harvest of the Gospel Age has continued longer than some of God’s people thought it would twenty, thirty, forty or more years ago? Has not the longer time than expected proved a great blessing in the Lord’s vineyard? Truly it has for those rightly exercised by His spirit. Apparently the extra time has been very truly required to find the remaining grains of “wheat” for the heavenly garner, and the members enduring well on earth have had their lives sanctified, and their characters mellowed and enriched with the passing years.

May the coming Christmas season be a means of blessing to all whose hearts and Minds are lifted up to God in praise and thanksgiving for the gift of our Redeemer, our Saviour, Christ the Lord, who came as the babe of Bethlehem so long ago. Yes, “though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9.) Some of our brethren will be assembling in Conventions over this Christmas period at hand, others will be gathering in their home classes, others are isolated, but wherever God’s people dwell, there also will His spirit dwell, as they seek to serve Him in spirit and in truth, by meditating upon His Word, for their own upbuilding, proclaiming the glad tidings to others, and generally “redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

I will pray this prayer today for you, May the love of God abide with you; Wherever you go, wherever you stay, May the peace of God bless you today; And throughout the year that lies ahead Slav beautiful flower; of joy be spread. Through your Christmas-tide and New Year too May the love of God abide with you.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Rynie Street—Sundays. 3 p.m.

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BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Vic., Australia.

Before Zion Travailed She Brought Forth.

“Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a man-child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children.”—Isa. 66:7,8.

THE name “Zion” was anciently applied to a prominent hill of Jerusalem, generally regarded as the south-western and highest of those on which the city was built. It included the most ancient part of the city with the citadel; and, being first occupied for a palace, it was called “the city of David.”—2 Chron. 5:2. It was also called the “holy hill,” or “hill of the sanctuary”—Psa. 2:6, being the original site of the tabernacle, pitched by David for the reception of the ark.

By the prophets the name was often put for Jerusalem itself, and also for its inhabitants, sometimes called sons or daughters of Zion. It was also used in a wider sense, as was Jerusalem also, to signify the entire nation of Israel. And since fleshly Israel was typical of spiritual Israel, the Gospel church, the symbolism applies with still deeper significance to the Gospel church,

which term, throughout the Gospel age, included the entire body of professed Christians, all of whom are on probation for full membership in the church triumphant—the true church, the Zion of the future, and the true Zion of the present age, the elect “little flock” to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom. In the symbolic application of the term we must therefore judge from the character of the prophecy whether it applies in its broadest sense to the nominal Gospel church, or to the elect little flock, the only true church in God’s estimation.

The symbolic travail, in the above prophecy, is a reference to the great time of trouble—the travail that is to come upon the nominal Gospel church, great “Babylon,” from which some are to be counted worthy to escape. —Luke 21:36. This is indicated by the preceding verse which locates the time of this prophecy as synchronous with that wherein is heard “a voice of noise (confusion) from the city” (Babylon), and “a voice (of truth and warning) from the temple” (the elect little flock of consecrated and faithful ones), and “a voice of Jehovah that rendered recompense to his enemies”—in the great time of trouble. The travail that is coming is to be upon nominal Zion—“Christendom,” “Babylon;” and it will be a great and sore affliction—a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” But the marvelous thing the Prophet here has to record is that a manchild is to be born out of Zion before this travail comes. This is a striking reference to the fact, elsewhere clearly taught, that the ripe wheat of the Gospel church is to be separated from the tares, that they are to be exalted and glorified before the burning, the consuming trouble, is completed upon the latter. This man-child is, therefore, the little flock—the true Zion in God’s estimation, the body of Christ; as it is written, “There shall come out of Zion (the nominal Gospel church) the deliverer (the Christ, Head and body), and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (the fleshly Israel or Zion)..”—Rom. 11:26.

This is the man-child that is to bless all the families on earth—Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:16, 29. The birth of the man-child is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the first resurrection. Such are now begotten of God by the word of truth, and quickened by the holy spirit—James 1:18; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:11, and in due time—before the travail—they will be born in the glorious likeness of Christ. The birth of this man-child began over nineteen hundred years ago with the resurrection of Christ Jesus. There the Head of this body of Christ came forth; and surely as the Head has been born, so surely, shall the body come forth. “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord; shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God.”—Isa. 66:9. Ah, no; “the man-child,” the Christ complete, the great Deliverer, shall come forth.

Yet “who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?” for not only shall the body of Christ, the true overcoming Zion, the “holy nation, the peculiar people,” be delivered out of nominal Zion before the travail; but when she travails a great company of other children will be born. This is the great company described in the Revelation as coming up out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.—Rev. 7:14. The body of Christ, the man-child, born before the travail, will be composed of those who heard and obeyed the call, “Come out of her, my people” etc.,—Rev. 18:4, and who were counted worthy to have part in the first resurrection; while the many children born through the great tribulation will be those believers in nominal

Zion, Babylon, who have allowed themselves to become measurably intoxicated by the spirit of Babylon, the spirit of the world, and who, therefore, are not quick to discern and prompt to obey the voice of the Lord in this harvest time. They fail to see that it is harvest time, and consequently fail to understand the separating work which the sickle of present truth is accomplishing, regarding those servants of God who wield it as enemies, and hence as opposing them and the Lord whom they serve.

The great tribulation or travail that is coming upon nominal Zion is the only thing that can convince such as these—and they include a large number of believing children of God, whose manner of life is righteous and generally circumspect, but who are nevertheless worldly-minded, and who are not rendering themselves a living sacrifice to God, following Him through evil and through good report, and meekly bearing the reproach of Christ. They have respect to men's opinions, traditions and plans; and fail to fully submit themselves to the will and plan of the Lord. And only when they behold the wreck of nominal Zion— Christendom, Babylon —will they realise its gross errors and be delivered from them and it.

“Behold,” says the Prophet, “I lay in Zion a stumbling-stone and Rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” Rom. 9:33; Isa. 8:14,15; 28:16. That stumbling-stone is the doctrine of redemption through the precious blood of Christ. At that stone the fleshly Zion stumbled, and so now the nominal spiritual Zion is stumbling at the same stone; for it was to be “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel”—the fleshly and the spiritual. The elect little flock of overcomers do not so stumble, but recognise this as the chief cornerstone of the true Zion, remembering the words of the Prophet, “Behold I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe (in Christ as your Redeemer, who bought you with His precious blood) he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient the same is made a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed”—1 Pet. 2:6-8; for God does not propose to deliver His kingdom unto any of the disobedient. They need the fiery trial of the coming tribulation to bring them into a proper attitude before God; and hence must come up through the great tribulation.

While those who are truly begotten of God and who have been quickened by His spirit to the new spiritual life, and who are faithful in fulfilling their covenant of entire consecration as living sacrifices unto God, may well rejoice in hope of the first resurrection, and of being born before the travail upon nominal Zion, it is also a cause of rejoicing that many of the weaker children of God, stumbling with nominal Zion, will, nevertheless, by and by be recovered and saved so as by fire (born) through the great tribulation (travail), in which nominal Zion shall expire, but from which they shall come forth.

“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that mourn for her.” “Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”—Isa. 66:10; 65:18,19.

This call to rejoice with Jerusalem immediately follows the prophetic announcement of the birth of Zion, the terms Zion and Jerusalem being used here interchangeably. The birth of Zion, the exaltation of the body of Christ to kingdom power and glory, will indeed be cause for rejoicing on the part of all people; for it is for this exaltation and manifestation of the sons of God that the whole creation waits, groaning and travailling together in pain until now.—Rom. 8:22, 23.

When the true Zion is thus exalted, then will follow the great work of the kingdom. The travail upon nominal Zion immediately succeeding will quickly liberate the true children of God still in her, and they shall come forth to larger views and higher principles, and to develop rapidly into nobler characters. The rule of the iron rod will quickly subdue all things, completely breaking up the whole present social fabric and accomplishing the leveling process which will make ready for the peaceful reign of righteousness.

Then the great Millennial reign of righteousness will begin, when every man will have a full, fair opportunity to win eternal life by faith and obedience. And no man's opportunity will be less than a hundred years; though if he wastes all of that time without taking any steps towards reformation, he will be considered unworthy of life and will be cut off in the second death.— Isa. 65:20; But the obedient shall eat the good of the land.—Isa. 1:19; “They shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people (They shall renew

their strength')—Isa. 40:31; and mine elect shall make them long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed (the children) of the blessed of the Lord (the church) and their offspring with them."

"And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear"—so near will the Lord be, so mindful of all their interests.

"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together (The reference here may be to men formerly of wolf-like or lamb-like character, or to animals, or to both—the expression signifying in any case a reign of peace); and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat—(another expression similar to, "His enemies shall lick the dust," signifying the destruction of the serpent, or rather of Satan, whom the serpent symbolizes). "They shall not hurt, nor destroy, in all my holy mountain (kingdom), saith the Lord."—Isa. 65:21-25.

Thus the birth of the true Zion will be cause for rejoicing among all who truly love righteousness; for, though it will first dash in pieces all their long cherished hopes, it is the dawn of real hope for all the world. It will humble all their pride, despoil them of all their cherished possessions and what they have come to esteem their rights, break down all their boasted institutions, civil, social and religious, and completely wreck all their order and all hope until they begin to see hope in the new order of things inaugurated by the kingdom of God.

Yes, rejoice with Jerusalem, Zion, and be glad with her, all ye that love her, as well as all ye that mourn for her now and try to dissuade her from her course, not seeing the prize at the end of her life of faithful self-sacrifice; for soon her glory will appear, not only to her own exceeding joy, but also to the joy and blessing of all the families of the earth. (From "Reprints.")

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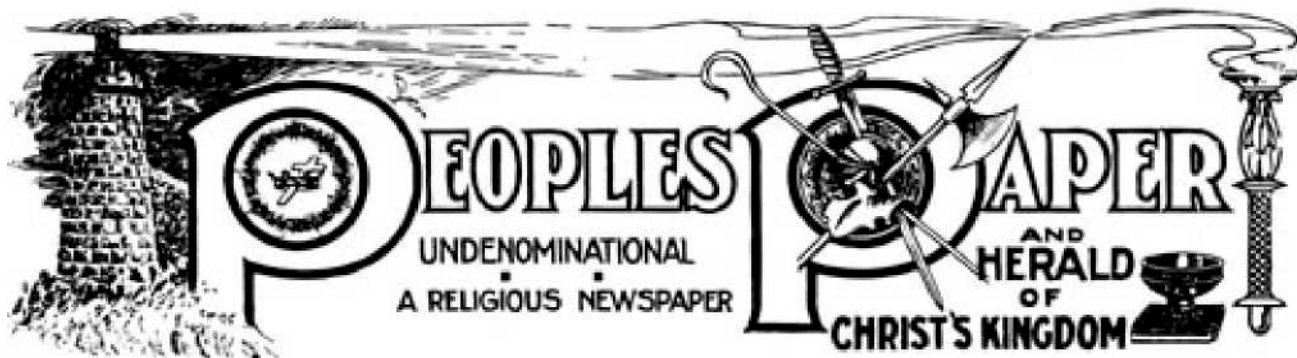
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The Lord Your God Proveth You.

“The Lord your God proveth you, whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” (Deut. 13:3).

THE words of this text were uttered to Natural Israel, but they are certainly applicable to Spiritual Israel—to all of God’s people. The thought is manifest that the Lord’s children are all under testing, that the Lord is proving our devotion. It is not sufficient that God should have called us with a Heavenly Calling, that He should have sent a Message through His Son, speaking peace and declaring that He will forgive the sins of those who surrender themselves to Him. It is not sufficient that we should be informed as to how we may gain these blessings through a full consecration to God through the Saviour. It is not sufficient even that we should accept these to do the will of God. Something more is necessary.

The making of the consecration, according to the Scriptures, would mean the giving up of our lives to do the will of God. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice,” as the Apostle Paul expresses it. (Rom. 12:1). We have seen this privilege. We have accepted the terms. We have given our little all to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. We rejoice that He has received our little offering through our great Redeemer, who has imputed of His merit to cover our blemishes, thus making us acceptable to God. We have now been received into the family of God in the highest sense and are New Creatures in Christ, members of the Anointed company, sons of God, called to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to the great inheritance of glory, honor, immortality and the Divine nature—2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Cor. 12:12; John 1:12; Rom. 8:17.

It is not enough that God has accepted our consecration. He purposes to prove us, to *see* whether we mean all that we said. Consecration is more easily made than fulfilled. Having made the surrender to God, we received an enlightenment. As the Apostle says, we were illuminated. (Heb. 10:32). This illumination came to us as it came to our Saviour, through the holy spirit and through the Word of God, enabling us to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge, giving us an insight into the Plan of God, helping us to appreciate what we have done, what it means to us now, and what it will mean to us hereafter.

All these things become clearer day by day; and we realise more and more the glorious things which our God has in reservation for His faithful children—things which “eye hath not seen nor ear heard,” but which the Lord has “revealed unto us by His spirit.” (1 Cor. 2:9, 10). While all this work is going on within us, there is a testing, a proving, a disciplinary training.

Every day we are receiving added blessings. God’s mercies are indeed “new every morning and fresh every evening.” His providences are shaping all our affairs. How are we responding to all these blessings coming from the Lord? This is the question. God has indeed entered into a Covenant with us, as He says: “Gather together My saints unto Me, those who have made, a Covenant with Me by sacrifice.” (Psalm 50:5). You agreed to give up yourself, your own will, all your own preference in every matter, not only in word and action, but in thought. It was on this condition that you and I were received. It was on this same condition that our Lord Jesus was accepted and became the Head of the Church.

Jesus was our Guarantor. Therefore the Father entered into this contract with us and gave us the holy spirit, the first fruits of our inheritance. This He would not give without a definite contract; for it is the advance payment, the earnest of the glory to come. So we see that the blessing which has come to us from God through Christ is only a foretaste of what is in store for us. Our Father waits to give us all the riches of His grace, of His loving kindness, through our Lord Jesus, in the coming Age and in the Ages to follow. In those future ages of glory He will continue to show to the

Church the glorious riches of His grace and of His love.—Eph. 2:7.

“The Lord your God proveth you.” The Lord does not wish to disprove us. Our Heavenly Father has great love for all His children, and He has exceeding great blessings in store for them when their loyalty has been demonstrated. The word Love has in it the thought of honoring the one who is loved. “Surely we are not worthy of God’s love!” you say. Very true, my brother; but we remember that our Lord Jesus said, “The Father Himself loveth you.” (John 16:27).

The Word tells us about God’s deep interest in those who have become His children. It tells us that the Church are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. (Zech. 2:8). What tender love and care is here expressed. All things permitted by the Lord to come to any of this class are for their good, for their preparation for the Kingdom, that they may be to the glory of God, members of the Divine family.

According to the Bible, our Heavenly Father alone had originally this great thing, the Divine nature, with its quality of immortality, incorruptibility. He has given it to His First-begotten Son since His resurrection from the dead, that He might have this same nature, this inherent life; and through the Son the Father has offered it to the Bride class that they also might inherit the same glory as our Lord, though He will always remain the Head of His Church (John 5:26; 1 Tim. 6:16; 2 Pet. 1:4). This is the sum total, as we understand the Word—that nevermore will any others attain the Divine nature—only the Father, the Son and “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife”—no more.

Then will come the other natures on the spirit plane cherubim, seraphim, those who will constitute “the great multitude,” and then the lower order of angels. We do not know how wonderful some of these orders may be; but none will be so great as those on the Divine plane. Then, to complete the picture, we shall have mankind restored to perfection—“a little lower than the angels.”—Psalm 8:5; Heb. 2:6-9.

This is the glorious outlook before us. Those of the Divine nature will reign over all others. Theirs will be “the glory that excelleth.” The Father loves us and wishes us to attain this glory. If we fail, it will not be because of His unfaithfulness. “Faithful is He that hath called you, who also will do it.” (1 Thes. 5:24). The whole responsibility is with us. No one can take our responsibility. Each must stand for himself. We cannot go into the Kingdom by classes. There is no other way to get into the Kingdom except as individuals, personally related to the Lord Jesus. Therefore it is for each of us to “make our calling and election sure.”

“Is God proving my imperfect flesh, to see whether I will use it perfectly?” some one may inquire. No. Long ago God knew that we could not do perfect works. He would not try our fallen flesh. In the Bible he tells us that all mankind are imperfect, fallen. (Rom. 3:10, 20). He is proving what your spirit is of, your mind, your will. What kind of mind ought we to have? The Lord tells us, “Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:5). “But,” you say, “I have not the same body that Jesus had.” Very true; but you can have the same mind, disposition, will, that He had. You can WILL for truth, for righteousness, for faithfulness to your covenant with God. You are to come as nearly to the line as you are able. God looks to see how you rule your mortal body, to what extent you crucify the flesh and its desires.—Gal. 5:24.

You are the one in charge now. The Lord says, “I will let you work with that poor body which you have; and if I see you doing your best with that body, in due time I will give you a perfect body. If you prove your loyalty of heart now, with all your imperfections, I will cover those imperfections with the merit of Jesus. I know that if you are faithful in this blemished body, you will be entirely satisfactory in the glorious body I will give you by and by.”

This is a very reasonable proposition, dear friends; and everything about God’s Plan, when we come to understand it, is so beautiful, so reasonable, that we could not ask Him to change even one feature. How would it be if we could get glory, honor and immortality without living up to our promises, while another who did not promise would do better. We would say that the one who did not promise would be better than the one who promised and did not fulfil his promise, that the one who did not promise would be more deserving of the reward. If the Lord sees that you mean all that you said in consecration, no matter how poor the body you have, the blood of Jesus Christ will cover all your defects; and you will be acceptable to God and will thus be counted worthy.

The Bible says, “Worthy is the Lamb,” and His Bride will be worthy too. You say, “We know that Jesus is worthy.” Yes; and those who have His spirit have a measure of worthiness also. There must be character if we are approved of God. Unless we develop the necessary character we shall never reach the Kingdom. If you have something to do with developing that character, it will be counted real worth in God’s sight; and Jesus’ righteousness will make up the rest. If you are found wholly loyal to Him, then you will be accounted worthy.

“To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne,” declared the Master. (Rev. 3:21). If we do not overcome, we shall not be seated there. “But there are special tests, are there not?” asks some one; “Is one test how to

keep the Sabbath day?" Not especially, we reply. Such a test would be but a poor proof of character. If you thought that God wished you to keep a certain day as the Sabbath day, you would be injuring your conscience if you did not keep it. It is not keeping a Sabbath day or wearing clothes of a certain style, or having your hair cut in a special way that proves character such as God requires.

What are God's conditions? For what is He especially looking? First, God is looking for faith—faith in Him. This is an important requisite. "Without faith it is impossible to please him." (Heb. 11:6). If you have no faith in God, you might just as well stop where you are. The Lord has a glorious arrangement for those who cannot exercise faith, but He is not calling them during this Age. He will deal with them by and by. But he requires faith of those who would have His favour now. Only such can be of the Bride of Christ.

There is a great difference between faith and credulity. We have learned this lesson from the experiences of the Dark Ages. There was comparatively little faith then. We are not to have faith in things that nobody can understand. That is not God's plan. It may be the creeds of men, but it is not the Word of God. He expects us to have faith in what He has declared; and He says, "Come now, let us reason together." (Isa. 1:18). To-day all over the world, you will find people saying, "I believe in the Trinity, but I cannot understand it." here is no credit in believing what you cannot understand. "I thought that if I did not believe in the Trinity, I would go to eternal torment," says one. My dear brother, there is nothing about the Trinity in the Bible. The Bible is all straight and reasonable.

What the Bible says is this: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one—Jehovah." (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:6). Have faith in what the Bible says. Attend to what God has declared. "To us there is one God, the Father." Have faith in this Scriptural statement. We are to believe what the Word of God declares, and not what men have said that is not in the Bible.

Another thing which God requires of us is loyalty. We are to stand for all that God stands for, and to be opposed to all that God opposes. God is opposed to everything dishonourable, evil and false. There are only two sides. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." You cannot serve Truth and error. Watch where you are standing. There is great danger of being deceived. Thousands of people are standing to-day where they should not stand, and would not, if their eyes were not blinded. (2 Cor. 4:4). "His servants ye are to whom ye render service."

Whom are you serving? Are you serving Christ or the system? We must know what we are serving. Only as we are faithful in serving God and in turning our talents to use in His service shall we be acceptable to Him. He is not looking for those who are loyal to sects or systems. This is a part of the test upon us.

"The Lord y our God proveth you"—your faith, your loyalty, your meekness, your love of the brethren. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20). If any man or woman has made a covenant of consecration to the Lord, and has been begotten of His spirit; that fact is a notice to me from the Lord that He has accepted that one. Suppose I say, "He is not my style," would that be loyalty to God? If we were in an earthly army, there might be some next to whom we would prefer not to march; but we would say, "He is my comrade; he is loyal to my government." So it is with the army of the Lord. We are fighting "the good fight of faith"; and all who are on our side are our brethren, no matter how ungainly or unattractive they may be according to the flesh. The fact that they belong to our King settles it. If He accepts them, I accept them; if He rejects them, I reject them.

This is the cue which the Lord gives me as to the ones for whom I shall lay down my life. He is looking on with loving eyes to see how you and I are carrying out our covenant as to loyalty in faith, word, act and thought,

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Out of the heart are the issues of life. If our hearts are right, then loyalty will be manifest by our doing the best we know how for the brethren and in doing our duty towards all. It is not sufficient, however, to love the Lord with part of your heart and to say, "Next to my, wife (or my husband) I love the Lord." God must have the first place. It is GOD FIRST, the Lord Jesus second, and everything else after them.

It is all a matter of the heart. It is not mere Law, although it may begin as such. I may say, "I have accepted God's terms. It is now a law to me to do His will." But as I progress and come into fuller sympathy with God, then comes a love for the principles for which He stands. It is my heart that is to serve God. This is the highest attainment of a Christian—that with his whole heart he should love and serve the Lord.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., over the Easter period, in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Ave., Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

Passover Memorial, 1957

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 14th April; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by the true followers of the Master.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably before the end of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Sunday, 14th April at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Builders and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6 p.m., at No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House), Perth.

Sydney.—Sunday, 14th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Of all the things you wear, your expression is most important.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, rest paid.

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While it is our intention that these column be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper, is overdue,

Melchisedec and Aaron as Types

THERE was really but one priest—the High Priest. The under-priests were merely representatives of the High Priest. So with Christ, the Great Priest of the future. The association of the under-priests with the Lord recognises Him as the Head and the under-priests as His members, and the “great company” as the servants of this great priest.

God’s work for the world is future. The only work yet accomplished is the providing of the priesthood and the qualification of the Great Priest and His members and His servants for the work of instructing, healing and uplifting mankind during the thousand years of Messiah’s reign.

During the Gospel Age the getting ready of the Great Priest, Head and members, has required of them sacrifice. As the Apostle declares, “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable.” The sacrifice of the Head was acceptable because of His perfection. And all the sacrifices which He subsequently offers, represented in His members, are likewise acceptable to the Father, because the merit of the Head Priest is imputed to the other sacrifices.

Two priesthoods are set before us in the Scriptures, the Aaronic and the Melchisedec. Both typify The Christ—Head and Body. The Aaronic pictures the sufferings of Christ, but shows nothing of the glory and reign, except as these were symbolized in the garments of glory and beauty. The Melchisedec Priest represents merely the future of The Christ, after the sacrificing shall have been finished and all the members of the Body completed.

The work of the Priest may be viewed from these two standpoints. His sacrificing is the most important in one sense, because all of his future work is based upon these sacrifices. But in another sense the sacrificings are merely a preparation for the great work which will follow. The Priest must first offer sacrifice, in order to become worthy of his own exaltation to the Priestly Office and glory; and, secondly, he must have the merit of that sacrifice wherewith to satisfy Justice on behalf of the sins of the world, in order that, as the Glorified Priest, he may have the full right to stand as Mediator between God and mankind—to bless the latter and uplift them during the thousand years of His reign as the Melchisedec Priest—a priest upon His Throne.

The Apostle declares that Messiah is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron (Heb. 7:21); for if He were on earth, He could not be a priest. The significance here is that Jesus, being of the Tribe of Judah, and not of the Tribe of Levi, could not have served as a priest under the Mosaic Law, which gave this office to Aaron and his sons forever. Aaron and his sons, however, as a priesthood typified the preparatory feature of Messiah’s priesthood—the sacrificial preparation. Messiah’s claim to priestly functions is not, therefore, to be expected from the Aaronic line, for the Scriptures expressly declare, “I have sworn; I will not, repent; Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” (Heb. 7:21.) The Priest here referred to is the glorified Messiah, Head and Body, at the conclusion of this Gospel Age, when the consecrating and sacrificing will be at an end and the glorious Priestly Office, serving the world of mankind, will begin.

Little Opportunities.

“We all might do good where we often do ill;
There is always a way, if we have but the will;
For even a word, kindly breathed or suppressed,
May guard off some pain, or give peace to some breast.

“We all might do good, in a thousand small ways;
In spurning ill rumour, reproving wrong done,
Forbearing to flatter, yet giving due praise;
And treating but kindly the heart we have won.

“We all might do good whether lowly or great—
A deed is not judged by the purse or estate;
If only a cup of cold water is given,
Like the mite of the widow, ‘tis something for heav’n.” —Selected.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

Knowledge & Understanding

(Convention Address)

EVERYBODY can acquire knowledge, a great number can acquire wisdom, but comparatively few can acquire understanding. As an example, take the atom bomb; everybody has a knowledge of the atom bomb, even the man in the street has that. The man who makes the component parts must have a certain amount of wisdom, but it requires scientists and professors to have the understanding of it.

However, the knowledge and understanding we are concerned about is the knowledge and understanding of the Bible. The Bible was written for a specific people; namely, the chosen in the Old Testament—"Ye only have I known as a nation"—the children of Israel. That lasted till Christ's time; then they were cast off, because of their rejection of Him. Then came the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles down through the Gospel Age, or as the Scriptures put it—"Taking out a people for His name." And in this connection we know Christ's statement—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

We will examine now what the Scriptures have to say about knowledge and understanding; let us look at Prov. 1:17, especially verse 7—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Also Psalm 111:10 confirms this. Even this statement, "The fear of the Lord" has been misunderstood. The fear of God has been, and still is being taught, in some cases, to hold people to certain beliefs, instead of the love of God. We do not fear in the sense above quoted, but we do have a reverential fear of God, in case we should do something to displease Him who is Love.

There are other things which are essential for the child of God, as seen in 2 Pet. 1:1-10, quoting from verses 3 to 7—"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Note again it is the called that are being addressed. Then follows the requirements—faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. Confirming this is James 3:17—"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

So much for knowledge and wisdom; what about understanding? We are given a warning in Prov. 3:5—"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding." Then, how do we get understanding? The only way is through the Scriptures. We remember how the Bereans were commended for their diligence in studying the Scriptures to prove all things for themselves.

Let us examine a few Scriptures and see how we may get this understanding. From Job 32:8 we read—"But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." So we can see how essential it is that man's spirit be kept in tune with the spirit of God, to get our understanding. Romans 8:4, 6, 16 will also help us in this direction—"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit . . . For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace . . . The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." It is only the called of God who can attain to this blessed condition.

Let us note a few examples of how the spirit operated in the past, such as Luke 2:25, 26, showing how the man, Simeon, beheld the infant Jesus—"The holy spirit was upon him, and it was revealed unto him by the holy spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Also on the same occasion, as shown in verse 38, regarding Anna, we read—"And she coming in at that instant gave thanks likewise." Further, in the case of Peter's response to the Master in Matt. 16:15-17, we read—"But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This example of the operation of the spirit is one of the most striking. This was no dream or vision, but an instantaneous transmission of thought to Peter by God's holy spirit. One more quotation on this particular line is found in 1 Cor. 3:6, where Paul states, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." The act of planting was giving knowledge; the act of watering was giving further knowledge amounting to wisdom, but God only gives the understanding.

We have often thought that the operation of the holy spirit is like radar. To illustrate—A group of young men is being trained to become pilots in the air force. They do not get into a plane and start flying right away, but are taken collectively and shown a plane and instructed in its functions, including the reading and understanding of its instrument board, or panel, as it is called, on which are the necessary guides as to how to pilot a plane, such as oil pressure, petrol gauge, wind drift, altimeter, etc. A knowledge of these is essential to travel from one given point to another, but we must not forget radar, which is an instrument which can give out and receive signals from the proposed destination. Now, as children, we were taken collectively and told simple little stories of the Bible; then we were introduced to reading of the Bible, like the air force trainee reading the panel on the plane. Our next step was, as individuals, reading

our Bible for guidance in the ways of life, just as the pilot gets his guidance from reading his panel. We now bring our radar into operation by tuning in to our landing field, and we must keep on the wave length, as we know by tuning in on our radio—if we want a certain station we get on the correct wave length.

So, the Christian must have his mind and heart tuned to the holy spirit of God at all times and not deviate, because that is our safeguard. Let us at all times watch our panel (Bible), and keep our ear open to the radar signals (the prompting of the holy spirit), and as we hear the signal getting louder we realise we are getting near our destination and our journey is nearly over. So, with the spiritual *signal* getting louder we know that time is now a governing factor, such as we see in Daniel 12:4, which is a prophetic utterance due to be understood—"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end." Here is a case of understanding being withheld at that particular time, but which would be released when the due time came, which is now; for we read further, "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase." No doubt we all realise that this is taking place today, showing that we are still on that spiritual beam. Nahum 2:4 has this to say corroborating the times in which we live—"The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings." This is surely what we witness every day and night in the streets of our big cities.

All these things have happened in the last 75 to 100 years, and we are privileged to see them; and as we realise prophecy can be understood only when it is in course of fulfilment, or has already been fulfilled, so let us heed the instructions, watch and pray, that we may be aware of what is going on around us, and keep our thoughts, minds and hearts tuned to the holy spirit.

In this connection we wish to draw your attention to the Jews, especially as we see the prediction for God's holy nation as shown in Ezekiel 37, which deals in prophetic picture with the "dry bones" of the whole household of Israel. Verses 4-6 state—"Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." (Please read this whole chapter).

We are seeing this prophecy being fulfilled. Take the beginning of this case when Dr. Wiseman inaugurated the Zionist movement sometime in the 1890's. Then came World War I during which the Turks were ousted from Palestine by General Allenby, which was followed by the Balfour declaration giving access for the Jews to Palestine. Then Israel became a nation in 1948: surely, marvellous are the works of our God. We know that the Jews have gone back in unbelief, but the day is at hand when God will take away their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh, and write laws thereon and pour upon them His holy spirit.

We thank God for the knowledge we have obtained from His Word, the Bible, and the understanding through His holy spirit. "Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not . . . Therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding." (Prov. 4:5, 7).

Correspondence.

Dear Brethren in Christ—Loving Greetings in His precious Name. Ever since I read the article "The Treasure of the Humble", in the "Peoples Paper" November, 1955, I have intended to write a line to you to ask if the book written by Maurice Maeterlinck, bearing the above named title, was procurable, as I have been unable to get it here in England. This book was referred to in the article mentioned above, and the latter was very short and sweet to my taste, and I thought that perhaps I might glean some further "gem" from a book bearing such a title.

In January I usually send my sub., for the "Peoples Paper" to Welling, Kent, together with that for the "Bible Study Monthly." Some of the articles in your little "Paper" are very much appreciated, and I do also love to feel that measure of contact and fellowship with our brethren, who, whilst separated by earthly distances, are still very close to us spiritually. In fact, dear brethren, one is apt to hear so frequently of the very dear and generous brethren of the U.S.A., that I personally make a point of reminding friends of the Lord's dear brethren in the still more distant lands (speaking of our natural way of viewing distances) and especially the Australasian countries, as also in my prayers.

As I have now received and read the October and November 1956 "Peoples Papers", and seeing the passing of Brother Bray of Sydney to his Home-call, I thought that I will make the endeavour to write to you, as I had the pleasure of the fellowship of this dear Brother during his visit to England referred to in your paper . . . This blessed experience and privilege was a reminder to us of the Blest Tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. I have thought of him many times since . . . While we do not mourn, as others, the loss of dear ones, be they natural or spiritual friends, we naturally do not like the parting, even though it be "until the day break, and the shadows flee away," but we are

grateful to our glorious Heavenly Father for all the comfort and assurances which He has given to us through His most precious Word of Truth, and that at such times we are able to recall, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth." (Rev. 14:13.) How true has become that promise, "The wise shall understand." Praise God that worldly wisdom has been superseded.

With fervent Christian love to you all. Pray for us, as we do for you dear ones. Your brother, by kind favor, in His service.

Dear Brother.—Thank you for your nice letter and Convention Notes. I read them very carefully and I thought I had never read anything nicer; it must have been good to be there to listen to the different speakers as they spoke of their findings from the Scriptures. I like the address showing that the Jews are God's Witnesses, and so they are I find in Isa. 43:10, 12. Fancy the followers of Judge Rutherford calling themselves Jehovah's Witnesses; all the false religionists cannot deceive the Lord's people, because they pay close attention to His Word. We have the truth and we are given God's holy spirit to guide us into all Truth and show us things to come. How lovely it is to be on the right side and to follow our dear Master who is leading us in the narrow way.

Your programmes always have sessions on "Hymns we love and why." I never hear hymns here, but I have read through different books—"Dawn", "Christian Hymns" and "Bible Students' Hymnal", and they contain many beautiful hymns. I don't know many tunes but what I do know I love to sing and make melody in my heart to the Lord. 1

John 1:7 carries my thought to that beautiful hymn "Walk in the Light", and verse 3 takes my thought to John 14:21 .

. . Although my eyes are very weak I can still read, but it is not easy to do, and I write very slowly to make it plain for people to read. I will close, dear Brother, wishing you continued blessing from our Father. Your Brother in Christ.-

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brothers.—I wish to thank you for the second parcel of literature including Biblical Dialogues, "The Voice," "Peoples Papers" and two booklets "God and Reason", and "The Plan of God in Brief", which arrived recently.

In my reading of the booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave", I was greatly impressed by the explanation of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. It is a new thought to me, and clearly elucidates the Master's thoughts. The churches are fond of quoting this parable in support of their hell fire theory.

Every Sunday I listen to your broadcasts and find them very interesting and instructive, and pray the Lord's blessing on your radio messages and many publications. Yours in Christ Jesus.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends—We listen in every Sunday morning. to Frank and Ernest, and enjoy them in doing so, and our many friends in . . . and surrounding districts . . . and . . . I would like you to send me a volume of "Our most Holy Faith," for which I have enclosed Money Order, and hope and trust our faith will hold strong in our Lord and Saviour. Sincerely.

Dear Brother—Thank you for sending "Frank and Ernest" and the "Peoples Paper" so regularly to me; I find them very helpful and interesting. "Frank and Ernest" I find very useful for passing on to other people as they are clear and simple for them to understand.

Please find enclosed a cheque for £10; take what I owe for the "Peoples Paper" and the remainder for Frank and Ernest, unless of course you need it more for any other part of the work. I take this opportunity of wishing you a very happy year, full of God's blessing for yourself and also for the good work you are doing. With Christian love; Yours in His service.

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus—I have much pleasure in acknowledging your letter, together with another parcel of literature.

I wish to sincerely thank you for the interest you have taken in my spiritual welfare, in sending me the booklets, including Parables of the Kingdom, etc., and the Biblical Dialogues.

The "Peoples Paper" arrives regularly and I find it very helpful in my studies. The December issue was very interesting, especially the article—"Before Zion Travailed She Brought Forth," which very clearly explanation number of difficult verses. I am also grateful for the booklet entitled—"Our Bible Translated." I knew the New Testament contained a number of mistranslations, but was, not familiar with them all. The elimination of these passages often makes a difference in the meaning . . . May the Lord bountifully bless you and your Society and the good work you are

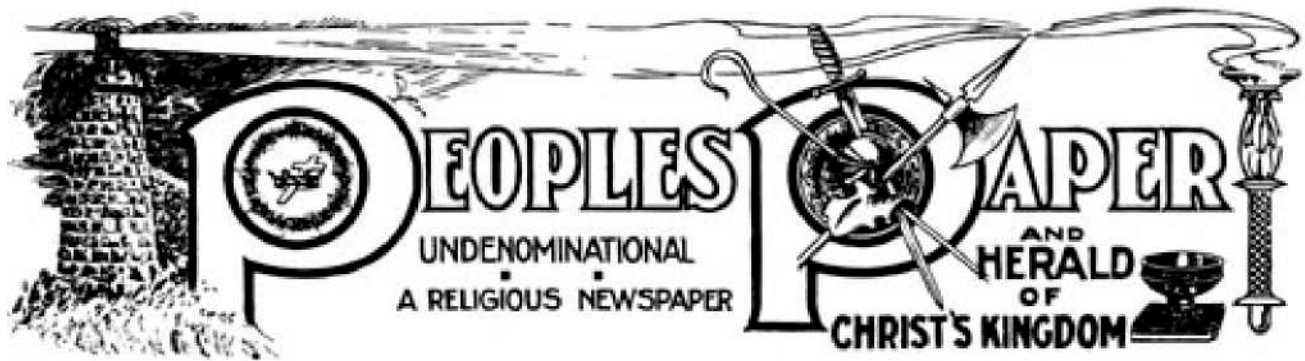
doing. Your Brother in Christ Jesus.

Dear Brethren in the Lord—Please find enclosed cheque for £5 which kindly place to the work where you think best. I trust you are finding much encouragement in spreading the good news of the Kingdom. It does seem as if there is much reason for lifting up our heads now, doesn't there? While disturbing in one sense, it is reassuring to see things going along in such accord with what has been pointed out to us so long. We have been fortunate in having such faithful watchmen who brought these things to our notice, for I suppose most of us would never have seen them for ourselves. It gives such a feeling of comfort that the dear Lord has the situation well in hand, and will intervene at just the right moment. I pray the Lord's blessing on you and His guidance. With Kindest Christian regards; Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was interested in this morning's discussion on "The Seed of Blessing," but as I am old and deaf, it is difficult for me to follow all that is said. Enclosed is £1 note, and I should appreciate a copy of each Sunday's talk, as I try to listen in regularly. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours faithfully.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I very much enjoy "listening in" to the 10 a.m. session on Sunday mornings. I wonder if you could send me the lines "Beyond the Sunset" which you used yesterday morning. I am among the shut-ins, on account of arthritis, and depend so much on the radio for fellowship. Thank you for your interesting address. With best wishes for 1957; yours sincerely,-

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Volume XL No. MELBOURNE, APRIL, 1957

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“Showing the Lord’s Death.”

AS we again approach another anniversary of the great sacrifice of Christ, and the holding of the precious Memorial of His death which our Lord instituted for His followers to keep year by year throughout this Gospel Age, our minds go back to God’s mighty deliverance of Israel from Egypt, as the basis: nor our service.

In Exod. 12:1-15 we have a wonderful account of the instructions given by God to Moses and Aaron to instruct the Israelites, the carrying out of which meant deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Verse 2 states — “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.” It seems as though the Lord wished to especially impress Israel with the importance of their first Passover, as it would mean for them a new life of liberty under the care of His loving providence as they obeyed the instructions and especially valued the protection afforded by the blood of the lamb. Likewise, there is a very important “beginning” for Christians who also acknowledge the blood of the Lamb of God as their only means of deliverance from sin and death.

In verse 3 we read—“In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lam) for a house.” This seemed to picture the time when Jesus, as the anti-typical Lamb, presented Himself to God at Jordan in full consecration. The instructions in verses 5 and 6 were —“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats. And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening, (between the two evenings—margin).” These directions undoubtedly portrayed our Lord Jesus as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” — giving Himself a ransom for all at Calvary, 35 years after His consecration. In the type the literal lamb was kept four days prior to sacrifice as the Passover lamb, so Jesus completed his sacrifice within four years (the antitype being larger than the type) from the time he presented His human life to minister to Israel and give Himself a ransom for all.

Following the instructions given in verses 7-11 of this 12th chapter of Exodus, where we see the importance of marking the doors of the houses of the Israelites with the blood of the Passover lamb, we read in verses 12-14—“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods (princes) of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord through-venerations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” Verses 21-27 give further details as Moses communicated the Lord’s instructions to the elders of Israel. We read in verses 25-27—“And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.” It is very evident that the Lord intended Israel to keep the Passover service as a reminder of His great deliverance and care over them, but that nation as a whole did not adhere to God’s instructions and “keep the feast” in spirit and in truth.

We know of Israel’s failure to observe God’s requirements by the nature of John the Baptist’s ministry, it being noteworthy that John the Baptist commenced his ministry at the Passover season, and our Lord began His ministry six months later, at the time of Israel’s Day of Atonement. We read in Matthew 3,—“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ... I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear;

he shall baptize you with the holy spirit.” (Verses 1,2,11.)

Six months later, at the time of our Lord’s baptism, we read in John 1:29, 35-37—”The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” How fitting it was for John, the Baptist to refer to Jesus in this way—”Behold the Lamb of God.”

Throughout our Lord’s earthly life He would keep three annual Jewish Passovers, and knowing that the fourth Passover after beginning His ministry would complete His sacrifice as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,” we can understand to some extent His words as recorded by Luke 22:14, 15—”And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.”

For 31 years Jesus had devoted His ministry to calling, teaching and sanctifying the dear followers who really felt that they wanted nothing else in life but to walk in the steps of their Master—this Messiah—this Jesus—whom God had sent, as His Lamb, to take away the sins of the whole world. We are well aware, also, dear friends, that ever since our Lord’s first advent He has been seeking only the same devoted followers who are willing; yes, really willing to go through the same experiences, the same contradictions of sinners, the same ignominy and shame, the same sacrificial death, that all these faithful ones may share in the same glorious inheritance, by the power and favor of God.

As the hour approached for the last Jewish Passover that God could accept, our Lord knew that He was to be the Lamb of God. The preparations were complete; Jesus and His twelve disciples went to the appointed place for the Passover service, and as we have noted, our Lord declared—”With desire, I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” No doubt these words were intended to impress His little band of followers with the solemnity of this occasion, for He was about to institute the Memorial of His death, which was to serve as a sacred remembrance of His sacrifice to all true followers throughout the Gospel Age.

Upon arrival at the prearranged place for the Passover service, the disciples forgot the privilege of serving in the custom of the feet washing, and Jesus performed this lowly, but all important service, and used the occasion to impart a most effective impression and lesson upon all who would seek to be His disciples. From John 13:12-17 we read—”So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.”

“And as they were eating (the Jewish Passover feast), Jesus took bread (unleavened, picturing purity, free from sin), and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” (Matt. 26:26.) Our Lord was here instituting the Memorial of His death; the unleavened bread representing His sinless flesh, and eating this bread would mean appropriating the value of Christ’s perfection by faith; hence, justification by faith in the sight of God. (See Rom. 5:1.) “And he took the cup (the fruit of the vine, the contents of the cup), and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matt. 26:27, 28.) Drinking of the wine, which represented the blood of Jesus, pictured also appropriating the merit of Christ’s perfect humanity by faith, resulting in justification by faith for all who partake of His merit in full faith and trust.

In Luke 22:19 the words of Jesus are added—”This do in remembrance of me.” And how significant ! Jesus was instructing His disciples in this institution of the Memorial of His death to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover. So, He would imply—No longer keep the Jewish ceremony with the slaying of the literal lamb, but, “This do in remembrance of me.” Yes, indeed, this was to be an annual remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice as the true Lamb of God by ail who could accept Him as such for their sins wid for the sins of the whole world.

It seems that Jesus did not impart the deeper significance of the Memorial to His little band of followers on the night of its institution, as apparently they could not have grasped it at that time. However, with the outpouring of Ole spirit at Pentecost the minds of the apostles and disciples generally were illuminated by the spirit on this important matter. How clearly and beautifully did the Apostle Paul reveal the secondary and deeper truth respecting our Lord’s Memorial, when, by inspiration, he related the exact procedure of Jesus’ institution of this remembrance, and then declared—”For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

And how do the followers of Jesus “show the Lord’s death?” The same Apostle states—”The cup of blessing which we

bless, is it not the communion (common participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (common participation) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. 10:16,17.) These words reveal that true disciples of Christ participate in the sacrifice of the Christ, following their justification by faith, and thus “show the Lord’s death” as members of His body, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”; “for as the body is one, and hath many members, all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” (Col. 1:24; 1 Cor. 12:12.) Thus we see that full consecration “to be dead with Christ” is clearly defined in partaking of the Memorial of our Lord’s death.

In referring to those who may participate in the Lord’s Supper the Apostle Paul declared—“Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.” (1 Cor. 11:28,29). These words from the Apostle are not intended to intimidate any of the Lord’s people who may keenly feel their shortcomings, and are seeking to overcome these, by the Lord’s grace, but rather are to guard against a careless observance. All who have accepted the Lord as their personal Saviour, and have yielded their lives in consecration to walk in the steps of Christ, even unto death, surely should rejoice to participate in the Memorial Supper, either with other brethren, or alone if needs be, that they may “show the Lord’s death till he come,” —till the last members of His body are taken to be with Him, and see Him as He is.

Following the institution of the Memorial of His death by Jesus, came quickly the Gethsemane experiences, the betrayal by Judas, the Judgment Hall treatment, the denial by Peter, the trial before Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again, and finally the cross, the most ignominious and painful experience to which our Lord was subjected. However, even under these most humiliating experiences Jesus did not forget His earthly mother, but commended her to the care of John, and this loving thoughtfulness, even when in extreme suffering, surely shines out as a lasting example of self-forgetfulness on the part of our dear Lord, as He was paying the penalty on behalf of the human race.

The Lord’s disciples shall have some of His experiences also, as they walk in His steps of sacrifice, and the example of Paul is always a great encouragement to us today, as we meditate upon his life of full devotion to the Lord and His cause—“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” (2 Cor. 4:10,11.) May all the Lord’s dear people who gladly partake of His Memorial this year experience His blessing, and ever rejoice in being counted worthy of His calling, and seek His grace and strength daily to continue in the narrow way which leads to life.

Lord, I would follow Thee
In all the way
Thy weary feet have trod;
Yes, if I may.

Help me the cross to bear,
All Thy fair .graces wear.
Close watching unto prayer,
Following Thee.

Passover Memorial. 1957

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 14th April; after sundown on this daze will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord’s Supper by the true followers of the Master.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Sunday, 14th April at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.
Adelaide.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Builders and Contractors’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.
Perth.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6 p.m., at No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House), Perth.
Sydney.—Sunday, 14th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Speak if you are angry and you’ll make one of the best speeches you’ll ever regret.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

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Review of New Covenant.

SOME expressions have been made respecting the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31), to the effect that it is "the only covenant under which provision is made for the forgiveness of sins." There is, however, no such statement in the Scriptures, but there appears much to the contrary. In fact, it seems only when speaking or writing to the Jews, that there is any mention of the "New Covenant." It is only to those who had been under the old "Law Covenant" that the New Covenant is promised. In Romans, chapters 3 and 4, Paul speaks of a righteousness attained by faith—"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," etc. —then goes on to show how Abraham was accounted righteous because of faith and also that David speaks of the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered," etc.

While Jesus said, "This is my blood of the New Testament," He was speaking to Israelites, who, being in bondage of the Law Covenant, needed to be redeemed so that in due time the New Covenant may be established, and it will be through the operation of the New Covenant that salvation will come first to restore Israel and then through them to the whole world.

During the Gospel Age, however, God is taking out the full number for the Church from Gentiles, and these are not dealt with in the way of a collective covenant, but each needs to enter into a personal consecration—a covenant by sacrifice—and so they become members in Christ. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:16,29.) They thus come into the "blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness," under the original Abrahamic Promise (to which the Law was added but did not disannul). See Heb. 6:13-19; Gal. 3:3-8, 17, 18; Acts 3:25; Gal. 4.

It would seem strange if the New Covenant had been established and by it only could sins be forgiven, that the Apostles should have so omitted mention of it in their preaching either to Jews or Gentiles. Note Paul's noble address before Agrippa, yet no mention is made of any New Covenant, Acts 26 (note verse 18). Jer. 31:31,32 distinctly states that it is to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, who were under the old Law Covenant, that the New Covenant is promised. How foolish, then, is the statement that is made, "If it (the New Covenant) did not go into operation at Calvary, then no one's sins have been forgiven."

Another expression is that Paul tells us that "Jesus set aside the first old Law Covenant that He might establish the second," inferring, here, that the New Covenant must be at once in operation. What the Apostle appears to have in mind in this verse is, that Jesus was the great antitype of the Aaronic priest, and that the typical arrangement had now passed away and the antitype was being established. The antitypical sacrifices had begun. Christ, as typified by the bullock, was slain, and the Church, as typified by the Lord's goat, was following "in His steps." See Heb. 13:12,13, which sacrifice must be offered in the spirit of praise as indicated in the sweet incense that burned on the typical altar. So says the Apostle, Rom. 8:36, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long" (all down the Gospel Day). "This is the day of salvation, this is the acceptable time" (for such offerings). So the Body of Christ must be complete and each member be conformed to the great Head, "filling up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake." (Col. 1:24.)

We are referred to 2 Cor. 3:6, "Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament," and it is suggested that this means that the New Covenant is being operated by these able ministers. The failure to understand this expression seems to be in regard to the largeness of the antitype in comparison with the type. The type is spoken of as a shadow compared to the reality. The selecting and anointing of the Aaronic priesthood occupied a very brief time, but it shadowed or typified the Gospel Age of about 2000 years. The ministers of the New Covenant are being chosen;

Paul was one, and others have been selected all down the age, but not until all are ready will the New Covenant be established with Israel and the blessing of all the families of the earth begin.

It would be indeed a sad thing to think of the New Covenant as having been in operation all down the age, for under it everyone is to be personally responsible, and if he dies, he will die for his own sin (not Adam's), and there would be no resurrection for any who had died apart from Christ during the past 1900 years.

When the “prophet like unto Moses” (Acts 3:22) begins His work, He will rewrite God’s Law in the inward parts and write it in their hearts. That is, all mankind will be led up the highway, and taught not only to do, but to love righteousness, so that it will become their nature to do right, and to abhor that which is evil.

With the Church it is different; while we learn to love righteousness and to hate iniquity, yet our human nature is not led up to perfection. It still remains, as says the Apostle, “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.” We are granted the holy spirit to help our infirmities and have to continually keep our bodies under restraint. We do not have God’s law written in these fleshly hearts, but we receive a new mind—the mind of Christ—and have to conquer all the tendencies of the human nature that would hinder our progress as new creatures.

There will not be that continual, personal fight under the New Covenant, when all difficulties will be removed.

No lion will be in the path, the stones (of temptation) will be taken out of the way, and everything made easy. All environments will encourage righteousness, which will have its happy rewards of health and prosperity. Evil and its consequences will gradually be blotted out and human hearts of the obedient will be brought into happy accord with likeness to God. Then the law of God will have been rewritten in the hearts of the human family.

Books Available.

“God’s Promises Come True”—£1.

“Most Holy Faith”—£1.

“The Book of Books”—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“Tabernacle Shadows”—6/-.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”—11,

“Manner of Christ’s Return”—1/-.

“Christ’s Return”—1/-, “Some of the Parables”—1/-, “Hope Beyond the Grave”—1/-.

“God and Reason”—1/.

A gossip is like a blotter—soaks up everything, and gets it all backwards.

Unto a Perfect Man.

(Eph. 4:13)

(Convention Address)

OFTEN in the apostles' writings we find the use of the analogy of the natural growth of a child up to manhood to illustrate the desired spiritual growth of the "new creature." Children are endeared to their elders by their guilelessness; they live, speak and act "just as they are." Unfortunately, in these days of child delinquency, many do not retain this lovely characteristic as long as in former times.

However, despite all the endearing qualities of young children, they all have traits that need correction. At tender ages they need training and attention, and if left without a parent or guardian they can quickly bring injury to themselves and cause damage to property. Many a parent doubtless heaves a sigh of relief in the contemplation that some day their children will grow up and require less continual oversight. Yet, as parents have confessed, when the children grow up it does not always mean that they prove to be of less concern; though they progress in certain respects to be less bother, youth is still quite often very self-willed, and enters other fields of temptation and foolishness. Therefore, it is very understandable that parents should be very pleased to see their children grow up to manhood and womanhood with really good qualities and characters, and that they should feel pained if that is not the case. To quote from Proverbs — "A wise son maketh a glad father . . . but a foolish son is a grief to his father . . . and the sorrow of his mother." (Prov.10:1 ;17:25.)

Now it is just as essential and pleasing to the Heavenly Father above that His spiritual children or "sons" of this Gospel Age should progress well too, and blossom forth unto a "perfect man."

The thought of the word "perfect," as used in our text and other places in the Scriptures, is not that of sinless perfection in the same sense as that in which our Lord was born unto this world — "harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" — but the thought is rather of spiritual adulthood, a fully developed Christian.

In 1 Pet.1:14 we have a verse that helps us to discern how to make this desirable progress. One hardly knows which end of the verse to take first; the latter portion refers to ignorance as playing a large part in the fashioning of our former life. Young children are apt to play with fire, and things of like danger are detrimental to their well being and safety, because of their ignorance, lack of knowledge. The same applies to spiritual "children." Because of lack of knowledge of God's requirements for us, we sometimes "burn our fingers."

The child that touches the hot stove has its ignorance removed, but the better and less painful way is to listen to the parents' instruction. Addressing the Christians to whom he wrote (and this includes all Christians), the apostle says, "as obedient children."

We note that he refers to all Christians as "children." We must all grow from spiritual childhood to that which is referred to "as the stature of a perfect (or fully developed) Christian." There is no short cut.

Next, we would stress "obedient." By obedient children only will the required progress be made. The very best instruction that can be given will not profit the child who refuses to obey it. A magistrate recently commented—"I do not like to hear this term 'child delinquency' ' • it appears to me rather a lack of parental ability to control." It is not our desire to enter into debate on this question of prominence in our day, but in fairness to a parent it is right to recognise that if a child or youth refuses to profit from instruction properly given, then it is the child that errs and must receive the blame. As spiritual children also, we may hear the voice of the Lord and thus to a good degree have our ignorance removed, but it is only if we are obedient children that we will fashion (form or model) our lives aright.

This lesson is taught again in our Lord's words in Matt. 7:24,26—the one who heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them is a wise man; the one who hears only and doeth not is a foolish man,—he will never progress to a perfect man in the sense of our text. (Read also James 1:22,25.) If we are dutiful, obedient children we have nothing to fear from any consciousness of lack of knowledge or understanding, for the Lord will see to it that we receive the needed instruction and revelation in good time. What we should fear is that ignorance of our own making referred to in Eph.4:17,18. (Note margin, "hardness of their heart.")

In Heb. , 5:14 we find this word "perfect" rendered "full age." (Read first portion of verse). A moment's reflection makes it clear that the Apostle Paul is alluding there to those more advanced and mature who have reached spiritual adulthood, the very ones whom our text refers to as "unto a perfect man, unto the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Referring to the concordance it is interesting and helpful to note some meanings of the word “full” as it is used in the Scripture, and which meaning seems embodied in the word “perfect” in the text. The meaning is “replete, or stored full.” It seems another way of saying, We are what we are. We think of the Psalmist,—”As a man is in heart so is he.” Whatever we are “replete” in, or “stored full of” makes the person or being. Quoting a Scripture or two where this exact word “full” is used will help us to grasp the point. See Matt.23:28. You see, they were replete, “stored full” of hypocrisy and iniquity so that there was no room for any good thing to enter. In Rom. 1:29, we find the word again; note verses 28,29. They were full to overflowing with evil propensities. We find the word again in the Apostle Peter’s description of the class that once knew the truth, but wilfully turned from it. (Read 2 Pet.2:14.) Alternately, we look at Rom.15:14, and here we see the apostle’s hope expressed that these Christians were replete, “stored full” of the good things. In James 3:17 we have it again. How good, indeed, to be “stored full” of this wisdom that comes down from above.

This repleteness or storing is not to be in the selfish sense, merely to retain or hold, but means that every man is stored full of something. James gives us the thought in Chapter 3:11, which please note. The fountain will pour forth only what it is “stored full of” and men will do the same. If it is evil that is stored within, it will manifest itself in word and act; if it is good it will overflow in gracious words and deeds. In James’ discourse the tongue comes into the discussion, and in chapter 3:8 he admits that the tongue is an unruly evil, and reminds us that so often out of the same mouth proceeds words that bless God and at other times words that curse or slander our fellows. Seeing that the tongue is such an unruly member “which no man can tame,” does the apostle allow this as any excuse for a professing Christian? Certainly not! The apostle says in verse 10, “My brethren, these things ought not so to be.” No man, of himself, can control the tongue, but with God all things are possible, and the more replete, or stored full, or filled with the holy spirit we become, the more the tongue will be controlled. In verse 2 the apostle says—’If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man,’ a developed or mature Christian, a child no longer, but one who is approaching close to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

It is recorded of Jesus that He was full of the holy spirit, and that being so, it was only natural that men should note and wonder at “the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.” Here we have the perfect Exemplar, the One who will teach us daily how to progress “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,” but it is essential that we continue as obedient children and grow thereby. Our Lord left nothing to be desired so far as proper provision was concerned for our spiritual welfare. Notable such provision was the giving of the apostles and their wonderful messages preserved down the age to this day, as well as all the helping pastors and teachers of which the church of God has had need.

Read a verse or two prior to our text—See Eph.4:11,12. “For the perfecting of the saints” this provision was made, not to found large sectarian organisations now commonly referred to as the churches; for the perfecting of the saints it was all given, not to convert the world in this age. And those whom God gave or provided have been faithful in their mission; it has been emissaries from another source who have sought to convert the world before the time, who have played flatterer to the world and begotten multitudes of “tares” whose claim to Christian discipleship lies in name only, who know little of, and are concerned less with, growing in the knowledge of God and in the grace and favor of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, to whom, by the grace of God, the torch of truth has been preserved to this day, continue ourselves to grow (for it is fatal for any to conclude that they have fully attained the measure of perfection called for; note Phil. 3:12), and labor and preach faithfully as did the apostles of old; to proclaim “Christ in you, the hope of glory . . . warning and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man ‘perfect’ in Christ Jesus,” (Co1.1:27,28); as also did Epaphras mentioned in Col. 4:12 — “always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete (stored full to overflowing) in all the will of God.”

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., over the Easter period, in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Ave., Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 57/6.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book. ‘—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is wired at 10/- post paid.

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The Power of God

“Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high,” —Luke 24:49.

POWER is one of the attributes of the Heavenly Father, all of which are equally essential in the carrying out of His great plan of redemption. Without power to act, wisdom would fail to accomplish its designs, justice could not be enforced, and love would be helpless.

There appears to be two words in the New Testament both of which are rendered by our word “power.” The one refers to power in the sense of rule or authority; the other speaks of ability, strength of will, power of character. It is the latter of these two words which is used in this passage,—“Ye shall receive power, the holy spirit coming upon you.” Thus we see the connection between the baptism of the holy spirit and the promised power.

The Apostles had been with Christ, had seen His work, His miracles, and had been taught by Him. They had seen Him in His passion, His death, and resurrection, and were yet to witness His ascension. Yet with all this experience the Master said, “Wait until ye be endued with power.” Our Lord has said, “It is expedient that I go away, for if I go not away the holy spirit will not come.”

Thus they were to tarry for the promise of the Father; they did not wait in vain. They were gathered together, a body of men, like ourselves, no doubt, in great expectation, wondering what was going to happen. There was the sound of a rushing, mighty wind (Acts 2:1-3), and these fishermen and others had received the holy spirit—the power of God. They went forth endued with power, as the Apostles of Christ, and faced the world with courage. How useless it would be to start out in Christian work, or as a follower of Christ without the baptism of the holy spirit. Jesus Himself did not begin His ministry until He had received this promise of the Father.

“I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.”—Phil. 4:13.

“I cannot do it alone;
I change with the changing sky;
To-day, so glad and bright,
To-morrow, too weak to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win,
Jesus and I.”

This gift of the holy spirit of power (2 Tim. 1:7), is a constant one (John 14:16,17). Like the disciples we shall find that by tarrying together and waiting on God and in study of His word we shall be renewed in spirit and in power, and enabled to keep clear of the world and its snares.

Having received this power, Acts 1:8 informs us as to the use to be made of it—“Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” So each one who comes under the same anointing, through our Lord Jesus Christ, has a responsibility to witness to the truth according to opportunity.

Matthew 5:41,42.

THESE injunctions are not generally understood: it does not mean that we should be turned aside from the duties and affairs of life at anybody's bidding. In olden times certain magistrates, governors, etc., had the authority of law to press the service of the people for governmental work. For instance, note how Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus a certain distance. The word "compel" in our lesson is from the same Greek word, and refers to a legal compulsion; "commandeered" would be the modern way of referring to such matter. Our Lord's injunction is that His followers should be so broadminded, so liberal, so generous, that they would not only obey the legal commands but be ready to go further—to do more than had been required.

In thus doing heartily, joyfully, and agreeably all and more than would be commanded they would be exemplifying the generous spirit which represents our Lord and His teachings. By such breadth of sentiment they would be known as Jesus' disciples, who had learned of Him. Indeed, we may say that the whole trend of the teachings of the Lord and the Apostles is in line with this, and opposed to stinginess and narrowness and selfishness—in accord with generosity, full measure, pressed down, heaped up and running over. The Christian measure would be nothing short, though it might be a little more. A Christian measure of anything must be full, never skimp. This is an element of the higher law, the law of love, and its spirit of generosity in our hearts.

In similar strain the great Teacher enjoins that we should give and lend to those requesting. We cannot suppose that He meant that a parent should give anything harmful to a child which cries for it; we cannot suppose that the Lord meant that our loans or gifts would be such as would be injurious to the recipients. Love must be the basis of our conduct, as it is the very essence of the Master's law. We cannot think either that He meant that we should neglect the interests of our own homes and families in giving to others or loaning to them.

We are bound to suppose that our Lord in this, as in all things, wished His followers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. What He wished to enjoin evidently was the spirit or disposition which would have pleasure in loaning or giving to the needy, and which is so circumstanced as to be able to comply with such requests and would be glad to do so. using the proper discretion and judgment, as to time, place, and persons. In other words, the spirit of Christ is a benevolent spirit and not a mean or stingy one, and all the Lord's people, more or less selfish, need to learn this. There are few perhaps who would be in any danger of injuring themselves or others immediately dependent upon them by any acts of benevolence.

Be Like the Spring.

Up in the mountains there is a spring. Day and night, year in and year out, for years this spring has been running continuously. Long before there were homes about it, people came from afar to quench their thirst with its cool flow. The spring's waters are pure and health-giving, for nothing is allowed to accumulate in the waters. Sieved through rocks and gravel for miles, all impurities are washed away before its sparkling waters are offered to whomsoever may take and drink.

About a mile from this spring is a pond.
It is still and stagnant.
If you were to drink from it you might die from its accumulated poison.
It gives nothing.

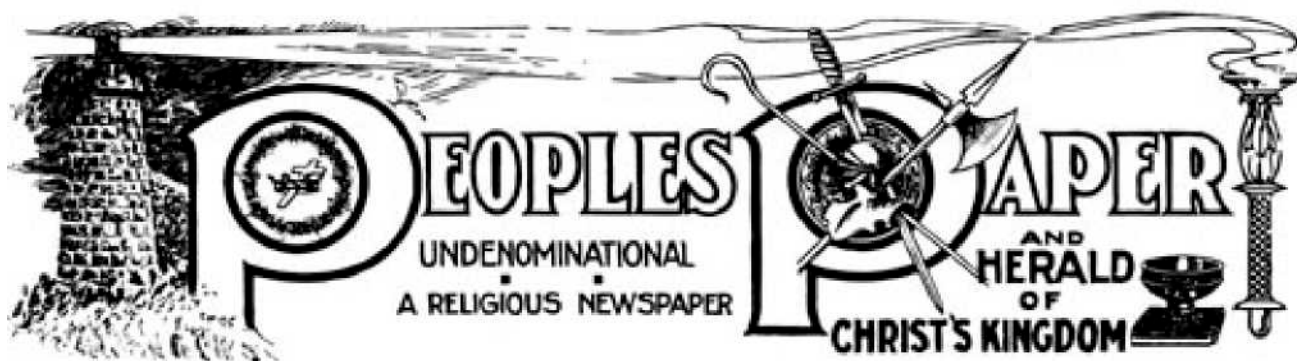
But the little spring is always giving.
Always it is made and kept clean by moving.

Let us keep our hearts like the little spring.
Keep the kind and thoughtful deeds flowing all the time.

The only satisfactory life is the one that is continually giving away and renewing itself by acts of service and devotion for others.

Be true to God, and to the thought of His presence all day long; let self occupy as little as possible of our thoughts; care much for His approval, and comparatively little for the impression we are making on others; feed the inward light with oil, and then freely allow it to shine.

—Goulburn.



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The Witness and Seal of the Holy Spirit.

(Convention Address)

“The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”—Rom 8:16.

AMONG Christian people there is a good deal of misunderstanding in regard to the meaning of the expression “witness of the spirit.” How does the holy spirit witness to us respecting our acceptance with the Father—that we have become sons of God, and that under divine providence we are being prepared to be associated with our Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennial Kingdom? Not knowing what the witness of the spirit is, many of the Lord’s people are uncertain whether they have it or not. Others claim that they have the witness of the holy spirit, and refer to their happy feelings as the evidence. But the “witness” of feelings is a most unsatisfactory one; it fails those who rely upon it in the times of greatest need. When all men speak well of them, when health is favorable, when they are financially prosperous, when friends are numerous, they feel happy; but in proportion as some or all of these conditions are reversed, they feel unhappy, and lose what they had supposed was the “witness of the spirit.”

Such are deceived and misled by their feelings; they feel themselves happier and think themselves drawing nearer to God at times when really they are, under the Adversary’s leading, going straight into temptations. Again the blessings associated with the trials and disappointments of life which are designed of the Lord to draw us nearer to Himself, and to make us most appreciative of the Saviour’s loving sympathy and care, are partially lost upon this class; because, losing the witness of their feelings, which they falsely consider the witness of the spirit, they feel so bereft, and so hungry and thirsty for a return of the good feelings, that they lose many precious lessons which can only be obtained when leaning confidently on the Lord’s arm and communing with Him amidst the trials and perplexities and disappointments of life.

Another class of Christians learning the unreliability of the “witness” of feelings seem to conclude that God has denied (to them at least) any reliable evidence of His favor—any sure “witness” on the subject of their acceptance as “sons” into His family. Their doubts and uncertainty arise in part from a misapprehension of the doctrine of election; and yet these friends are quite correct in concluding that their changeable feelings could not be a proper criterion by which to judge of their sonship. Others, because the Scriptures declare, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee,” judge of their sonship by peace of mind; but when they look at the people of the world around them, and see that many of them have peace of mind too, their view of the spirit’s witness proves insufficient to sustain their hopes, or to give them assurance. Then the dark hour of tribulation and distress comes, and they say, How easy a matter to be deceived, and are in torment lest they have grieved the spirit—for “fear hath torment.”

Persons of large credulity (misnamed faith) will imagine they hear the spirit’s “whisper” to an inner ear and they congratulate themselves accordingly,—even though they should subsequently ascertain that the information “whispered” was absolutely untrue. Other Christians of more logical mind, who cannot thus delude themselves, are perplexed that their friends should so confidently assert the witness of the spirit, while they themselves have no such assurance.

The difficulty lies largely in the erroneous view that the spirit is a person, and which seeks to apply personality to its witnessings. When the fact is realised that the spirit of God is the power or influence which God may be pleased to exercise, the subject is clarified and the “witness of the spirit” becomes a matter easy of distinguishment. It will be a blessing to those who have this witness to know it of a surety; and it will be a blessing to those who have not this witness to ascertain their lack, so that they may fulfil the conditions and obtain the witness, without which none are

authorised to consider themselves sons of God, in acceptable standing with the Father.

But what a joy and peace comes to those who have the true witness—to those who have the correct experiences and who have learned how to read them. It is to them indeed joy in sorrow, light in darkness, comfort in affliction, strength in weakness. And the full and explicit directions on this subject, as on all subjects, are found in that wonderful book, our Father's Word, the Bible. In it and through its testimonies God's spirit witnesseth with our spirits.

How To Know The Spirit's Witness

A man's mind or spirit may be known by his words and conduct; and so we may know God's mind or spirit by His words and dealings. The testimony of His Word is that whosoever cometh unto Him (by faith, and reformation from bad works and dead works, through Jesus) is accepted. (Heb. 7:25.). Hence, the questions to be asked of themselves by those who are seeking a witness of the spirit respecting their sonship are:

Was I ever drawn to Christ?—to recognise Him as my Redeemer, through whose righteousness alone I could have access to the heavenly Father, and be acceptable with Him?

If this can be answered in the affirmative, the next question would.

Did I ever fully consecrate myself—my life, my time, my talents, my influence, my all—to God?

If this question also can be answered in the affirmative, the inquirer may rest fully assured that he has been accepted with the Father, in the Beloved One, and recognised of Him as a son. And if scrutinising his own heart's desires and sentiments he finds it still trusting in the merit of Jesus, and still consecrated to do the Lord's will, he may allow the sweet confidence and peace which this thought of harmony and relationship to divinity brings, to fully possess his heart. This conviction of the Lord's grace toward us in Christ constructed from facts of our own experience, built upon the unalterable character and Word of God, is not mutative, not changeable, as it would be if built on the shifting sands of feelings. If doubts or fears intrude in some dark hour, we have only to take ourselves to the Word of the Lord and examine afresh the facts and the foundation, and if our hearts are still loyal to the Lord, faith, joy and peace will instantly return to us; if we find our faith in "the precious blood" crumbling, or our consecration slipping away, we know the true condition of affairs, and can at once make the proper repairs and thus re-establish our "full assurance of faith." (Heb.10:22.) . But be it noticed that each one who would have this assurance must "set to his seal that God is true," that our Lord changeth not, but is "the same yesterday, today and forever." The Lord's consecrated people may therefore rest assured that having once come into the conditions of divine favor, they may continue under those conditions so long as their hearts are loyal to God and their desires in harmony with His will; so long as they are at heart obedient to the divine commands —briefly comprehended in the word love—to God and men.—Heb. 11:6:13:8.

Whoever has taken the specified steps has the assurance, the "witness" of the Word of God, that he is a child of God; and this, during the Gospel Age, signifies that he is a branch of the true vine, a probationary member of the true Church. (John 15:1.) To such the word of God witnesses that they have joined the' true Church, which is Christ's body. The witness is given to their spirit, their mind, by God's spirit, which testifies through His Word. And the same spirit of truth assures such that if their hearts continue faithful to the Lord to the close of their probation,—if they willingly and gladly take up the cross daily, seeking as best they are able to follow in the Master's footsteps. their probationary membership in the Church of Christ will shortly be changed to actual membership—after they have finished their course, and been made sharers in His resurrection, the first resurrection.—Phil. 3:10.

However, the spirit of God, through His Word, witnesses with equal clearness that it is possible for those who have already become branches of the true Vine to be cut off, if unfaithful —if they fail to bring forth the proper fruits of the spirit of love. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit he (the Father) taketh away, and every branch that bringeth forth fruit he purgeth (pruneth) it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The spirit of God, through His Word, thus testifies or witnesses to us the rule of our heavenly Father's dealing with His sons, —chastisements, pruning, taking away of the dross, and a development of the fruit-bearing qualities. Hence, to have these experiences, after having become identified with the "Vine," is to have the witness of the spirit that we are still in the "Vine," and still recognised as branches of it,—still under our Lord's care and discipline. On the contrary, if anyone lack these disciplines, prunings, etc., after having become identified with the Vine, he lacks this "witness of the spirit," and correspondingly has reason to doubt his acceptance with the Lord.—Heb. 12:7.

If we were all perfect, absolutely perfect, and had been proven so by tests, the case would be different; God would then love us for our perfection and harmony with Himself; then chastisement and bitter experiences would be signs of His disfavor. But as it is, we all know that all are imperfect, that we all come far short of the divine standard; and that our new hearts, our new wills, our transformed minds or spirits, alone are acceptable with God,—and that through the

merit of Christ, and in probationary sense, with a view to our testing, development and final perfecting. Only in proportion as we learn to appreciate the divine perfections and our own deficiencies, can we appreciate the many and important lessons to be learned, and the necessity for the trying experiences we are required to undergo in order to develop in us the divine likeness.

The Scriptures inform us that the heavenly Father is preparing a glorious spiritual Temple, in and through which the world of mankind is to have the privilege of coming to at-one-ment, reconciliation with Himself. We see in the Scriptures the great Architect's ideal in respect of this Temple,—that the ideal of the whole was represented in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, its chief corner stone, and “top-stone,” “laid in heaven.” We can see the better what is required of all those who will be acceptable to God as the “living stones” of that Temple;—to be builded together with Christ the Head, “for an habitation of God through the spirit.” And we discern our own roughness by nature, our inharmony with the graceful lines of the Temple, delineated in its “top-stone.” We can readily discern that much chiseling and much polishing are absolutely necessary for us, if we would be fitted and prepared for the place in this Temple to which, by the grace of God, we aspire. And hence those who find that they are not receiving the blows from the Lord's hammer and chisel, lack this “witness” which the spirit of God through His Word testifies must come to all the living stones of His Temple, and which even the grand Topstone did not escape. If divine providence does not mark out for us a “narrow way” with a certain amount of difficulty and adversity,—if we are simply permitted to rest without difficulties, afflictions, trials, etc., then we may know of a surety that God is not dealing with us as with the living stones which shall form part of the Temple,—the sons—because we lack this “witness” of our acceptance and preparation. A realisation that such is our condition ought to send us promptly to the Lord to inquire why we have no tribulations and adversities, and to “examine ourselves” whether or not we be still in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5.); and whether or not we are still endeavouring to walk faithfully in the footsteps of our Master, in fulness of consecration to the Father's will. But if we have this “witness” of chiselings, polishings, prunings, disciplines, chastisements, let us take them patiently, joyfully, appreciatively, as evidence of our Father's love essential to our attainment to our high-calling;—in full accord with the spirit's testimony or witness,—that we are sons of God, “heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, (only) if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:17.

The humble and obedient children of God will co-operate with the Lord in the development of their own characters, they will note their own defects and seek earnestly to correct them,—hearkening for the Father's voice of direction, instruction or loving reproof, and ever seeking His approving smile. This is the class of whom the Apostle writes, who judge themselves, and who, therefore, need less chastening of the Lord. (1 Cor. 11:31.) To be of this class requires fulness of consecration; and these are and will be the overcomers, who shall be deemed worthy of joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord in His kingdom. To this class, obedient and watchful, the Lord says, “I will guide thee with mine eye,”—“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory.” Those who can be guided only by continual scourging are not of the overcoming class, and will not be accounted worthy to be of the Lord's Bride.

What The Holy Spirit Witnesses

It would seem to be important that each one of the Lord's professing children shall examine himself whether or not he have “the witness of the spirit,” that he is one of the children of God: and we need to repeat the examination frequently, and thus “watch” and keep ourselves in the love of God, rejoicing in the witness of His spirit.

Are we being pruned continually? Are we passing through such experiences, great or small, as are removing from us more or less rapidly the fleshly tendencies, which war against the soul—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, selfishness, rudeness, and all things contrary to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus—the spirit of love? If so, to the extent that we can realise this pruning work in progress, we will no doubt be able to recognise growth in the proper direction—in meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. Whoever, after a careful, examination along these lines, marked out in the Lord's Word, can realise such experiences in progress may know of his continued acceptance with God, because he has this witness of the spirit.

Again, the spirit witnesses that “Whosoever is born (begotten) of God, sinneth not.” (1 John 5:18.) The child of God may be overpowered by his old nature (reckoned dead, but not fully, actually so); he may be overtaken in a fault, may err in judgment or in word, but he will never willingly transgress the divine law. So then, if our hearts can respond that we delight to do God's will, and would not willingly violate or in any manner oppose it,—that we would rather have God's will done, and His plan fulfilled, even though it should dash our fondest hopes and break every tender tie,—then we have this witness that our spirit or mind agrees with the witness of the spirit of the Truth here recorded; and this is a witness, not only that we were once accepted into God's family, but that we are there still.

The spirit witnesses, through the Word of God, that those who are the Lord's people are separate from the world—that their hopes and aims and general spirit, disposition, are different. “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” “Yea, mad all that will live godly in Christ

Jesus shall suffer persecution.”—John 15:19; 2 Tim. 3:12.

Can our hearts testify that these words properly represent our experience in life? If so, the spirit (mind) of God is thus again witnessing with our spirit (mind) that we are His. The holy spirit witnesses that, “Whosoever is born (begotten) of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” (1 John 5:4.) Let us examine our hearts, our spirits, our minds, in the light of this testimony of the holy spirit. Are we overcomers, according to this standard? The standard is that to be the Lord’s we must be out of harmony with the world, in conflict with it—its aims, its hopes, its ambitions. The thought of conflict is contained in the expression “overcometh the world.” And we can readily see that no one can be an overcomer of the world who is in sympathy and affiliation with it, and its general spirit of selfishness, pride, ambition, etc.

Again, the holy spirit witnesses, through our Lord’s testimony, that whosoever is ashamed of the Redeemer and of His Truth which He taught, of him will the Lord be ashamed when He comes to make up His jewels. (Mark 8:38.) Whoever, therefore, finds his heart so in love with the Lord and His Word that he takes pleasure, on every suitable occasion, in acknowledging Jesus as His Redeemer and Master, and to faithfully present the Word of His testimony, so long does such an one have this as another witness of the holy spirit that he is a child of God, and an heir of the kingdom. Such have reason to rejoice in the Master’s promise that they are just the kind whom He will be glad to confess before his Father and before the holy angels. But if any have not this witness—if, on the contrary, their hearts witness that they are ashamed of the Lord, ashamed to confess themselves His followers, ashamed to own His “brethren,” the members of His body, and ashamed to confess the doctrines which He taught—any who have these experiences have the witness of the spirit that if this condition of things be not altered the Lord will be ashamed of them at His second coming, and will not confess them before the Father and His holy messengers.

Furthermore, the holy spirit witnesses to us, through the Word, that if we are the children of God we will not be ignorant of things present nor of “things to come,” because we will be enlightened and taught of God, through the Word of His grace—the Word of His spirit. As we mature, “grow in grace,” we will desire and seek and obtain, in addition to the milk of the Word, the “strong meat” which the Apostle declares is for those of fuller development. (Heb. 5:13,14.) The development of the graces of the spirit, faith, fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, piety, brotherly-kindness, love, will bring us into closer fellowship with the Father and with the Lord Jesus, so that the Lord will be able and willing to communicate to us more and more clearly a knowledge of His gracious plans, as well as of His gracious character.

Referring to this growth, the Apostle Peter says,—“If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off . . . For if ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”-2 Pet. 1:5-11.

(To be continued.)

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Convention at Adelaide.

THE Adelaide Class had been planning and praying for the Lord's blessing upon their arrangements for the Convention at the Easter season, and now that this happy occasion is once more in the past it is felt that our prayers were most abundantly answered, and a blessing beyond our capacity fully to retain was poured out upon our hearts and minds, making us rejoice, and giving us renewed courage to press with vigor along in the narrow way which leads to life.

There remains in our hearts a spirit of thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father for giving us the very special blessing at this Convention season. It was a very great pleasure to meet and greet brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, also some brethren from Queensland, and a Sister from Perth, W.A. We trust that the dear friends who have sacrificed time and means to attend this Convention will be richly blessed and recompensed in mind and heart, by being granted still clearer insight into the glorious attributes of our Heavenly Father, as well as a deeper understanding of His wonderful Plan of the Ages, and that we may all be led to a more fervent zeal to cooperate with the Lord in the great work of our character development, and thus, by His grace, "make our calling and election sure."

From the opening session and words of welcome on Good Friday to the closing feature on the Monday evening, the various meetings provided a succession of rich and very profitable spiritual refreshment and blessing. Words of praise to God and thankfulness for the privilege of being present to enjoy the uplifting and inspiring provision were echoed freely by those present.

Following the address of welcome on Good Friday, a Bible Study was taken in Eph. 3:14-21. These verses contain one of the Apostle Paul's inspired prayers. The main petition in the prayer is that God, in the great riches of His glory, may cause the believers to be mightily strengthened in the inner man (See Col. 1:11.); that Christ, (the spirit of Christ), may dwell in their hearts in such large and copious measure, that they may be so transformed in mind that they will come to appreciate the various dimensions of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with God's holy spirit of truth and grace to the fulness of their capacity. The mighty power of God which works in us by faith is able abundantly to accomplish things far above our highest thought or expectation. To Him be all the glory in the Church by Jesus Christ throughout the ages to come.

The Bible Study in Ezek. 37:1-14 was also found interesting and timely. The vision of the "valley of dry bones" was given to Israel to encourage the people during their period of captivity in Babylon. Their hopes of ever becoming an organised nation had reached a very low ebb. The Lord's Message to the Prophet was that the dry bones represented the whole house of Israel. As a people they had lost heart and said, "Our strength is dried, our hope is lost, we are cut off from our parts"--from all tribal and national union. After asking the question "Can these bones live," the Lord explained that His purpose was to revive and restore the nation and bring them again to their own land. Instead of allowing them to remain a scattered people in Babylonia—in national oblivion—God would, in the out-working of His gracious designs, bring them again to their own land; and this was accomplished by the Lord who "stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus and caused him to make a proclamation Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up." (2 Chron. 36:22, 23.) This is the primary fulfilment.

There is also a secondary fulfilment on a much larger scale, and it takes place at the end of the Gospel Age. It had its beginning in the aims and aspirations of the Zionist movement. But the "bones" were very dry and withered, and there seemed little hope that the ideals of a few Jewish zealots would ever be realised. "Can these bones live?" would seem to express how humanly impossible it was, and the sentiments of many were echoed in the words of verse 11—"Dried are our bones, and lost is our hope; we are quite cut off." (Leeser) .

In the year 1914 there was a "shaking," or as one rendering of verse 7 states--"There was a noise, and behold a commotion, and the bones came together, bone to its bone." Yes, in 1917, during this "commotion" when Palestine was freed from the Turkish oppression, there began a great regathering of Jews which has never ceased to this day. Bone joins to bone, as Jews from 74 nations of the earth have gathered together until the Jewish population of Israel has swelled from 56,000 in 1914 to about 2,000,000 today.

In his vision the Prophet saw a further development—the skeleton took shape . . . "the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above," (verse 8.) This is the point of time to which we have reached today. Looking away from the prophecy to the land of Israel, we see not a skeleton, but a nation, for in May, 1948, the "bones" took shape and form and for the first time for 2,500 years Israel is a sovereign and independent nation.

Another has said, commenting on the "great noise" and the "earthquake" (Rev. Ver.) and its application to our day—"The great noise is the 'seventh trumpet' which has begun to sound; the earthquake is the coming great revolution in

which mystic Babylon will fall before the great 'Prince of Peace' whom Cyrus in a measure prefigured." Verse 8 continues—"But there was no breath in them." What, then, is the next step in Israel's revival? The prophecy indicates that it is the "loosing of the four winds," which is to bring life to the nation. Then it is that God's spirit will be poured out upon the nation, and He will make with them a New Covenant, putting His law "in their inward parts, and writing it in their hearts." (See Rom. 11:15, 25-27.)

Another very helpful Bible Study was taken up with consideration of 1 John 3:13-21. In these verses it was noted that the Apostle is holding up before us the necessity of maintaining in our hearts the spirit of the Lord—the spirit of love for the brethren. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the supreme example; He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. The Apostle urges that our love shall be sincere, and practical—not just in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. It is by yielding our hearts in sincere obedience to the Father's law of love for God and for the brethren that we will know "that we are of the truth," and shall "assure (margin, persuade) our hearts before him."

It seems important that we shall have hearts which bear witness to us that we are sincerely striving to serve the Lord wholeheartedly. If our hearts condemn us that we are not living fully up to the requirements of the "law of love," then we may be sure that our condemning conscience is but an echo of the Lord's disapproval; and, this should cause us to examine ourselves prayerfully with the object of removing the hindrance to our fuller fellowship with the Lord. On the other hand, an enlightened, approving conscience gives us confidence before God, especially as to the fulfilment of our prayers. (Verse 22.).

The portion for study on Easter Monday was taken in Rev. 22:10-21. In verse 10, John is told not to seal the sayings of the prophecy which had been given to him. The reason for this would be that the visions and sayings of the book were intended for the benefit of the Church during the time of her persecution. From verse 11 the thought may be taken that marvellous and meaningful as are the visions that John beheld, they were not intended to especially affect degenerate humanity; the visions would have little or no effect upon the world in all its sin and depravity. These words may be an expansion of Dan. 12:10 and contain a statement in respect of the condition of the ungodly: also an encouragement to the godly to persevere, in the hope of speedy salvation. for "Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me," etc. The Church will receive her reward early in the morning of the New Day. "I will give him (the overcomer) the morning star—Rev. 2:28. Mankind in general will have their trial, retribution and reward during the Millennial Day. (See 1 Cor. 15:23; John 5:28, 29.).

In verse 14 the best manuscripts read—"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree (grove) of life." The application of the words "wash their robes," to the world during the Millennial Age would mean their making use of the cleansing process of the Millennial River, the Word of God, then provided; thus being brought gradually to human perfection—restitution. The "dogs, sorcerers and whoremongers," etc., —could correspond with those "who will not hear that Prophet" and who are "destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:23; Rev. 21:7, 8.

Christ is the "root and offspring of David"; the offspring is that He "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." (Rom. 1:3). The "root of David" applies to our Lord after His glorification to the Divine nature. It applies to Him as the Life-giver, the One who is to give eternal life, not only to David, but to all who will receive it under the conditions of the New Covenant. Christ is the "bright and morning star," the One who brings cheer and comfort to His persecuted Church, helping her in the "dawning of her morning."

The invitation of verse 17 will not be in order until the Bride hath made herself ready and the "marriage of the Lamb" takes place. The called out ones of this Age have been prospectively only of the Bride; this class when complete in the end of this Age will share in the first resurrection. Then the Bride will be complete, and then the message—"And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come," will be due to be proclaimed. Then "whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely."

In the further verses follows the solemn warning designed to deter anyone from either adding to or taking away from, the "words of this prophecy." "Surely I come quickly" is the assurance of our blessed Saviour. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," is the fervent response of the beloved John, and this is surely the desire of all those who also love the Lord's appearing.

In addition to the Bible Studies, two of the brethren addressed the Convention each day, and their words and exhortation were helpful and encouraging. The topics of the various addresses were as follows:— "The Restitution of All Things"; "The Witness and Seal of the Holy Spirit"; "What can Separate Us From the Love of Christ"; "Spiritual Stocktaking"; "Why are the Dead not Raised to Life in Healing Campaigns Today?"; "Love Triumphs Over Justice"; "The Good Paymaster" and "From Candlelight to Sunlight."

The Praise and Testimony meetings, and the “Hymns We Like and Why” session were helpful and uplifting to our “new minds.” Many messages of Christian love and greeting were received from various Classes and brethren, and these were much appreciated, and the message sent by the Convention to the Classes and brethren is found in 1 John 3:1-3.

As usual the Convention came to a close with the Love Feast, at which the brethren bade each other farewell and sang “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian Love,” and “God be with you till we meet again.” Then the final prayer of thanks to God for blessings received, requesting His blessing upon each one present, and upon the Israel of God in every place, with the desire that the many lessons provided by His goodness during the Convention may be more impressed upon our hearts and minds and go with us in the days ahead. So ended another very helpful and happy season of spiritual fellowship. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered on the evening of 14th of April to celebrate the Memorial of Christ’s death, this being the anniversary of the Lord’s Supper which Jesus instituted on “the same night in which he was betrayed,” and left for His followers to observe each year at the appropriate time, in harmony with His request—”This do in remembrance of me.”

In previous studies the passage in Luke 22:1-20 had been examined with much benefit to the brethren, as we meditated upon the preparation for, and the institution of this Memorial Supper which our Lord was so desirous of performing before He suffered, even unto death, as “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

The attendance at our service was very good, though some brethren were also prevented, through various causes, from joining the assembly. The appropriate hymns sang from Bible Students Hymnal were, numbers 437, 345, 280, 2 and 414. Bible readings by four brethren were Isa. 53; Matt. 26:17-53; John 18:28-40 and John 19:1-30, and the prayers of the brethren were lifted up in thanksgiving to God for the gift of His dear Son to be our Redeemer, and also on behalf of all fellow members who were observing the Lord’s Memorial and walking in the steps of the Master in spirit and in truth. An address which covered both the type and antitype of the Memorial was also very helpful in preparing our hearts to partake of the emblems, which all did with gratitude to God and our Lord Jesus Christ after a blessing had been asked upon the bread and the wine, as representing our Lord’s body broken for our sake, and His blood poured out in sacrifice for us all. So doing, we also signified our willingness to share in our Lord’s sacrifice (Phil. 1:29), if so be that we may share in His glorious resurrection.

Geelong, Vic.

In the evening of April 14th the brethren in this area gathered together to appreciatively obey our Lord’s request,

“Do this in remembrance of Me.” The simple service consisted of the singing of suitable hymns, the reading by four brethren in turn of passages of Scripture found in Exod. 12; Matt. 26, 27 and Isaiah 53; also an address at the close of which we reverently partook of the emblems.

In our prior Memorial studies together our hearts were filled with delight at the realisation that our “little all” *we* can lay down beside our Saviour’s sacrifice is made “holy and acceptable to God” (Rom. 12:1) through the merit of Jesus imputed to us. As we remembered the cost and extent of our Saviour’s giving for us, we sought to remember also the privilege it affords us of giving something in which our Heavenly Father delights. Our meditations on Matt. 26:30 suggested that the words of the hymn or psalm sung to conclude that first Memorial must have been such to increase confidence in the heavenly Father’s care, particularly to our Saviour who knew what immediately lay before Him. We are glad to know our Saviour will help us all the way as we seek to follow Him here below, and our closing hymn was as a prayer in each consecrated heart —132 B. S. Hymnal.

Adelaide.

The Memorial of our Saviour's death was kept by the Adelaide Class on Sunday evening, April 14th. We are grateful to our Lord for having provided this simple remembrance of His death. because it reminds us that all our hopes of future life and blessing depend completely upon His gracious provision. "He is the satisfaction for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." What a privilege is ours, "not only to believe on Christ but also to suffer for his sake."

After appropriate Scripture readings and hymns, the meaning of the Memorial was explained and prayers were offered for God's blessing upon the friends present and upon the Israel of God everywhere. Then *we* partook of the emblems with thankful hearts and with the prayer that the year before us may, by the Lord's grace, be one of steady and continuous progress as we each one seek to follow in the Master's steps, in the narrow way that leads to life. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

Perth.

On the evening of the 14th of April the W.A., brethren commemorated the death of our dear Lord and Saviour. Having studied Isaiah 53 the week preceding *we* had in mind much of what the man Christ Jesus endured for our sakes. "He that was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."-2 Cor. 8:9.

There were fourteen adults assembled for the Lord's Supper. We recalled His 31- years of sacrificial laying down of His humanity, culminating at Calvary, after being unjustly condemned to death. Gladly would His followers remember His death as proof of His perfect love and perfect human sacrifice (ransom) , and so *we* partook of the emblems representing His body and blood. Also we renewed again our pledge to be co-sacrificers with our Lord, appreciating that great offer of "so great salvation" to be able to be accepted in the Beloved. With sincere hearts we showed by symbol that we had that communion with our Lord, being ready at all times to be dead with Christ, and alive in the spirit.

Tasmania.

Four of us assembled to partake of the emblems and renew again our consecration, and we had a lovely time in fulfilment of our Lord's promise that where two or three are gathered together in His name, there He would be in the midst.

Sydney.

We held our Memorial Service on April 14th at Strathfield where thirteen partook of the emblems. The service was opened by the singing of hymn 122—"In memory of the Saviour's love, we keep this simple feast." After the reading of the 12th chapter of Exodus, which reveals the type of the Passover, the speaker then explained in detail the deep significance of the antitype.

Glenbrook, N.S.W.

Once again we have had the Lord's rich blessing as we were able to keep the Memorial. We had ten members present and we remembered in prayer all the dear Israel of God that His richest blessings would be their happy portion at the present time and through all eternity.

From individual brethren we are pleased to report as follows:

Although alone it was surely a privilege to keep the Memorial which our Lord instituted. Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage was preceded by the slaying of the Paschal lamb, and as the custom was to commemorate such a momentous event our Lord also did so with His disciples: subsequently, the Memorial was instituted—"This do in remembrance of me" was His request.

Per medium of the holy spirit we appreciate the fact that our Lord was the antitype—"The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." With anticipation we joyfully look forward to the deliverance of the "groaning creation." Surely it will be indeed a wonderful privilege to participate in this stupendous and grand work. May this thought spur us ever onward to make our calling and election sure.

Our Lord's Memorial of 14th April is now in the past, and as there are no Bible students here I celebrated His Memorial alone. It was with reverence before God and with deep gratitude and love in my heart that I joined in spirit

with those of like precious faith to keep the Memorial in remembrance of our dear Redeemer.

I prayed God to bless all His consecrated people everywhere; I sang hymn 122 from the “Dawn Hymn Book” and my closing hymn was 128 from the same book. I love to think of our dear Redeemer who gave His life a ransom for all to be testified in due time. Ah, but the love of Jesus, what it is, none but His loved ones know. I love reading His immortal prayer for us in John 17, which shows the great love He and His Father have for their true and faithful disciples. I pray that we all may be faithful unto death, and see Him as He is. I know that’ without holiness none shall see the Lord.

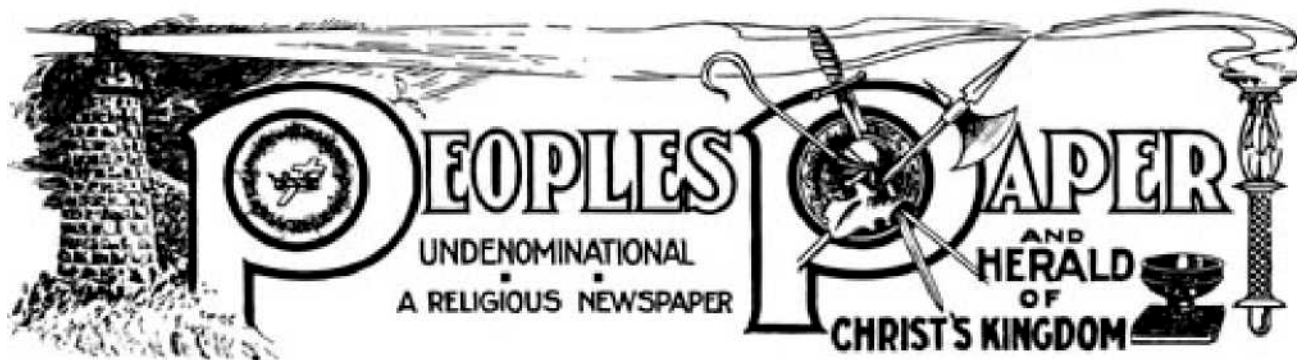
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. **8.15 a.m.**

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 11 **9 a.m.**

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. **4.45 p.m.**

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Why are the Dead not Raised to Life in Healing Campaigns Today?

(This article is published by request).

OUR subject is chosen on account of the great interest being shown, in recent times especially, in the claims that it is quite the right thing to expect. the Lord to heal bodily ailments or disabilities of those who exercise faith in Him.

One thing that is noticeable is the fact that not only those who specialise in faith healing, etc. (such as those of Pentecostal or Apostolic beliefs), are stressing this matter of bodily healings, but also some Of the other denominational churches are joining in and declaring that it is correct to seek, and expect the Lord to heal by miracles those who are suffering illness of one kind or another. This is certainly something new, but it all goes to show that anything of an outward appeal or demonstration is very attractive and captivating to those who do not study the Bible correctly, nor understand the Plan of the Ages .for this present Gospel Age, and for the ages to come.

It seems as though some of the leaders in some of the church systems are being stirred up by the campaigns of others who have started organizations in more recent years with special stress upon the healing of bodily sicknesses, and, apparently, not wishing to be left out of anything that seems to be “catching on” with a great number of people, we have now what might be called an epidemic of faith-healing propaganda which is often accepted at full face-value without examination of the Bible to prove whether it is truth or error.

In coming to the Bible for help in respect of any subject, how important it is to keep in mind that what may be true and appropriate for one age in God’s Plan of the Ages, need not necessarily be true in another age, or every age. In other words, while there are fundamental truths which do apply at all times, there are other truths which apply only, and especially, for certain periods during the outworking of God’s plan and which are termed “present truth” in the Bible; the thought being that a certain teaching was applicable to the time then present, as expressed by the Apostle Peter— “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.” (2 Pet. 1:12.) It is of interest to note that the Greek word from which our English word “present” is translated in the text just quoted, means, “to be near; at hand, or time being.”

During our Lord’s first advent He performed quite a variety of miracles, as we know, in the turning of water into wine, feeding the multitude from a few loaves and fishes, curing ailments of various kinds in some people, and even raising the dead. These miracles were also carried over into the activities of the early church, for the reason that the same conditions applied for some years after our Lord’s death as applied when He was on earth. So, the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 2:3,4 referred to the “So great salvation,” and “God bearing witness with signs and wonders.” (See also John 2:11.)

We wish now to examine the words of our Lord at the time of one of His most outstanding miracles, found in Luke 7:11-16. From verse 12 we read—“Now when he (Jesus) came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier (coffin), and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.” What a wonderful demonstration of the power of God was thus manifested by our Lord on that occasion, and no wonder the people “glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.”

Reading on in Luke 7:17-23 we find a most helpful statement from Jesus respecting John the Baptist and the information He sends to John that he may know that Jesus is really the Messiah. Verses 22, 23 read—“Go your way,

and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.”

We note from verse 11 that “many of his disciples went with him, and much people,” therefore the raising of the widow’s son was well known, so in sending John’s disciples to him in prison our Lord could well say—”Go your way,

and tell John what things ye have seen and heard.” And amongst the most startling things they had seen and heard was the raising of the widow’s son from death, by stopping the funeral procession. What would we think if we had been present and saw Jesus raise the widow’s son to life from the coffin in which he was to be buried? Would we not also say, in the words of verse 16—”A great prophet is risen up among us; and, that God hath visited his people?” We surely would. And be it noted that this manifestation of God’s power, in the hands of Christ, of raising the dead, was one of the important signs expressed to John the Baptist in prison, that he may know that Jesus was the true Messiah, and that he need not “look for another.”

It is of interest in connection with our subject to mention that recently one of the faith-healing people, in dealing with these words of Jesus to John the Baptist, stressed the importance of healing of people and used the Lord’s words —”Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me”—implying that those who do not agree with their healing campaigns today are offended, and rejecting the Lord and His witness. Yet, this man ignored altogether the words of Jesus respecting the “dead being raised,” and the “blind receiving sight” as part of the witness by which John could be sure that Jesus was the Messiah. And those who are today stressing the importance of healings for the sick quote the words of the Apostle Paul in Heb. 13:8—”Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever”—in support, claiming that what the Lord did then, **He is** now doing today. But who has heard of anyone being raised from the dead by the Lord today? Who has heard of any of those who claim -that the Lord’s power is the same yesterday, today and for ever in their healing campaigns ever attempting to raise the dead to life? Why do they not attempt to raise the dead, when they claim the same conditions exist today as when Jesus was on earth? They know very well that they have not got the Lord’s power to do such things, despite their claims that His power is operative as at His first advent, but they know that they have some power to do a measure of healing, and to speak in tongues, etc., and are deceived into thinking it is the Lord’s power.

What about the Apostles who saw the miracles of Jesus—raising of the dead, giving of sight to the blind, etc.—were they able to do the same? Yes, they did, because they were true disciples, and particularly, because it was still the appropriate time for such manifestations of God’s power, while the church was in its infancy. From Matt. 10:5-8 we read—”These twelve Jesus sent forth . . . And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.” Do we ever hear a present-day faith healer quoting these verses and claiming to do exactly what the Apostles did in the name of Christ? No, indeed, because those instructions cannot be carried out today, for the Lord does not work always in the same way. As we saw previously, there is some truth which is “present truth,” for the time only when it was uttered.

However, what of the apostles; did they raise the dead in their day? Yes, they did. In Acts 9:36-42 we have the record of Peter restoring Dorcas to life from the dead, surely a most wonderful exhibition of God’s power working through His servant in a special way that has never been repeated since the days of the apostles. Also we have the record in Acts 20:9-12 of Paul restoring the life of a young man who fell from the “third loft” and was killed. This surely was another marvellous manifestation of the Lord’s power at the hands of His faithful apostle. If it had been God’s will that these miracles of the apostles were intended to continue throughout the Gospel Age, surely Peter, after raising one from the dead, would have been full of exhorting others to do the same. But what do we find in Peter’s writings? We find no references at all to any of the “gifts” of the spirit, but rather exhortations for the development of the “fruits” of the spirit. (See 2 Pet. 1:5-11.)

This agrees very fully with the particular advice of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians. In 1 Cor. 12:28-31 the apostle mentions the order in the early church and that there were gifts of the spirit operating at that time, some of which were more desirable than others, and yet he would show them “a more excellent way” than even the best of gifts. This he proceeded to do in chapter 13, showing that the development of the fruits of the spirit was the allimportant attainment for the Lord’s people. In verses 8-11 in this 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians we see how the Apostle is clearly revealing the progressing elimination of the “gifts of the spirit” as the church developed and sought fuller appreciation of spiritual truths.—”Charity never faileth; but whether there be (gifts of) prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be (gifts of) tongues, they shall cease; whether there be (gifts of) knowledge, it shall vanish away . . . When I was a child, spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

How often we find reference being made to James 5:14-16 in support of physical healings today, but a careful examination of the context in James shows that bodily sicknesses are not referred to at all. It is of interest to find that the Greek word translated “sick” in this passage in James is the same as that translated “wearied” in Heb. 12:3—”Lest

ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” Yes, some become spiritually sick, and need encouragement and prayers of others to assist them back into harmony and fellowship with the Lord. “Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.” (Heb. 12:12,13.)

To safeguard the Lord’s people against the many deceptions the Apostle Paul, in 2 Cor. 11:13-15, revealed that there would be “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” How significant are the words—’Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” By deceiving our first parents Satan brought all the sorrow, pain, sickness and death upon mankind; now, he would seek to cure the very conditions he brought about—”as an angel of light,”—and this is very attractive and appealing to those who are not established in the truths, of God’s Word, but are thinking more of temporary fleshly advantages which it is not the Lord’s will to impart in this Gospel Age.

So far from expecting bodily healings today, the Lord’s people are invited to walk in the steps of their Master, sacrificing the human life, walking by faith and not by sight. The Apostle Paul’s own experience is a wonderful guide to Christians today, as well as when he wrote to the Corinthian church. He declared—”Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2. Cor. 12:7-10.) There can be no doubt that this was a physical disability, and the great apostle, who could even raise the dead by the Lord’s power, found that God’s will for him was that he may be sanctified and mellowed by the “thorn in the flesh,” as His grace was realised sufficient, for the Lord assured him—”My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

If it had been God’s will to heal His followers in those days, and since, surely the Apostle Paul would have been healed immediately, and how easy it would have been for Paul to have healed Timothy—See 1 Tim. 5:23. But no, it was not God’s will, neither is it His will today that His people should be healed by miracles. How noticeable it is that to the Corinthian church only does Paul mention the “gifts” of the spirit, and he seeks to wean them away from the outward show of gifts, and exhorts them to cultivate the “fruits” of the spirit. When writing his epistles to those churches which were not in danger of being deceived by continuing in the use of the “gifts of the spirit” the apostle does not even mention them. These brethren had developed from those outward manifestations, and were being built up in the “inner man,” as they gladly sacrificed their human lives in the service of the Lord. As the apostle set the example, so all the Lord’s true people gladly “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24; see also Rom. 8:14-18.)

Let us not be misunderstood, however, in claiming that the Lord does not heal by miracles today. Surely, the Lord’s blessing upon the sick and suffering of mankind is most fitting, and it is pleasing in His sight that we offer up sincere and fervent prayers for His blessing and comfort to be upon all ailing ones, while at the same time we do our best with the assistance of medical men, and correct foods, etc., which the Lord has provided for our well being, that God’s will may be done, as we progress along the Christian way. On the other hand we do well also not to neglect bodily weaknesses in view of the fact that we do not expect the Lord to heal by miracles. We must exercise the spirit of a sound mind and keep as well as reasonably possible, and correct habits of eating and drinking, etc., bring their own rewards. Those people who would not curb their appetites for food or drink which are injurious just because they appeal to the palate are not likely to progress very well in spiritual things either. (See 1 Cor. 9:26,27.)

While, then, we see that the time has not yet arrived for the dead to be raised, neither is it the time for miraculous healings, etc., and while God permits Satan to deceive certain ones by false claims, yet we rejoice that the time is not far distant when the Lord’s prayer will be answered—”Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven”—and the resurrection and blessing of all mankind will be accomplished as they obey the laws of the kingdom. (See John 5:28,29 [Rev. Version]; 1 Cor. 15:22,23.)

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Not Holding the Head.

(Col. 3:18,19.)

THE Apostle warns us all against a wrong attitude which at all times has more or less threatened the body of Christ, in its larger gatherings as well as in its little handfuls ;— he warns against the danger of looking too much to ourselves or to other men in the Church and not enough toward the Lord, who is indeed “the Head of the Church, which is His Body.” Some members he represents as taking a head position, forgetful of the fact that “one is the Head of the Church, even Christ,” and inclined, in consequence of this forgetfulness, to think too highly of themselves, to imagine that the whole weight and importance of the Lord’s cause devolves upon them, and to assume too much leadership.

The Apostle warns other less prominent members of the Church against a recognition and support of such wrong position, assuring them that their condescension is extreme, prejudicial to themselves and to the interests they would serve; that the angels, that is the messengers, the representatives of the Church (Rev. 1:20; 2:1) are not to be worshipped, though they are to be highly esteemed in proportion to their faithfulness, good works and humility.

He warns other members that such a humiliation as would ignore themselves entirely and cast all the weight and responsibility and influence upon these angels and elders would appear improper, and would indicate an unfaithfulness to Christ and a failure to rightly appreciate His arrangements.

Thus reproving two classes because of taking opposite extremes, the Apostle proceeds to explain that the difficulty with both parties is a failure to hold the Head in proper esteem —Christ, the only true Head of the Church. Whether by exalting ourselves, usurping our Lord’s place in the Church, and ignoring His words and arrangements and being puffed up as His servants, or whether, on the other hand, quietly submitting to such things and doing reverence to those who usurp the Lord’s place in His body, in either case the difficulty is the same—a failure to rightly recognise the true Head.

If we accept the fact that Christ is the Head of the Church, let us rest every argument on that basis; let us not feel for a moment that everything will go to pieces unless we steady the ark—that we are main spokes in the divine programme in any little quarter of Zion (1 Chron. 13:10). All such self-conceited ideas are traitorous as respects the Captain of our salvation, for He has told us, and we believe His word—“Without Me, ye can do nothing.” Every member of the body of Christ, whom the Lord has in any sense of the word set in the Church to serve His cause, should realise that he is not at all essential to the development of the divine plan, that it is a favour, pure and simple, that he has been granted a share in connection with it, that his blessings, day by day, more than compensate any little service and sacrifice he may be able to render. So far from feeling heady he should feel humbled by the thought that he is permitted to have any part in the great plan of God as a servant amongst his brethren, and he should realise distinctly that, so surely as the Lord is the Head of His Church, any who cease to occupy positions of trust in a humble manner will be debased, will lose privileges and opportunities, perhaps with injury to themselves and to others.

In 2 Tim.:3, the Apostle assures us that, in the last days, grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents (and higher authority in general), unthankful, unholy . . . traducers, heady, high-minded . . . having a form of godliness, but ignoring the power thereof.

This picture certainly fits well to our day throughout nominal Christendom, and it is not strange, therefore, that something of the same general spirit at times seeks to invade the camp of the saints—the little company of the consecrated who are striving to be overcomers of the world and its spirit. The fact that the Apostle writes thus forcefully on this question does not prove any lack of sympathy on his part, but the trouble is a grievous one and especially injurious to the brethren who may yield to such headiness; nothing is surer to sap spiritual vitality and to lead us into darkness, both doctrinal and spiritual.

It would be well for all whom the Lord hath set in the body, either in a humble position or in a conspicuous place, to have the Apostle’s words well in mind—that as our Lord humbled himself and was subsequently exalted, it demonstrates a principle at work in the Father’s programme under which all of His Royal Priesthood must humble themselves if they would in due time be exalted. The Apostle Peter’s argument also is, “Humble yourselves therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” Now is not the proper time for exaltation; to elevate ourselves or others under present conditions is to incur the greater danger of a fall. Hence, all who are earnest and of humble heart, should both watch and pray lest they enter into temptation along this line, which, from the very beginning of the Gospel Age, has been the most serious stumbling block in the pathway of this class. We remember that it was amongst the apostles themselves that the argument took place as to which would be the greatest in the Kingdom. Let us all remember our Lord’s words of reproof to them, “Except ye humble yourselves and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter into the Kingdom.”

Thus our Lord marks humility as one of the prime essentials of a place in the Kingdom. It will not be very long—let us have patience. Let us have faith, too; not be doubters. Much of the endeavour to grasp and wield authority in the Church is at first undertaken with the best of intentions, with the desire to do and be in the highest interests of the Church. In such cases, faith is not strong enough to realise how unnecessary we are to the divine plans and how able the Lord is to overrule every incident and circumstance according to the divine will. More faith in the Lord's power to regulate the affairs of the Church will counteract largely the efforts of some of His people to run the Church's interests along lines of their own wisdom and ability. Let us remember that He is able, He is willing, to work all things according to the counsel of His own will. Let us remember that our highest place is lying low, that the greatest mastery is self-mastery, and that whatever success we might have in usurping the place and authority of our Lord and His Word would undoubtedly react unfavourably to us in the end. Hence, in self-preservation, as well as in the interest of the Church and in honor of the Lord, we need to keep self under. Let us remember the words of the poet and apply them daily:—

“O! to be nothing, nothing,
Painful the humbling may be;
Yet low in the dust I'd lay me
That the world my Saviour might see.
Rather be nothing, nothing
To Him let their voices be raised
He is the fountain of blessing,
Yes, worthy is He to be praised.”

Let us keep ever in memory the Apostles' example and words: “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, our Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.” (2 Cor. 4:5.)

When the Nations will Seek God.

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though he be not far from every one of us.” —Acts 17:27.

NEW TESTAMENT evidences on this subject of seeking the Lord give the thought that not very many are in the condition of heart to seek Him at the present time. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ” and the faith of Jesus should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Nevertheless, as the Apostle puts it, God is “not far from every one of us,” and every one who will seek or feel after Him, He will be pleased to bless by a manifestation of Himself. In fact, this is the very object of this present Gospel Age — to find, to enlighten, to bless and to gather into a special class those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Those of us who thus seek after the Lord He guides, draws, influences. He leads them to the Lord Jesus Christ, pointing to Him as the necessary way by which they may approach Himself and assuring them that there is no other name given whereby they can be saved (Acts 4:12), and that all who will come unto Him through Christ will be accepted.

Such as do come in this way, we have proven from our own experiences and the experiences of others, as well as from the Word, are met half way by the Lord. “Draw nigh unto me, and I will draw nigh unto you.” (Jas. 4:8.) And as they draw nigh and continue to approach closer by God’s grace, they are brought by and by to a full realization that God is willing to accept them as sacrificers, as “members of the Body of Christ.” If they fall into line with the Divine provision and present their bodies a living sacrifice, they will be looked upon as holy, acceptable to God (Rom. 12:1); they will recognize the “high calling” to “glory and honor and immortality” with Christ. But if they fail to go on, they will thus receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. 6:1)

The Apostle intimates, not only in the text under consideration, but also in his Epistle to Timothy (1 Tim. 2:4), that God wills that all men shall be saved; wills it in the sense that He will awaken them all from Adamic death and “bring them to a knowledge of the Truth ;” that they may be recovered entirely from all imperfections that belong to Adam’s condemnation, and thus brought fully into harmony with Him. Because this is His will, He has made ample provisions — not only in the arrangement by which our Lord died on behalf of all mankind, that He might be the Ransomer of all, but also in the provision that all shall have the opportunity of coming to this knowledge and of benefitting thereby.

In this sermon on Mars Hill, the Apostle Paul pointed out to the men of Athens that this “unknown God,” this God who was unknown to them, is the great God who has divided unto men their habitation and determined their bounds; that He is the supervisor of the nations; that he determines how long and under what conditions the nations may prosper and what liberties and opportunities they may have. Then he proceeds to point out that while God has for a long time left men in ignorance and winked at many of their imperfections and flagrant wrong-doings, as though He did not notice them at all, nevertheless another step has now been taken in His great Plan: “Now he commands all men everywhere to repent.”

The Apostle further declares, I, Paul, have something to tell you about this great God and about His message—that all men everywhere should repent. Do you ask me why they should repent ? I answer, for the reason that God is prepared to forgive them their sins, on this condition: He was not prepared to do this a short time ago; He was not prepared to do this until Christ died; but since Christ has died and ascended up on high and “appeared in the Presence of God for us”—for believers—God is now willing to accept any who come unto Him through Jesus. It is proper, therefore, that I should tell you that there is to be an opportunity of future life through Him.

And, furthermore, it is proper that I should tell you also that “God has appointed a Day (the great Millennial period) in which He will judge (try) the world in righteousness.” The whole world will then have a trial, a righteous trial, a fair, impartial trial, a full opportunity to come unto the knowledge of the “Truth ;” to come to a knowledge of right and wrong, a full opportunity to come to perfection of human life and to attain all that was lost in the fall of man. (Luke 19:10) This message should, as far as possible, be made known to all men everywhere, because every act of their lives will have a bearing on the future; it will either uplift them to some extent out of the depths of degradation into which the world has been plunged through ignorance and superstition and bring a development of character, or it will condemn them and bring a measure of retribution, and thus make the conditions of the future more difficult than they would be if righteousness were sought.

Speak only when you have anything to say which it is desirable to communicate. You do not know what a great gift of God it is not to be obliged to speak, and to know when to hold your tongue.—St. Gregory.

WATCH AND PRAY.

Communion with the Lord in prayer brings:

1st:—Increased confidence in the Lord's supervision of our affairs.

2nd:—Increased faith in all the great and precious promises of His Word.

3rd:—Increased realization of His leadings, past and present.

4th:—Increased love for all the brethren in Christ.

5th:—Increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress.

The Divine object, then, in answering prayer is that we may have a stimulation of faith in connection with our receiving daily blessing—both temporal and spiritual.

HIS CHILD'S PICTURE.

Bishop Thoburn tells a beautiful story about a picture of his deceased child. It seemed a very imperfect photograph, so blurred that scarcely a trace of the loved features could be seen in it. But one day he took the picture to a photographer, and asked him if he could do anything to improve it.

In three weeks the Bishop returned, and as he saw the picture in its frame on the wall he was startled. It seemed as if his child were living again before him. The image had been in the old picture, but was concealed beneath the blurs and mists that were there also.

In every true disciple there is the image of the Master. It may be very dim. Its features are overlaid by blurs and blemishes, and are almost unrecognisable by human eyes. It is the work of Christ in our lives to bring out this likeness. This is what He is doing in many of His ways with us.—"Sunday Pictorial."

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

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Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street) —Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

The Witness and Seal of the Holy Spirit.

(Continued from last issue.)

Each should ask himself whether or not he has this witness of the spirit, this testimony to his growth as a new creature in Christ Jesus, and whether or not he is developing and maturing the kind of fruit here specified. Let us remember also that our growth in love and in all the fruits of the spirit is dependent largely upon our growth in knowledge; and our growth in knowledge of divine things is dependent also upon our growth in the fruits of the spirit. Each step of knowledge brings a corresponding step of duty and obedience, and each step of duty and obedience taken will be followed by a further step in knowledge, for so the spirit witnesseth, shall be the experience of all those who shall be taught of God in the school of Christ. If we have this witness of the spirit of growth, both in grace and in knowledge, let us rejoice therein, and let us follow on in the same pathway until it shall bring us, under divine guidance, to that which is perfect, both in knowledge and in grace.

Having learned how the holy spirit “witnesses” and what are some of its testimonies through God’s holy Word, we do indeed find these very much more satisfactory than all the doubts and fears inspired by mental and physical conditions—feelings, falsely called by some the witness of the holy spirit. At the same time *we* cannot overlook the fact that all Christians cannot have the same witnessings from the spirit of God with their spirits or minds. All Christians of large experience and development should have testimony or witness on all these points, and on other points set forth in the Scriptures; but there are young Christians who have not yet progressed far enough to have all of these witnessings; some, perhaps, may be truly begotten of the Lord, and yet have but few of them.

The great Husbandman does not expect fruitage, neither green nor yet developed and ripe fruit, from the fresh and tender sprouts of a branch.

The first witness that the newly begotten may have is, that they are accepted with the Lord; that they are young branches in the true Vine: and the spirit of the Vine is in them—the desire to grow and to be like the Vine, and to bring forth fruitage. Nor should it be long after the branch first shoots forth, before the sign of leaves and the buds of promise for fruit will be discernible. The new-born babe in the spiritual family manifests its relationship to the older and more developed members of the family, not by its eating of the strong meat, which might strangle it, but by desires for the strengthening milk, to grow thereby.—1 Pet. 2:2.

“Those who find themselves possessed of any of the witnessings of the spirit should rejoice correspondingly; and every particular they are lacking they should endeavour to cultivate and develop, so that they may ultimately have the witness of the spirit in their favor on every point of the Scriptural testimony respecting the pathway and experiences of the Lord’s faithful people. Such will no longer be in doubt and perplexity. On the contrary, they will know, will have full assurance of faith, and will be rooted and grounded and built up and established in the faith. This is the divinely arranged way; we wholly escape from fear—from “Doubting Castle”—for our trust rests securely in the divine promises, which never fail. This is as true in the time of trial and adversity and darkness as when we are more particularly enjoying the light of our heavenly Father’s smile.

The Seal of The Spirit

In Eph. 1:13,14, the Apostle refers to the seal of the spirit.” In these verses Paul says that the Christians, after they had believed, (in the sense of making full consecration and following it up with a life of obedience) “were sealed with the holy spirit of the promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.”

The expression “spirit of the promise” shows that there is a connection between this sealing and the promise which God has given us. It is an advanced evidence or attestation of God’s covenant with the “sealed” one, that “the exceeding great and precious promises” of the “things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him (supremely)” are true; and that he shall inherit those promised blessings after he has endured faithfully the tests of his love and devotion which God will apply.

The Apostle refers to this same sealing later on in the same epistle, and there identifies the “promise” with the “day of deliverance.” (Eph. 4:30.) In other words, the seal of the spirit of promise unto the day of deliverance is but another form of expressing the thought that we (the Church) “have the first-fruits of the spirit,” the hand-payment as it were, binding the contract or covenant between the Lord and us, and assuring us that if we faint not we shall inherit the promise to the full.

This seal of covenant relationship, of sonship and heirship, is not an outward sign upon our foreheads; nor is it a mark or manifestation of God’s favor in earthly affairs, in worldly prosperity; nor is it now, nor was it ever, the “gifts” of

healing, or of speaking with tongues, etc., for many who possessed those miraculous “gifts” lacked the seal and witness of the spirit.—Acts 8:13-23; 1 Cor. 13:1-3.

The seal or pledge of the holy spirit is in the heart of the sealed, and hence it is that no man knoweth it save he that receive it (Rev. 7:17), except as others may see the fruits of it in his daily life. "He who establisheth us in Christ, and hath annointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts."-2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

This earnest or seal of sonship is the spirit of love which is at-one with the Father and all His holy arrangements, crying out, Abba, Father: I delight to do thy will, O my God. He who has this seal or mark of sonship is he who not only seeks to do the will of the Father, but doing it finds it “not grievous,” but delightsome.-1 John 5:3.

The spirit of adoption or sealing as sons, the possession of the first-fruits or earnest of the coming inheritance, is, then, one of the most advanced “witnesses” of the spirit—the very cream of Christian experiences in the present life. Before attaining this stage of experience we must receive our share of the anointing by coming into the anointed body of Christ, the Church, by being begotten of ‘the spirit of Truth unto sanctification of our spirits to know and do the Lord’s will. This experience, comes after we have been quickened of the spirit to the service of righteousness: it is an evidence, so to speak, that we have passed from the embryo condition to one in which God can consider us sons and seal us as such.

As all believers should seek to come under the anointing and begetting influence of the holy spirit of God, the spirit of the Truth,—so all who have been thus begotten of the spirit to sonship should seek to attain that position of fulness of harmony with the Father that He can acknowledge and seal. And having attained this position, how careful we should be not to mar or blur the seal;—not to quench or extinguish this precious treasure;—not to turn this spirit of love and joy in the holy spirit of fellowship and communion into a spirit of heaviness, darkness, grief. Not to spoil this seal, but to keep it ever bright and fresh, should be the constant effort of all who receive it.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ., 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. „ 4.45 p.m.

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The Good Paymaster.

(Convention Address)

YOU have heard of the Lord as a Good Teacher, for did not Nicodemus confess when he came to Jesus by night, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." You have heard of Him as a Good Shepherd, for He says "I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." You have heard of Him as the Good Physician,— "The sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his beams." "Bless the Lord, oh my soul; who healeth all thy diseases." He is also a Good Builder, giving us the blue-prints of a temple, whose builder and maker is God; a Good Guide, "I will guide thee with mine eye . . . the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way," (Psa. 25:9) . and a Good Master, "You call me Lord and Master, and so I am."

However, the Scriptures present Him to us in many instances as a Good Paymaster. In the form of a paymaster He is presented from two angles—(1) As being very fair, just, faithful; and (2) as being generous, kind, compassionate, or good.

Generally speaking, and as pertaining to mankind in a large way, He is presented as being Justice itself. Let us glance at a few of these laws that affect every living person in some way or another — the laws of justice, keeping in mind God as being the paymaster.

Most men in this day of grace work under some award or other; be it ever so poor, and be there ever so much room for improvement, the conditions under any award are, better than those under none. Under the latter arrangement, men are exploited without mercy by unscrupulous employers, whereas, under an award, there has been a bargaining of conditions and payment for services rendered. Under these terms the working conditions of today are probably the best ever experienced in man's history. We know there is still much room for improvement, otherwise strikes and lockouts would never occur. To be working under a good award is the aim of most men; they are glad to have constant employment, with its consequent remuneration, and the concessions and liberties enjoyed by some over and above the remuneration aspect, such as holidays, sick leave, and in some cases long-service leave. Some even enjoy pensions on retirement, and even still better, generous employers remember their employees in their wills.

God is a very good Employer, too. He has an award also, under which men receive concessions or privileges, or hardship and privation; it all depends upon our co-operation. We sing

"While joyfully in Thine employ . . .
Henceforth my chief concern shall be.
To love and speak and toil for Thee."

He also pays over and above award rates—to some. Long-service leave is also cumulative. Pensions are generous; and a share in a future inheritance is also ours because of the legacy in the will of His dear Son.

God, the Supreme Paymaster, keeps account books for every individual. With the keeping of these books He has economised to a large extent by charging all on the debit side to one man by the name of Adam; he was the one who plunged us all to death, with its pains, aches and sicknesses. It was Adam who consigned us to the great prisonhouse of death. We had no choice at all, irrespective of whether we followed righteousness or sin. (Rom. 5:12,14.)

It is most important to note that, even with the pronouncing of the sentence of death, God's goodness can be recognised — "Cursed is the ground for thy sake . . . in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." Work. What a blessing is here in disguise. Exercise; strange, if men do not get it in their work their bodies cry out for it and they embark on the daily constitutional, or visit gymnasiums, or get busy in the gardens, to enjoy better health. Who will doubt that we have a Good Paymaster?

Is God obliged to give us fruitful harvests and bountiful seasons, whether we work hard or little? No. And if, after we gaze about us, we see His goodness on every side, we look into His plan and see there His great mercy, how He could find a way in condemning us. and at the same time a way for our escape, does not all this goodness, all this mercy, all this undeserved consideration affect us somewhat? Does it not lead us to the point where we cry out with almost frustration, "What can we do?" Does it not lead us to repentance? It was nothing else but the "goodness of God that led us to repentance." This is a good step. Instead of fighting against God, of complaining ignorantly about His laws, of finding fault with His administration, of questioning His judgments, we are convinced that what He does is good, is for our betterment, to lead us step by step closer to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift."

Let us ponder, briefly, to consider those pronouncements against us, uttered in the Garden of Eden where eternal life might have been our heritage. The penalties for disobedience and unfaithfulness are recorded for us in Gen. 3:17— "Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." "In sorrow" must mean in a comparative sense; compared with what might have been our happy lot, the present condition is inferior. Consider a similar pronouncement of "in sorrow." "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children," was a curse put on the woman, but look at all the joy that accompanies that marvellous event, even as our Lord declared—"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow . . . but as soon as the anguish is past she has joy that a man has been born." (John 16:21.) Note the mixture of sorrow and joy, God being kind and merciful even in His punishments. The same with the eating of our bread with sorrow; this also is mixed with joy, especially after one has been consoled that God is pleased with our works—Eccles. 9:7—"Eat thy bread with joy."

The curse — "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" is also a benefit, as many a farmer can tell. It is the rich ground only that will produce the vigorous weeds, as well as the good crops. It means that conditions or circumstances of life now pronounce for us WORK. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." What a blessing in disguise is this. It was during the late depression, when work was so scarce, that one put it so nicely—"If work be the curse of God what must His blessing be?"

It seems that the "sweat of thy brow" enforces exercise for our good. Natural exercise is beneficial, as many find out for their good during these days of easy living. The exercise we miss out in earning our bread we are forced to get in other directions. In short, what we dodge naturally we have to make up in other ways. Another name for work, of course, is exercise, which in turn affects our respiratory systems, so necessary for good health. How often do we open our lungs to inhale good draughts of air? If only we knew these benefits we would esteem it a duty to give them more attention, slothful creatures that we are. God gave us the penalties for our good and we are too beguiled by lying deceptions to recognise them. Is it wise to breathe continually impure air? Who is at fault when we suffer from such folly? Surely in our ignorance we charge to God in many cases what is merely the reaping of our own folly.

Another part of the curse is—"Thou shalt eat the herb of the field." It is not suggested we should, like Nebuchadnezzar, because of his continual offending in the eating part of his life, be turned out to graze on grass, to rectify the condition of his stomach ulcers or whatever it was. No, but pause for one moment; count up what proportion of your diet consists of some leafy material, some natural plant that comes under the category of "herb of the field." Be honest, we are companions of the many who have endeavored to lift the curse before its time, instead of putting our necks under God's penalties, for our own good. If you really want to know how far we have got away from His pronouncement, all to our hurt, have a look at Gen. 1:29 and consider how much it concerns you. We wonder why things go wrong, why our hospitals are overflowing, why parasites grow up among us. All because we tickle our palate with the "nice" things of society. Look into Daniel's habits.

"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet" and "Lord, if he sleepeth, he doeth well." Sleep and rest seem related; if we miss out on this necessity in a natural way, we are forced to get it in an artificial way. What mental disorders are the direct results of insufficient rest, either from worry, anxiety, or maybe we have not had the happy medium of natural exertion. Do we use sufficient of the correct lubrication to keep these machines of ours, our bodies, on the road? There is no need to study all the intricacies of the workings of our bladders or kidneys; sufficient to plead just the natural springs of earth, unpolluted with any discoloration or impurities. God has made provision for our occasional offending His laws in these matters; the wonders of healing properties astound us, but His laws become a little harsher if we persist in offending. Look at the sunlight; what healing properties are in its rays. God gave us clothes and houses; we ignore His counsel if we choose to remain cooped up like pigeons in a cage.

And now the last, but not least of His injunctions, but probably the most complex of all, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matt. 4:4.)

The foregoing constitute the “Conditions” of our award, with God being the Supreme Employer. Whether we like it or not, we are in prison, the prison house of death. Faithful subjects, like Joseph, Daniel and his friends, made the best of prevailing conditions, not like Cain, who rebelled and was confined to another part of the prison while undergoing detention.

There was at one time a class of people whom God favored greatly, and He said to them—“You may have more of my favors than these heathen (isolated) people. You may pictorially present annually and in feasts and ceremonies My plan for all mankind to be delivered from sin. This should benefit you immensely, and prepare you to receive the King of the earth.” They misappropriated His favors for their own aggrandisement and excellence among the other prisoners in this huge prison house. Had they been faithful in their duties there were other high favors to be won. Others were invited to enjoy these favors, and they should be careful to appropriate God’s favors for the purpose given. In short, we should study the terms and conditions of the new award under which we are working. These extra favors do not exempt us from responsibilities. We are subject to the general conditions prevailing in the prison. To enjoy these favors puts pleasure into work, whether it be housewife, servant, bricklayer, carpenter, office worker, employer or janitor.

God is a generous Paymaster; give what we may to Him in the form of faith, work, trust, zeal, love, service, and what do we get in return? We are rewarded over and above all that we ever give. Sometimes it may be to the extent of twenty, thirty, sixty, or even a hundredfold we are rewarded. But it is always returned with good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over. There are many glaring examples of this principle operating in the lives of the Ancient Worthies; we think of Job, Jaccia, Joseph, Daniel, etc.

Let us bring it nearer home: “Give God the thanks,” says Jesus. We thank God for our blessings, but ours should be a continual thanking Him for all His benefits—“in everything give thanks.” Have you noticed that when you are thankful you miss out on a lot of trouble? Compare the disposition of a disgruntled person with that of a thankful one; the former is sour, bitter, and there is no pleasing him. The latter is happy; he cannot help but be happy if he is thankful. If we knew of the hidden mysteries of how a state of mind can affect our stomachs, and thy in turn our health, we should be very careful to bow to God’s will in everything, and accept it as being best for our welfare. A troubled or worried person is more apt to find an accident round the corner than one who is free from worry and thus keen and awake to all the hazards of the day.

We do not seem able to thwart the operation of God’s law that “As ye sow, so shall ye reap” and that He will reward every man according to his works, for “every man shall receive his own reward.” It is no use our professing one thing and acting another. If we say we are glad to cast our cares upon Him and act as if we cannot trust Him to solve or ease our burden, what else can be the result but disadvantageous?

“With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Fair enough in anyone’s language, but it brings us up with a jolt to discover as we examine this rule or law, chat, the thing that really offends us most in our brethren is the thing of which we generally are most conscious in ourselves. If you are of the complaining kind, look inwards and see if you have not grounds for complaint nearer home. It is so easy to see the “mote,” the tiny splinter that is in our neighbor’s eye and miss altogether the “beam,” the huge failing in our own make-up. God takes note of all this, and rewards us accordingly. You will discover that even in His chastisements there is sympathy, consideration, and they come with the desire of correcting our waywardness rather than a punitive punishment for misdeeds.

We have so much for which to be thankful there should never be an occasion for murmuring. Human nature being what it is, we find in ourselves as well as in Scriptural records, the grumblers are there. Martha was “Cumbered about with much serving; overcareful and troubled with many things,” complained about her sister . . . the laborers in the field contracted to work for a specified sum and compained about others coming in later in the day and all receiving the same reward . . . the elder brother of the Prodigal Son complained when his younger brother was shown a favor.

All of God’s laws are for our benefit and protection, even if we should suffer injury through them in some way or another. What if we should place a rickety chair on a table to fix the hole in the roof, fall and sprain or break a limb. Whose fault? God’s law of gravity is for our protection, not our destruction. Yet we can, quite properly, ascribe our injury to the law of gravity. The point is, that we should examine these laws with our intelligence and develop in understanding, so that we may use them all to our advantage. Many by-laws govern the complete Law of Existence. We should note, as intelligent creatures, their effect upon us, and correct that part where we may suffer, like the insecure rung of a ladder, that we do not fall to earth rather suddenly.

“The Lord is merciful and gracious; He hath not rewarded us according to our iniquities. If Thou Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who could stand ?” These beneficent mercies are gracious provisions incorporated in the general terms of God’s award under which we strive to be good servants, or employees. But He also has decreed that “As ye sow so shall ye reap.” As we receive His mercies we are counselled to pass on the good grace—”Freely ye have received, freely give.” The strange thing about this retributive action of receiving and giving is that no one ever becomes poorer by giving to others what God has given to him. For example, to pass on love, kindness, gentleness, etc., makes us the richer in those qualities rather than the poorer. On the other hand, to pass on bitterness, sourness, etc., does not lessen our complaint, but contrary, we become worse.

Some folk are easily discouraged, mostly on account of sins of ignorance, selfishness, wilful dispositions. Faultfinding comes quickly. To excuse their selfish approach they say, “What’s the use ? Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may be dead.” This unthankful attitude can hardly blame God for the ill results.

Some think they are unjustly treated and become despondent and discouraged; they lose the zeal and zest for a thankful heart. They complain that the aim is too high. Consider what cause for complaint had the thief on the cross upon whom Jesus had compassion. This man, we are told, was arraigned for stealing, and yet his penalty for such malpractice was crucifixion. The penalty, to any fair-minded one, seems far in excess of the crime. Think, crucifixion for theft! Yet this man cried out for mercy, for compassion, saying, “We receive the DUE REWARD for our deeds.”

Of a truth Paul declares, “There is none righteous, no not one.”

Because of exceedingly rich promises God has now lifted the death penalty as far as we are concerned. Faith-righteousness sees now ahead of it eternal life, a full reward for full obedience. And John exhorts us to look to ourselves, “That we receive a full reward.” (2 John 8.) Whether it be a full or partial reward, it will be over and above that which we should have received. Surely we have a Good Paymaster.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

The Institute's Work.

IT is a pleasure at this time to report another year's work being completed for the Berean Bible Institute, and our foremost thought is that of thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessings upon the efforts undertaken in His name together with our brethren who have co-operated in the service of the Lord in this part of the harvest field.

Our friends generally will realise that the efforts from the Institute, here in Melbourne, are directed along similar lines each year, the main object being to encourage our brethren in the Lord to press on along the Christian way in appreciation of the truths which have drawn them to the Lord and each other in, these last days of the Gospel Age, and also to witness to the message of the kingdom that others feeling after the Lord may be found and supplied with the precious things that have been such a blessing to our own hearts. To this end, our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" goes forth throughout this land and overseas, and it is encouraging to know that its contents have been appreciated generally, both near and far.

Contributions to the pages of the "Peoples Paper" have been gladly received and warmly appreciated, and it is our desire that this messenger for the Lord's truth may always contain just those things that will build up in Christian faith and doctrine, and promote the development of the graces of the holy spirit wherever it is read. It is realised that the harvest 'truths are of special importance, and these find a prominent place in our journal from time to time.

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper," which are now 5/- per year, do not cover the cost of production, but quantities are distributed free to those interested in spiritual things, and so the witness in this way is considered a good investment, in the Lord's service, for the deficiency in cost which is made up from the General Tract Fund. Our readers are welcome to extra copies of the "Paper" for distribution where good may be done, and those who provide subscriptions for others, or encourage others to subscribe for themselves are assisting helpfully in the work, and these efforts are greatly valued. The good help rendered in the checking of proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching of our monthly "Paper" by some friends is also appreciated very much.

During the past year quantities of tracts have been distributed and supplies of various topics Are available to those who desire to cooperate in this work. The mailing of Consolation Cards is another means of witness to those who have suffered bereavement, and in which our friends may assist.

Public lectures have been given regularly throughout the year in co-operation with our brethren, and it has been encouraging to note the interest and appreciation of the messages from the Word of God, presented along the line of the Plan of the Ages, by some new friends, as well as by our brethren who are rejoicing in these truths.

The General Tract Fund Account reveals the financial position of the general work, and all the good help has been provided, in the Lord's overruling providence, by the voluntary contributions of our brethren generally. Such loving co-operation is greatly appreciated, as unto the Lord, and is most encouraging in the efforts to serve the Lord's cause of truth.

Looking back over the year we have much cause for praise and gratitude to our Heavenly Father. It is certainly a privilege to be free from the trouble and distress which is prevalent in some countries of the world, and this gives us further opportunities for service amongst our brethren and towards all who have ears to hear. The prayers of our brethren are requested that the Lord's guidance and blessing may be upon His work, that His will may be done in our hearts, and amongst others with whom we come in contact, either personally or through the mails, to His praise. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (John 4:36.)

GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/56	£54 3 2
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By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples	£98 2 3
Rents, Advertising Circulars,	36 10 6

General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	52 8 2
Towards Personal and House Ex- 325 0 0 41 11 4	
Pilgrim Work and Assisting Brethren 27 2 0 Free Books and Booklets ..	5 7 6
Travel and Sundries ..	13 7 0
Credit Balance 1/5/57 ..	25 10 3

£624

Radio Work.

THE witness work by means of the radio has also continued steadily, over another twelve months, and we lift up thankful hearts to the Lord for His blessings in connection with this feature of service in which it has been a privilege to engage with others of our dear friends in various parts.

A goodly number of enquiries have been received throughout the year past, and it is a pleasure to report that from this number quite a few in the different States have appreciated the truth message very sincerely. During the past year the same radio stations have been used, namely-3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY/NA and after each broadcast complete copies of the discussions by Frank and Ernest are offered free to all interested listeners, as well as other free literature.

To all enquirers to the radio sessions free copies of the "Peoples Paper" are also forwarded for several months, and in this way full opportunity is given to encourage the interest of all who are feeling after the truths of God's Word. Our brethren within range of the radio stations would be performing a good work by encouraging people to listen, and advertising slips for this purpose are gladly supplied.

Looking back over the 14.1 years since this witness work commenced in Australia it is encouraging to realise that a number of brethren were first contacted by this means of service, and by the Lord's grace, have continued to rejoice in the truth. It is fully realised that the spirit of the Lord draws earnest hearts to appreciate His truth, but what a privilege it is to be used in any small way in the service of our Lord who has done so much for us.

The financial position for the work over the radio is shown by the Radio Fund Account. The good assistance to this branch of service by voluntary donations is warmly appreciated, and has met all costs, by the Lord's providence. Our brethren in Western Australia continue to cover the cost of the sessions over 6KY/NA. It is desired that the prayers of the brethren be offered for the Lord's blessing upon this avenue of service also in the days ahead, that all may be accomplished in harmony with His good will, to His praise.

RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/56	£80 10 4
„, Donations...	756 19 2
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By Radio Stations 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ	£692 3 1
Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY	49 0 10
Freight Charges	13 6 2
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Bank Charges ..	65 10 1
Credit Balance 1/5/57	

£837 9 6

Study in Hebrews 10.

THE wonderful plan of God, by which He forgives the sins of all mankind and establishes His new covenant with Israel and ultimately with all the families of the earth, is outlined so clearly and helpfully throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews by the Apostle Paul.

To those who have made an examination of this masterly presentation by the Apostle of the typical and antitypical priesthoods of God, the truths of God's Plan shine out in added beauty, and appeal in ever-increasing grandeur as the various features are grasped and appreciated as coming only from the mind of our gracious Heavenly Father.

In the tenth chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews the Apostle presents so beautifully the explanation of the antitypical sin offerings which were prefigured on Israel's day of atonement by the slaying of the bullock and the Lord's goat, and the sprinkling of the blood of these animals, in succession, upon the mercy seat in the Most Holy of the tabernacle.

Israel's day of atonement was a 24-hour day, but the antitypical day of atonement lasts the whole of this Gospel Age. So, says Paul, as it is "not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins, wherefore when he (Christ) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:4,5.) We surely rejoice that "Jesus was made a little lower than the angels (made flesh) for the suffering of death . . . that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.)

Our Lord's sacrifice of His humanity to "taste death for every man" constituted the ransom price to take away the sins of the world, and the way in which this valuable price is made applicable to cancel the sins of all mankind is revealed by the sin offerings, so ably presented by Paul in this 10th chapter of Hebrews in particular. Jesus was the antitypical bullock, and, as in the type, the bullock's blood was sprinkled on behalf of "himself and his house" only, and not for all Israel, so our Lord's sacrifice was applied for His body and household of faith only, and not for all the world when he "appeared in the presence of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.)

As it required the sprinkling of the blood of the Lord's goat, in the type, to cancel the sins "for the people" — all the remainder of Israel—(Lev. 16:15), so in antitype the Lord's people follow in the steps of Christ's sacrifice, and having His merit making their sacrifice "holy, acceptable to God," they are the secondary offering for sin during this Gospel Age. So, we see a secondary meaning in the words of Heb. 10:5—"a body hast thou prepared me." God had prepared the Body of Christ, His Church, representatively in the Apostles and other brethren who were offered in sacrifice at Pentecost. All the Gospel Age other members of the Lord's body are also "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24.)

So, the Apostle declares—"He taketh away the first (the typical sacrifices) that he may establish the second (the antitype, the real sacrifices for sin). By the which will we are sanctified (set apart to holy, sacrificial service) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (the members of His Body, offered representatively of the whole, at Pentecost). For by one offering (in two parts—the Christ, Head and Body) he hath perfected those being sanctified. Whereof the holy spirit also is a witness to us." (Heb. 10:9,10,14,15.) Yes, "the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16), and being sanctified more and more during the daily presentation (offering) of ourselves as members of the Lord's goat class in His service.

Paul then proceeds in verses 16,17 of Hebrews 10, to refer to the wonderful transformation that will be effected in the lives of Israel (and later all mankind) by the establishing of the new covenant with Israel "after those days" — after the "seven times" or 2520 years of chastisement upon Israel, ending about 1914-18. We are not to conclude that this new covenant should have been established fully with Israel immediately the "seven times" expired, but rather from that time the Lord's favor would begin to return to Israel, and ultimately "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

The Apostle had mentioned this new covenant in more detail in Hebrews 8:8-13, so the reason for again bringing it forward in chapter 10 seems to be to show the connection between the "offerings for sin" of the Gospel Age, and the blessings to follow under the new covenant in the Millennial Age, still future. For, says Paul, in verse 18—"Now where there is forgiveness of these (forgiveness of sin for Israel and the world under the new covenant) an offering for sin is no longer needed." No, indeed, the antitypical offering for sin will be completed before the new covenant can become operative, for the very good reason that the secondary antitypical sprinkling of the heavenly mercy seat must be accomplished before the High Priest can "appear the second time without sin (without a sin offering) unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.)

How clearly, then, has the Apostle established the fact that the new covenant is to be made with a natural, earthly

people, and is not operative with the Lord's people of this Gospel Age, who are developed under the Abrahamic covenant, as shown by Paul in Gal. 4:28—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

However, the main purpose of Paul in stressing the benefits to be received under the new covenant, by the forefathers of those to whom he wrote his Hebrew's epistle, seems to be to impress the goodness and mercy of God, so that they may be the more encouraged to press on in their privileges as the "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1), and to esteem the opportunity of being counted in with the sacrifice of Christ as the greatest favor ever offered to any of the human family. To us also, in this end of the Gospel Age, does the Apostle's reasoning appeal, as he seeks to lead us forward to grasp more and more of the inestimable favor of being called into the Body of Christ, prepared for sacrifice first of all by our loving heavenly Father, and later, by His grace, to enter into the antitypical Most Holy, "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:20.)

"I TOLD THEM OF . . . THE KING'S WORDS"

There is no more precious talent entrusted to us with which we may trade with certain success and splendid increase than the words of our King. A simple text passed on may be the immediate means of wonderful help and quickening, and the comfort whenever we ourselves are comforted of God (not some otherwise concocted comfort) may comfort many who are in any trouble, without even one word of man as its vehicle.—F.R.H.

What is the Cross?
I questioned.

'Tis bearing every day
The trials which the Father
Permits along the way;

'Tis sharing the reproaches
Your Master meekly bore
While those who claim to love Him
Reville you more and more.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music)—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

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Swallowing angry words is a lot easier than having to eat them later.

Excerpt Convention Report 1930.

HAVE we ever stopped to really think seriously just how the Saviour would view matters and what He would say to us were He visibly to appear in our midst in these times? Some have said, “Oh! how I wish the Master would visit us as He did with those disciples long ago; how I wish I might consult Him with regard to many questions that have so troubled me; I am sure, if the Master were right in our midst, we could soon have the burning, vexing problems and issues that have disturbed us in these recent years quickly settled.” But, brethren, is there any question, problem or difficulty before us today that the Master has not already answered in one or another of His many sayings when He was here long ago? Has He not through the spirit in the Apostolic messages dealt with all the present issues?

But still someone says, “If He were here I would like to ask Him who has charge of His Church today, and whom He has put over His people to control and direct them with power and authority.” How would Jesus reply to this question? I believe that we already have His answer to that question—My dear disciples, I have never vacated the position which the Father gave to Me in the beginning of the Age. As I then said, “One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren,” so now I say that I alone have charge of My Church, and I have never delegated authority to any man or company of men to rule over the Church or to interfere with the individual liberty of each member.

Another might ask: Master, tell us what great movement or work have you authorised your people to carry on in the earth today; what great pronouncement is there to be made in fulfilment of your will? Again we may be sure the Lord would answer in harmony with what He established as the mission of the Church when it was instituted, and that answer would be: I have not authorised any great movement or any great work to be achieved during this dispensation, for “My Kingdom is not of this world.” I remind you that in the beginning of the Age I said that My people would be scattered here and there throughout the earth. I never authorised My disciples to organise any great and wonderful work while yet in their earthly pilgrimage. Was not this the sum of the teachings of Christ and the Apostles with regard to what was authorised or expected of the faithful Church all along through the centuries until her glorification?

Another question might be: Master, will you not tell us just who and where your people are to be found in the earth today so that we may be numbered among them and thus enjoy fellowship with the true saints. We believe the Lord would answer, saying. “My followers are those who do the will of My Father in heaven; they are those who possess My spirit; they are such as are consecrated—surrendered—to My will; they are those who deny themselves and have taken up their cross to follow Me; in fact, whoever will do the will of My Father the same is My Brother, My Sister, My Mother.” And, dear brethren, should not this reply of the Master be satisfactory to us? Do we not really love all who love the Lord Jesus and possess His spirit? As many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God.

All our perplexities of today can be settled if we properly take them to the Lord and enquire what the spirit has long ago said unto the Church.

Why should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others,—that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious, or troubled,—when with us is Prayer,
And Joy and Strength and Courage are with Thee!

—Matt. 28:20. R.C.T.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.

“THAT MUCH.”

A little girl who was in hospital recovering from a severe operation, was visited by her mother every day. The mother noticed that the child was careful to keep her handkerchief in a place where she could easily get it. There was nothing strange about that, but her mother also observed that whenever the nurse brought her a clean handkerchief the little girl would transfer to it something that was tied up in the corner of the other one. At length the mother gently asked the child what she was guarding so carefully. With tears in her eyes, the little sufferer answered, “I found it in the drawer at home, and wanted that much with me.”

The mother untied the knot, and found rolled up in the handkerchief part of a leaf from the Bible containing the text, “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God.”

The child wanted “that much” with her to take to the operating-room; she could hold “that much” in her hand when the dressings were made and the stitches taken out, and it meant, oh, so much to her!

Oh, for the faith and trust of a little child!



Volume XL. No. 8 MELBOURNE, AUGUST, 1957

Price— Fivepence

Gideon's Brave Three Hundred.

(Judges 7:1-8, 16-23)

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.”—Zech. 4:6.

A STUDY of the above passage of Scripture shows an army of 32,000 from the various tribes of Israel with Gideon at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at Harod Spring—a little lake which drains off eastward to the Jordan. On the farther side of the lake were the Midianites, numbering about 135,000. An invading host, they had for some time been pillaging the Israelites unmolestedly; but now they learned that Gideon's army was gathering; and they assembled themselves to crush it.

While Gideon was feeling that his army was far too small for such a battle—one to four—the Lord directed him to the contrary—that the army was far too large, and that there would be danger that the victory which He purposed should come might not be appreciated as being from the Lord, but be thought to indicate the dexterity of Israel's warriors. Accordingly, by divine direction, Gideon gave word to his army of 32,000 that as many of them as were fearful and preferred to return home might do so. Many were fearful—22,000. The name of the spring, Harod, signifies coward; and it has been assumed that the name was given it because of the fear manifested by the 22,000 who went home.

Surely the faith of Gideon was tried as his little army melted to 10,000 men ! But the Lord said to him, There are yet too many. Cause the host to go down to the spring to drink; and discern between those who drink directly from the pool, kneeling down and putting their mouths into the water and sucking it up, and those who, bending over, lap from the hands as a dog laps with his tongue.

There were three hundred of this latter class left by this test; and the Lord declared these to be the proper ones to especially win the victory. The remaining 9,700, however, would later join in the pursuit of the enemy.

The custom of lapping water with the hand is still common with the people of Palestine—shepherds, etc. They become very expert at it. Symbolically, this act would seem to signify alertness and obedience. An ox drinks by putting his mouth into the water and sucking it and, when thirsty, gives his entire attention to the sucking of the water, refusing to pay any attention to the commands of his owner, and even resisting the use of the rod upon his flanks. The dog, on the contrary, while lapping the water with his tongue, is all alert, with his eyes watching in every direction, seeing everything about him, and ready to quit the water at any moment in pursuit of obedience to duty.

If water here, as elsewhere in the Bible, be understood to represent the truth, these two companies of Gideon's army would represent two classes who love and appreciate the truth. Both classes drink of the water of truth, but the one class more for their own satisfaction. The other class, watchful, attentive, drink according to their needs, and do not neglect alertness in the Master's service, keeping eyes and ears open for the guidance of divine providence at all times. This latter, wiser class are represented by the three hundred who were with Gideon, himself representing Jesus, the Captain of our salvation.

Armies in olden times evidently did not keep so strict a watch as do modern armies. At all events, Gideon and a trusted companion were able to penetrate in the darkness of the night amongst the tents of the Midianites. Listening, they heard one relate his dream of how a barley loaf rolled down a hill and did havoc. Another offered the interpretation that this was Gideon and his small army, which was likely to be their undoing. The incident shows that the Midianites were

fearful, apprehensive. Gideon was confident; his faith was strengthened by this little experience which the Lord permitted him to have.

After midnight, shortly after the hour of the changing of the guards amongst the Midianites, was the time appointed for Gideon's attack. The method of warfare was novel. The three hundred were divided into three companies, and spread out over a considerable space near the Midianites. In addition to their usual armor, sword, etc., Gideon and his three hundred had new weapons. Each in his left hand had a pitcher of earthenware, each pitcher had in it a lamp, and each soldier had in his other hand a ram's horn trumpet. The instructions to the three separated bands were that those

who were immediately with Gideon should do as he did; and that the other bands, hearing should imitate, breaking the front of their pitchers to let the light shine out ahead, shouting aloud, "Jehovah and Gideon," and blowing in the ram's horns.

The Midianites, waking out of sleep, beholding the flashing lights, hearing the clash of the pottery like the sound of armor, hearing the shouting of voices and the blowing of trumpets, imagined themselves surrounded by a great host; and half-dazed, they fled. They fought each other, mistaking each other for foes. Gideon and his three hundred pursued and were soon in the fight, assisted by the remaining 9,700. The victory was a great one. The Lord was recognized to be the deliverer; and Gideon, His servant, was honored accordingly.

Referring to the Old Testament matters the Apostle declares, "These things were written aforetime for our instruction." (Rom. 15:4.) In addition to the lessons learned at that time the Lord, through some of these experiences of the past, gives certain spiritual lessons to spiritual Israel. Gideon's call resembles the Gospel call for volunteers on the side of righteousness — of right against wrong, truth against error.

Many in the world hear the message, have sympathy with it and respond, purposing to become soldiers of Christ; but before they are fully accepted, the voice of Jesus calls to them, saying, Sit down and count the cost; it is better not to put your hand to the plow and become a servant of the Lord than afterwards to look back and wish that you had not become one.

The sight of the enemy, the "fear of death" (Heb. 2:15), causes them to walk not with the Master, because it is too much. When they first responded to the call, they thought of the glory and honor, but overlooked the fact that these could be obtained only at the cost of hardship and endurance. These cowards who turn back, and never really take the vow of consecration, are perhaps no worse off than if they had never responded. But they will not share in the great victory—the laurels will not be theirs; the crown of life will not be their portion.

Then comes the second test—that of obedience and loyalty. One class of the Lord's people, like the faithful dog, put obedience to the Master's voice first, alert to do His will. Another portion of the Lord's consecrated people heed less the Master's voice, and even the rod; and being less alert to the service of the Lord, they are less used of Him.

Compared to the world, the most alert ones are but as very few. It is those of the Lord's people who are alert that He chooses and grants the greatest opportunities for service. These are the ones most willing to break the earthen vessel—to use their present earthly lives in the service of the Lord—that the light of truth may shine out, and that the cause of truth may have a victory. These zealous ones are most faithful in blowing upon the trumpet, representing God's Word. These have the blessed opportunity for letting their light shine. Their zeal entitles them to special privileges and opportunities.

The victory of the Lord is attained by the antitypical Gideon and His little band of faithful followers, "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." The Lord's spirit is represented by the light of the lamp shining from the broken vessel. The broken vessels of Gideon's host represent how the Lord's people present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, in His service—in letting the light shine out—in fighting a good fight against the hosts of sin.

We are doubtless near the time when the great victory, the antitype of Gideon's, will be accomplished, when the hosts of sin, the powers of evil, will fall upon one another for their mutual destruction. The present distress of nations is the beginning of this, but not its end. According to the Bible, the climax will be a temporary reign of anarchy, which will fully prepare the world for Messiah's glorious reign of righteousness. (From Reprints.)

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 57/6.

But warm, sweet, tender even yet,
A present help is He;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.
—Whittier.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper". is overdue,

The Mystery of the Kingdom

THE salvation open at the present time has been obtainable only through faith, and faith is dependent upon a measure of knowledge, or revelation, and this knowledge, or revelation, came to us from God, for said St. Peter, "Holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit." God in this Age is calling a class possessed of ears of appreciation for His Message. These are mainly the weary and heavy laden and sin-sick, chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.

It is not enough that they hear the Message, not enough that additionally they accept it, turn from sin and consecrate their lives to God and His service and be accepted of Him, through the merit of Jesus, and be begotten of the holy spirit. From that moment they may be said to be saved and to have everlasting life, if they follow a certain course.

That course includes a continual study of the Divine instructions and promises and the exercise of faith and prayer, and obedience and trust, even unto the end.

The point of this lesson is to show the importance of having the right kind of spiritual food, and of using it and not allowing the new nature to become choked by earthly hopes, aims or ambitions. Such as thus overcome will be inheritors with Jesus of His glorious Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years, which is to bless Israel and, through Israel, all the families of the earth.

Jesus gave the parable of the Sower of the "good seed," some of which fell by the wayside, and was devoured by the fowls; some fell on rocky ground where it had no depth of earth, and brought forth no fruitage; some amongst thorns, which choked it; some into the good ground, which yielded thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold. The disciples were perplexed and unable to understand it and inquired of the Great Teacher its meaning.

His answer was that He was quite willing that they should understand the parable, and that it related to the Kingdom of God, but that it was not to be understood by outsiders. He explained that it was for this reason that He always spoke in parables, so that the general public might see and hear and not understand, because the masses even of the Jews were not in a hoar, condition to understand and be profited by these lessons respecting the Kingdom. Only such persons as desired to become members of the Kingdom class and were also willing to undertake the stringent conditions of the "narrow way"-- only such were to fully and clearly understand the parables of the Kingdom. This is in harmony with all of God's dealings in the present time. We read again, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise (toward God) shall understand." And again we read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant."

In Mark 4:13, the Master indicates that this parable would serve as a general key to His followers for their interpretation of all His parables. "Seed" does not mean literal seed, "birds" do not mean birds, "thorns" do not mean thorns, etc. Proceeding, the Great Teacher expounded the parable as follows:

(1) The seed that was sown represents the Word of God. More than this, it represents that particular element or feature of God's Word which relates to the Kingdom.

This is shown by St. Matthew's account of the same parable (Matt. 13:19): "When anyone heareth the Word (Message of the Kingdom), and understandeth it not, then cometh the Wicked One and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that receiveth the seed by the wayside." Our lesson says that the Wicked One meant is Satan. Satan and his evil agents are therefore represented in the parable by "birds," and the lesson is that however much of the Gospel of the Kingdom we may read or hear preached, we lose the benefit of that which we do not understand.

Evidently then, much of the Bible study and much of the religious reading is lost, because not understood. The secondary lesson is that one reason why the "good seed" does not enter into the understanding is that the heart is not in a receptive attitude. Like the wayside path, it is hard. Such hard hearts, selfish hearts, proud hearts, are of the kind which the Saviour does not wish to have understand His parables nor understand the glorious Kingdom Plan which they expound.

(2) The seed sown in the stony place represents those who, when they hear the Message of the Kingdom are delighted. They say, how good that sounds. What a grand time there will be when Messiah rules in righteousness to bless the world and lift up the poor, degraded members of Adam's family ! And how great is the privilege of becoming members of the Bride of Christ, to be associated with Him in His glorious Kingdom work! But the class represented by the stony ground have little depth of character; they are merely emotional.

The “Seed,” or Message of the Kingdom, which these heard with such delight at first, never matures in their hearts, because they are too shallow, too superficial in their love of righteousness. Below the surface these are hard hearts and selfish, and so, when they find that the good Seed of the Kingdom is unpopular and that it will bring them a certain amount of reproach and contempt and perhaps persecution—then all their ardour fades out, their zeal is at an end, The Kingdom Message fails to produce in them the fruitage desired. The trouble was not with the Seed nor with the Sower, nor with the sun of persecution necessary for the ripening—the fault lay in the fact that their hearts were not right; they were hard, stony.

(3) The seed sown in the thorny ground represents those who have good hearts and have heard the Message of the Kingdom and appreciate it and rejoice in it, but their hearts are divided. They allow the cares of this life and the love of riches to have such a share of their heart’s affections that the Kingdom Message does not have the opportunity to bring forth fruitage as will be pleasing to the Lord.

Let us note carefully that these thorns do not, as some suggest, represent gambling devices, card parties, saloons and other places of ill-repute, nor secret sins and vices. None of those things should appeal to Christians at all. The Master distinctly tells us that the thorns represent “the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches.” Thus every Christian man or woman who has received the Message of the Kingdom and has allowed the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke and frustrate his prospects as respects the Kingdom is represented in this parable. Very nice people, hospitable, educated, etc., belong to this class of the parable represented by the thorny ground.

(4) According to the parable there will be three classes of believers who will attain the Kingdom—or we may say, they will all be one class in the sense that they will bring forth the one kind of fruitage and be acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs in His Kingdom, but the differences between them will be in the amount of fruitage such yield—some thirty fold, some sixty fold and some a hundred fold.

The Lord does not explain the differences between these fruitages, but we may well understand that the amount of fruitage will be measured by the amount of love and zeal in the heart. The fully appreciative and the fully loving will be the most energetic to know and to do the Master’s will, and they will bring forth the largest fruitage — a hundred fold — and they, too, will have the chief places in the Kingdom.

St. Paul declares that as star differs from star in glory, so it will be with those who attain unto the First Resurrection—all will come forth glorious, but some will blaze with a more resplendent brilliancy, because of their great zeal, and therefore their great likeness to their Redeemer and Lord. Jesus likewise mentions the distinctions amongst those who will sit with Him in His Throne. He assured James and John that, if they were willing to drink of His cup and be baptised into His death, they should surely sit with Him in His Throne; but as to whether or not they would have the chief places of honour and distinction was not for Him to say. Those places will be given according to the Father’s determination; that is to say, according to the principles of justice, of merit.

Those will have the places of honour next to the Redeemer, who, in this life, will manifest to God the greatest harmony with His character, in their zeal, their love for God, the Truth and the brethren.

We are not to understand that those people represented by the thorny ground and the wayside will suffer eternal torments because of their unfaithfulness in respect of the Kingdom, nor are we to understand that others, who do not hear about the Kingdom in the present life at all, will on this account suffer eternal torment. They will all, however, lose the grand privilege and glorious blessing of participating in the Kingdom, whatever they may obtain under the restitution blessings which that Kingdom will inaugurate for the blessing of mankind in general.

Candle Light to Sun Light.

(Mat. 5:15, 16; 13:43.) (Convention Address)

A LIGHT of any kind in darkness is a wonderful boon. Most of us can recall times when some unexpected occurrence found us endeavouring to perform a task in darkness when we would have given much for a light. It was a wonderful step forward in the creative plan when God said, "Let there be light." The common blessings of God we accept without much thought, but what a really wonderful thing is light; in a sense we could say, Light is life, for mankind could not maintain life without it.

In our texts candle light and sunlight are used to illustrate something else. Christians are not actually candles, nor will they ever be an orb like the sun, but they are likened to these, in that they can create an influence upon society—similar in effect upon another kind of darkness, the darkness of this present evil world.

After man, as represented in Adam, fell, he walked on in his earthly course in darkness, but not entirely without hope, for God had given a promise that some day light would come to them, a means whereby they would be guided into the place of favor again. The promise was vague, but every true believer in God kept hope in it, for since God had promised it they knew it would come. In course of time the Law given to Moses shed some light upon man's pathway. The New Testament in later years refers to it as the "shadow" of better things to come, and that, perhaps, is how we can view the light of the Law, shaded and obscure. All who hailed it as light were compelled to acknowledge its lack in delivering from the darkness of sin and death.

However, to earnest and true souls who continued to walk in its shadowy light, a truly great light burst upon their sight. John the Baptist was ordained to introduce it. (See John 1:6-9.) We all know to whom reference is made—John 8:12 makes it plain. Luke 1:76-79 also gives a graphic description of this great light as it entered the world, which please note. The prophet Isaiah, long years before, had prophesied of it also. (See Isa. 9:2.)

Alas, so fallen was man that only a few hailed this great light graciously sent to them; the masses of men were not lifted out of the darkness and condemnation so heavy upon them, so accustomed had they become to the darkness in which they dwelt that they actually preferred it. (See John 3:19-21.) The only bright spot in this ungracious action of mankind was that a few "doers of truth" were glad to come to this light and they received great blessing. Their hopes continued high that this Light around which they rallied would soon quell the turbulent opposition of the hosts of darkness and compel them to accept it also. But no, the darkness seemingly won and they put the Light to death; how dark, indeed, then appeared the lot of the few dear lovers of God's righteousness. Shortly after, their sorrow was again turned to joy as their resurrected Lord and Light explained to them the meaning of these things, and that in a future day He would become the light of every man that cometh into the world.

Meantime, this wonderful light was to continue to shine through His followers, as Matt. 5:14 states—"Ye are the light of the world," but in comparison to the great light of Jesus we are as but candles. Maybe we should think more of the truths—God's truths—that we teach, as representing the light, more than any example of conduct, etc. In the flesh we are so imperfect that we often do and say things that do not reflect the perfection of Jesus, but the truths of God's Plan are beautiful, and to learn them, obey them and teach them, sends out light indeed.

Before a candle can give light it must be lighted. We could liken them to being fired or filled by the holy spirit.

We remember Jesus telling His apostles to wait until power from on high should be conferred upon them, and then when the day of Pentecost was fully come, we know what happened—they were lighted alight and began to shine immediately so that people took notice that they had surely been with Jesus. We are reminded of the hymn many of us learned in childhood—

"Jesus bids us shine."
"First of all for Him
Like a little candle burning in the night."

There is an interesting verse of a psalm in this connection also. (See Psa. 18:28.) Yes, it is very necessary for God to enlighten our own darkness before we can shine for Him, and this takes time, and we should be sure we are ready to shine before others. Even when we do, let us never forget that in this life we can never legitimately be more than "candles" shining out more or less from obscurity. In some measure early disciples were impatient, they could not wait—"We trusted that it was he who should have redeemed Israel." They wanted things done; they could not bide the shadows.

Modern disciples are often similar. The world is so dark, and it is difficult for anyone to see very much merely by the light of a candle; surely the world wants a clearer, brighter guide—so we may want to urge the work along, put it in the public eye, become a great, organised, sectarian body that can speak with some authority, and be “great and shining lights” now. All who have adopted this course eventually have ceased to let the light of Jesus shine out from them. Matt. 6:19-23—Hearts become set on other treasures, sects, organisations, etc. The eye is no longer single to the glory of God, and how great becomes the darkness.

We think of the saying, “Patience is a virtue, possess it if you can.” From time to time, in daily events of life, it is impressed how difficult it is to possess it. Especially today, humanity cannot wait a minute. Christians often forget the real work of this age which is inward preparation of each one to Christ-like character. We may have the urge “to reign before the time” and change the world about us. We seek something more tangible in our fellowships, and tend to impatience with our twos and threes and the “wilderness” experiences that are necessary to prepare us for a later work. Yes, it is difficult to abide as mere “candle” lights, for we are so anxious to have our Father’s name vindicated and His truth to go abroad in the earth that we may be apt to forget that there is a proper time for this.

We note in our text that when these Christian “candle” lights are lit, they are set up so as to give light to “all that are in the house.” We might think of this as referring to God’s house, to those who are in closer proximity to Him than others. At this end of the age, perhaps, there are fewer than ever in God’s house, so the “candles” do not attract, or give light and help to many. Another once referred to a Christian’s witness as a beacon light on the ocean. The ocean is so vast; not many see it, and of those who do, its true value is assessed only by the ones looking for it to guide them in their journey over the waters. However, the candles’ shining is not limited solely to God’s house, although that is where most good will be done during this age.

The 2nd verse of our text tells us that they are to let the light shine before men, and we might think of this in a more general way. It says, “So that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The world may see our good works now, but few are moved by them to glorify God. That will not be till a later time—the time of “their visitation.” Then they will recall the good examples set them and will thank God for the help they received. But meantime, many will treat the candle lights as they did the great Light of the world; they will persecute them to death.

Our Christian witness may not impress many now, more likely you will be considered a fool in every respect. Even some who do appreciate, more than others, will still regard you in many respects as a “weak” character. They like a more aggressive spirit and cannot understand the philosophy of the Apostle that a Christian must not strive, but be gentle to all, and must not oppose the powers that be, but continue in subjection to all that God ordained, for in due time He will set everything right.

In depicting the condition of his people in his day the prophet Isaiah seems to show how true Christian witness will be observed by the world right down the age. See Isa. 59:14, and half verse 15; margin—“Is accounted mad”—which is what one said to Paul—“much learning hath made thee mad.”

Eph. 5:13 says that all things that are reprov’d (margin—discovered) are made manifest by the light. Yes, even candle light will uncover enough to make evil doers uncomfortable; therefore, they seek to snuff out the candles.

We note in Jeremiah’s prophecy (Jer. 25:8,10), that because God’s professing people in his day did not live in obedience they were going to meet the punishment and be scattered. In verse 10 we see some of the things they were going to lose, amongst them “the light of the candle.” (See verse 10.)

Turning to Rev. 18:23 we see how God’s punishments affect professing Christendom at the end of this age. So we see all the true “candles” are to be separated from Babylon. This separation is important, too, in keeping our candle light clear and bright. To stop in Babylon and try and let our light shine would be like putting a bushel over it. (A bushel being an empty, wooden or metal box used in the olden days for measuring purposes). No light can emanate from Babylon, for the Lord has spued it out. (Rev. 3:16.) Particularly at this time the light must be set on a hill—elevated to a place or position where it can be seen. The very fact that God’s true people stand separated from all sects and denominations in these last days draws attention to the message they have, the light they let shine.

There is a verse in Zeph. 1:12 that is interesting. Yes, the Lord still searches Jerusalem—His professing people—with “candles.” He does not do great things, highly spectacular. No, He works through humble, devoted servants, and humility is required by any who would hear the voice of the Lord.

Our second text portion in Matt. 13:43 tells us that when the kingdom comes it will be different. Christians then will shine forth as the “sun” in the glory of the kingdom. In fact, we notice these words were spoken immediately following the explanation of the wheat and tares parable, which pictured the separation of God’s true people from Babylon during

the harvest of the end of this Gospel Age. From this point of time the light that the saints emanate seems to increase until it becomes as bright as the sun when the kingdom is fully ushered in.

The Apostle Paul also tells us that in the resurrection to this glory some will shine brighter than others—"as star differeth from star"—and *we* can be sure that those who will shine the brightest then, will be those who never sought to be more than "candles" in this life. To those who were faithful in that which was least the Lord will richly reward.

Question Box

Question.—Do you think it possible that I Thes. 4:16, 17 may be fulfilled by the remaining saints being instantly all together caught up bodily in the air to meet the Lord?

Answer.—Such seemed to be the general thought of Bible exponents of the past, but along with many other advent truths, this matter would seem to have become clearer, and is viewed today in what seems to us a more reasonable Scriptural way, more in accord with the usual developments of the Divine Plan.

It is in accord with Scriptural usage that prophecy respecting our Lord's return, or future events connected with the Church, is stated in figurative or symbolic language. This appears to be so whether Paul, Peter or John be the writer, or whether the speaker be the Lord Himself. We will probably all agree that Revelations is practically all symbolic, and that 2 Pet. 3 is the same, as also is our Lord's great prophecy of Matt. 24, etc.

The passage in question would also seem to be in highly symbolic terms. It does not seem that it can reasonably be taken in a literal way. Paul declares that what he said was "by the word of the Lord," and it does not appear that the Lord ever described His second advent but in figurative language. He says, "Those who will be alive and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord shall not precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then those who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (in the heavens)."

The Diaglott translation of this verse is misleading in stating that they "shall at the same time" with them be caught away. While the Greek word "hama," according to Dr. Strong, properly means "at the same time," he points out that it is freely used as a preposition or adverb "denoting close association." It is in this sense that it is here used, and the Diaglott translates the same word correctly in the next chapter (1 Thes. 5:10). A careful study of the subject of our Lord's second advent will, we believe, reveal the fact that He is to be present for some time before the world, and also before even many Christians will be aware of it. May be we should first quote Matt. 24:30-31:—"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with the sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other."

If the Son of Man were to come visibly and literally riding on the literal clouds and with the sound of a literal trumpet, there would be no need for a sign of His presence—a sign is only necessary when the one signified is unseen.

Then note that the saints or the elect have not been instantly all caught away to be with the Lord, for after His arrival He will give command to His messengers to sound a trumpet and gather His elect who are still in the religious systems in all directions.

Again, the tribes of the earth are to see His coming in the clouds of trouble. If He were to come like a flash of lightning, they would not have time to see His coming. The Greek word "erchomai" signifies the act of arriving, and men can today discern that the strange happenings in the world portend a change of dispensation—they see that some great change is working and some will even say that the second coming of Christ must be at hand.

Next we may refer to Luke 17:26, "As in the days of Noah so it will be in the days of the Son of Man." If we compare this with Matt. 24:37-39, "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming (Parousia, i.e., presence) of the Son of Man be." Luke shows us that the word "parousia" has the meaning, not of the act of arriving, but of having arrived, and being present. The world will be ignorant of the fact, eating, drinking, buying, selling, marrying, building, etc., unaware of the great storm of trouble in which all will be involved. Just as they ignored the preaching of Noah for 120 years the world generally ignore the preaching of the second presence of Christ, and so they will be taken unawares by the great time of trouble which will close down the present age, just as the destruction of Jerusalem was the final scene of the Jewish Dispensation.

The Lord follows the prophecy of Matt. 24 with three parables, which appear to be significantly in order.

- (1) The parable of the Virgins indicates two classes who would be waiting and watching at the time of Christ's arrival.
- (2) The parable of the Talents again shows very distinctly that the saints are still here after He has come, and that His first work appears to be the calling of His people to account for the use of the talents entrusted. When this is all accomplished and the elect have all been gradually changed from mortal to immortality, then the Kingdom will be set up.
- (3) The parable of the sheep and the goats then shows the work of Christ and the Church judging the world of mankind. "Know ye not the saints shall judge the world."

The Lord gradually accomplishes the closing down of the Gospel Age and prepares for the Kingdom Age, and then takes up His great power and reigns with His saints for the blessing of all families of the earth.

By referring to Phil. 2:12; 2 Cor. 10:10, and Phil. 1:26, it will be seen that the word "parousia" should be generally translated "Presence." That is the thought contained in the word.

With these thoughts in mind we come back again to the question: How do we understand 1 Thes. 4:16, 17? As we have seen, it cannot be that the Lord's waiting people are all to be literally caught away in one instant, at the moment of our Lord's arrival, for they are indicated as being still on earth. Then one cannot see any reason why the Lord would snatch the saints away and carry their bodies and clothes up in the air, when we know that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." Such translation would not be, being "planted in the likeness of Christ's death," and only "if we be dead with Him," be planted in the likeness of His death can we share in the "likeness of His resurrection." Such an experience as some read into this passage would be neither in the likeness of His death nor of His resurrection. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

This interpretation of this passage, which has been given of recent years, would seem to us both Scriptural and reasonable. The dead in Christ rise first in His presence, then those who are still left over in the flesh will be gradually caught away. As they close their eyes in death they shall be instantly awakened on the spiritual plane "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," at the last (7th) trump, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. We must all die, but we will not all need to sleep, awaiting the resurrection morning, for that time will have arrived, and so no need to sleep, but just to pass under the veil, not over it, and be forever with the Lord, and when all the elect are gathered, or the first resurrection complete, the marriage of the Lamb will be accomplished and the blessings of Christ's Kingdom will soon begin to flow to all mankind.

"Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee."—Luke 8:39.

Are you seeking to be your best to those nearest to you? If not, you may be quite sure you are missing some of life's purest joy and highest service. How often the teaching of the Christian home is discounted by the want of earnest effort to please and gladden and serve in the family circle! To those nearest to us God has given a stronger claim upon us than any others in the world.—Selected.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

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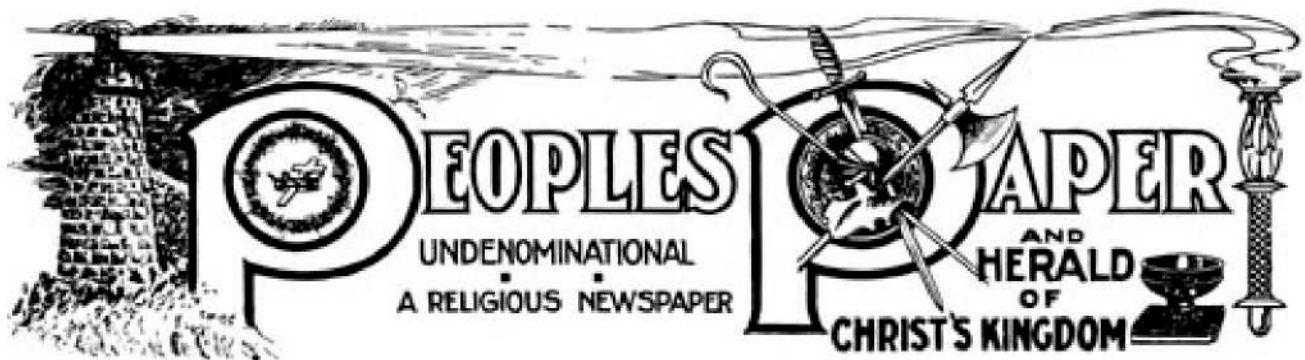
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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“A Full Reward.”

“Look to yourselves that ye lose not the things that we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward.”—2 John 8 (R.V.).

THE Scriptures tells us in regard to the A Gospel Age, that while the special purpose of God has been the choosing of the New Creation—the Little Flock; yet when the Age ended there will be manifest two complete classes—not only the little flock, but also a great company—the latter made up of candidates called to be of the little flock, but who, having failed to attain through not completing their covenant, will be brought, through the grace and provision of the Lord, into a place of servants of the Church—the overcomers. Little prominence in the Scriptures is given to this class, because no one is called to belong to it. “Ye are all called in one hope of your calling.”

We find them, however, pictured frequently; as in the calling of the bride of Isaac—which pictured the calling of the Bride of Christ; Rebecca here pictured the Church—Christ’s Bride, and those maids or companions who accompanied her picturing the Great Company—the Virgins, her companions that follow her.” Psalm 45.

Again, in the two sons of Rachel—Joseph and Benjamin, the former, who attained to Kingdom power and authority, etc., picturing those who shall inherit the Kingdom; whereas Benjamin, the second son, was born through a period of severe travail on his mother, whose death resulted: and pictured the birth of the Great Company—the tribulation class; at the time of whose deliverance the present Age and Order will “die” and vanish away.

And this one calling—what is it? It is something which can only be realised by faith, and personally claimed as one’s own, because we see it so clearly set forth in the Word of God, and have in ourselves the witness of the holy spirit marking our adoption, and being to us a pledge of our future inheritance. “If sons, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.”

It is manifest that the New Testament writers would have, us both fully and constantly realise our calling of God, the favour of it, the greatness of it, and the standard character for it.

The favour of our calling is referred to by Eph. 2:7: “That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us in Jesus Christ.” “No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron.”

Thinking of the greatness of our calling, we read of it as a heavenly calling, a high calling; and again, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love Him.” And Paul’s prayer of Eph. 1:8 is that we might know “what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.”

Can we grasp with all seriousness and solemnity our standing, our hope, God’s purpose in regard to us; for we have been “apprehended” by God, seized hold of by Him. He has called us, which manifests He sees in us the possibility we may become of the Kingdom class; or we would never have been invited of Him. How inspiring are the words of Paul and his example, “I, too, am seeking to apprehend that for which I have been apprehended of God. I can see His work in progress. I realise what it all means, and I am going to do all in my power to attain, working out my own salvation with fear and trembling.”

How the Apostle seeks to urge us to realise the necessity for a walk in keeping with our calling; that our conduct might correspond to, and manifest a realisation of our great favour, great calling; the high requirements of us. Examples of such exhortations occur in 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; Eph. 4:1; 1 Thes. 2:11, 12. If, then, we are to daily recognise what we have been called to, and for what we are on trial, how serious is our position—what dignity, caution, reverence, we need. What manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godliness!

When we realise that all who are called may attain the prize (for their calling signifies this), when we think that God has promised to supply all things needful through Christ Jesus, and when we think (as it seems but reasonable to think) that all who clearly see the wonderful prize, would earnestly desire it; yet to be warned that the majority of those who run for the prize fail to attain; what grave dangers must surely lurk in the way—subtle snares and foes. And any failure can only be attributed to ourselves, for “God is faithful.” And it is proper for us to recognise the danger of failing; to fear lest a promise having been left us of entering into His rest we should seem to come short of it. (Heb. 4:1.) And Paul himself declared (1 Cor. 9:27); “I keep my body under lest by any means after I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway.”

The Word of God as a faithful chart indicates where the dangers of our course lie, telling us where many make shipwreck and others are seriously detained. What, then, are some of the causes tending to the missing of the full reward? All of us seem alert to the danger of a complete falling-away; the danger of the second death through an insurrection of the flesh; or wilful sinning; but we seem less alert to the second line of danger—that of missing the full reward. Many of us seem even to have ourselves allotted to the great company, feeling so keenly the greatness of the high calling standard. However, our calling and possibility are of the Lord; hence it seems that we should earnestly hope and strive to attain the full reward, even that for which God called us.

In the verse above quoted (1 Cor. 9) Paul says, “I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, lest I myself should be a castaway.” Again we read (1 Cor. 5:5): He hands one over to Satan “for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved.” What is the danger here indicated? It is “the flesh”; the danger of not crucifying the flesh entirely. What is our position in this connection? Our covenant of sacrifice unto the Lord signifies that we have let go of the things of the flesh, renounced them, become dead to the human hopes, aims and ambitions. “Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.” “Not to ourselves again, not to the flesh we live.” This is spoken of as a crucifixion of the flesh. (See Gal. 5:24.)

Like any covenant or contract, the arrangement entered into is a binding one. God on His part is faithful, and to us He has given witness of the holy spirit, a pledge to us of God’s faithfulness and speaking to us of a spirit birth and heavenly glory—if we carry out faithfully all the terms of our contract. Ours is a serious position, requiring determination, zeal, faith and love.

And here we see the danger confronting us, and see where the great company come in, for many fail to adhere to their covenant; they do not wilfully break their agreement, but are not just sufficiently particular and careful. And while such, as are pictured away back in the scapegoat of Israel, are specially dealt with in mercy and goodness and brought to a position of “servants before the throne,” yet the lesson stands plainly before us, that the terms of the spiritual hopes are the sacrifice of the flesh; there can be no holding back.

A second point of danger is indicated in Rev. 7, where in speaking of the great company and of God’s dealings with them, it is said that they wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. The washing signifies that the robes had become soiled, and we think of the message to us to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world.” “Ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world.” Ye are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people, called out, separated, sanctified. Right through the age many of the Lord’s people have tended toward the world, as a result of which we see the great system known to men as Christendom and in God’s Word as Babylon; and surely we can all see our individual responsibility to maintain a separateness from the world; the line cannot be too tightly drawn nor too cautiously guarded. “The friendship of the world is enmity with God.” But how many get entangled and retarded by striving to walk pleasing to the Lord and to the world also. How impossible a task; how can we, who have been translated out of this kingdom or world, any longer walk in harmony with its spirit ?

Let us beware also of the defilements of sin and guard ourselves, letting not the spots of sin remain upon our robes, but applying continually the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, so that we may eventually be of that happy company, presented “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” And then, on the other hand, how many helpful suggestions are given to us; how much advice to enable us to be of the full reward class. What characteristics mark this class and are factors in their attainment?

(1) Decision is undoubtedly a big help. If we have with clearness of mind taken up the matter to realise what our consecration really means, and can constantly, clearly keep a proper viewpoint—God’s viewpoint; if we can realise we

have cut ourselves off from the flesh and the world; let neither of these then influence our decisions or actions. Our position leaves no room for debate; we are serving God after the spirit.

(2) Closely allied is the thought of singleness of purpose. "This one thing I do." Paul did not attempt to serve other masters nor to divide his service with self. In the obtaining of the pearl of great price everything else must go.

(3) Paul's words and example are continually of value to us, as in Philippians 3. He tells us that he was forgetting the things behind; and no doubt Paul found it hard, like many of us. But hardness did not count; it was necessary to the attaining of the prize, and that was the all-important point. Sometimes with ourselves, when things go hard and the troubles come hard and frequent, we are apt, if not watchful, to sigh and look back. But let us look right onward, not backward; neither on the trouble and things around. "While we look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen."

(4) In Heb. 12:1 we are urged to lay aside every weight. And here Paul is showing the absolute necessity of laying aside every fetter and obstacle; anything which might unduly and contrary to God's will occupy our time, attention and affection. To be of the full reward company, it is manifest we must not allow ourselves to be interfered with, whatever the natural tendencies or weaknesses may be, and that our mind be quite free and open to serve God, unfettered by allegiance to any earthly head; free in heart and mind for a personal, independent, sincere, acceptable worship and service of our God.

(5) We are frequently exhorted also to "run with patience." Continuance, surely, is one of our biggest lessons and needs and the thing that will have much to do in the testing of the saints. "Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things that we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." "You have been led into the path of life, properly started on a proper basis; you have made a measure of progress; but now continue, for otherwise your work and our work will be spoiled. The prize is not for starting only, but for continuing to the end." We are reminded here, too, of Paul's earnest appeal to the Galatians: "What doth hinder you? Ye did run well." "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" And looking round today on the Lord's people, the question comes to many, who hath bewitched you, you who are straying into bondage again? What 'cloth hinder you? Ye did run well. He who was so wonderfully used of God to enlighten and feed us, though dead, speaks to us, saying, "Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things that we have wrought, but chat ye receive a full reward." Particularly numerous are the exhortations to continuance, and with them watchfulness of our steps is, of course, implied. (See Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:2.) And surely the steady faith, determination and patience are essential that we might keep on. Since we are being tested out, it will be only the Lord's true people, full of love for Him, who will have the qualities to enable them to go right on to the end and be more than over-comers.

Living where we are today, and seeing the Lord's purpose clearly in progress in His people, as in the world, let us take to ourselves all exhortations from the Word; all warnings, all examples. Let us carefully guard all dangers and avail ourselves of all means of grace, clad in the whole armour of God. May God enable us all to clearly see and realise our position, understand the real meaning and responsibility of our consecration, having a comprehensive survey of our course; then endeavouring to forget the things behind and to lay aside every weight, let us strive for a clearer perception of the things ahead, with a richer joy in them and a brighter hope as to the attainment of them. And let us not be weary in well-doing, but let us, as a good ship, homeward bound, keep straight on, riding safely, despite the storms and disturbances which God sees we need to have, determined to finish our course despite all the assaults of the great adversary, trusting ever in our God, whose own Word declares, "God is faithful."

RETURN, OH WANDERER.

Return!

O fallen, yet not lost!

Canst thou forget the life for thee laid down,

The taunts, the scourging, and the thorny crown?

When o'er the first my spotless robe I spread,

And poured the oil of joy upon thy head,

How did thy wakening heart within thee burn!

Canst thou remember all, and wilt thou not return ?

—F.R.H.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

She Stood At His Side.

UNDER the above heading the following appeared in the columns of one of our Melbourne newspapers, in the section of questions and answers conducted by a person who answers life's problems.

An incident that happened some years ago has remained in a man's mind. He is wondering if others have had such an extraordinary experience.

"Faithful" writes: "Ten years ago I visited Mauritius and met a girl with whom I fell deeply in love. She was only 19, so we decided to wait 12 months before marrying.

"We kept up a regular correspondence and if possible, grew more attached. A few months before she was due to come to me, I had a strange sensation that she was in the room.

"I looked up and saw her standing by the table. She did not speak, but looked at me lovingly. Later I discovered she had died at that time.

"I like to think she is waiting for me, but sometimes wonder if I imagined I saw her. Have you heard of a similar experience? It would give me further hope to learn of it."

To the above enquiry the reply was: "I am satisfied there is no death and the closer the link in life the more certain to us is our belief that death is not permanent separation. Perhaps some of our readers will be able to relate an experience that will supplement your belief."

The above account of the apparent appearance of a close friend at the time of her death in another country reveals how subtle and deceptive are the methods used by the great adversary to try and uphold the statement made to Eve in the Garden of Eden—"Ye shall not surely die."

What a variety of methods are used to appeal to the sentiments or affections of people to seek to deceive respecting their departed loved ones, and the majority of people, unacquainted with the plain statements in the Bible, are so easily led to believe that which is in direct opposition to the words of Christ, His apostles and prophets throughout the entire Bible.

How clearly the matter is stated in Gen. 2:17—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Right throughout the Bible this truth is declared—"The soul that sinneth it shall die," and "The wages of sin is death." (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23.) Of our Lord it is also stated so definitely—"That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." And again, "He by the grace of God tasted death for every man." (1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Heb. 2:9.) Inasmuch as Christ "died for our sins," then of course the penalty is death, and not life in any other realm, and all who have died must await the resurrection morning to again receive life, as the Apostle declared—"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Life in the resurrection is a gift from God because it would have been quite just for God to have left mankind in the death condition for all time, but God so loved the world that he sent Christ to pay the penalty for all the human family,

and so we read—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.)

What a terrible deception it is when Satan, through his wicked associates, the fallen angels, so dramatically affects the mind of anyone that he feels that a loved one departed has visited him, giving the impression that the deceased was alive and lovingly waiting for the time of reunion again. It is in this way also that spiritualists are likewise deceived by the evil spirits working through mediums that are under their control.

It is really little wonder that the person who answered the enquiry in the case above reported, stated, "I am satisfied there is no death," when even most ministers of religion today who are supposed to know the truth of the Bible hold the same unscriptural view. Truly, as our Lord declared of the religionists of His day, so the same applies today — "They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14.)

No wonder that the Lord, in this harvest time of the age, is calling His people out of the systems of Christendom (Rev. 18:1-5), where such gross errors are taught that really "deny the 'Lord that bought them,'" for if those who have passed away are not dead, then the sacrifice of Christ was quite unnecessary to redeem them from death. Truly the ransom sacrifice of Christ is the doctrine upon which theories can be tested as to whether they are truth or error. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.)

The Spirit of Courage, Love and of a Sound Mind.

"For God hath not given us a spirit of timidity, but of courage, of love and of a sound mind." —2 Tim. 1:7.

THERE is one kind of fearlessness which is begotten of self-esteem, lack of humility. This is not the kind enjoined upon the Lord's people. They are to be both tender-hearted and' humble-minded. The spirit of courage possessed by the saints is based largely upon their faith in the Lord. Realising the Divine love and providential care, these can apply to themselves the gracious assurance that "The Father himself loveth you," and that "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose." It is this realisation of Divine all-wisdom and all-power that gives the strength of heart referred to in our text. It will be readily seen, then, that this courage is based upon faith, though of course the faith must have a foundation of knowledge. The proper relationship of our growth is primarily knowledge; faith, courage, activity, and all of these continue to grow, and in their maturity make us wise, faithful, courageous, over-comers in respect of the spiritual matters to which we have been called.

Sometimes we realise our deficiencies, and are not able to locate the cause. Someone says, I want to be an overcomer, to gain the victory over the spirit of the world, over the tendencies of my own fallen flesh, and over the wiles of the adversary, but somehow I cannot; I fail. Such should learn to look for the source of failure, the deficient element, and should fortify himself in respect of the same. Let him ask, first, Is my failure to overcome due to a lack of courage? Am I fearful, and hence unable to fight the good fight of faith and, by the Lord's assistance, to gain the victory? If he has the courage, he may find that he has not been sufficiently trusting in the Lord, but leaning too much on his own strength. Such should remember the Apostle's words. "When I am weak, then I am strong;" reversely, "when I am strong in self-assurance, I am then weak," because the Lord wishes me to rely not upon myself, but upon Him, His strength, His grace. If the courage be found deficient, the reason evidently is that the faith is lacking, and if so, there is a reason for it; either a lack of knowledge on which to build faith, or a lack of exercise and development of faith. The knowledge is to be sought from the right quarter, in harmony with the Lord and His Word, and the faith is to be exercised continually, recognising the Lord's interest in us as His children, as testified to by His Word, and by noticing the leadings of Divine providence in our daily affairs.

There is a proper fear or reverence and disinclination to offend our Heavenly Father and our Redeemer, which we wish never to lose. Perfect love will not cast out this fear, but rather intensify it. The fear which love casts out is timidity, a servile fear or dread of the Lord, or of Satan, or of the fallen angels, or of men, and what they might do to us. Perfect love cannot be attained without knowledge, faith, courage, and overcoming. It is the result of the exercise of all this Divine arrangement that brings us nearer to God, and makes us truly thankful and appreciative of His gracious purposes and omnipotent power for their accomplishment.

The spirit of courage needs special cultivation by the Lord's people. And this cultivation means growth in all the graces. For instance, if calamity befall us or threaten us, we should immediately think of the fact that our Lord assures us that an insignificant sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our Father's notice, and that we are of much more value than many sparrows. This thought at once strengthens the heart, nerves the arm, quickens the pulse of endeavour, provided we can realise that God is for us, that no earth-born cloud intervenes between our souls, and the love for us, which He has declared. If a cloud does obscure the Father's love we must the more earnestly, the more persistently get from behind it by getting our hearts right with the Lord, by going to Him in prayer, by confessing our trespasses, and by requesting mercy and grace to help and restore us to His favour.

“Be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart” is one of the blessings assured us in His Word. In the Divine order, courage is necessary in order to gain strength and victory. Someone has said, “One with God is the majority.” With the courage to grasp this thought, and to hold it, things almost superhuman seem possible to the Lord’s people, while without this courage they may naturally be weak and easily vanquished.

Never before, perhaps, was courage so needed, as it will be needed in the evil day just before us; but the Prophet’s descriptions of the great troublesome time before us are very figurative when they speak of fire and cloud and pillars of smoke, saying of this time, “I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke,” etc. But the consecrated children of God need have no timidity in respect of these matters if they have the proper courage, developed by proper exercise and built upon proper faith, founded upon the knowledge of Divine revelation. His attitude of heart will be, “I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.” Whether, therefore, storms, financial, political, religious, or demoniacal, come his way, the child of God may rest secure, and be of good courage. The Lord is both able and willing to care for his interests, and bring him off victor. Love for the Lord, based upon a knowledge and appreciation of His truth, will lead such to triumph courageously over all the wiles of the adversary and his hordes.

The Scriptures abound with testimonies to the effect that the severe trials of the near future will be along the lines of deception. They speak of lying angels and deceivableness of unrighteousness, and “lying wonders,” and tell us that the Lord will send or permit a strong delusion that many may believe a lie. If we gain a right conception of the matter, these deceptions are to affect the whole world, including its wise men, and, indeed, practically everybody except the “very elect,” and the “very elect” will be preserved, not through their own wisdom or superiority, but through the power of God, “For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the “very elect.” Matt. 24:24.

Our Lord, in the parable of the wheat and the tares, tells of the harvest work, and how, in the present time, He would gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (Matt. 24:31). It is by thus gathering them that they will be protected in the time of strife and trouble, when others will be deceived. But they are not to be gathered physically into one place, but spiritually; their minds, their hearts, their affections are to be gathered together, centred. Our text tells us that our Lord is the great Centre to which His elect must all be gathered, if they would have rest or peace, if they would overcome the world, the flesh, and the peculiar snares of the adversary, which will be laid for the feet of all, and will more or less entrap all except the elect class.

Figuratively, all of these “very elect” ones are to be gathered, and the place is thus described, “I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge; in Him will I trust”; and again, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” (Psa. 91:1). Ah! no wonder that we also read, “No harm shall come nigh them.” How could harm come to any who are thus close to the Lord? “A thousand shall fall at thy side; ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee; because thou hast made the Lord thy refuge; thou hast made the Most High thy habitation” (Psa. 91:7).

This nearness to God, into which His “very elect” will be gathered, will be the source of their protection. And the dangers to others will be in proportion to their distance to this great citadel of strength, this fortress, this refuge or tower.

“Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We’re travelling through Immanuel’s ground,
To fairer prospects nigh.”.

“Fear Not, Little Flock”

Luke 12:32.

WHAT endearing words, so sweet, so simple, so full of meaning and what comfort they bring to the heart in this day of fear! They remind us of a mother, who, hearing a cry in the night, rises swiftly to tend the one she loves. Taking the trembling one in her arms and telling it to fear not, while she rocks it to sleep on her breast.

How many times we are told in the Scriptures to fear not, and our Saviour must have realised the great power fear would have over the human mind when He told His little band of faithful followers so many times to fear not.

From whence comes the fear, and what makes one ‘fear? The first intimation we have of fear in the Bible is where Adam and his wife hid themselves in the Garden of Eden—So we see that fear comes from a knowledge of sin. Once sin enters the heart we fear. Job 11:14, 15, says: “Put iniquity away . . . and thou shalt not fear.” When iniquity leaves the heart fear departs with it.

What a persistent and formidable foe is fear. It attacks from every direction. It is the imp and progeny of sin, and where it hides, the child of God may be sure that the Adversary is working very hard to stumble the unsuspecting one. Nevertheless, a godly fear is necessary in the composition of a true Christian character, for the child of God must fear to do evil, to wound the feelings of a brother, and should reverence and fear God. Fear makes a splendid watchdog, which should warn if any evil approaches the heart, but it should never repose in the heart.

How strange that in a day of full and plenty, with garnerers of wheat overflowing, fat cattle and sheep by the million, fruit weighing the branches to the ground, grapes in abundance in a land flowing with milk and honey, and everything that should gladden the heart of man, that fear grips the heart, leaving a dreadful feeling of unrest and insecurity.

Never in our lives do we need faith and perfect trust in God more than we need it today. Men seem to have lost faith in God, and evil and vice abound. What a vivid picture St. Paul paints of the men of today, when he declares that they would wax worse and worse; that in the last days trying times should come, for men would be lovers of self, money-lovers, boasters, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, accusers, without self-control, ferocious, rash, self-conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than God, having a form of piety but denying the power thereof; and from all such he exhorts us to turn away.

O, the blessedness and peace that reigns in the heart of the children of God, who look to the Father with the faith of a little child, never doubting that the Divine hand that has supplied the wants of today, will also provide the needs of tomorrow! As the mother runs to the aid of her sick child, even so, God will come quickly to the aid of those who call upon Him, and His best gifts are to those who have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. Our Saviour teaches this lesson. When He was with His disciples on the lake of Galilee, a storm arose, lashing the waves to fury; and in the midst of the tempest the boat had sprung a leak and the disciples were in great peril. In fear and dismay they ran to our Saviour and found Him sleeping peacefully. They awakened Him, saying, “Master, Master, we perish.” Then arising, He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and there was a great calm. And He said unto them, “Where is your faith?” In this case the disciples’ fear was caused by a want of faith. Had they had perfect faith in their Master, they too, could have slept peacefully and would have known no fear.

The Psalmist gives us a splendid pen picture of that storm in the words, “They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths. They reel and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and He delivers them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still” (Psa. 107:23-29). It may be that our Saviour had previously been discussing these powerful words of the Psalmist, and to try the effect of His teachings and to test their faith had permitted the raising of the storm. Even so it is today, amid all the gathering gloom and the banking of the storm clouds when men stagger and reel under the power of the Divine hand.

Although the storms are of a different character, they are purposely sent by God to try our faith, and to see if we have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. O, if we could only have that sweet love and trust in God, which even little children teach us every day by their confiding faith in us.

We see many instances where our Lord tested His disciples and gave them warnings. After Peter had made his avowal of love, our Lord had warned him that he would deny Him, and we all know the result. Jesus, revealing Himself to St. Paul on the road to Damascus, told him plainly that he would suffer many things for His Name’s sake. And as we

follow the Apostle Paul in all his wanderings, we see him buffeted from pillar to post, and treated by some as the scum of the earth. We follow him to prison, and in depths oft, five times he received forty stripes save one, thrice he was beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, in perils often, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, and yet, in spite of all this formidable list of fears and sufferings he counts them all as light afflictions. So real was his faith, so great his love and loyalty to his Master, that fear could find no place in that noble heart. We realise that the many things he suffered acted as the chisel of persecution that shaped that noble character into a gem of loveliness, which has so endeared him to all believers.

As we look back over the mist of years and recall the wondrous words of the Apostle which have shed a halo of glory around the cross of Christ, reaching numberless hearts, stimulating and comforting, and leaving an impression which is the reflex of Christ's glorious character, let us step forward bravely and courageously into the future, and "fear not."

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Rules for Conduct.

Rule 1.—Let each resolve to mind his own business. If we have not sufficient of our own and the Lord's business to fully occupy us there is something wrong that needs careful and prayerful study of the Word to set it right. This doesn't mean that we should not take a sympathetic interest in the affairs of others.

2. —We should exercise patience with others more than in dealing with ourselves and our own shortcomings. This means a great deal.

3. —Do not be touchy or easily offended. Take a kindly charitable view of the words and acts of others. Throw a mantle of generosity over the faults and offences of others, realising that they are mostly unintentional.

4. —Do not slander. If we have been slandered it will serve no good purpose to slander in return. Let us not render evil for evil, reviling for reviling. If we should try to rectify all the errors and misstatements of slanderers the adversary would keep us so busy that we should have no time for development.

5. —Do not indulge in evil speaking, backbiting or slandering, even if the statement be true. Many are led into this trap not with any desire to do harm, but out of the love of gossip. Both the laws of God and man recognise this to be thieving, even as Shakespeare says: "He who steals my purse steals trash; but he who steals my good name steals that which doth not make him rich, but leaves me poor indeed."

6. —Avoid pride as a most deceitful enticement. This fault comes out in so many ways that it needs to be specially watched, for pride caused Satan's downfall, and we must watch lest it entraps us. It is even possible to be proud of our knowledge of present truth, deceiving ourselves that we must be good, noble and wise persons to have been able to comprehend something of God's Plan, forgetting that the Lord has chosen the weak and foolish things to accomplish His will, that it should not be of power or might, but by the spirit of the Lord.

7. —Be sure to maintain a conscience devoid of offence toward God and man.

8.—While treasuring and seeking to follow the various specific Scriptures, let us not lose sight of the character and principles of God as a whole, so that we may attach due weight to each portion of the Word.

9. —Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the disposition of Christ. While it is necessary that we have sufficient firmness of character to contend earnestly for the Faith, let us avoid unnecessary contentions about non-essentials, and with persons whom we know we shall be unable to influence for good.

10. —Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, strife, keeping our hearts in an attitude of love for God and all of His creatures.

11. —Do not trust your conscience; if it were a sufficient guide, the Lord would not have given us the Scriptures. Educate and regulate your conscience by the Word.

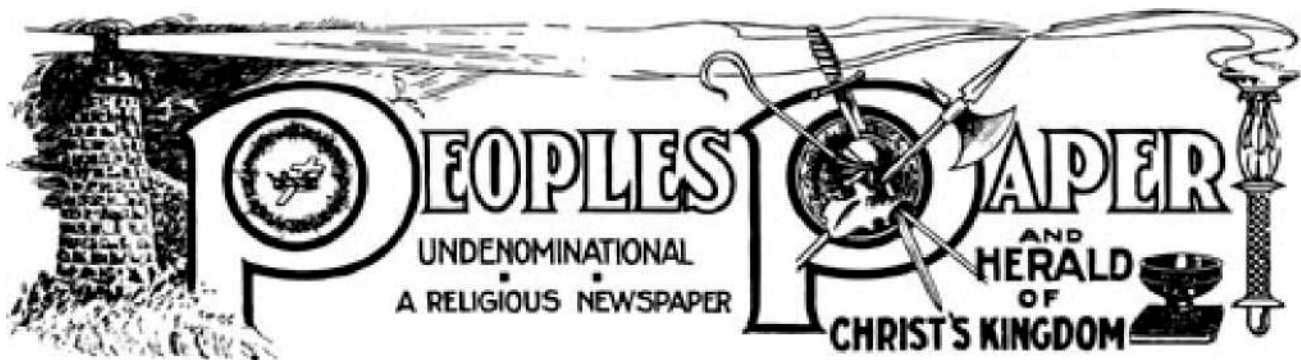
12. —Do not be bold except in the cause of Christ, righteousness and truth.

We shall find it a great help in this matter if we get a clear view of the purity and beauty and loving benevolence of God and Christ, and instead of arguing with the tempter say, No, with finality. I want to be like God or Godlike, or as we have heard some take as their guide, the question: "What would Jesus do?" and the answer will assuredly take us on the right path. In other words, let us seek first the Kingdom of God, continually setting our affections on things above.—Selected.

The All-Seeing Eye

On the ceiling of many Greek churches may be seen painted an enormous eye. This is intended to represent the Eye of God. It is well to be reminded that this Eye is upon us in church, but we must not think that we are more seen there than elsewhere. Perhaps the difference between a truly religious person and one who is not, consists in this: that the first feels he is always being watched over. He looks to the Eye of God for guidance, reproof, correction, encouragement, in all times and places; he thinks of a loving Father watching over His child.

The second, when he thinks of it at all, only feels that he is watched with a view of future punishment—Clipping.



Volume XL. No. 10 MELBOURNE. OCTOBER, 1957 Price—Fivepence

A Practical Self-Examination on Love.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.”-2 Cor. 13:5.

IT seems impossible to describe love, this wonderful quality without which nothing is acceptable in the sight of God! The Apostle does not attempt to define love, but contents himself with giving us some of its manifestations. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it. The fact is that love, like life and light, is difficult to define; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of its effects. It is of God; it is godlikeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts — supervising all the human attributes and seeking to control them. Where love is lacking, the results are more or less evil; where love is present, the results differ according to the degree of love, and are proportionately good.

In the Christian an outward manifestation of amiability, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., is not sufficient, either in God's sight or in his own. These graces must be produced by the spirit of love, filling and expanding within his own heart. Many of the graces of the spirit are recognised by the unregenerate and are imitated as marks of good breeding, and in many cases are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments wholly antagonistic to the holy spirit of love.

The measure of our appreciation of divine love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of divine love enters the heart, before that grace is manifest in all the thoughts and words and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may, without the grace of God within, have many of the outward refinements. None but Him who reads the heart is competent, therefore, to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts; but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten of this holy spirit, love, should seek to let its light so shine out, through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify his Father in Heaven and “show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.”-1 Pet. 2:9.

Amongst the “gifts” of early Apostolic times, prophecy, or oratory, was one highly commended, and large faith was reckoned as being amongst the chief of Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and Love were absent, he would be nothing — a mere cypher—not a member of the new creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature.

What a wonderful test this is ! The Apostle Paul counsels, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.” Let us each apply the test to himself: Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by my love for Him, for His brethren, for His cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, rather than by my knowledge, or fame, or oratory!

Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy spirit of love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measure of character, therefore, we are to put Love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness to and acceptance with the Lord.

Love is the Secret of True Politeness

Having given us such a conception of the importance of Love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates and how it does not operate, or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself and inquire within:

Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerably and for a long time, and yet to be kind? Am I patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions? Am I patient even with those who are out of the way, realising that the great adversary blinds the minds of the masses and remembering that this manifestation of love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus, who was patient with His opponents?

Am I kind in my thoughts, seeking to guard my manner and my tones, knowing that they have much to do with every affair of life? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts? Do I think of and am I considerate of others? Do I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle in the home, in his place of business, in the Church—everywhere. In proportion as perfect love is attained the constant effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of patience and kindness. With the child of God these qualities are not to be mere outward adornments, they cannot be; on the contrary, they are fruits of the spirit—growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, having learned of Him, received of His spirit of holiness, of love.

Have I the love that “envieth not,” the love that is generous, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if, for a time, my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is true generosity, the very reverse of jealousy and envy, which spring from a perverted nature. The root of envy is selfishness; envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love rejoices with them that rejoice, in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and in the divine service of all who are actuated by the divine spirit.

Have I the love that is humble, that “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up”? the love that tends to modesty, that is not boastful, not lifted up? Have I the love that would prompt to good deeds, not to be seen of men, but that would do the same if no one saw or knew but God only? that boasts neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the

Father? And do I make return to Him in love and service for every mercy? Boasting over self-esteem has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is the spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate one’s self, and not to think too highly of his character and attainments.

Have I the love which is courteous, “doth not behave itself unseemly”? Pride is the root out of which grows much of the unseemly conduct, impoliteness, so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Politeness has been defined as love in trifles; courtesy as love in little things. The secret of politeness is either surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have heart-love which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love which is unselfish, which “seeketh not her own” interests exclusively, which might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others? or have I, on the contrary, the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the conveniences, comfort and rights of others? To have love in this particular, means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and will prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong; to suffer an injustice than to do an injustice.

Love Begins at Home

Nothing in this signifies that one should neglect the caring for and providing in every way for those dependent upon him by the ties of nature, in order that he may do good to others. In every sense, “love begins at home.” The proper thought, as we gather it, is that men and women, possessed of the spirit of perfect love, would not think exclusively of their own interests in any of the affairs of life. Put into exercise, this element of Love would have a great influence upon all the affairs of life, inside as well as outside the home and family.

Have I the love which is good tempered, “not easily provoked” to anger—love that enables me to see both sides of a question, that gives me the spirit of a sound mind, which enables me to perceive that exasperation and violent anger are not only unbecoming but, worse than that, injurious to those toward whom they may be directed, and also injurious in

their effect upon my own heart and body?

There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and ...his might come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense, in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised for a loving purpose for doing good, but, it should be exercised then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not either with our lips, or in our hearts, in which, at no time, may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments towards those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offence. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love; and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to Him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered, or willingly harbored, or not fought against, it becomes an evidence of a deficiency and imperfection of our development in the holy spirit of our Father, and of the deficiency of our likeness to our Lord Jesus, our Pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive from one's self as much kindness and as many excuses for their continuance as this one. But however much natural depravity and heredity and nervous disorders may tend toward this spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord's spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it.

It will not do to say, "It is my way," for all the "ways" of the fallen nature are bad; and it is the business of the new creature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the devil. In few ways can we show to our friends and households more than in this the power of the grace of love. This grace, as it grows, should make every child of God sweet tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

Love Thinks No Evil

Have I the spirit of love which "thinketh no evil," which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, not attributing to them evil motives? Have I the love which seeks always to interpret the conduct of others charitably, to make all possible allowance for errors in judgment rather than to impugn the motives of the heart? Perfect love is good intentioned itself; it prefers and, so far as possible, endeavors to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. "Faults are thick where love is thin" is a very wise proverb.).

But where love passes over offences and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this does not mean that love would treat evildoers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper, or even necessary, to take some notice of the offences to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested — nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible, doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

"Love Rejoiceth Not in Iniquity"

Have I the love that is sincere, that "rejoiceth not in iniquity (in-equity), but rejoiceth in the truth"? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with right, and so out of harmony with the wrong, that I am grieved with evils wherever encountered and sympathise with all who fall into evil or who are beset with temptations? Am I so opposed to wrong that I would not encourage it even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests?

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the holy spirit, perfect love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness or goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect "love rejoiceth not in iniquity" under any circumstances or conditions and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own advancement.

The love of God, which the Apostle here describes as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more distinctly discerned and always firmly adhered to at any cost. However profitable error might be, love could take no part in it, and could not desire the reward

of evil. But it does take pleasure in the truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the truth of divine revelation, however unpopular the truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cost the loss of friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of love has such an affinity for the truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the truth or its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of Him or ashamed of His Word; and of all such He declares that He will be ashamed when He comes to be glorified in His saints.

Have I the love that “beareth all things”? that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin, and everything that is contrary to Love ? that is both able and willing to endure, for the cause of God, reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death ? “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith”—the very life and centre of which faith is the holy spirit of love for the Lord and for those that are His and, sympathetically, for the world. Perfect love can bear up under all circumstances and, by God's grace, bring us off conquerors and “more than conquerors through him that loved us.”-1. John 5:4; Rom. 8:37.

Love is Not Suspicious

Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced to do so by indisputable evidences ? that would rather believe good than evil about everybody? that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Perfect love is not suspicious, but is, on the contrary, disposed to be trustful. It acts on the principle that it is better, if necessary, to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspect even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition, as applied to thoughts; and of it the Master said, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matt. 5:7.) The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct towards others.

Have I the love that “hopeth all things,” perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that “endureth all things,” that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance? Perfect love is not easily discouraged. This is the secret of Love's perseverance: having learned of God, and having become a partaker of His holiness, it trusts in Him and hopes undismayed for the fulfilment of His gracious covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings.

This hopeful element of love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged or put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. Love's hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the veil, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages.

Let us, Beloved, with all our getting, get love —not merely in word, but in deed and in truth —the love whose roots are in the new heart, begotten in us by our Heavenly Father's love, and exemplified in the words and deeds of our dear Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross unless, with all, we secure love. (From “Reprints.”)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. }ham, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows

“Just for To-day,”
“One Here and There,”
“How Readest Thou?,”
“The New Leaf,”
“The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,”
“Drop a Pebble in the Water,”
“My Bible and I,” “Love’s Victory,”
“The Touch of the Master’s Hand,”
“Some Worthy Attainments,”
“Come Unto Me.”
“Somewhere the Light is Shining,”
“The Secret of His Presence.”
“Watching and Praying,”
“Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,”
“Not Seeing, Yet Believing,”
“Hitherto and Henceforth,”
“The Lord My Shepherd,”
“Into His Marvellous Light,”
“Right was The Pathway,”
“This is My Will for Thee.”
“Are Ye Able ?”

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

Christian Fellowship.

(Excerpt Convention Report, 1929.)

. . . . Toleration is not enough. Sometimes we hear the value of toleration praised in high terms, and we certainly agree that toleration is a great deal better than intolerance, but toleration is not fellowship. What kind of a time would I be describing to absent friends if I told them of the wonderful way in which the friends at this Convention had tolerated me? They would not think that I had had such a wonderful time after all, would they? It would be apparent that only by a considerable strain on their Christian forbearance had the conventioners managed to put up with me for three days. My experience would not be exactly what we would understand by the word fellowship.

When the Apostle John (1 John 1:3) speaks of fellowship with “us,” I understand that he had reference to the fellowship of spirit which exists in the Christ Company. As our first thought in this connection let us consider 2 Cor. 5:16, ‘Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh.’ We are still in the flesh, each of us trying to “keep the body under,” and the fellowship we have is the fellowship of spirit. If I meet with brethren who are striving to walk in the footsteps of Christ, handicapped as we all are by reason of birth, education, environment, etc., the fellowship I have with them is not after the flesh but in our mutual attempt to grow more and more like Christ. So with the Psalmist I rejoice to say, “I am a companion of all them that fear Thee and keep Thy precepts.”

In Phil. 2:1 the Apostle speaks of fellowship of the spirit. As illustrating this: Suppose I have been absent from a brother for a year or so, and during that time I have been seeking to grow more and more like Christ, to develop more of His spirit of humility and of truth. I have been trying to get more of the spirit of holiness in my life, more of the spirit of liberty, more of the spirit of joy in bearing the fruit of the spirit and in helping others, more of the spirit of patience, more of the spirit of peace.

Suppose, when I meet this brother, I find he has been striving likewise and that as a result the mellowing influence of God’s holy spirit in him is manifest to me as the mellowing influence of God’s holy spirit in me is manifest to him. Is there not fellowship of spirit? There is, indeed. There is nothing else on earth quite like it.

There are some places where they are not so well educated—they spell the word fellowship differently. In the dictionary it begins with “f,” but there are some who begin it with “g,” and they go on in this way—g-o-s-s-i-p spells fellowship. That is not the kind of fellowship with which we wish to have anything to do.

Another point I have noted down for myself is, try and be a better listener—to listen in a way that shows I am giving full attention. If one’s mind is preoccupied he may appear to be listening when others are speaking to him when actually his mind is too much filled with other matters to be of any real comfort to the one who may be seeking sympathy or attention. A father was reading a newspaper when his little child wished to tell him something, and he attempted to hold conversation with her while still reading the newspaper. “Listen, Father,” said the little girl, tugging at his coat sleeve. “I am listening,” he said, continuing to have his eyes glued to the newspaper. “Ah, but I want you to listen with your eyes, too,” she replied. And so in order to have more of the fellowship of my brother in Christ I am determined to give more of my fellowship to him and this will empty my life of all the things that centre around self, that I may be free indeed to fellowship with my brethren in a way that will mean something to them.

Books Available.

“God’s Promises Come True”—11.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“Our Lord’s Great .Prophecy”-1/-. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-1/-. “Christ’s Return”-1/-.

“Some of the Parables”-1/-.

“God and Reason”-1/.

Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

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Know of the Doctrine

“If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.”—John 7:17.

WE are living in a day when the very word doctrine seems to be offensive to the majority of Christian people. Each denomination realises that its own system of doctrines is imperfect, unsatisfactory, undependable. And the same is believed in respect of all other doctrines. Hence, by mutual consent Christian people seem disposed to henceforth and forever ignore doctrines; for they believe that, if after nineteen centuries they are thus confused, the matter never was clear and never will be clear to anybody.

All this is a great mistake; the doctrines of Christ, as presented by the Great Teacher and His Apostles, was a great message, of which none of them was ashamed. The difficulty with the Lord’s people today is that we gradually fell away from those doctrines—we gradually put darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus gradually got into the spirit of Babylon, and into the spirit of bondage to human traditions and creeds. Instead of shunning doctrines, we should realise that they are the very things needed to cause the scattering of our darkness and superstitions, and to draw all of God’s people nearer together.

The doctrines of Christ and the Apostles are what we need to inspire us to break down all our creed fences, which so long have separated us as God’s people, the one from the other, in various denominational folds, all which are contrary to the Divine arrangement; for God has but the one fold for all His “Sheep” of this Age, as He will have another fold for the Restitution “sheep” of the next Age—the Messianic Kingdom Age.

Can we doubt that if as God’s people we put away sectarianism and the creed spectacles of our forefathers, and if we go with pure, sincere hearts to the Lord and His Word, we will there find again the “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father over all, and one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” and “one Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven”? (Eph. 4:5,6; Heb. 12:23). Let us hearken to the words: “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward,” “But remember the former days, in which ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and by afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.” “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” (Heb. 10:35, 32, 33, 36).

The time seems long to all of us, even though we remember that “a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” When we think of the fact that it is thirty-nine hundred years since God’s promise to Abraham that his Seed should bless all the families of the earth—when we think of the fact that Israel did not receive that great privilege of being the spiritual Seed from which primarily that blessing should go forth, and that the “elect” are receiving it; when we think of the fact that God has been over nineteen centuries in selecting the “elect” from Israel and from all nations, it is enough to stagger our faith unless we hold firmly to the Divine promise and remember that God confirmed it with an Oath. By these two immutable, unchangeable things, the Divine Word and the Divine Oath, we know that the Seed of Abraham is to be developed, and that eventually it is to bless all the families of the earth. It is the Divine will that we allow our faith in this great promise of God to be “an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil.”—Heb. 6:19.

What we all need as God’s people is to put away human theories and other gospels and take hold afresh on the Gospel of Christ. These other gospels are other messages of hope, aside from the one which the Bible presents. For instance, Theosophy is one of these; Evolution is another; New Theology is another. These all hold out a different gospel from that which Jesus and the Apostles presented; the one that was given to us for our sanctification, and through the holding fast of which, and the obedience to The Faith,

we are to be saved and given a share with Messiah in His glorious Empire of the world.

The doctrines of Christ mean those doctrines presented in the Bible by Jesus and His mouthpieces, the Apostles. These doctrines relate to the Church and to the world, and God's blessing for each; these doctrines relate to sin and its forgiveness; the terms of that forgiveness, the basis of that forgiveness—the death of Jesus—and the hope of that forgiveness, release from Divine condemnation, fellowship with God, and everlasting life obtained through a resurrection of the dead.

But some one will inquire, Why is it so difficult to understand the doctrines of Christ? Why are there so many different denominations of Christians? Why do they all so misunderstand the matter—that the different denominations have resulted from the differences of theory respecting the teachings of the Bible? The simple explanation is that, shortly after the death of the Apostles, when the Church began to be in a measure of prosperity, the Adversary came in and sowed the seeds of false doctrines, using human lips and human pens in his service, through pride and ambition. The darkness became so great that, looking back today, we speak of the period as the “Dark Ages.”

The various denominations of Christendom are evidences of honesty, perseverance and love of the Truth, because our forefathers, who made these creeds, were each trying to get more and more out of the dark and back to the “True Light.” They all made the mistake, however, of holding too much to the creeds and theories of the past. Let us not make the same mistake; let us cut loose entirely from every authority outside the Word of God. Whoever can help us understand God's Word—we should be glad to have his assistance; but we cannot acknowledge as inspired or authoritative the teachings of the “Fathers” of the early times however conscientious they may have been, because we cannot recognise that there were any such authorised successors to the Apostles.

God, who foretold through the Prophets this long period of darkness, and who has blessed and guided His saintly children throughout it, without removing all of their blindness, has promised that with the end of this Age will come a great blessing and enlightenment upon His people, when the “wise virgins” will find their lamps burning brightly, and be able to understand and appreciate the deep things of God: “The wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand.” In the end of this Age the curtain was to be drawn, and the “true light” was to shine forth, scattering all the darkness. We are in the close of this Age today, and therefore may see much more clearly than did our forefathers, the Divine character and Plan for human salvation.

Our text is a message from the Master's own lips. He gives us the key to a clear knowledge of His doctrines, namely, that the student must be fully consecrated to God and fully desirous of knowing His Will and His Plan. In order to see light in God's light—to see the Truth, from the Divine standpoint of the Divine revelation, we must draw near to God in the spirit of our minds, consecrated in our heart. We must will to do His will.

But what does this mean? What is it to will to do His will? God's will represents actual perfection of thought and word and deed, toward God, toward our fellows in the Body of Christ, and toward all mankind. This is the Divine Standard set up, but we are no more able to fill its demands than were the Jews. As St. Paul declares, “We cannot do the things that we would.” Weakness of the flesh, frailty and imperfection, we all have with the world; the best that we can do is to will to do right, and to the best of our ability carry out that covenant with the Lord to do His will. At the very best all will come short of perfection.

But for those who have come into harmony with God, through Christ—for those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice—for those who have Jesus for their Advocate, a provision has been made, whereby the willing, all desiring to do the Divine will, and manifesting endeavors so to do, are counted as

righteous—as though they did the Divine will perfectly. This class, in the Scriptures, is known as the “saints”; they are the prospective members of the Body of Christ. It is to these that the promises of our text apply, that they shall will to do the Divine will, shall know whether Jesus merely made up these teachings of Himself, or whether He was the active agent of Jehovah in what He did and in what He taught.

Shall we not, then, determine to give our hearts, our wills, fully to the Lord—determine in our wills to do God’s will? If so, following the instructions of the Word of God, we shall doubtless be blessed and enabled fully to know, to appreciate, to understand, the doctrines of Christ—the deep things of God, which are revealed to this class by the spirit of God.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays. 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

The Find.

“Mother, I’ve found an old dusty thing
High on the shelf—just look!”

“Why, that’s a Bible, Tommy dear,
Be careful, that’s God’s book.”

“God’s book,” the child exclaimed,

“Then, mother, before we lose it.

We’d better send it back to God,

For you know we never use it.”

—”The Churchman.”

RADIANCE

The shining face is no mystery. Centuries ago the Psalmist knew the secret, and wrote, “They looked to him and were ‘radiant.’ “ It comes to those whose faces are always turned toward Christ, as a flower turns toward the light.

It was said at the time the Boxer rebellion that Chinese Christians could not be disguised—the light in their faces betrayed them. The pity of it, that every Christian may not be known by the shining of his face!

Dwelling in the Lord.

TO dwell in Christ means to be in the closest relationship with Him; there must be agreement, harmony, and unity of purpose, producing a feeling of confidence and goodwill. The closeness of this relationship is shown clearly in the beautiful illustration of the vine and its branches. The vine is the stem or trunk that produces and supports the branches which bear the fruit. The branch is part of the vine, with which it must remain connected. “Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” (John 15:4.) Here the word “abide” has the same meaning as the word “dwell” in 1 John 3:24, for we surely dwell in God as we continue to abide in Christ.

We dwell or abide in Him by doing His will, keeping His commandments, and He abides or dwells in us. This union is a double one—we in Him and He in us. To establish and maintain this union it is necessary to keep His commandments; God cannot dwell in us unless we dwell in Him. “If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23.)

In Psalm 37:3, we read, “Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.” Here also is implied a spirit of concord without which God’s bounty could not be enjoyed. His commandments must be kept, then the promise of peace and plenty would be fulfilled.

Further the prophet says, “He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his water shall be sure.” (Isa. 33:15, 16.) Again the condition attached to the promise is righteousness, and he who does righteously has the spirit of God and dwelleth in Him. Under the dispensation existing at the time of the Psalmist and Prophet, the promises were earthly, and to enjoy God’s favour it was necessary to keep His commandments, just as it is now, if we would receive His spiritual favours.

“And hereby we know that he abideth in us by the spirit which he hath given us.” In Rom. 8:9 and 14, we read: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you; for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Being led by the spirit of God is abundant evidence of the inward presence of God’s spirit which leads us to seek those things which are above rather than mind the things of the earth..

Christian Way Ended

Word has been received of the passing of our elderly Sister Thorpe, who had resided with her son and family in Gippsland, Victoria, since coming to Australia from England about eight years ago.

Sister Thorpe had attended one of the Melbourne Conventions a few years ago, and made the acquaintance of a good number of the brethren; her sincerity and love for the Lord and His truth was very manifest indeed. Our dear Sister had rejoiced in the truth for many years prior to coming to Australia, and we trust for her an abundant entrance into the Kingdom by the Lord's grace.

Failing health in recent years had prevented Sister Thorpe from leaving the home in Gippsland, but her letters were always cheerful, and one of the Apostle Paul's lovely texts was always in her mind; she certainly rejoiced in it, and quoted it freely—"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) Sincere sympathy is extended to our Sister's relatives, who also appreciated the Christian qualities shown by Sister Thorpe during her sojourn in the home. "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

"He always wins who sides with God,
To him no chance is lost;

God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost.

Ill that He blesses is our good,

And unblest good is ill;

And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet will.

—Farrar.



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The Third Heaven.

“It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth ;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for man to utter. ” (2 Cor. 12:1-4.),

BEFORE investigating these verses which describe the wonderful experience of the Apostle Paul it is fitting to examine, to some extent, the extraordinary event of this Apostle's conversion on the Damascus road. The full account is given in some detail in Acts 9. Briefly stated, the record reveals that while Paul was on a mission intent on persecuting the followers of Christ, he was confronted with a most amazing situation, as stated in verses 3 to 6 as follows—”And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”

In Damascus the Lord instructed a certain disciple, Ananias, to contact Saul and inform him that he was a chosen servant to serve His cause forthwith. Ananias at first objected that Saul had come on a mission of persecution of the Lord's people, but the answer from the Lord was unmistakable—”Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Paul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou tamest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the holy spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” (Acts 9:15-20.)

Later, in Paul's ministry for the Lord, in his defence before king Agrippa, we find the same information beautifully revealed by the Apostle. (See Acts 26:12-20.) In verse 19 we read—”Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” No, indeed; what a lovely witness! This spontaneous acceptance by Paul of the Lord's revelation to him, no doubt gained for him additional

favours and blessings with increased revelations, which clearly marked the Apostle Paul as the most enlightened of all the apostles, next to the Lord Jesus Himself.

Again, in his letter to the Galatians, we find further helpful reference to Paul's ministry under the influence of the holy spirit, as follows—"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ . . . Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days . . . Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles." (See Gal. 1:11-24; 2:1, 2.)

We gather from the above references that the Apostle Paul was so fully under the guidance of the Lord, as a specially chosen vessel, and we are, then, somewhat prepared for his amazing statement contained in our text. Quoting another translation of this passage in 2 Cor. 12, it reads—"I am obliged to boast. It is not profitable, but I will proceed to visions and revelations of the Lord." Then, in verse 11, he declares—"I have descended to folly, but you have compelled me. Why, you ought to have been my vindicators; for in no respect have I been inferior to the preeminent apostles, even though I am nothing." The Apostle seemed to feel he was foolish in being required to boast of his prominence in the service of the Lord through visions and revelations, but he claimed he was compelled to do so because of the Corinthians' lack of appreciation of himself as the Lord's representative and the vital message of truth which he brought them. Even though Paul may have felt self-conscious in his boasting to some extent, yet, of course, he did all things as in the service of his Lord, and there can be no doubt that the record he sent to the Corinthian church has been most beneficial to many others as well, including ourselves.

Before examining our text, another statement from the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians is appropriate, as it is closely related to our subject. (See 1 Cor. 15:1-10.) Verse 8 reads—"And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." This occasion when Paul saw the Lord would seem to be when he was on the way to Damascus, and the Lord called a halt to his mission of persecution of the saints. Truly, it was "as of one born out of due time," because the brilliance of our Lord's appearance would have struck Paul dead, but for the protection given by the Lord Himself. However, He allowed just sufficient effect from the experience to give Paul the required lesson, and direct his zeal and devotion to the service of the true God.

The expression—"born out of due time"—implies that the Apostle saw the Lord, even though for a moment, just as he would see Him when raised to the spirit nature. Thus, Paul was given that privilege as though he was, for that moment, "born of the spirit." Also, in 1 Cor. 9:1, we read—"Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" So, while Paul had not seen Jesus while He was on earth, he did see Him in this most wonderful way, in glory—"as of one born out of due time." Knowing thus of the Apostle's extraordinary experiences at the time of his conversion on the way to Damascus and after, we can the better appreciate his words in our text passage in 2 Cor. 12—"I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord."

In reviewing the circumstances respecting these wonderful visions and revelations received by the Apostle, it is interesting to compare the early days of his Christian life, following the Damascus conversion, with the early part of Jesus' ministry. In Matt. 3:16, 17 we read of Jesus' baptism and receiving of the holy spirit, and in chapter 4 we find that our Lord was "led up of the spirit into the wilderness," and that He fasted forty days—no doubt in communion with His Heavenly Father, that He

may know and understand the Father's will for Him during His earthly sojourn. Likewise, we have noted that Paul did not seek instruction from the other apostles when entering upon his ministry, but he "went into Arabia," no doubt there to commune with the Lord and be guided in his important ministry. It would seem, then, that while the Apostle Paul was granted to see the Lord at the time of his conversion on the Damascus road, it would probably be in the Arabian wilderness that he received the amazing revelations we are about to examine in 2 Cor. 12.

From verse 2 we read again—"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth." So amazing was this experience that Paul could not tell whether he was transported bodily, or carried away in the spirit, to behold what he relates as—"such an one caught up to the third heaven."

There has been much speculation as to what Paul meant by being "caught up in the third heaven," but from other Scriptures we are able to understand this matter quite clearly. Turning to 2 Pet. 3:5-13, we see how the Apostle Peter explains the various "heavens and earth" of the past, of the present, and of the future.

From verses 5 and 6 we read—"By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world (kosmos—order of things, comprising heaven and earth) that then was, being overflowed with water, perished,"—at the time of the Flood in Noah's day.

The Apostle Peter continues — "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, (at the time Peter wrote—'this present evil world'), by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men . . . The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works of man that are therein shall be burned up,"—symbolically speaking. (Verses 7, 10.) In this connection we call to mind the words of Jesus—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:35.)

The Apostle adds — "Nevertheless we, according to God's promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (Verse 13.) To sum up the matter from the Apostle Peter we find

The first heavens — prior to the Flood in Noah's day.

The second heavens—from Noah's day to the second advent of Christ.

The third heavens — the new heavens or spiritual ruling power in the age to come.

So, the Apostle Paul was carried forward in spirit on the stream of time to the third heaven, or period of the Kingdom Age, and it is little wonder that he could not tell whether he was taken bodily, or caught away in spirit.

In verses 3 and 4 of 2 Cor. 12, the Apostle repeats that he did not know how his "third heaven" experience was revealed, but—"He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." This is of added interest to us, that Paul mentioned he was "caught up into paradise," as well as "caught up to the third heaven."

In Rev. 2:7 we read—"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." This is a reference to the heavenly paradise, the inheritance of all the faithful overcomers of the Gospel Age. We can but wonder at the splendour of that heavenly paradise, but apparently Paul was given a preview, so to speak, and heard "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter." Yes, we can well realise that it would not be fitting to convey the scene of the heavenly

paradise to earthly language, but this revelation was apparently given to Paul because of the great importance of his ministry to the early church, and throughout the Gospel Age, for the upbuilding of the church which is the Body of Christ. Even though we are not able to visualise the heavenly paradise, it does us good to contemplate the grandeur of that celestial scene with the various planes of

spirit beings, all doing loving and faithful service to God and to Christ on His Kingly throne of glory, encircled by His Bride. Then there would be the Great Company serving before the throne, and the multitude of heavenly hosts, including those who were restored to obedience through the judgment of Christ and His church.

Further, Paul would behold the earthly paradise restored, the whole earth being like the Garden of Eden, and mankind restored to the “image of God” from which Adam fell because of disobedience. We are reminded of the earthly paradise by the words of Jesus to the thief on the cross—“Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:42, 43.) What a wonderful picture the restored world of humanity would also present to the Apostle in this revelation of the third heaven —“caught up into paradise.” Surely we can rejoice as we contemplate the restored paradise on earth, as well as that of which we can grasp but little as respects the heavenly paradise.

We are reminded also that the Apostle John was given many wonderful visions by our Lord on the Isle of Patmos, so that he might record the Book of Revelation. He also was apparently carried forward on the stream of time to the “Lord’s day”—the Kingdom Age—and looked back upon the scenes of this Gospel Age. (See Rev. 1:10.)

While the Lord’s people generally are not granted visions and revelations such as Paul experienced, especially in this end of the age, yet they have much spiritual enlightenment and blessing from the Lord while still in the house of their pilgrimage, as they seek to know more and more about the wonderful heavenly treasures, as expressed by Paul— “God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” And again —”Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” (Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:12, 13.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary--Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

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Aside with Jesus! Is it hard to be,
O Blessed Master, thus alone with Thee?
Aside with Jesus! basking in His smile;
Brought to the “desert place” to rest awhile.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

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Knowledge Shall Increase.

THE wonderful achievement of the Russian scientists in hurling the earth-satellite into space to encircle the earth at the rate of about 18,000 miles an hour, at a height of about 560 miles, is certainly capturing the attention of millions of people throughout the world. The fact that this satellite has been seen by the naked eye quite readily, adds interest to such an accomplishment, which, along with so many happenings of this twentieth century, would have been thought sheer nonsense had it been deemed possible even twenty of thirty years ago.

A great number of people apparently have good cause to fear the ability of a foreign power to launch an earth- satellite, because it has been definitely stated that the mechanism to accomplish this could also launch intercontinental missiles. Thus it would now be possible to hurl projectiles capable of destroying the largest cities of the world from the other side of the globe. We are not surprised that a columnist in one of our Melbourne daily papers writes as follows:-

"Nearly two years ago, nine famous scientists, including Einstein, issued a warning to the world. 'Here, then, is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful and inescapable,' they said. 'Shall we put an end to the human race? Or shall mankind renounce war?' The presence overhead of an earth-satellite means the time to answer those questions is almost here."

The consideration of such startling inventions of our day is surely most appropriate for all thinking people, and to know the Plan of God respecting the outcome of all the achievements of mankind, which God in His wisdom has permitted at this particular time in the history of the human family, is truly most heart satisfying, and which the greatest inventions of man cannot disturb or terrify, for the simple reason that God's Plan is being worked out partly by the very accomplishments of His human creatures. A review of events leading up to present-day achievements and the ultimate outcome, as seen from the Bible record, is now presented from the study—"Divine Plan of the Ages"— which, it is thought, should prove both interesting and helpful to our readers. The extracts are as follows:—

"From a human standpoint we can account for modern inventions thus: The invention of printing, in A.D. 1440, may be considered the starting point. With the printing of books came records of the thoughts and discoveries of thinkers and observers, which, without this invention, would never have been known to their successors. With books came a general education and, finally, common schools. Schools and colleges do not increase human capacity, but they do make mental exercise more general, and hence help to develop the capacity already possessed. As knowledge becomes more general and books more common, the generations possessing these have a decided advantage over previous generations; not only in that there are now a thousand thinkers to one formerly, to sharpen and stimulate each other with suggestions, but also in that each of the later generations has, through books, the combined experience of the past in addition to its own. Education and the laudable ambition which accompanies it, enterprise, and a desire to achieve distinction and a competency, aided by the record and descriptions of inventions in the daily press, have stimulated and brightened man's perceptive powers, and put each upon the alert to discover or to invent, if possible, something for the good and convenience of society. Hence we suggest that modern invention, looked at from a purely human standpoint, teaches, not an increase of brain capacity, but a sharpened perception from natural causes.

"And now we come to the Scriptures to see what they teach on the subject; for while we believe, as suggested above, that invention and the increase of knowledge, etc., among men are the result's of natural causes, yet we believe that these natural causes were all planned and ordered by God long ago, and that in due time they have come to pass—by His overruling providence, whereby He 'worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.' (Eph. 1:11.) According to the plan revealed in His word, God purposed to

permit sin and misery to misrule and oppress the world for six thousand years, and then in the seventh millennium to restore all things, and to extirpate evil—destroying it and its consequences by Jesus Christ, whom He hath afore ordained to do this work. Hence, as the six thousand years of the reign of evil began to draw to a close, God permitted circumstances to favor discoveries in the study of both His Book of Revelation and His Book of Nature, as well as in the preparation of mechanical and chemical appliances useful in the blessing and uplifting of mankind during the Millennial Age, now about to be introduced. That this was God's plan is clearly indicated by the prophetic statement: 'O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; (then) many shall run to and fro, and KNOWLEDGE (not capacity) shall be increased,' 'and none of the wicked shall understand (God's plan and way), but the wise shall understand ;' and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time.'—Dan. 12:1, 4, 10.

“To some it may appear strange that God did not so arrange that the present inventions and blessings should sooner have come to man to alleviate the curse. It should be remembered, however, that God's plan has been to give mankind a full appreciation of the curse, in order that when the blessing comes upon all they may forever have decided upon the unprofitableness of sin. Furthermore, God foresaw and has foretold what the world does not yet realise, namely, that His choicest blessings would lead to and be productive of greater evils if bestowed upon those whose hearts are not in accord with the righteous laws of the universe. Ultimately it will be seen that God's present permission of increased blessings is a practical lesson on this subject, which may serve as an example of this principle to all eternity—to angels as well as to restored men. How this can be, we merely suggest:

“First: So long as mankind is in the present fallen or depraved condition, without stringent laws and penalties and a government strong enough to enforce them, the selfish propensities will hold more or less sway over all. And with the unequal individual capacities of men considered, it cannot possibly happen otherwise than that the result of the invention of laboursaving machinery must, after the flurry and stimulus occasioned by the manufacture of machinery, tend to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. The manifest tendency is toward monopoly and self-aggrandisement, which places the advantage directly in the hands of those whose capacity and natural advantages are already the most favorable.

“Secondly: If it were possible to legislate so as to divide the present wealth and its daily increase evenly among all classes, which is not possible, still, without human perfection or a supernatural government to regulate human affairs, the results would be even more injurious than the present condition. If the advantages of labour-saving machinery and all modern appliances were evenly divided, the result would, ere long, be a great decrease of hours of labour and a great increase in leisure. Idleness is a most injurious thing to fallen beings. Had it not been for the necessity of labour and sweat of face, the deterioration of our race would have been much more rapid than it has been. Idleness is the mother of vice; and mental, moral and physical degradation are sure to follow. Hence the wisdom and goodness of God in withholding these blessings until it was due time for their introduction as a preparation for the Millennial reign of blessing. Under the control of the supernatural government of the Kingdom of God, not only will all blessings be equitably divided among men, but the leisure will be so ordered and directed by the same supernatural government that its results will produce virtue and tend upward towards perfection, mental, moral and physical. The present multiplication of inventions and other blessings of increasing knowledge is permitted in this 'day of preparation' to come about in so natural a way that men flatter themselves that it is because this is the 'Brain Age ;' but it will be permitted in great measure to work out in a manner very much to the disappointment, no doubt, of these wise philosophers. It is the very increase of these blessings that is already beginning to bring upon the world the time of trouble, which will be such as never has been since there was a nation.

“The prophet Daniel, as quoted above, links together the increase of knowledge and the time of trouble. The knowledge causes the trouble, because of the depravity of the race. The increase of knowledge has

not only given the world wonderful labour-saving machinery and conveniences, but it has also led to an increase of medical skill whereby thousands of lives are prolonged, and it has so enlightened mankind that human butchery, war, is becoming less popular, and thus, too, other thousands are spared to multiply still further the race, which is increasing more rapidly today, perhaps, than at any other period of history. Thus, while mankind is multiplying rapidly, the necessity for his labour is decreasing correspondingly; and the 'Brain Age' philosophers have a problem before them to provide for the employment and sustenance off this large and rapidly increasing class whose services, for the most part supplanted by machinery, can be dispensed with, but whose necessities and wants know no bounds. The solution of this problem, these philosophers must ultimately admit, is beyond their brain capacity.

"Selfishness will continue to control the wealthy, who hold the power and advantage, and will blind them to common sense as well as to justice; while a similar selfishness, combined with the instinct of self-preservation and an increased knowledge of their rights, will nerve some and inflame others of the poorer classes, and the result of these *blessings* will, for a time, prove terrible—a time of trouble, truly, such as was not since there was a nation—and this, because man in a depraved condition cannot properly use these blessings unguided and uncontrolled. Not until the Millennial reign shall have rewritten the law of God **in** the restored human heart will men be capable of using full liberty without injury or danger.

"The day of trouble will end in due time, when He who snake to the raging Sea of Galilee will likewise, with authority, command the raging sea of human passion, saying, 'Peace! Be still!' When the Prince of Peace shall 'stand up' in authority, a great calm will be the result. Then the raging and clashing elements shall recognise the authority of 'Jehovah's Anointed,' the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together ;' and **in** the reign of Christ thus begun 'shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

"Then men will see that what they attributed to evolution or natural development and the smartness of the 'Brain Age' was, instead, the flashings of Jehovah's lightnings (Psa. 77:18) in the day of his preparation' for the blessing of mankind. But as yet only the saints can see, and only the wise in heavenly wisdom can understand this; for 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) him; and he will show them his covenant.' (Psa. 25:14.) Thanks be to God, that while general knowledge has been increased, He has also arranged that His children need 'not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord' and in the appreciation of His plans. And by this appreciation of His Word and plans we are enabled to discern and to withstand the vain philosophies and foolish traditions' of men which contradict the Word of God.

"The Bible account of man's creation is that God created him perfect and upright, an earthly image of Himself; that man sought out various inventions and defiled himself (Gen. 1:27; Rom. 5:12; Eccl. 7:29); that, all being sinners, the race was unable to help itself, and none could by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him (Psa. 49:7 , 15); that God in compassion and love had made provision for this; that, accordingly, the Son of God became a man, and gave man's ransom-price; that, as a reward for this sacrifice, and in order to the completion of the great work of atonement, He was highly exalted, even to the divine nature; and that in due time He will bring to pass a restitution of the race to the original perfection and to every blessing then possessed. These things are clearly taught in the Scriptures, from beginning to end, and are in direct opposition to the Evolution theory; or, rather, such babblings of science, falsely so called,' are in violent and irreconcilable conflict with the Word of God."

Correspondence.

U.S.A., Aug. 13th, '57

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren—Loving Christian Greetings. Once more it is my privilege and pleasure to be able, by our dear Lord's goodness, to herein send you my check for to help in a small way with the publishing of the little paper, "The Herald and Peoples Paper."

Now, as I'm becoming so old (in 83rd year) I shall appreciate your continuing the sending of the "Paper" to me without my sending in renewal notice from time to time. Memory is not so good as formerly, and I do not wish to miss any copies of the pamphlet. It is my hope that you at the office may be able, by God's grace, to go on publishing the paper for some time to come. By the obituary notices in different truth publications I note that so many of our dear brethren are going "Home," or else health is failing, so that they are not able to continue with the work, and certain journals have ceased publishing, therefore we are becoming more dependent upon the few still able to continue sending out the truth as we learned it so many years ago.

I have been very sick since July, but some better now, praise the Lord. Please pray for me as I daily do for you all. Commending you to our Heavenly Father's love. Your Sister in Him.

England.

My Dear Brother—Greetings in the Name of Jesus, our Dear Saviour. I almost feel ashamed of myself at times when I come face to face with my correspondence, which I am afraid I neglect very badly. Last Sunday evening I spent on the Notes of the Adelaide Convention, which made me feel very close to you in "Spirit and in Truth" even though we are separated by so many miles, and I resolved that I would get down to send you a few lines of acknowledgement for your letters.

It was very sweet of you to take so much trouble over my enquiry about the book "The Treasure of the Humble," and I do sincerely thank you and the dear friend in Adelaide who so kindly procured it and sent it along via your good self.

Melbourne always brings back to me memories of my childhood days at the Church of England Sunday School which I attended with great regularity and at which I was awarded a book in which was a picture entitled "Christmas in Australia," the picture being of children picnicking on a lovely sunny hillside in Melbourne.

Am sorry to say that I agree with your comments on the book; that it is rather disappointing in its reading and does not contain much to add to the precious truths which we so much treasure in these closing days of the Gospel Age; certainly not in doctrine, and very little with which the Garments of Praise can be adorned. How blessed indeed we have been to have our eyes opened to the wonderful Harvest Truths which it has pleased our Loving Father to reveal in His own appointed way through channels of His own appointment.

We must not be like the little boy who was told to hold his brother's hand when crossing the street and insisted that he would be alright, he would hold his own hand and thus he crossed the street full of self-confidence. Our Father has had many faithful servants down through the years whom it has pleased Him to use, in various ways and not the least of them has been many of the hymn writers. The little incident of the boy and his self-confidence brings to mind that dear hymn No. 132 in the "Bible Students Hymnal"—"Hold Thou my hand! So weak I am and helpless," and the closing verse of that same hymn brings home

the thoughts which must have impregnated the mind of John Bunyan in his “Pilgrim’s Progress” which contains some thoughts which are bound to be helpful to one whose heart has been opened to the knock of the Master, and recognised in Him—”The Way, the Truth and the Life.”

400.)

On August Bank Holiday Monday I went to Ilford to the Convention of the Aldersbrook Class at which there was an Immersion Service in the morning (4 candidates), and spent a lovely and inspiring day with about 80 dear ones of like precious faith. (A very sound Class there.)

With Acts 20:32 I must conclude, sending you sincere Christian Greetings in which my dear wife joins, and our prayers continually ascend to the throne of heavenly grace with Numbers 6:24-26 on our lips for you and all His dear saints everywhere. Pray for us also; we need them and your love in Christ. In whom I remain your Brother, by divine favour.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I have recently been introduced by an old friend to some of your literature. I have read “The Divine Plan of the Ages” and it interested me greatly. I am afraid my brain has become rusty of late years, as I do not grasp things quickly. Without help I find the Bible difficult to follow, but I would give much to find that peace of mind and spiritual happiness I have seen in some few others. I “gave away” all churches years ago, because I felt they had nothing to offer; I still think the same

We are living “in the bush” and as I have young children, it is not easy for me to get out very often. Finances at the moment are “below par” so I cannot send anything to you, but my friend assured me there was no “Welles Scheme” attached to your group, so may I leave it to you to send me whatever papers you think would be helpful to me.

I do not now send my children to Sunday School, as I refused to force them, and also I am not in favour of what is taught at any of them, but it does worry me. What am I to teach them? I do hope you can give me some help, it’s awful to be just drifting on any old current. Yours very sincerely.

(The Bible stories “God’s Promises Come True” and other smaller books are most helpful to assist in conveying the truths of the Bible to children.—B.B.Institute.)-

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother—I have received the parcel of books, “Divine Plan of the Ages” and the booklets for which I **am** truly thankful. I would like you to send me if possible “The Book of Books” reviewing the Bible as a whole. Enclosed please find cheque, any balance from this and my other letter please put it forward as a donation for the work. Thanking you again. Yours sincerely in Christ.

Dear Sir—Would you please accept the enclosed small donation to the cost of 3GL Sunday morning broadcasts. They remind me very much of the books “Divine Plan of the Ages” which I read many years ago with great profit. One does not expect the broadcasts to be successful in a commercial sense, but it is nice to know they are appreciated; hence this letter. Yours sincerely.

Dear Friend—Thank you very much for the last package of Frank and Ernest Biblical Dialogues and copies of the “Peoples Paper” you sent me. Thank you also for the book you left the last time you were out—”The Atonement Between God and Man.” It is a wonderful book, and has made things clear to me that I did not understand before. Have you any other similar book you could let me have? I particularly like the sound of the one listed—”The New Creation”—but would be quite happy to receive anything else instead that you care to send. Small covering cheque enclosed. Once again my most grateful thanks. Yours very sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly send me a copy of the discussion given this morning from radio station 3GL? I listen to your broadcasts whenever possible, and find them very helpful. This morning a friend called while the session was on and I was able to hear only the beginning and the end. If still available may I have a copy of the talk “The Lamb that was slain” and the one of the following Sunday. Thanking you in anticipation and blessings on your witness. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest—I listen to your broadcasts on 3GL Geelong on Sunday morning, and find much help in my Bible study. “The Lamb that was slain” was a topic taken by you last week, and I would like a copy of it please.

Can you also explain to me what the holy spirit is; and is this the spirit people say they have when they love God as their Saviour and govern their life by His laws? To find a place in the Kingdom of heaven is it necessary to be baptized by immersion in water. Can you give references to the Bible please ? Thanking you; yours faithfully.

(Literature on the above questions, giving the Bible explanation, is gladly supplied free to all—B.B.Institute.)

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book. ‘—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 1 0 /- post paid.

Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 57/6.

Books Available. “Most Holy Faith”—£1.

“Tabernacle Shadows”—6/-.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“God’s Promises Come True”—£1.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“The Book of Books”—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-1/-. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-1/-. “Christ’s Return”-1/-.

“Some of the Parables”-1/-,

“Hope Beyond the Grave”-1/-. “God and Reason”-1/.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, 19 Ermington **Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.**

Question Box'

Question.—Please explain Rev. 14:1-5. If the women referred to are unfaithful church systems, just where are we to draw the line; where do they start and finish as such ?

Answer.—These verses seem clearly to picture the church triumphant—the overcomers of the Gospel Age. The statement is that these have not been defiled with women. That would appear to intimate that they had kept the faith and not had their hearts deflected by the allurements which are associated with these women, i.e., church systems which have lost their first love, and become entangled in earthly matters and confused in doctrine.

Woman in the Bible appears to represent a church. Virgins represent those who have preserved their hearts in purity, looking forward to the great marriage of the Lamb. The “woman” that “sits as a queen,” or “Jezebel,” represents the unfaithful church—a church married to the world, leaning on a secular arm. So “women” in this passage would refer to any church that has become allied with the world.

The worldly spirit has taken possession of the churches today. There can be no doubt we are living in the Laodicean period, and that the message of Rev. 3:14-21 is applicable. Worldly alliances and associations have crept in and the spirit of Christ has been quenched. The congregations are mostly kept together by sports, games, socials, dances, card parties, etc. The true Church, the “chaste Virgin,” is not attracted by such things, but by the glorious hope of sharing with her Lord in the joys of His Kingdom. Instead of the spirit of the world she is held together by the holy spirit of consecration, of faith in Christ and fellowship around the Word of God.

The true Christian must consider just how far such Laodicean conditions prevail, or whether there is food from the Word of God provided; whether the doctrine is pure and God is glorified by the revealing of His glorious character and plan of salvation, so that there may be growth in grace and in knowledge and progress made in the work of transformation into the likeness of Christ.

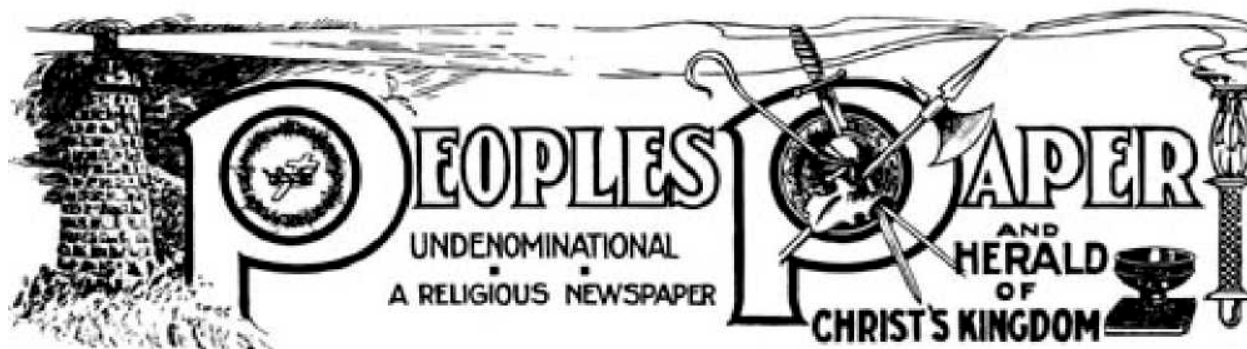
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.



Volume XL. No. 12 MELBOURNE, DECEMBER, 1957 Price— Fivence

Good Tidings-Great Joy-To All People

(Luke 2:1-20)

THE message of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God's great plan of the ages, that prophetic message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be too frequently called to the great event which lies at the foundation of that message— our Saviour's birth.

For four thousand years and more the promises of God, clothed in more or less of obscurity, had been given to mankind, intimating that ultimately the great curse of sin and death which had come upon the world through Adam's disobedience in Eden would be rolled away, and instead of a curse, a blight, would come a blessing of the Lord with life-giving refreshment. In various types, figures and shadowy promises this lesson had come down through the ages to the time of our Lord's birth, especially amongst the Jews, who were the divinely favored and covenanted people. And since the Jews were of a commercial spirit, many of them were to be found in all parts of the civilized world; and thus amongst every people the faith in the one God and the hope of Israel through a Messiah were more or less made known, so that at the time of our Lord's birth, we read, "All men were in expectation" of a soon-coming Messiah. Doubtless, this expectation was built upon the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, which we now see clearly marked the year of our Lord's majority, when He was thirty years of age and made His consecration' to His work and received the begetting of the holy spirit, His anointing as the great antitypical High Priest and as the great antitypical King over Israel and the world.

The Angels and the Shepherds

Noble shepherds those must have been to whom the Almighty sent the angelic message respecting the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, which has rung down the ages and reached our ears—the message which thrills us the more in proportion as we are able to grasp its meaning. First a single angel appeared to the shepherds and allayed their fears saying,

"Fear not; behold I bring you good tidings." It would appear that fear is one of the dominating impulses of the human mind, especially in conjunction with any revelations from the Lord. Men realize—even the

best of the race—that they are imperfect and that the Almighty and His laws are perfect. Instinctively the world seems to realize that a curse or condemnation of the Almighty rests upon it, and instinctively it fears a further curse and further condemnation, realizing its continual and increasing sinfulness. The same is true today with all except the comparatively few who are well informed respecting the divine character and plan. Thus the subject of religion is generally obnoxious to the world in general—a subject which they prefer to avoid, because of a feeling of guilt and a dread of further knowledge and condemnation.

It is for the true children of God today, as it was for the angels at that time, to assure the world that God is better than all their fears—that God so loved the world as to redeem them from the just sentence of death, the curse that came upon all as inheritors of Adam's imperfections and sentence.

“Good tidings” is another translation of our word “gospel.” How beautiful the thought that the Gospel is really and truly good tidings. Alas, for the misrepresentations of God's plan, under which so many of His professed people misrepresent His character and His Word, and apply the term “Gospel” to their various messages from the dark ages, teaching purgatory and eternal torment as the portion of the race. Let us get away from this false thought and get the truth that the Gospel is good tidings. The angel elaborated, saying that his message was good tidings of great joy, which should be unto all people. Ah, thank God, His plan is wider and deeper and higher and grander than anything we had ever conceived. The Gospel is not merely to be good tidings to the comparatively few that now have ears to hear and eyes to see its beauties, but in God's due time it is to be good tidings of great joy to all people.

As every member of Adam's race shared in his fall and in the curse of death which came upon him as a result, so every member of the race was included in the great redemptive sacrifice which our Lord Jesus offered and which was finished at Calvary. God's plan in Christ, as it is being worked out and shall ultimately be accomplished, will mean great joy for all people, and the tidings of this were given at the very moment of our Lord's birth, because He was the one through whom all the glorious things of the divine purpose and plan shall ultimately be accomplished.

Although over nineteen centuries have rolled away since that angelic message was delivered, it has not yet been fulfilled except in a limited measure by faith to those who have the eye of faith and the ears of faith, in all a “little flock.” But the tidings of great misery for nearly all people has been spread abroad in the name of Christ, much to the discredit of the divine plan and to the dishonor of the divine character. Instead of carrying joy the message has very generally carried grief and sorrow, especially to the kind-hearted and more generously disposed. Indeed we may say that no message of the Lord Jesus either true or false, has ever reached all people. Even today, after nineteen centuries of propaganda, only a comparatively small portion of the human family has ever heard of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved—“nor is there salvation in any other.”—Acts 4:12.

What, then, shall we say of the salvation which is come to those who have truly accepted Christ as their Saviour, and who are today rejoicing in Him as such, and who by faith are seeing the salvation of God begun in their own hearts and yet to be fully accomplished under the whole heavens? This the Apostle calls the salvation by hope. His words are, “We are saved by hope.” (Rom. 8:24) We are not saved actually; we are still surrounded by sin, pain, sighing, crying and dying; the curse is not yet rolled away. All that the best of the Lord's people have received is salvation by hope, by faith. Yet this anticipation of the future salvation, of the resurrection from the dead, of a participation in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature promised to the faithful, is so strong, so clear, that those who possess it are enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in the midst of trials and difficulties and weaknesses and unfavorable conditions incident to the curse upon the race.

A Prophecy of Good Things

Yes, the angelic message was a prophecy of good things to be accomplished for the Church, and also for the world during the Millennial Age. The church is to have the first blessing. The first resurrection is to be composed only of the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ during the Millennium, the thousand years in which Satan shall be bound, and when the good influences of truth and righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth. The declaration of the Scripture is that the deliverance of the Church will come first, as the prophet declares, “God will help her early in her morning.”—Psa. 46:5.

But much as we rejoice in the glorious hopes of the Gospel set before us who now see, who now believe, who now rejoice with joy unspeakable, we are glad that the divine mercy and love are of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths as to encompass the whole world of mankind, and to provide a blessing for every member of Adam’s race through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

It will be during the Millennial Age that this prophecy of the angel will have its fulfilment, and the great Saviour who has already redeemed us by His sacrifice will stand forth as the King, the glorified Messiah, and establish His dominion of righteousness in the world for the blessing and uplifting of every member of the race. In harmony with the words of the Apostle, those will be times of restoration, “times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:20, 21.) If the Lord had based the hope of the world upon some works of merit or righteousness of the world’s doing, then indeed we might have feared—indeed the more we know of the world, the less hope we would have. But, on the contrary, the Lord has based the entire proposition for the future blessing not upon our worthiness, but upon the worthiness and sacrifice of His Son—to you is born a life-giver, which is Messiah the Lord,

How it adds to our enjoyment of the coming *age* blessings to know that the trials and difficulties of this present Gospel Age are subject to the divine supervision in the interest of the little flock that is now being gathered in advance from amongst men—the “elect,” the Church. We see how the present trials and difficulties are the chiselings and polishing necessary to our development in the fruits *and* graces of the holy spirit in the character-likeness of God’s dear Son, our Lord, our Hope, our Bridegroom. How joyful the thought that soon the elect number called from the world to be the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, will be completed and enter into her glory. How precious the thought that then they shall be privileged with their Lord and Master to extend the divine favour of blessing and uplift to the world. What higher honor or privilege or blessing could possibly come to any?

It was after the giving of the message of good tidings and great joy by the heavenly one that a host of angels appeared to the shepherds, saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.” This, too is a prophecy. It is not yet true, but will be fulfilled in every particular in God’s due time, which we believe is now nigh, even at the door. Not yet does God receive glory in the highest, not yet is there peace amongst men. Quite to the contrary. God’s name is blasphemed, not only by those who vulgarly and in ribald jest take the divine name in vain, and not merely by the heathen who worship devils and think they are Gods, but even by Christian people, God’s name is blasphemed every day. For be it known that blasphemy is any dishonorable misrepresentation of another. God be merciful to us, for at some time or other every one of us doubtless has blasphemed the holy name in this manner—by misrepresenting the divine character and divine plan, by picturing the God of love and mercy and justice and truth as the originator, the planner, the perpetuator of the eternal torment of the great mass of His creatures, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, born to sin as the sparks fly upwards.

But the Lord had mercy upon us because we did it ignorantly. And we also should have compassion upon others who still ignorantly misrepresent our God, and our energies should be continually bent to their assistance that the eyes of their understanding might open more widely to perceive the lengths and

breadths and heights and depths and know the love of God which passeth understanding.

Noting that peace on earth and goodwill to men have not followed the Saviour's birth thus far, and not discerning that this is a prophecy of what is to be accomplished during the Millennium, many have been inclined to change the translation of this verse so as to have it read, "On earth peace amongst men, in whom he is well pleased." However by thus changing it, the statement would not be true, for even the Lord's people have no peace on earth. Whatever peace they have is in their hearts, and based upon their faith in the Lord and in the glorious things which He promised. Our Lord Himself and the apostles testified to this, assuring us that whosoever in this present time would live godly should suffer persecution, that a man's foes would be they of his own household, etc. (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 10:26.) . Let us not confuse ourselves nor abridge the testimony of the Word, but with the eye of faith look forward to the day of Christ in which all these glorious things shall have their fulfilment, in which peace shall indeed fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord; bringing divine favour and rolling away the curse from the entire groaning creation, as pointed out by the Apostle.—Rom. 8:22.

Not even with the inauguration of the Millennium will this prophecy be fulfilled: not until its close, when the human family shall have been lifted by the Kingdom regulations out of sin, sickness, pain, sorrow and death up, to all that was lost in Adam—not until then will there indeed be glory to God in the highest, not until then will there be a peace amongst men_ Nor are we to understand that the entire race will be appreciative of the divine love and favor even after they have fully seen the righteousness of God manifested in Christ. On the contrary the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there will be a class who will then prove unfit for life eternal, unappreciative of the divine favor and we learn that all such shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the second death. Thus eventually by the close of the Millennium, Satan and all wilful wrongdoers having been destroyed, the time will come as declared in the Scriptures when all voices in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard praising God, Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb forever and ever. Hosanna! Glory to God in the highest! Peace and goodwill to men, will be the final shout of a redeemed race when the great salvation shall have been fully outworked according to the divine plan set forth in the Scriptures.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid:

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, hew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

Fellowship in the Truth

It is always a pleasure for the Lord's people to associate with others who are also rejoicing in the truths of God's Word, and it is apparent that the fellowship of kindred minds is one of the means the Lord has used to encourage and build up the members of His family all down the Gospel Age, and we may say He is especially using in these last days—during the harvest of the age.

While there are some who almost discount the possibility of new friends becoming interested in the wonderful Divine Plan of the Ages and consecrating their lives to the Lord's service in these days, it is evident that such an outlook is not scriptural and is far from being healthy spiritually. Those with this trend of mind may be elderly, either actually or in mental outlook, and, perhaps weary themselves, are apt to conclude that everyone else is weary as respects spiritual things.. Having this attitude of mind many opportunities of service are lost, being overlooked. Others may conclude that as there are few appreciating the Bible truths in their particular restricted locality the same must be true over wider areas. Yes, it is possible for some to almost wish to terminate the Lord's work of the harvest, which could result in the grieving of the spirit in their hearts and prove a great hindrance to progress in making their calling and election sure.

Truly, activity in the service of the Lord has always been required both as respects one's own spiritual life and service towards others, and, will continue to be required of the follow of the Master in all the days ahead. Ho-, refreshing, indeed, it is to associate with those who, whether advancing in years or otherwise, are fully alert to the privileges and joys of serving the Lord through the brethren or newly interested friends, and do so with praise and thankfulness to the Lord.

Such an opportunity to associate with various brethren, also with a nice number of new friends who have been contacted through the radio stations in Sydney and Brisbane over recent years was possible last month when a three week's visit was paid to the two northern States. Having corresponded regularly for some time with most of those visited, it was a great joy to meet them personally, and to note how the truths of God's Word are held in sincere appreciation and thankfulness to the Giver of every good thing. When our brethren realise that our new friends are the comparative few from the hundreds of enquiries received from the radio witness, they will understand readily that this is just what to expect in the harvest of the age, and rejoice the more with those whom the Lord has drawn and called into the fellowship of His dear Son, through His Word of truth.

During the first week, after renewing happy acquaintance with some of the brethren in the Sydney area, a visit was made to the country where a helpful weekend was spent in fellowship with those who are appreciating so well the glad message of truth with the assistance of the volumes and periodicals etc. It was at this time that one member, having made full consecration to the Lord, joyfully took the symbol of water baptism, thus indicating the heart's desire to be faithful in death baptism in the steps of Christ. We truly rejoice with this dear member who has joined the family of God whose supreme object in life is to fulfil the vows of consecration by the Lord's grace.

Returning from the country of New South Wales, on the way it was a pleasure to greet again two elderly brethren who have been rejoicing in the truth for many years, and continue to do so in hope of the kingdom at hand. While rather frail in the flesh, it was good to realise that the spiritual life was very real indeed with these dear brethren.

Following visits to interested radio listeners, the journey to Queensland was taken, and it was a great pleasure to fellowship with those who have been in the truth for many years. For two days a number of contacts were made with others who have appreciated the message over the air and through the literature

supplied; it is hoped that the interest was also encouraged further, by the Lord's overruling.

The second weekend was spent in the country of Queensland where a little band of interested friends dwell amidst the sugar-cane, pineapple and banana plantations, and it was a great joy to fellowship with them in their homes for two days, with a meeting arranged in the town on each evening. The various truths were freely discussed, and the zeal and interest manifest was a delight indeed; truly, the first love for the Lord and His truth is very precious, and it was most refreshing to witness the deep appreciation on the part of these friends.

There was further joy with an expressed desire on the part of another friend to take the symbol of water immersion, thus symbolizing full consecration to the Lord, and we rejoice with this dear member also in the privilege of responding to the invitation to sacrifice with Christ, so that there may be the great favor of living with Him in the glorious kingdom to come.

Various contacts were made on the way south and in the Brisbane area, and those already interested were encouraged to continue in appreciation of the only message which gives real satisfaction to both heart and mind. It was a pleasure also to visit two other brethren in the country again, and to enjoy their hospitality and fellowship in the truth, while at the same time being taken to view some of the most extensive mountain scenery to be found in Australia.

The journey south was continued in good time to allow the third weekend to be spent with the friends in the Sydney area, and to visit again some unable to leave their homes. There was good fellowship with the brethren at the meeting, and in the homes, and in the remaining few days there was further encouragement to find other interested friends who are really alert and in earnest about the Bible truths. Truly it is most refreshing to realise how the message of truth lightens up the faces of those who are making it their own, as they feast upon its treasures of goodness, mercy, hope and salvation through Christ, not only for the church at this acceptable time for the heavenly kingdom, but also for all mankind who will be granted the opportunity of gaining the earthly kingdom by obedience to the laws then operating throughout the world.

Much assistance was freely given by a number of the friends as we journeyed along, all of which was very much appreciated as from the Lord's hand. Looking back upon the happy season of conversing together on the truths of the Bible with numerous friends, we lift up our heart in thankfulness to the Lord for the privilege enjoyed of partaking and sharing in His good treasures from His Word of truth. May the blessing of the Lord continue with all *His* dear people who look to Him and desire the indwelling of His spirit to guide and *sustain* in all the days ahead, to His praise. **Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper"**

It is expected that a booklet will take the place of the January, 1958, "Peoples Paper," and this will be posted out with the February issue.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows-

- (1) "Just for To-day,"
- (2) "One Here and There,"
- (3) "How Readest Thou ?,"
- (4) "The New Leaf,"
- (5) "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,"
- (6) "Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
- (7) "My Bible and I,"
- (8) "Love's Victory,"
- (9) "The Touch of the Master's Hand,"
- (10) "Some Worthy Attainments,"
- (11) "Come Unto Me,"
- (12) "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
- (13) "—The Secret of His Presence."
- (14) "Watching and Praying,"
- (15) "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,"
- (16) "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,"
- (17) "Hitherto and Henceforth,"
- (18) "The Lord My Shepherd,"
- (19) "Into' His Marvellous Light,"
- (20) "Right was The Pathway,"
- (21) "This is My Will for Thee."
- (22) "Are Ye Able ?"

Books Available.

- "Most Holy Faith"--£1.
"Tabernacle Shadows"-6/-.
"Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages-10/6.
"God's Promises Come True"—£1.
"Emphatic Diaglott" — New Testament —18/-.
"The Book of Books"—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.
"The Divine Plan of the Ages"—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.
"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—1/- "Manner of Christ's Return"-1/-. "Christ's Return"-1/-.
"Some of the Parables"-1/-.
"Hope Beyond the Grave"-1/-.
"God and Reason"-1/.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to **announce** that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th. in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary—Mr J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

Unto the pure all things are pure:

“Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful nothing is pure; but both their minds and conscience are defiled: they profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work worthless.”—Titus 1:15, 16.

NOT sinners, not the worldly, are thus spoken of by the Apostle, but those who have enjoyed the truth, and who have enjoyed at least the first step in heart purification; namely justification, and whose hearts have become defiled through a failure to maintain in them the law of love as the ruling principle. Instead of being filled with love, selfishness, with its defilement, has been received back as the ruling principle of the heart. Such have the spirit of the world, and sometimes exercise it with a much greater degree of animosity than the world exhibits. They are specially ready, as the Apostle intimates, to impugn the conduct and motives of others; being selfish themselves, they attribute selfishness to every one else; being impure themselves, they attribute impurity to others; having lost the spirit of love which thinketh no evil, their hearts rapidly fill up with selfish, envious, uncharitable, ungodly, unkind sentiments, toward those who are true, sincere and noble.

The Apostle suggests of -such that not only their minds become corrupted, but also their consciences, so that they will do evil, speak evil, think evil, and yet their consciences do not reprove them; because their consciences and minds work in harmony, and, as the Scriptures declare, they become blinded, self-deceived. What a terrible condition this is, and how careful all of the Lord's people should be not only to have pure hearts, pure minds, but also to keep their consciences very tender, in close accord with the Word of the Lord. This condition can only be maintained by judging ourselves, and that strictly and frequently, by the standard which God has given us, His law of Love.

“I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or fond desire;
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.”

As the Apostle points out, those whose minds become impure, poisoned by ambition or pride or selfishness, the spirit of evil, professing to have known God, are apt to profess as loudly as ever, sometimes, indeed, becoming boastful of how much they know of God, and of His Word and of how wise they are as respects its interpretation. Not by boasting of professions, therefore, can we always judge who are of pure minds and of good consciences and in full harmony with the Lord. Rather by their fruits we shall know them, as the Master said, and by their works, as the Apostle here points out. If any profess to know God, and yet by their works renounce Him, we are fully justified in questioning whether or not they may be self-deceived, whether or not their consciences, as well as their minds, may have become defiled.

To renounce the Lord in our works does not necessarily mean a resort to murder, robbery, licentiousness, etc. It means, rather, in the beginning at least, that from the hitherto good fountain of a cleansed or

renewed heart or will, from which issued purity, truth, sweetness, kindness, encouragement and refreshment for all who drank of its waters, in the home and family and neighbourhood, and amongst the Lord's people, would issue instead bitter waters, producing bitter feelings, watering and nourishing roots of bitterness, stirring up malice, envy, hatred, strife, etc.

No wonder the Apostle says of such that they are abominable! All who have the spirit of the Lord must abominate the spirit of evil, however surprised and grieved they may be to find it issuing from one who previously gave forth sweetness, love, kindness, good works.

As the Master declared, if the professedly sweet fountain send forth bitter waters, we may know that there is something wrong, something defiling in the fountain, and are not to deceive ourselves respecting its waters, and to partake of its bitterness.

Commenting along the same line, the Apostle James declares, "If any man among you seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain." Because the tongue is the index of the heart, because "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," therefore the unbridled tongue, speaking selfishly, enviously, bitterly, boastfully, slanderously, proves that the heart from whose fulness these overflow is unsanctified, unholy, grievously lacking of the spirit of Christ—hence, whatever religion it may have attained is thus far vain, as that heart is not saved nor in a salvable condition. No wonder the Apostle comments in our text, that such are "disobedient only by disobedience to the law of the New Creation, love, could anyone reach such a condition of heart and conscience defilement after he had been purified through faith in the precious blood, and consecrated to the Lord.

The final statement of our text is that such a one, having lost the spirit of the truth, and having obtained instead a spirit of bitterness, rancour, evil, having a poisoned or defiled mind and conscience, is "to every good work worthless." No matter what work such a one might undertake to do, it would surely be spoiled, because the spirit of evil, the spirit of pride, the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of malice and envy, are so violently in opposition to every feature of righteousness and goodness and truth **and** love, that there can be no peace, no co-operation between them. This reminds us of our Lord's words, to the effect that those who are His people and who have His spirit are "the salt of the earth"—preservative, so long as they have this spirit; but, as He suggests, if the salt lose its saltiness—if the Christian lose those peculiar features of the spirit of Christ which constitute him different from the world, separate from the world, and a preserving quality in the world—if he should lose these, what? He would be worthless as bad salt, "to every good work worthless."—Titus 1:16.

What course should be pursued by those who find themselves possessed of impure minds—minds inclined to surmise evil rather than good, envious minds, selfish, resentful, bitter, unforgiving minds, which love only those who love and flatter them? Is there any hope for these? Would God not utterly reject such?

God is very pitiful, and it was while all were thus "in the very gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity" that He provided for our redemption. There is hope for all such who see their defilement and who desire to be cleansed.

"His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood avails for me."

But true repentance means both contrition and reformation; and for help in the latter we must go to the Great Physician, who alone can cure such moral sickness; and of whom it is written, "Who healeth all thy diseases." All of His sanctified ones, it is safe to say, were at one time more or less diseased thus, and proportionately "worthless" for His service. True, it is worse for those who were once cleansed, if they,

“like the sow, return to the wallowing in the mire” of sin—but still there is hope, if the Good Physician’s medicine be taken persistently the same as at first.

The danger is that the conscience, becoming defiled, will so pervert the judgment that bitterness is esteemed to be sweetness, and envy and malice to be justice and duty, and the “mire” of sin, to be beauty of holiness. Then only is the case practically a hopeless one.

Some of the Good Physician’s Antidotes for Heart Impurity.

The Good Physician has pointed out antidotes for soul-poisoning—medicines, which, if properly taken according to directions will sweeten the bitter heart. Instead of envy it will produce love; instead of malice and hatred and strife, love and concord; instead of evil-speaking and back-biting and scandal-mongering it will produce the love which thinketh no evil and which worketh no ill to his neighbour; which suffereth long and is kind, which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, which never faileth and which is the spirit of the Lord and the law of the spirit of life in Christ .Jesus. Let us all take these medicines, for they are good, not only for the violently sick, but for the convalescing and the well. The following are some of the prescriptions:

(1) “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he (the Lord) is pure.”-1 John 3:3.

The hope mentioned is that we have been adopted as sons of God, with the promise that if faithful we shall be like Him and see Him as He is, and share His glory. As our minds and hearts expand with this hope, and we begin to measure its lengths and breadths, its heights and depths, it surely does set before us the Heavenly Father’s love and the Redeemer’s love in rainbow colours, and we more and more love the Father and the Son because they first loved us. The divine form of love becomes more and more our ideal; and as we seek to reciprocate it and to copy it, the cleaning and purifying of our hearts follows: for looking into the perfect law of liberty—love—we become more and more ashamed of all the meannesses and selfishness which the fall brought to us, and once seen in their true light as works of the flesh and of the devil, all anger, malice, wrath, envy, strife, evil-speaking, evil-surmising, backbiting and slander become more and more repulsive to us. And finally when we see that such as to any degree sympathise with these evil qualities are unfit for the kingdom and to every good work worthless, we flee from these evils of the soul as from deadly contagion. Our hearts (wills, intentions) become pure at once, and we set a guard not only upon our lips but also upon our thoughts—that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable to the Lord.

(2) “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.”—Titus 2:14.

We might theorise much and very correctly upon how and when and by whom we were redeemed; but all this would avail little if we forget why we were redeemed. The redemption was not merely a redemption from the power of the grave—it was chiefly “from all iniquity.” And the Lord is not merely seeking a peculiar people, but specially a people peculiarly cleansed, purified. This medicine will surely serve to purge us from iniquity if we are anxious to make our calling and election sure.

(3) “Pursue righteousness, fidelity, love, peace, with all who call upon the Lord with a pure heart.”-2 Tim. 2:22.

We not only need to start right, but also to pursue a right course. We may not follow unrighteousness even for a moment; whatever it may cost, justice and righteousness must be followed. But here a difficulty arises with some: they do not know how to judge righteous judgment. They are too apt to judge according to rumour or appearances, or to accept the judgment of Scribes and Pharisees, as did the

multitude which cried “Crucify Him ! His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Had they followed righteousness they would have seen the Lord’s character in His good works as well as in His wonderful words of life: they would have seen that so far from being a blasphemer, He was “holy, harmless, separate from sinners ;” they would have seen that His accusers were moved by envy and hatred.

It is just as necessary as ever to follow the Lord’s injunction, “Judge righteous judgment,” and whoever neglects it brings down “blood” upon his own head and becomes a sharer in the penalty due to false accusers. For as the Lord was treated, so will His ‘brethren’ be treated. The more pure our hearts the less they will be affected by slanders and back-bitings and evil-speakings, and the more will we realise that those who have bitter hearts from which arise bitter words are impure fountains in which is the gall of bitterness and not the sweetness of love.

Next comes fidelity, that is, faithfulness. The Lord declares His own fidelity or faithfulness, and declares Himself a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And even the worldly recognise fidelity as a grace, and by such it is often given first place, for many would commit theft or perjury through fidelity to a friend. But notice that God’s Word puts righteousness first. Fidelity, love and peace can only be exercised in harmony with righteousness, but unrighteousness not being proven against a brother our fidelity and love and peace toward him must continue, and indeed must increase in proportion as envy and slander and all the fiery darts of the Adversary assail him “without a cause.” This valuable prescription will help to keep our hearts free from the poison and roots of bitterness which the Adversary keeps busily planting.

Justice is purity of heart—freedom from injustice. Righteousness is purity of heart—freedom from unrighteousness. Love is purity of heart—freedom from selfishness.

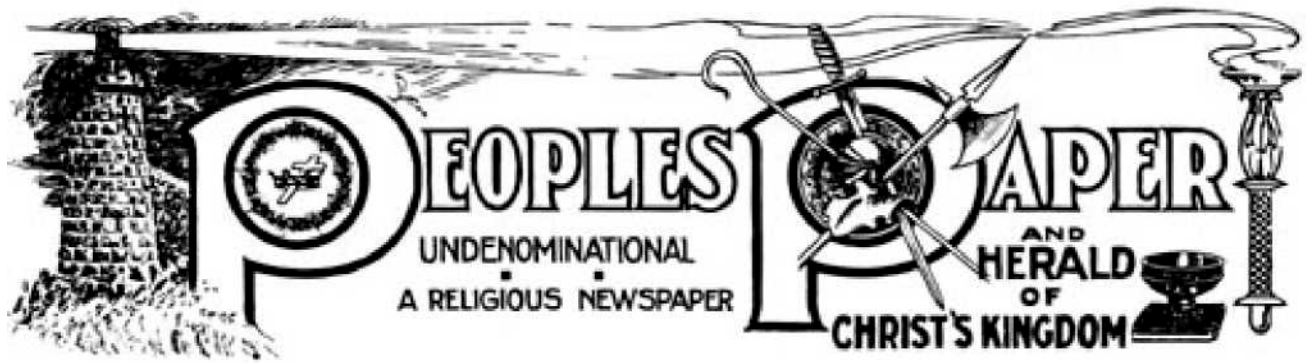
(4) “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit (the spirit of the Truth) unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently.”-1 Pet. 1:22.

This medicine is for those who have used the other prescriptions and gotten clean. It points out that the purity came not merely through hearing the Truth, nor through believing the Truth, but through obeying it. And not merely a formal obedience in outward ceremony and custom, and polished manner, but through obedience to the spirit of Truth—its real import. All this brought you to the point where the love of the “brethren” of Christ was unfeigned, genuine. At first you treated all with courtesy, or at least without impoliteness; but many of them you did not like, much less did you love them; they were poor or shabby, or ignorant, or peculiar. But obeying the spirit of the Truth you recognised that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to the dear Redeemer and seeking to follow His leadings are “brethren,” regardless of race or colour or education or poverty or natural grace. You reached the point where your heart is so free from envy and pride and selfishness, and so full of the spirit of the Master that you can honestly say I love all the “brethren” with a love that is sincere and not at, all feigned.

Now having gotten thus far along in the good way, the Lord, through the Apostle, tells us what next — that we may preserve our hearts pure—“See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently (intensely).” Ah, yes, the pure heart must not be forgotten, else it might be but a step from pure love into a snare of the Adversary, carnal love. But the pure love is not to be cold and indifferent; it is to be so warm and so strong that we would be willing to “lay down our lives for the brethren.”-1 John 3:16.

With such a love as this burning in our hearts there will be no room there for any selfish, envious thoughts or words or deeds. Oh, how blessed would all the gatherings of the “brethren” be if such a spirit pervaded all of them! Can we doubt that, if it held sway in one-half or one-third or even one-fourth, it would speedily exercise a gracious influence upon all—for righteousness and fidelity and love and peace, and against every strife, malice, slander and back-biting?

Let all the “brethren” more and more take these medicines which tend to sanctify and prepare us for the Master’s service here and hereafter.



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The Issues of Life.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”—Prov. 4:23.

WE realise that our heads need keeping, and some of us at one time might have been inclined to say, “Keep thy head with all diligence, in line with the doctrines of Christ, and thy heart will be all right, for God will keep it.” This, however, is a mistake. God has stated the matter correctly. We are not competent to keep our heads. We are competent and responsible for the keeping of our hearts. If we diligently keep, watch, guard our hearts from evil, and in full harmony with the divine Word and its spirit of the truth, righteousness, love, God will do the rest. He will guide our imperfect reasoning faculties, and we shall know His doctrines.

Keeping the heart signifies keeping guard over our sentiments. It signifies a critical inspection of every motive of life. Why do we speak? What is the object desired? Why do we do this, or not do that thing? Is the motive honourable, just, loving? Do we love righteousness? Do we hate iniquity? Is the love of God being more and more shed abroad in our hearts? Is it increasing God-ward, and man-ward, and towards the brethren? This is watching, “keeping our hearts,” and implies that if a selfish thought or motive or ambition be found lurking anywhere, or seeking to guide in act or word, it should be promptly expelled—that the heart may be pure, clean. Keeping the heart means also activities in love, benevolence, helpfulness and the cultivation of thoughts and sentiments in accord with the divine.

It means not only the purifying of the heart, but the garnishing of it with the fruits and graces of holiness and love, that it may be acceptable to the Lord. So surely as injustice or sin or impurity is harboured to any extent, the heart is proportionately defiled and proportionately unacceptable to the Lord, and in the way leading towards repudiation by Him.

The words, “the issues of life,” would remind a lawyer of the fact that when a case is tried in court the jurors are sworn to do their duty in respect of the issue joined—the decision, to be reached. So all the Lord’s consecrated people are on trial. The issue has been joined. It means—(1) Life or death eternal; and (2) additionally to those who win life is another issue, namely, whether that life eternal shall be on the highest plane—of the divine nature and joint-heirship with Christ—or on the lower spirit plane of the great company—like unto the angels. Do we realise the issue joined in this trial, the outcome of which is so vital? If we do, and if we believe the Lord’s declaration that the issue or result will depend upon our heart condition, then we see a reason why we should use “all diligence” in keeping our hearts pure, sweet, tender, loving, “a copy, Lord, of thine.”

Once, when our eyes of understanding began to open and we discerned the length and breadth and height and depth of love divine, and the wonderful plan of salvation, we inclined to think that the number who would fail to attain life everlasting, either in this age or in the Millennium, would be a small number. We would even have inclined to the Universalist view that all would ultimately be saved, had it not been for certain texts of Scripture which clearly intimate that, according to the divine fore-knowledge, there would be some who would see the second death, as a result of the “sin unto death.” “There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye shall pray for it”—1 John 5:16.

But as we have become more and more familiar with the mind of the Lord as presented to us in His Word, we discern that none will be granted eternal life, except they shall attain a certain character development, and that that character development means not merely an outward loyalty and restraint from sin, but a heart loyalty and love for righteousness, and hatred towards iniquity. During the Millennium, outward perfection will be standard, yet ultimately in the end of that age, the heart development will be the test, which will determine who may go beyond to eternal life, and who may not.

The heart test may now be said to be the only one, because our flesh, justified, then consecrated to death, is not the new creature which hopes for glory, honour and immortality, but merely its imperfect servant or tool. The new creature's heart or affections must be loyal to the very highest principles of justice and love, and, according to its development along these lines, will be the divine decision for life or for death—on some plane of being. The great company must have the Christ-like character as well as the little flock. We are not to understand that there will be, for any of the consecrated, any further trial or testing after the present trial is ended. No one will be in either the little flock or the great company, except those who are in loving loyalty to God, to the brethren, to the principles of righteousness; all others will be condemned as unfit for life eternal.

Perhaps the worldly might say to us: It must be a great strain upon you and make your life miserable to be obliged to think continually of the right or the wrong of every act, and every word, and every thought, and to be obliged to repudiate and disown every sentiment not entirely just and loving. We reply, that at first it might have so appeared to us, but the Lord leads His people gently, graciously, step by step, to an appreciation of the principles of righteousness and love. Following on to know the Lord means, to such, continual growth in grace as well as in knowledge. We are glad that we see distinctly the issue joined in our case—that it is for life or death. To us this is the chief consideration—the making of our calling and our election sure, to life eternal. As we get a glimpse of the wonderful things which God has in reservation for those who love Him, earthly pleasures, self-denials, self-sacrifices, all lose their weight and power, and gradually we come to the place where we “delight” to know and to do the Lord's will—to the mental attitude in which these divine regulations are not grievous to us, but really joyous. This means that our minds have been “transformed,” so that the things which we once loved, now we hate; and the things which we once hated, now we love. Yet we approached this position gradually. Those who come into present truth now have advantages in many respects, but we must also remember that as the time of testing grows shorter, it signifies that the tests themselves will be the sharper.

Life unto Life or Death unto Death.

The Apostle, contemplating the situation of those who have been saved by faith, through the knowledge of the Lord and of His gracious plans, declares that the message becomes to such a life or a death message. The demands of our consecration to some appear onerous, burdensome. They have an odour of death that may lead on to second death. To others the ways of the Lord and the requirements of His holiness have a sweet odour, a life odour, bringing refreshment. Such an appreciation of the divine goodness and of the divine plan, the Apostle refers to as a sweet odour of life, and tending and leading up to the glorious life condition which they shall share in the resurrection of the blessed.

The Apostle realised that the message he was preaching would have one or the other effect upon all who had the spiritual ears. It would be to them either a savour of life unto life or of death unto death. Then he adds, “Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor. 2:16.) There is a tremendous strain of responsibility upon all who minister the Lord's truth. Who is sufficient for these things? How can any of us fully grasp and comprehend the value of present opportunities? And how can those who, in the name of the Lord, present His message, sufficiently realise the weight of responsibility attaching?

Summing up, then, let us each know that if we do not keep our hearts from the leaven of malice, envy, hatred and strife, the issue with us will be the second death, and in the interim assuredly we would lose much of the light and spiritual blessings which we once enjoyed. If, on the other hand, we keep out the evils referred to, and put on the graces of the Lord's spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love—the decision in our case will be life, eternal life. And in the interim, while waiting for our resurrection “change,” our experience will be continual growth in grace, in love, and in knowledge of the things freely given of the Lord to such as are in this heart condition. These shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free—not with the freedom of the unregenerate, but with the liberty of the sons of God—liberty to do right, liberty to suffer injustice for righteousness' sake; liberty to lay down our lives for the brethren, and, in general, for the truth, and in doing good to all men as we have opportunity.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

Convention News.

IT is with thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings upon the Annual Convention held in Melbourne over the Christmas period that this brief report is presented at this time. It was freely expressed by the brethren in attendance that these gatherings were most profitable indeed, as the various friends contributed, under the Lord's providence, in making it such a season of spiritual refreshing.

In opening the Convention the chairman expressed pleasure in extending a cordial welcome to so many visiting brethren who gladly assembled in the Lord's name to enjoy the spiritual food at His table. Each of the Australian states was represented, and throughout the various sessions the contributions of the visiting friends added much to the spiritual blessings received. Messages with greetings from other brethren, far and near, were also received, manifesting the good interest of many who were unable to attend in person, but who were present in spirit. As it was, the attendance was very good, being greater for an Australian Convention than for many years past.

The Bible Studies were well conducted by the chairmen on the selected Scripture passages—Hebrews 12:22-29; Psalm 51:10-19 and Romans 11:25-36. Each of these portions of the Bible gave scope for much investigation by the students prior to the Convention, and of course the greatest benefits are received from all Bible study classes when the

studies are well prepared beforehand. Then, coming together to compare or query thoughts with others much blessing is gained by all the assembly, but especially by those who have studied well and applied their hearts to the Scriptures under review. At most Convention Studies the time available is usually insufficient to cover the passages in any detail, yet the main points are brought out, and the studies at this Convention were very profitable indeed. Our readers will have the opportunity of gleaning some of the thoughts presented at the studies from the Convention Notes which are printed separately.

Throughout the four days of Convention a number of brethren served the gatherings with addresses, and each in their own way contributed much to the helpfulness of the assemblies. The variety of subjects dealt with meant that the Bible truths were presented from many angles, and the interest in these addresses was very manifest. The titles for the addresses were:—"The One Thing Needful"; "The Love of God"; "Pleasing God"; "A Voice Behind Thee"; "Godliness With Contentment"; "Jesus"; "Calamities"; "The Author and Finisher of Our Faith"; "Precious Promises"; "The Four Gospels"; "A Saviour—Christ the Lord"; "And Ananias Went His Way" and "Building—Praying—Keeping." An outline of the thoughts from these addresses will also be found in the Notes on the Convention, while some of these will appear in full in the pages of the "Peoples Paper" for the benefit of all our brethren.

Three Fellowship Meetings, comprising Praise and Testimony, and a Hymn Service, were also much enjoyed by the brethren. It is encouraging to hear the testimonies of the brethren who have experienced the Lord's blessing and keeping throughout the past year, and to realise their confidence and trust in Him for the future as they yield their lives to His love and care day by day. The "Hymns We Love and Why" were most refreshing; truly the sentiments expressed in some of our lovely hymns and set to appropriate melodies are most uplifting, and the brethren manifest much feeling as they sang the selections in spirit and in truth. We were reminded in the study taken on New Year's Day in Rev. 3:7-13 (following the Convention proper) that a great number of our lovely hymns were given to the Christian world during the Philadelphian period of the church's history—covering the Reformation and onwards to about the middle of the last century.

As a message of encouragement to all brethren in other parts of the Lord's harvest field, and in appreciation of the messages received from our brethren, the Convention assembly sent the words of Hebrews 12:22-24, 28 with Greetings of Christian love with visiting friends returning to home Classes and to friends in every place.

The happy Convention gatherings were concluded with the usual Love Feast, during which all partook of the little symbol of cake, and bade each other farewell with a parting handshake while singing "Blest Be the Tie." The closing hymn "God Be With You Till We Meet

Again," and a prayer of thanksgiving to the Giver of every good thing, with request for His blessing and guidance to be over all in the days ahead, brought the Convention to a fitting conclusion. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

This announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren are to hold their usual Convention this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 4th to April 7th, in the Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends who may be able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

Passover Memorial, 1958

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, agreeing exactly with the Easter season this year. While the Lord did not request that the Remembrance of His death be kept on the exact date each anniversary, the brethren arrange their services as near as possible, in keeping with the spirit and sacredness of the occasion.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Books Available.

\“Most Holy Faith”—£1.

“Tabernacle Shadows”—6/-.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“God's Promises Come True”—£1.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament — 18/-.

“The Book of Books”—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

“Our Lord's Great Prophecy”—1/- “Manner of Christ's Return”—1/- “Christ's Return”—1/-.

“Some of the Parables”—1/-.

“Hope Beyond the Grave”—1/- “God and Reason”—1/-.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE.

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne,

Looking Back We Praise the Way.

IT is fitting that the Lord's people should continually keep in mind the mercies and blessing they enjoy, otherwise the pressure of the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches would so crowd in upon our minds and hearts as to cover from our observation and ultimately choke up completely the springs of divine grace, which, kept open, minister continually to our joy and refreshment in the holy spirit.

To this end it is appropriate that we have a daily review of the blessings we enjoy—that every evening we call to mind the privileges enjoyed, the providences which have guided our way, and the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which have come to us; some of them in common with the world in general and others of a special kind known to and appreciated by those only who know the Shepherd and are known of Him.

It is appropriate, too, that we take weekly reviews, looking at the same mercies and blessings from a still broader standpoint of observations, reminding us of the rest into which we have entered through faith in the precious blood, and also of the rest that remains for the people of God, whereof God has given us assurance in that on the first day of the week He raised up Jesus from the dead.—Heb. 4:3, 9.

But it is with special appropriateness that at the close of the still larger cycle of a year we should take a still broader and more comprehensive view of our experiences, looking circumspectly at the way we have travelled and considering well which have been steps which have hindered progress, and which have been proper steps in the footprints of Jesus, bringing us nearer to the goal—the “mark” which we must surely attain if we would be accounted worthy of a share in the promised Kingdom.

Such an advanced Christian looks back through the year and recalls life's storms as well as its sunshine, its sorrows as well as its joys, its tears as well as its smiles, and sorrows not as others who have no hope. His troubles have been divested of their fearful features, and minimised by the spirit of a sound mind, and the instruction of God's Word, which assures all such that the trials, difficulties and adversities of life, rightly accepted as lessons, are blessings in disguise—which will work out “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” in the life to come.—2 Cor. 4:16, 17.

He will perceive, too, that his joys have been of a purer and a more solid kind than any he ever knew before he was begotten of the holy spirit. They have not had commingled with them the bitterness of envy, malice and hatred, but have been unalloyed; because they have not been rejoicing in iniquity, but rejoicing in the truth. Moreover, they have been much more numerous than ever before; because he not only is able to joy in the Lord, joy in His Word, joy in the holy spirit, joy in the fellowship with brethren of like precious faith, but by the grace of God he has been enabled additionally to joy in tribulation also—not because he loved tribulation, but because he loved the patience, the experience, the character, which God assures us are a fruitage which all tribulations must yield us under His providence, if we are rightly exercised thereby.—James 1:3, 4; Rom. 5:3.

Of whom are all these things true? Not of everyone, surely, for we know many who have no such experience—the world that lieth in darkness knows not God. Nor are these experiences true of all people of intelligence—nominally Christians. Comparatively few of those who profess the name of Christ enjoy these precious experiences, or will be able to look back upon the year with satisfaction of this kind, realising that God has crowned the year with His goodness. This is so, because they have not taken the necessary step of full consecration to the Lord, to bring them under His protecting care and under the enlightening influence of His Word through His spirit; or, having taken the step of consecration, they have not been performing their vows, but seeking to serve both God and Mammon, without pleasing either, and without receiving satisfactory blessings from either.

The class which can and does look back through the year from the standpoint that we have described—the class which looking back can see that God's goodness has crowned every feature of life throughout the year, is the “little flock,” the true Church, whose names are written in heaven—the body of Christ, the Bride class. They are the true Zion, which shall shortly be set up, filled with divine glory, the joy of the whole earth, and the divine channel of blessing to all the families of mankind; “For out of Zion shall go the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” These are of the elect Church, of which Christ is the Head, and are the faithful “feet” members who, now fulfilling their vows of sacrifice, are companions in the suffering of Christ, as by and by they shall be His companions also in the glory that shall be revealed. (Rom. 8:17, 18.) They are God's choice, or His “elect,” for, as the Apostle informs us, God has predestined that this class whom He is selecting shall all be copies of His Son. (Rom. 8:29.) They shall dwell in His house—they will be members of the great Temple which the Lord God is building of spiritual stones, in and through which He will bless the world with a knowledge of Himself and His grace.—1 Pet. 2:4-8.

Is it any wonder that these can rejoice in spirit saying, “Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits”? “He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the loving kindness of our God.” Surely, then, these, in looking back, can see in the year that is past that which has blessed and rejoiced them in every sense of the word has been of divine goodness, and that thus God has crowned the whole year with His favor toward them through Christ Jesus, and they thus appreciate it to the full.

The Four Gospels.

(Convention Address)

“For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa. 55:10, 11.)

THESE words from the prophet comfort us with the assurance that God is graciously willing and abundantly able to accomplish His loving purpose which He has revealed through His Word; and also that His Word itself has a function to perform. Not only does God’s Word reveal His plan; it is also used by Him to accomplish much of His plan.

Some of the most important parts of God’s Word are the four Gospels, wherein we have pictures of our Lord Jesus, especially of His earthly ministry. We may consider it strange that God provided four records of what our Saviour said and did instead of one complete, connected account.

One reason, doubtless, has been to hide some of the truth from all but those who would carefully search His Word as for hidden treasure. We can see that it is more difficult to obtain a clear outline of our Lord’s ministry from four accounts (each being different in some respects) than from one full and complete record. This would be one of many ways in which God has hidden His truth from the wise and prudent and revealed it to those of more humble mind—“unto babes”—as we read in Matthew 11:25.

The Gospel according to Matthew is generally understood to have been written in the first place for Jews, and as the Jews especially thought of their coming Messiah as a great king, Matthew’s presentation is that of a king.

The genealogy of Matthew, chapter 1, shows Jesus through his foster father, Joseph, as descended from Abraham, through King David.

Matthew alone gives the account of the visit of the three wise men from the east to Jerusalem who asked, “Where is he who is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”

Matthew’s Gospel makes particularly prominent the teaching concerning the kingdom. It records that both John the Baptist and Jesus opened their ministry with the announcement —“Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17.)

Matthew gives more of the parables of the kingdom than any of the other evangelists, and is the only one to quote the prophecy of Zech. 9:9—“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an’ ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” (See Matt. 21:5.) In the days of the prophet it was customary for kings and kings’ sons to ride upon white asses. Jesus was a king as well as a King’s Son. He, therefore, in harmony with the prophet’s words, adopted this custom when presenting Himself to Israel as their King.

Matthew alone gives a picture of the day of judgment, or the great assize as it has been called—“When the Son of man shall come in his glory,” and the church with Him, as we read in Matt. 25:31-34; and 16:27. Finally, we have in Matthew’s account Pilate’s question, “Art thou the King of the Jews?” To which Jesus in substance replied, “What you say is correct.” It is helpful to read through Matthew’s Gospel with this thought in mind of Jesus as King.

In Mark’s Gospel we have quite a different picture of the Son of God. It is said that Mark wrote his gospel in the first place for Gentiles, and for Romans in particular. He omits all reference to the Jewish Law, and gives no genealogy of our Lord, and in several places has put in little explanations which Jews would not have needed.

Mark gives us the picture of Jesus as the servant of Jehovah. He opens his account by quoting from Isaiah 40:3—“Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.” In Isaiah 42:1 Messiah is particularly pictured as the servant of Jehovah—“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” And in Isa. 52:13, and 53:11, we also find Messiah referred to as a servant, and again in Zech. 3:8. In Phil. 2:7 the Apostle Paul also tells us that Christ Jesus took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

Mark uses the word “straightway” nineteen times, suggesting the prompt way in which a servant would carry out his master’s command. Matthew uses the same word translated “straightway” seven times, and Luke only three.

Mark's Gospel is not so much a record of moral and spiritual teachings, but is an account full of the works of Jesus. Mark shows our Lord's days as being full of service. In chapter 3 we see that even the sabbath was frequently occupied with good works; and in chapter 6:31 the Lord says—"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile; for there were many coming and going and they had no leisure so much as to eat."

Mark 4:36 reads—"And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship." It is said that the original here gives the thought that our Lord was so exhausted from His labours, that He just allowed Himself to be carried into the boat "as lie was." We may recall too in this connection that they had to awaken Him of sleep lest they perish in the wind-storm which arose.

In chapter 6:14 Mark shows that it was the works of Jesus, rather than His message, that came to the notice of Herod—"And king Herod heard of him, and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him."

Then in chapter 10 we have Jesus' own words—"Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Just as Matthew presents Jesus to us as the great King of kings, and Mark portrays Him as the servant of all, Luke's Gospel calls special attention to the fact that He was the Son of man: It is a common belief that Luke wrote especially for the Greeks, and they thought a great deal about the beauty and perfection of human form. In fact, led by their great men, they almost worshipped, not the moral but the physical beauty of the human being and were continually looking for the human ideal. Luke takes advantage of this natural trait in the character of the Greeks and presents Jesus as the ideal, the perfect man—the very image of God in the flesh. He shows our Lord's perfection in all His human relationships—perfection in the midst of imperfection.

Luke records our Lord's genealogy, not from Abraham, but goes right back to Adam, thus showing that Jesus belongs not to one nation, but to all. He is the Son of The Man, the heir of all that Adam lost.

Luke relates how carefully God prepared for the birth of both John the Baptist and Jesus. In chapter 1:80 his account relates of John—"And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit." In chapter 2 he writes of Jesus—"And the child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." And again—"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

Describing the first sermon which Jesus preached, Luke writes in chapter 4—"And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." And in verse 22 he records—"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." The people were impressed with our Lord's presence, as well as with what He had to say.

In Luke's Gospel, more than in the others, we are shown our Lord's association with publicans and sinners, not to condone their ways, but to draw them back to the paths of righteousness, and to the Father's house. So much was this true of Jesus that the slur of being a friend of publicans and sinners was cast upon Him. As we see in chapter 15 Jesus replied with the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Silver, and the Prodigal Son, in which we see how highly the Heavenly Father values genuine repentance.

Finally, we might note the parable of the Good Samaritan, a parable peculiar to Luke, in which is shown the godlike qualities that should be possessed by humanity in the image and likeness of their Creator.

John's Gospel, written some time after the other three, presents Jesus as the Son of God—in the beginning with God, and as the Father's agent, the creator of all things. Chapter 1:3 reads—"All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." He is shown as having come forth from the Father, and who has now returned to the Father.

Matthew traces the descent of Jesus from Abraham, Luke takes His genealogy back to Adam, but John shows Him to be the Son of God. If Jesus were nothing more than a natural descendant of Adam, Abraham and David (as the Jews expected their Messiah to be), He would have been born an imperfect man, under condemnation to death like the rest of us; whereas the divine plan required a perfect man—"holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners,"—who would thus have an uncondemned life to give in sacrifice for the condemned life of Adam, and all condemned in him. This the Father accomplished by transferring the life of the Logos from the spiritual condition to be born a perfect human being through His mother, Mary. The angel Gabriel addressed Mary,—"The holy spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be

called the Son of God.”

Just as John shows that the great anointed Redeemer came from heaven to earth, that He was with the Father before the world was, so he shows much more than the other evangelists that Messiah’s Kingdom (in which the Lord’s followers are invited to share) is a spiritual kingdom which will follow the destruction of Satan’s unholy, invisible kingdom.

It is helpful to note a few Scriptures, which, among many others, show the truly exalted origin of Jehovah’s King, the Messiah. John 5:18—”The Jews sought to kill him because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father.” John 5:22, 23 —”The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” John 6:38—”For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” John 10:36—”Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God.” John 17:24—”Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

The object John had in writing his gospel is summed up in chapter 20:31—”These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

Thus, from the four evangelists we have pictured Jehovah’s King, Jehovah’s Servant, Jehovah’s perfect human Son who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and finally, Jesus, the Son of God, the beginning of the creation of God, who’ was made flesh and dwelt among us, and who now has been highly exalted to the divine nature, “being the effulgence of the Father’s glory, and an exact impress of His substance,” as we read in the Diaglott, Heb. 1:3.

From Israel’s earliest days as a nation her priests offered typical sacrifices for sin which were repeated year by year continually, for the blood of bulls and goats could never really take away sin. This arrangement, doubtless, caused some of the nation to realise the need for a greater priest than Aaron or any of his line. From the days of Samuel onward God gave Israel a line of kings, a few of whom were good kings, but the larger number were failures. And even the very best of these rulers, such as David, Hezekiah and Josiah were imperfect, dying creatures, unable to continue by reason of death, and who failed to carry out for Israel all that they desired. The divine records faithfully reveal their mistakes (some of which were of a very serious character) as well as their good qualities. Such experiences would, doubtless, cause Israelites indeed to realise their need of a greater king than any yet given to them.

God also gave to Israel a long line of prophets who, as imperfect men, could teach the people only imperfectly.

Israel needed a still greater prophet to show them how to keep God’s laws. The New Testament, therefore, shows Jesus as the ideal Priest, Prophet and King, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him, as we read in Heb. 7:25.

Soon the mystery of the Gospel Age will be finished—the many members of Christ having been found—and then the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of the Heavenly Father, and of His Christ, Head and Body. “For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

Question Box'

Question:—In regard to 1 Peter 4:8, How does love in practice cover a multitude of sins?

Answer:—The connecting verses show that while the Lord's people are being judged according to the flesh, i.e., by their actual doings, by the world generally, they are, from God's viewpoint, being judged according to the spirit, their intention, their real desire as new creatures. The earnest desire of these is to be holy, but they cannot act perfectly under present disabilities, so an advocate is provided, even Jesus Christ, the righteous. Our heavenly Father, therefore, views His consecrated children as though perfect through the merit of His dear Son. Our sins, through inherited weaknesses, are covered.

So, wherever the true love of the Lord prevails, and surely all who love God must love those begotten of God (1 John 4:20, 21), that love “will cover a multitude of sins,” i.e., weaknesses, imperfections, awkwardnesses, and peculiarities in their brethren in Christ. Above all things, the Apostle urges, “have fervent love among yourselves”— seek more and more to look at others from God’s viewpoint, not according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

There are various degrees of inherited weaknesses in the Lord's people in common with mankind. A Christian may be more noble and just in character, either born or developed, than his brethren, and thus may discern unrighteousness in others, which other brethren do not recognise. What should be the attitude of the "more noble" under such circumstances in applying the principle of the above Scripture? Have we not the answer to this in the example of our Lord. He was perfect and holy; and how the imperfections of His disciples, not to mention those of the fallen race around Him, must have jarred on His perfect heart and mind, had it not been for the spirit of the heavenly Father, the spirit of love, abiding in Him so fully. He said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," so He ministered to the poor, the sick, the publicans and sinners.

So we may be sure that those who may be of more noble birth or attainment need the same spirit of love in their hearts, if they will be kept from viewing others less noble in any other light than that in which the Lord views them.

It is so easy to find fault when often the only unrighteousness in another is that which we all have to some extent—
inherited weaknesses resulting in unintentional offences, all of which will pass away when “that which is perfect is
come.” “The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore, sober, and watch unto prayer”—desiring more and more of
the Lord’s spirit, which “shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

Convention Notes.

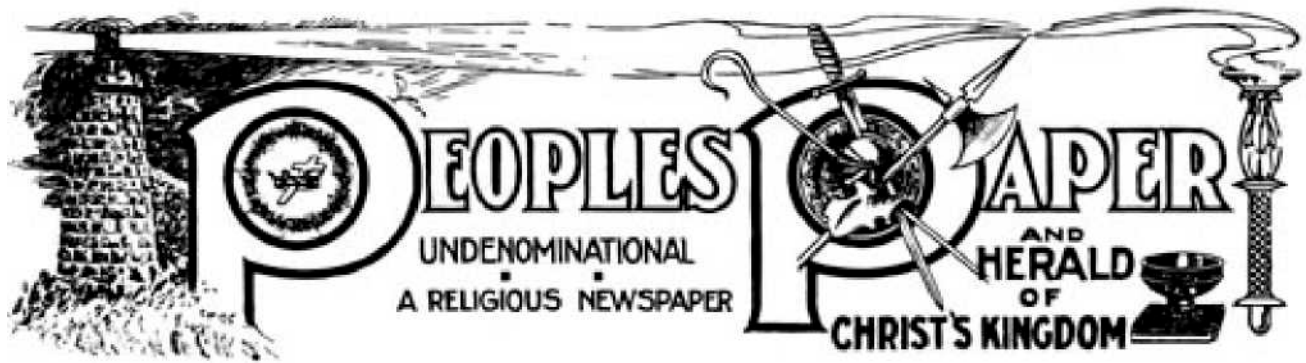
The Notes on the Christmas Convention are this year taking the place of the January's "Peoples Paper." All our readers will therefore receive a copy, and which are being posted out with this month's issue of the "Paper." Extra copies of the Notes are gladly supplied free.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. „ 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M.	„	4.45	p.m.
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In Remembrance of Christ.

EACH year, as the Anniversary of our Lord's death recurs, the propriety of its commemoration is more and more impressed upon the Lord's true followers, as they particularly bring to mind the Master's own words at the institution of the Memorial, and such as written by the inspired Apostle—"Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us."

Various Scriptures clearly show that Jesus, "the Lamb of God," was the antitype of the Passover lamb, and that His death was as essential to the deliverance of "the Church of the first-born" from death, as was the death of the typical lamb to the first-born of Israel. Thus, led of the spirit, we come to the words and acts of Jesus at the last Passover, which He ate with His disciples.

Jesus knew the import of the Passover, but the disciples knew not. He was alone; none could sympathise, none could encourage Him. Even had He explained to the disciples they could not have understood or appreciated His explanation, because they were not yet begotten of the spirit. Nor could they be thus begotten until justified from Adamic sin — passed over, or reckoned free from sin, by virtue of the slain Lamb, whose shed blood ransomed them from the power of death.

Thus alone, treading the narrow way, which none before had trod, and in which He is our Forerunner and Leader, what wonder that His heart at times was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. When the hour had come, they sat down to eat the Passover and Jesus said unto His disciples:— "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." (Luke 22:15, 16). Doubtless He longed to have them understand how it would begin to be fulfilled a little later on in that very day, by the slaying of the real Lamb.

Probably one reason why He specially desired to eat this Passover with them was, that He there designed breaking the truth of its significance to them to the extent that they could receive it; for, "As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave to them and said, Take (eat), this is my body." (Mark 14:22). "This is My body, which is given for you: This do in remembrance of Me." "And He took the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves . . . This cup is the new covenant, in My blood, which is shed for you." Luke 22:17-20.

We cannot doubt that the design of the Master was to call their minds from the typical lamb to Himself, the antitype, and to show them that it would be no longer proper to observe a feature of the Law which He was about to fulfil. And the bread and wine were to be to them thereafter the elements which, as remembrancers of Him, would take the place of the typical lamb. Thus considered, there is force in His words, "This do in remembrance of Me"—no longer kill a literal lamb in remembrance of a typical deliverance, but instead, use the bread and wine, representatives of my flesh and life, the basis of the real deliverance, the real passing over. Hence, let as many as receive Me and My words henceforth, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

The Import of the Emblems.

Of the bread, Jesus said:—"It is My flesh:" that is, it represents His flesh, His humanity, which was broken or sacrificed for us. Unless He had sacrificed Himself for us, we could never have had a resurrection from death, to future life as He said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man . . . ye have no life in you." John 6:53.

Not only was the breaking of Jesus' body thus to provide bread of life, of which if a man eat he shall never die, but it also opened the "narrow way" to life, and broke or unsealed and gave us access to the truth, as an aid to walk the narrow way, which leads to life. And thus we see that it was the breaking of Him who said, "I am the way, the truth,

and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

Hence, when we eat of the broken loaf, we should realise that had He not died—been broken for us—we should never have been able to come to the Father, but would have remained forever under the curse of Adamic sin and in the bondage of death.

Further, the bread was unleavened. Leaven is corruption, an element of decay, hence a type of sin, and the decay and death which sin works in mankind. So, then, this symbol declares that Jesus was free from sin, a Lamb without spot or blemish, “holy, harmless, undefiled.” Had Jesus been of Adamic stock, had He received the life principle in the usual way from an earthly father, He too, would have been leavened, as are all other men, by Adamic sin; but His life came unblemished from a higher heavenly nature, changed to earthly conditions, hence He is called the bread from heaven.—John 6:41. Let us then appreciate the bread as pure, unleavened, and so let us eat of Him; eating and digesting truth, and especially this truth; appropriating by faith His righteousness to ourselves we realise Him as both the way and the life.

The Apostle, by divine revelation, communicates to us a further meaning in this remembrancer. He shows that not only did the loaf represent Jesus, individually, but that after we have partaken thus of Him (after we have been justified by appropriating His righteousness), we may, by consecration, be associated with Him as parts of one loaf (one body) to be broken for, and in a like manner, to become food for the world (1 Cor. 10:16). This same thought, of our privilege as justified believers to share now in the sufferings and death of Christ, and thus become joint-heirs with Him of future glories, and associates in the work of blessing and giving life to all the families of the earth, is expressed by the Apostle repeatedly and under various figures; but when he compares the church as a whole to the “one loaf” now being broken, it furnishes a striking and forcible illustration of our union and fellowship with our Head.

He says, “Because there is one loaf we, the many (persons) are one body; for we all ‘partake of the one loaf.’” “The loaf which we break, is it not a participation of the body of the Anointed One?” 1 Cor. 10:16, 17.—Diaglott..

The wine represents the life given by Jesus, the sacrifice—the death. “This is My blood (symbol of life given up in death) of the new covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins”; “Drink ye all of it.”—Matt. 26:27, 28.

It is by the giving up of His life as a ransom for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a right to life comes to men. (Rom. 5:18, 19). Jesus’ shed blood was the “ransom for all,” but His act of handing the cup to the disciples, and asking them to drink of it, was an invitation to them to become partakers of His sufferings, or, as Paul expresses it, to “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24). “The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a participation of the blood (shed blood—death) of the Anointed One?” (1 Cor. 10:16.—Diaglott). Would that all could realise the value of the cup, and could bless God for an opportunity of sharing it with Christ that we may be also glorified together.—Rom. 8:17.

Jesus attaches this significance to the cup elsewhere, indicating that it is the cup of sacrifice, the death of our humanity. For instance, when asked by two disciples a promise of future glory in His throne, He answered them:—“Ye know not what ye ask; are ye able to drink of the cup I shall drink of?” On their hearty avowal, He answered, “Ye shall indeed drink of my cup.” Wine is also a symbol of joy and invigoration: so we share Jesus’ joys in doing the Father’s will now, and shall share also His glories, honor and immortality—when we drink it new with Him in the Kingdom.

Let us then, dear brethren, as we surround the table to commemorate our Lord’s death, call to mind the deep significance of the Memorial; and being invigorated with His life, and strengthened by the living bread, let us drink with Him into His death and be broken in feeding others. “For if we be dead with Him we shall live with Him; if we suffer we shall also reign with Him.”—2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

*“According to Thy gracious word,
In meek humility
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember Thee.
Thy body, given for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testamental cup I take,
And thus remember Thee.
When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O, Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,
I will remember Thee.”*

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

Passover at First Advent.

THE question as to whether our Lord and 1 His disciples had kept the Jewish Passover on its usual date at the time Jesus instituted the Memorial of His death has exercised the minds of the Lord's people for some considerable time.

From an article in the "Reprints" of 1901 the following is a quotation—"There can be no doubt from the account that our Lord and His disciples ate the Passover Supper on the day preceding the one on which the Jews in general ate it; for in John's Gospel we read (John 18:28; 19:14) that when our Lord was before Pilate in the Judgment Hall, which was after He had eaten the Passover, the Pharisees, His accusers, had not yet eaten it—nor would they eat it until the evening after His crucifixion."

We may wonder why our Lord had eaten the Passover on that occasion a day earlier than the Jews in general, and while most Bible students have probably concluded that, it was for the purpose that He could fulfil the antitype of the Passover lamb on the exact day—becoming the Lamb of God on the 14th of Nisan—yet the particular details how this could have been accomplished have perhaps not been evident throughout the years.

Last year a series of articles appeared in a weekly publication from the pen of a Bible commentator, and these were brought to our attention by one of our friends. It is thought that the following extract offers a helpful and enlightening explanation of the celebration of the Passover on the year of our Lord's sacrifice. The quotation is as follows:

"The Last Supper was taken on Thursday evening and the first three Gospels say that it was a celebration of the Passover. On this point they appear to conflict with John's Gospel, which says that Passover eve was on the Friday—the actual day of the crucifixion.

"There is, in fact no conflict. When, as it sometimes did, the festival coincided with the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath—and it did so this year—it became a question of which was to be given priority, the Passover or the Sabbath.

"Another school of thought regarded the Passover as a public sacrifice, seeing that the festival was a national commemoration, and such sacrifices overruled the Sabbath law. So they would keep the Passover on its proper day, even if this was the eve of the Sabbath.

"Thus, at this fateful Passover, there was a slaying of 'the lambs and eating of the Passover Supper on both Thursday and Friday, according to which authority was followed.

"Again we see the careful planning of Jesus, so that He would both keep the Passover with His disciples and also suffer the next day in the character of the Lamb of God."

Passover Memorial, 1958

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, agreeing exactly with the Easter season this year. While the Lord did not request that the Remembrance of His death be kept on the exact date each anniversary, the brethren arrange their services as near as possible, in keeping with the spirit and sacredness of the occasion.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early March, and please *state* the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth -Thursday 3rd April, at 8 p.m., at 100 Harbourne Street, Wembley, W.A.

Sydney.—Thursday, 3rd April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the let side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

He wakeneth morning by morning. He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.
The Lord God hath opened mine ear.—Isaiah 50:4, 5.

Lord, in the stillness of the dawn
Before' the world breaks in
To flood the mind with *its* concerns
Its hurry and its din,

Let me breathe deep of heavenly air,
And may my inner ear
The music of the heavenly land
In all its sweetness, hear.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these **books are'** priced at 24A post paid.

“The Man Christ Jesus” as Viewed by Unbelievers.

THIS description of the Person of our Saviour appeared in the pages of “Peoples Paper” some years ago, but it is thought it will be of interest again, especially to new readers, as well as to those acquainted with it.

The following was taken from a manuscript now in possession of Lord Kelly, and in his library, and was copied from an original letter of Publius Lentullus at Rome. It being the usual custom of Roman Governors to inform the Senate and people of such material things as happened in their provinces, in the days of Tiberius Caesar, Publius Lentullus, President of Judea, wrote the following epistle to the Senate concerning our Saviour:—“There appeared in these our days, a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted for a Prophet of truth, but his own disciples call him the Son of God—he raiseth the dead and cureth all manner of diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverend countenance, such as the beholders may both love and fear—his hair of the colour of chestnut full ripe, plain to the ears, whence downward, it is more orient and curling and wavering about his shoulders. In the midst of his head is a seam or partition in his hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead plain and very delicate; his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a lovely red; his nose and mouth so formed as nothing can be reprehended; his beard thickish, in colour like his hair—not very long but forked; his look innocent and mature, his eyes grey, clear, and quick. In reproving he is terrible; in admonishing courteous and fair spoken, pleasant in conversation, mixed with gravity. It cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. In proportion of body, most excellent; his hands and arms most delicate to behold. In speaking, very temperate, modest, and wise. A man, for his singular beauty, surpassing the children of men.”

Not merely the devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have recognised His wisdom and grace, and noted that He was “filled with all the fulness of God,” but even His opponents recognised Him as far beyond the ordinary of our race, as we read, “And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” (Luke 4:22.) Others said, “Never man spake like this man.” (John 7:46.) And Pilate, loth to destroy the life of the noblest Jew he had ever seen, endeavoured, as a last resort, to placate the malevolence of the multitude, perceiving that it was instigated by the Scribes and Pharisees, who were envious and jealous of our Lord’s popularity. Pilate finally caused Jesus to be brought forth to face His accusers, evidently with the thought that a look upon His noble features would turn back their hatred and their malice. So presenting him, Pilate exclaimed, “Behold the Man !” with an emphasis on the words which is not apparent in our English translation, unless the word “the” be read with emphasis—“Behold THE man!” as though he would have said, “The man whom you are asking me to crucify is not only the Jew above all other Jews, but the Man above all other men.” And it was concerning our Lord’s manhood that John declares, “The Logos was made flesh . . . and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”—John 1:14; 19:5.

And in this connection let us remember the oft-quoted and well-known eulogy of “The Son of the Man,” and His teachings, by Rousseau, the celebrated Frenchman, as follows:—

“How petty are the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the work of men? Can He whose life they tell be Himself no more than a man? Is there anything in His character of the enthusiast or the ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in His ways, what touching grace in His teachings! What a loftiness in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His words! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in His replies! What an empire over His passions! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die, without weakness, without display? My friends, men do not invent like this; and the facts respecting Socrates, which no one doubts, are not so well attested as those about Jesus. Those Jews could never have struck this tone or thought of this morality. And the Gospel has characteristics of truthfulness, so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that their inventors would be even more wonderful than He whom they portray.”

Surely the perfect man Christ Jesus, anointed with the spirit of the Highest, was so different from the imperfect race of which He took hold, for its redemption, that the world is certainly- excusable for questioning whether He was not more than a man. Assuredly He was more, much more than a mere man—much more than a sinful man; He was separate from sinners, and, as a perfect man, was the very image and likeness of the invisible God.

“And Ananias Went His Way.”

(Convention Address)

THE chief design in this discourse is to stress the importance of the need the stronger ones have of the weaker. Indeed, all have need one of another, but the insignificant, those who may be more or less conscious of their shortcomings (and who among us is not?) are as necessary today as they were at the beginning of the age. As if the head could say of the feet, “I have no need of thee.” The weak and insignificant are always loud in their praises and need of the strong parts; yes, these members are surely necessary, but Paul says these members which are thought to be more feeble are much more necessary. We can all take heart, then; on the one hand, the strong “not thinking of himself more than he ought,” and the feeble not despising that very small, necessary part he is able to play.

Ananias questioned God’s wisdom when told he could be of assistance to one named Saul. Who was Ananias? One of those small, faithful members in Christ, ministering in a small way to a little band of believers. He had reason to question God’s direction. God reassured him that He could manage the lofty Saul, who was now a chosen vessel for Him, and now the Lord would say, “Ananias, go along and do this for me—Go thy way. Do not be over-concerned with Saul’s way.” We remember in this connection the case of Peter who was rebuked for his inquisitiveness, and told not to mind about John, but “Go thy way”.

“And Ananias went his way.” That which was apportioned to him he did. It was not beyond him, nor will it be beyond you to do God’s will. It may be you are a wife or mother, a husband or father, a servant, a nurse, a builder, a laborer or farmer, a secretary or senior executive, you in your place serving Christ, and you will come to the point where you can be not only faithful, but a blessing to others, that they in their turn will also bless others. “And Ananias went his way.” Let us aspire to no greater height than this, for it is the full measure of any Christian believer. He went his way; did as he was directed by the Lord. Let us be “faithful in little” before we can be faithful in much.

This account seems to gain more purpose if it is told backwards. Instead of beginning with Ananias and Saul, and how Paul began his ministry after the baptism by Ananias, let us look briefly first at Paul. Paul, the Apostle, a special vessel chosen of God, to take the message of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Paul, the preacher, eloquence unsurpassed, commanding attention by all and sundry, from the peasant to the king. Agrippa complains, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” Is there one among us who entertains the idea that he could be a preacher like Paul? He was a fluid linguist,—“more tongues than they all.”

Paul, the missionary. The hardships, the endurance, the fortitude, the patience, the suffering, “flesh that had no rest, troubled on every side,” shipwrecked, a night and a day in the deep, beaten with rods and the lash often, all kinds of perils, hungering and thirsting, covering on foot thousands of miles under the blazing sun, biting cold, working his way as he went. (Read 2 Cor. 11:22-33.) Does any one of us aspire to be a missionary like Paul?

Paul, the writer. What a wealth of matter in his epistles. Even his enemies acknowledged that his “letters were weighty.” The secret of his success as a writer must be attributable to the ability to write, as he spoke, “with understanding.” Rather than use thousands of words that could only cloud an issue he employed brevity with understanding. This was so successfully used that he could say of believers, that they “were his epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men.” (2 Cor. 3:2.) Do you aspire to be a writer such as Paul?

When we at last see the height of his accomplishment, the extent of his endurance and suffering, the ability and faithfulness of this “chosen vessel” some may become discouraged. His was such a glaring example of ability and faithfulness that it would not surprise if some missed the main point of his ministry, that “the body is not one member, but many, and we being many, are members one of another.” (Rom.12:5.) The Apostle had his “off” moments, too; he needed fellowship and consolation the same as you and I. He needed reassurance—“God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforteth us by the coming of Titus.” You will remember the good news that Titus brought back from Corinth, how they ministered unto him, and greatly desired to do the same to Paul.

Innumerable examples may be quoted how lives are linked with other lives. Some may limit the influence to those of like precious faith, but it is our desire to remind you how the lives of extreme difference were linked—Paul, sometimes known as Saul. Incidentally, if this gulf of difference was bridged in the one person why cannot it be bridged in separate people? The inference here is that we all are linked with other lives, sometimes not of our own choosing, like Saul and Ananias. And strangely enough, the lesser blesses the greater.

Have you ever considered the havoc and destruction this persecutor of the faith wrought among the Lord’s disciples? We all know he was a prime mover for the death of Stephen. The Word records the conditions in Jerusalem at this

time, that “There was great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, Stephen was slain, great lamentation was made over him. Saul was further incensed with the saints, and he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, haling men and women, committing them to prison.” That is, those who remained in Jerusalem for reasons not given, who were unable to flee before this unmerited onslaught. Saul, suppressing the truth in his own heart, redoubled his fury against the suffering saints, scattering them abroad through neighboring regions.

The Apostle at a later date, in pleading his own cause, recounts some of the things he did contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. “Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, putting some to death; he punished them oft in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them he persecuted them to strange cities.” (Act. 26:9-11.) Saul approached the High Priest for authority to hound the Christians down, which was promptly given to him. If you meditate for a moment here you will discover Saul had in his hands, in his own hands, authority that was vested only in the Sanhedrin.

Let us pause for a moment and look into any Christian home at Jerusalem at this time. The breadwinner, the wife, the children; men and women cast into prison; children being cared for by other friends until the persecutor brought them into the range of his persecutions. What shall we do? Those having been bruised and tasted of Saul’s fury, beaten with rods, and remembering Stephen’s fate, they knew what to do. “When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into the next,” was our Lord’s own advice. Hastily packing what valuables or food such as could be carried by foot, the little band at Damascus was reinforced with these refugees, safe from this marauding tyrant, temporarily out of danger.

So they came to Damascus with what belongings they could carry, along with their bruises, aches and pains, which they were forced to carry. It was in this condition the church at Damascus received them. Worse was to come; news was brought that Saul had received this unthinkable commission. of being permitted to hunt them down and, if needs be, exterminate them. Ananias, who could have been an elder in the church, and his companions did not know of the incident on the road to Damascus; the incident that was to turn Saul into Paul. They did not know, they could not know, of this happening. All they knew was that Saul was on his way, exceedingly mad.

What would be your reaction if you were in such a predicament, awaiting with fear and trembling the arrival of the spoiler? What if you were asked to go along and do him a good turn? Is it, any wonder Ananias sought to be reassured ‘that his ears had heard aright when he was told to go along to the house in which Saul was to be found, without doubt a house not friendly to the Christians? Was this not a cunning ruse on Saul’s part to be introduced right into the inner circle of the Christians, that with one swoop he might bind them all with one blow? What a test there was on this quiet, humble, devout man. Do you, in all your ambition to be faithful to your calling, seek a bigger test than was Ananias’ that day? He did not falter to the request of God, “Go thy way.” As though God would say—Never mind about Saul; I have plans for him; My plan for you is to do this.

At this point, dear friends, we can apply the lesson for ourselves. Do not be overworried about God’s arrangements for others; the chief thing is to find out what God has in mind for us. He has “set” you in a particular position; can you recognise this position? One thing is certain; He does not want us for Apostles. The twelve He chose as His inspired mouthpieces have done their work. Our task must be complementary to theirs. The high example these men set us is worthy of our deepest admiration, but to aspire to such heights may bring disappointments, leading to frustration. Yet we can all be like Ananias. He went his way, faithful in that which was committed unto him. Could anyone do more? To do it will mean a full surrender of the heart you call your own. The Truth frees each one to be himself. The question we now ask is the same as Saul asked, the same as Ananias asked, “What wilt thou have me to do?”

When honest-hearted people ask this question they are quickly ushered into the presence of each other, as Saul and Ananias. Saul, with authority exceeding that of the High Priest himself, humbled to the dust. Ananias, with fear and trembling needs reassurance to encourage him and deliver him from the “fear of man which bringeth a snare.” Determined in their own hearts to serve God, each needs the service and fellowship of one another. Ananias “laid his hands on Saul,” embraced him as a brother, took him to his own house, baptized him into Christ, and prayed that Saul might be filled with the holy spirit. Could you aspire to greater heights of service than this? This can be your portion of the Christian ministry.

Was ever a faithful soul more obedient than Ananias? Many have been equally obedient to the heavenly vision. Saul was. Yet it is recorded in the Word that “Ananias went his way.” To sink your will into Christ’s will could also mean that you too, “went your way,” or “She hath done what she could.” Can anyone do more? This should inspire the meekest and the humblest of our number, as well as encourage and stimulate the “strong” ones as “members one of another.”

After Damascus, after the laying on of hands of Ananias, we find the zealous Saul a changed man. As zealous as ever, but in a very different way- for a different cause. He began to preach Christ and to suffer himself the trials he so

efficiently meted out to others. This did not deter him. The atmosphere of persecution in Damascus becomes so hot Saul is induced to leave and return to Jerusalem. (Act 9:26.)

The next contrast is interesting. The saints in Jerusalem, possibly some of whom had returned from Damascus, knew of the exploits of Saul, knew of the fellowship Ananias had extended; but with Saul's return to Jerusalem they could not bring themselves to receive him as a brother. He assayed to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. In the face of good reports they believed not. In the face of evil reports, confirmed with evidences of the blows, Ananias believed God. The saints associated with Ananias were probably like those back in Jerusalem, like most of us, fearful and disbelieving, looking at the things that are seen, rather than the principles of righteousness that are unseen. Perhaps we need reassurance as Ananias did, as Jacob did, as many others did, and have continually been reassured by God that He has everything under control.

Look at the test on Jacob. The famine, of which Joseph prophesied in the revealing of the dream to Pharaoh, was getting worse and worse. Jacob had sent to Egypt for relief once; he was obliged to do so again, and after this second plea for help he was invited by Joseph to pack up and come to Egypt, where he would be cared for. What was this horrible doubt gnawing into Jacob's faith; so much so that, he needed to be reassured by God that this was His Will.

But was it God's will to lead Jacob out of the land promised to Abraham and his seed? Was it God's will to go into the land of the enemy? He would recall how Abraham went there and the resultant difficulties and embarrassment.

He would recall how Isaac was on the point of going to Egypt, and he was restrained by the hand of God. (Gen.26:2.) And now did God intend Jacob to vacate the promised land with which were associated all the promises? It worried Jacob; he needed reassurance; Ananias needed reassurance; we need reassurance. The vision at Beersheba was given to Jacob. "Fear not . . ." (Gen. 46:2-7.) With this reassurance Jacob was at rest; he packed up all his belongings, and with all his families, cattle and goods, left the land of promise. The inference is plain. While we do not expect visions today, we can expect reassurance, and what is more, we get it. So many right down through the ages have received it; why not you or I? And this is it; as we look into the lives and faith of men like Saul and Ananias, who both went their ways, we may learn the lesson of being faithful in that which is committed to us.

Every life, in some way or another, is linked with another life. Indeed, it will be strange if many lives are not linked to yours, in some way or another. When both play their parts what a happy result. Think for one brief moment of the happiness that must have been Ananias' when, after he had baptized Saul, he could tell to others with added reassurance, the power of the truth—We now have in our ranks the lofty Saul. If this were possible, what cannot God do when He purposes a thing? If he does not purpose something we in our natural-mindedness may think would be nice, who are we to question God's wisdom? Let us learn from this account that God is able to work all things after the counsel of His own will, and has made every contingency for those things that seem to be harmful or oppose His will.

What HEIGHTS of rapture must Ananias have felt that day. Saul, what must have been his quiet and convincing conviction that day. How differently he now would view the believers. Since he had opposed them so violently, how gently he would act henceforth. What DEPTHS of love and compassion were now his.

Surely each and all can see the force of that blessed promise (after looking into Saul's and Ananias' life) that God will "work all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Do you love God, like Saul professed, in a tyrannical or opposing manner? You will be brought face to face with an Ananias.

Do you love God as did Ananias, seeking to please Him, needing to be reassured every so often? You may be needed to console such as Saul. Why should we grow weary or tired? It is neither a disgrace nor lack of faith to need reassurance; contrawise, it is a necessity. May God grant us the wisdom and strength, each and all of us, to go our way, that it may be written in faith and love, if not in ink, that we, too, went our way, just as did loving, faithful Ananias, for "Ananias went his way."

Question Box'

Question.—Will you kindly explain Heb:12:14, "Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." And Rev. 1:7, "Every eye shall see him."

Answer.—The Greek word from which the word "see" is translated is the same in both instances, as also in Matt. 5:8. It does not necessarily mean to see with the natural eye, but in each case would seem to refer rather to discernment of mind or to see by the eye of faith. It is the pure in heart, those with a single eye to God's glory, those who are not looking to build up some peculiar ideas of their own, but are desiring only the truth, these shall see God. They shall understand God, perceive His will and purpose and teachings. The Master has put it in other words: John 7:17, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

The apostle's exhortation in Hebrews 12:14 is in line with this—"pursue peace and holiness" (sanctification), pure desire for God's will only; without this no one will be able to grasp the things of God, will not perceive His purpose or understand His teachings. This was an exhortation to the Church during this Gospel Age.

Rev. 1:7, speaks of the time when the Lord will come and command the obedience of the world of mankind. He will come in clouds of trouble which will make all men realise that a great change has taken place. They will come to see that Satan has been bound and that Christ is King over all the earth in that day. They will no more see Christ then, with the human eye, than they see Satan now, but they will perceive the prince of evil has been restrained and that the prince of righteousness and peace is in control. Jesus distinctly said, "The world seeth (that is with the natural eye) Me no more." (John 14:19.).

Question.—What is the Apostle's thought in 1 Thes. 5:23?

Answer.—To quote from the writings of one: —The terms body, soul and spirit are figuratively used of the Church collectively. The Apostle says, "I pray God (that) your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This prayer must be understood to apply to the Church as a whole—the elect Church whose names are written in heaven. The true spirit has been preserved in the little flock. Its body is discernible today also, notwithstanding the multitude of tares that would hide as well as choke it. And its soul, its activity, its sentient being is in evidence everywhere, lifting up the standard for the people, of the cross, the ransom.

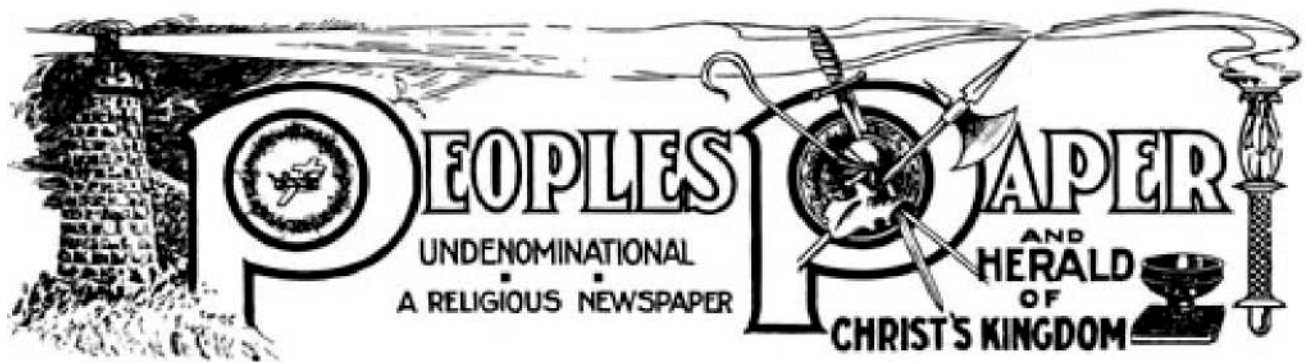
In no other way could we apply the Apostle's words; for, however much people may differ respecting the preservation of the individual spirits and souls of the people addressed, all will agree that their bodies have not been preserved, but have returned to dust like those of others. Besides, the words body, soul and spirit are in the singular, not in the plural.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

This announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren are to hold their usual Convention this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 4th to April 7th, in the Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends who may be able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

A HOLY LIFE.

"Oh, for a life to please my God
In every little thing,
A holy life that day by day
To Him will glory bring.
"A life lived only unto Him,
No double aim in view;
The outcome of a Christlike heart,
By God made pure and true.
"Jesus, complete thy work in me,
The work Thou hast begun.
Each day may I grow more like Thee,
Until my race is run."
—Selected.



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A Voice Behind Thee.

(Isa. 30:19-21)

(Convention Address)

ALTHOUGH the words of our text were addressed to natural Israel and apply to the time when their long season of chastisement shall be at an end, nevertheless, there are helpful lessons here for spiritual Israel also.

We are glad there is to be a highway opened up for Israel, and for all mankind, the dead and the living. There is no such highway now; the way given to Christians now is a narrow way, beset by many foes; but the reward at the end of the narrow way is so much grander, leading to joint-heirship in the Millennial Kingdom.

The highway is a public thoroughfare. In Isa. 2:2 we read—"All nations shall flow unto it." Verse 3—"And many people shall say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." In Rev. 21 this government is described as a city. The city is represented as having one street only—a public thoroughfare—a highway. There is one way only to eternal life, and Jesus said, "I am the way." We often hear people say, "All the various denominations lead to the same place," but the Scriptures do not support this wishful thinking.

As a body of consecrated people of the Lord we also are indeed favoured with a wonderful, comforting hope—a spiritual hope—and standing in a position from which vantage point we may look back over our past Christian experience and say with the Apostle Paul—"Now is our salvation nearer than when we (first) believed." (Rom. 13:11.) We can say also with David—"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." (Psa. 23:6.)

We are convinced that the Lord has been, and still is, fulfilling His many promises of His Word to us, and for all who love Him in sincerity and truth. He is still faithfully guiding and instructing us in the way we should go; the voice from behind us is like a father walking behind his children, saying—"This is the way, walk ye in it"—not the other way, the popular way.

It is the voice of wise counsel and the kindly tone of it has arrested our attention and given us quiet and contented assurance. So David has said of his own experience—"Thy gentleness hath made me great." (Psa. 18:35.) Not great from the standpoint of this world and its attainments—philosophy, or possessions, or worldly learning; colleges and universities do not afford the education required for the development of God's elect.

By God's grace we have made a better choice, and experienced the enlightening and transforming power of God's holy spirit. We are disciples of Christ, learning in His school; we have heard the voice from behind us saying—"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; let not the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment (justice R.S.V.) and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." (Jer. 9:23,24.)

We can glory that we know Him from this standpoint; once we did not know Him in this light. He has favoured us with a knowledge of His Plan of the Ages, formed in the anointed Jesus our Lord. We now see therein the exercise of His loving kindness, justice, righteousness, power and wisdom. These qualities will be more fully displayed in the age to

come, when every eye shall discern them,— “At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:10,11.)

These qualities have appealed to us now, and so the Apostle Paul says—”The goodness of God leadeth us to repentance.” (Rom.2:4.). Also the Apostle Peter declared that “God has appealed to us by his glorious perfections.” (2 Pet. 1:3, Weymouth and Diaglott). David also testifies to the perfection of God’s law, when he stated—”The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward.” (Psa. 19:7-11.) This is indeed the right way—”Walk ye in it.” These instructions are profitable unto godliness.

Nevertheless, there are many strange voices calling from the right and from the left; these have come down to us through the ages and past dispensations; these had their beginning in the Garden of Eden, as recorded in Genesis 3.

In verse 8 of this chapter our first parents “heard the voice of God walking in the garden,” and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of God. No doubt they were accustomed to this voice; it was fellowship to them, for it was the voice of their Benefactor. But why did they hide themselves on this occasion from the presence of the Lord? Fear had entered their hearts; fear had its *beginning* there, and has plagued mankind ever since, and very acutely in these latter days.

Why did Adam and his wife hide themselves; why were they fearful? They had heard and taken the advice of a strange voice in the garden—the voice of the adversary, contradicting the voice of the Lord God. This strange voice said, “Ye shall not surely die, if ye partake of the forbidden fruit.” (Gen. 3:4, 5.) This is where the first lie was told, the first murder committed. Jesus reveals the character of the adversary in John 8:44. He says—”He was a murderer from the beginning (brought about the death of our first parents), and abode not in the truth (this implies he was once in the truth), because there is no truth in him (*suggests* total depravity). When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh **Ills**, own; for he is a liar, and the father of it.

But the naked truth is manifest everywhere, as is stated in Gen. 2:17—”In the day thou eatest thereof (of the forbidden tree) thou shalt surely die.” The plain truth is that death reigns over all, and this is painfully manifest everywhere. Satan, back there, laid the foundation of the false theory, the immortality of the soul—”Ye shall not die,” -and later he added to this the doctrine of eternal torment; for, it is implied, immortal souls must live on somewhere. Satan, back there, laid the foundation of all future errors, misrepresentations, false doctrines opposed to the Scriptures and misrepresenting the character of the Creator.

Today, after about 6000 years since that contradicting voice uttered that lie, nearly all Christendom and all heathen nations believe there is no death, but life continues on after the body dies, they say. Strictly speaking, the body does not die. We speak of many inanimate things and say they perish, become useless; our garments perish, we do not say they die; the body returns to dust (perishes) from whence it was taken. Even though the body can be preserved, and recently human bodies were discovered in freezing temperatures in good condition, and had been so for a considerable time, yet in warm temperatures these would perish. However, no one would say that those bodies died, but the persons died, represented by the bodies. It was the union of the prepared body with the breath of life that produced the sentient being, the living soul.

The Lord did not address the body but the living soul, or being He had made when He declared — “In the day thou (Adam), eatest thereof (disobey my command) thou shalt surely die.” The living soul, Adam, in due time ceased to exist. “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” (Ezek. 18:4) Adam was a soul; the Lord did not put a soul within him, as many people seem to think, and so the Apostle Paul understood it—”As it is written, (he refers to the Genesis’ account for the record of man’s origin). The first man Adam was made a living soul.” (1 Cor. 15:45.) “Man became a soul”— Gen. 2:7.

“The wages of sin is death” is the declaration of the voice behind us. This has never been disproved; Adam was not threatened with eternal torment if he disobeyed. No, Satan appears as a teacher of truth and tries to prove that life continues after death. For the wicked this would mean life in torment forever, according to this erroneous teaching, but the doctrine of eternal torment does not lead to repentance; nevertheless, this error is preached, and in spite of this threat wickedness and irreverence has increased alarmingly, as can be seen by the daily newspapers. errors, wrong teachings concerning the Creator do not sanctify; only the truth of the Scriptures can sanctify the life, and Satan knows this. He does not want people united to the Creator; neither does he want people to appreciate the benevolent character

of the Creator. Through this one act of disobedience on the part of Adam, sorrow, evil, pain, sin and death entered, and was permitted by the Creator for a wise purpose for a limited time, and upon this tiny planet, our earth.

The voice behind us has also told us how the Creator will remedy this, and He is working according to His plan formed before the foundation of human society. His foreknowledge enabled Him to plan in advance, and from time to time in various ages and dispensations He has communicated His purpose to such as have had faith and obedience. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant." (Psa. 25:14; Amos 3:7.) The things written aforetime were written for our learning, and we are able to discern that the majority of the prophecies are fulfilling, with a few yet to be fulfilled.

The voice of prophecy is behind us. Its voice has become clearer and more distinct; through the enlightening influence of the holy spirit we see more clearly the outcome of the present distress of nations, and its relationship to the second advent; both events go together—the second advent of Christ is the cause of the present distress of nations.

The prophetic voice predicted clearly all the events connected with the Lord's first advent. It was the voice of prophecy, the voice behind the New Testament writers, which enabled them to see Jesus' birth, mission, miracles, His betrayal, His arrest, the manner of His trial and the nature of His death and resurrection as the means of identifying Him with the prophecies—to recognise Jesus as truly their Messiah, the Son of God. To them, at that time, the Old Testament Scriptures were very much up to date, even though these predictions concerning Jesus' first advent were recorded hundreds of years before. The light travelling down the ages shone upon this advent; the voice spoke and the light clarified.

This same voice still speaks clearly and truthfully to us today; the light reveals and shineth more and more unto the perfect day. A few students of the Scriptures, godly men, have lived ahead of their generation; one of these who wrote about eighty years ago foresaw the things we are witnessing today in the distress of nations—the present perilous times and end of the age. He was at that time referred to scoffingly as a prophet of woe. Living and preaching ahead of the times he was much misunderstood and persecuted by the generation then living, but his opponents' booklets written in opposition to his teachings make strange reading today, now that we are witnessing events he foresaw in the prophecies pertaining to the end of the age.

As late as 1913 the Paris Peace Conference went down in history as a World Peace Conference, and later still, in 1920, the League of Nations was hailed in some quarters as "the political expression of God's Kingdom on earth." These events, it was said, made it almost impossible for one nation to go to war against another. Still later, in 1928, there was the Kellogg Peace Pact and still more recently it was announced "Peace for our time" — but this was short lived. Now we have the Atlantic Pact, but all these fail to bring about peace and security. But the light shining down the ages is focused upon our day, the end of the age, and the voice behind us announces — "Then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." (Matt. 24:21, 22.)

Godly men have heard the voice of prophecy in advance of the majority of people, and have announced its message and its implications. The prophetic voice of the inspired Word of God is still very much up to date; events are rapidly coming to pass, one upon another. The voice behind us, the voice of prophecy and the voice of woe are more meaningful today than ever—not peace and safety, but destruction is announced—and now mankind is truly fearful of it.

Some of these prophecies are a thousand and more years old. Take one as an example --Daniel 12:1-4 "At that time shall Michael stand up and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even

to that same time.... Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." This prophecy is approximately

2550 years old. He would be a foolish man who would venture to say that there is no evidence of fulfilment. It is the increase of light and knowledge that brings about the trouble with which this age closes.

This voice of prophecy concerning our day began fulfilling about 100 years in the past though not so distinct then as 'nowadays. Nevertheless, it was heard in the distance, in the end of the 19th century; it has now become louder, and mankind seem to sense the possibility of destruction. A piece of history may illustrate this. During the Indian Mutiny in 1857, at the siege of Lucknow, when the few British in India were attacked by Indians many were massacred; a remnant held out in the town of Lucknow, but the position became hopeless. A Scottish girl among them had a dream; she heard a sound which others could not hear—the sound of bagpipes of the Scottish Regiment approaching in the distance. "Can ye no hear them?" she said. "The bagpipes, can ye no hear them? the Campbells are coming." Sure enough later they arrived and great was the joy.

For several decades the end of the age has been announced; some have heard the announcement and recognised the signs of the end, but the majority of professing Christians are dull of hearing. The announcement was not that the end was coming, but that we are already in the end, and are now approaching the final climax. A few all over the world have heard the glad tidings of the near approach of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, and dissolution of the old order is under way. The voice of Scripture has in our day become nearer and louder. Zeph. 1:14 states—"The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty men shall cry there bitterly."

The second advent of Christ and the end of this evil dispensation are being announced; signs of the second advent of Christ are present, as we read in Luke 21:26—"Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken." This has meant an increase of joy and gladness to the defenders of the faith. Luke 21:31—"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

To others it is the voice of alarm. Joel 2:1-3 reads — "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them." This prophecy reminds us of similar words from the Apostle Paul in 1 Thes. 5:3—"Sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall not escape."

The voice of prophecy is behind us in the sense that these things were predicted hundreds of years ago; nevertheless, it is very much up to date. Its warning is very clear—"This is the way, walk ye, in it," i.e., take heed to its light. Zephaniah 2:3 gives sound advice,—"Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

Those who do stand on higher ground are represented in the Scriptures as standing upon a sea of glass mingled with fire (with judgments). Read Rev. 15:2-4. The spiritual • vision of those who have gotten the victory over the beast and his image (counterfeit Christianity) is very clear as to the events transpiring in the world today and the final outcome. These are standing at the very end of this age and looking beyond to the glorious Millennial Day—the light shineth more and more unto that perfect day. The celestial city is in view, as the poet has stated it:

"Come all ye saints to Pisgah's mountain,
Come see the view beyond the tide;
Millennial Canaan is before us,
Soon we'll sing on the other side."

Here in Rev. 15 these are represented as having their harps, i.e., the Word of God, and they sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb—the harmony of the Law and the prophets and the Gospel—saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty Thou art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgements are made manifest."

Passover Memorial, 1958

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, agreeing exactly with the Easter season this year. While the Lord did not request that the Remembrance of His death be kept on the exact date each anniversary, the brethren arrange their services as near as possible, in keeping with the spirit and sacredness of the occasion.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne —Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Thursday, 3rd April, at 8 p.m., at 100 Harbourne Street, Wembley, W.A.

Sydney.-Thursday, 3rd April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

Adelaide Easter Convention.

This announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren are to hold their usual Convention this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 4th to April 7th, in the Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends who may be able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

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Wholesome Counsel.

(Prov. 16:22, 23).

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Prov. 16:25.

IT is a solemn warning against self-deception —against pursuing a course of conduct which is radically wrong, being opposed to the spirit and intent of the divine law, and yet which may be made to seem right by a line of false reasoning, suggested by the will of the flesh, and apparently founded upon the Word of God, yet denying its fundamental principles of righteousness. The delusions of Satan also greatly help along such deceptions, and thus the blinded one is urged along in a course which seems to him to be right, but the end of which is death.

Christians should above all things guard themselves against the folly of this way. To do this, let us ever remember that, even though through Christ we have a reckoned standing of justification before God, the human heart which we still have is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9), and that it requires constant watching and purging to enable us to put into practice the Apostle Paul's rule, “In simplicity and godly sincerity, have your conversation in the world.” (2 Con 1:12). To do this requires humility, sobriety, godliness. If the heart be puffed up with pride, or ambitious for vain glory, or if it be selfish, or in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world, then beware, for there is great danger of getting into that way that seemeth right to a man, because blinded by his own perverse will or fleshly mind.

The best safeguard which a Christian can have against the snares of Satan, is that understanding which is here (vs. 22) described as a “well-spring of life unto him that hath it.” Such understanding is not merely that of the head, but of the heart. specially; for, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness,” and “out of the heart are the issues of life.” If the heart be wrong, the head will seek to justify it, and in so doing will pervert judgment and truth. Therefore, take heed, and “keep thy heart with all diligence.”

Not only will the “wise and understanding heart” keep the feet in the paths of righteousness, but also “the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips” (verse 23), so that he shall speak forth “words of truth and soberness,” words of wisdom, of kindness and of love. How important that the fountain should be sweet, that thus the stream that issues from it may be healthful and refreshing to all within the range of its current! Truly, “pleasant words (of wisdom, of counsel and of loving kindness) are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones (in that they refresh and comfort and stimulate courage, and thus fortify the soul and strengthen it to noble deeds).” Verse 24.

How different is the picture of the ungodly man! (verses 27-29). “An ungodly man diggeth up evil (apparently finding a morbid satisfaction in searching for it), and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife, and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good. He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips, he bringeth evil to pass.” Thus, as Isaiah says, “The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” (Isa. 57:20, 21.)

But blessed is the man that hath learned the right ways of the Lord, and walketh therein with a perfect heart. Such a one, unlike the wicked, who go about digging up evil, delights himself in doing good, and in speaking forth the words of truth and soberness. He is slow to anger, and studies carefully how to rule his own spirit, which is surely a great work and worthy of the ambition and effort of every Christian. (verse 32.) How blessed (verse 31) are the closing years of a long life, devoted to this most worthy end of ruling one's own spirit in harmony with the principles and precepts of the Word of God, when, as Mr. Whittier has beautifully expressed it:—

“All the jarring notes of life Seem blending in a psalm,

And all the angles of the strife Are rounding into calm;”

and when the hallowed influences of ripened Christian graces are manifest to every beholder. Truly “the hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness.” But if not, it is but a monument of folly and its ripened evil fruitage is most undesirable.

The statement of verse 33 is to the effect that God’s overruling power takes cognizance of even those things which men may regard as mere chance, and that nothing can come to pass without His knowledge and permission, and that eventually all things will be overruled to the accomplishment of His purposes.

Pilgrim Way Ended.

Towards the close of February our dear elderly Sister Blaby of Melbourne finished the pilgrim way after a long life in appreciation of the Lord’s wonderful plan of salvation through the sacrifice of our dear Saviour.

Our Sister Blaby had lived in the country of Victoria for a considerable time, and after coming to Melbourne to live with her daughter and family for the past sixteen or more years our dear Sister had not contacted many of the brethren on account of being a semi-invalid. However those who knew her best can testify to her gentle and loving disposition, and sincere appreciation of the truths of God’s Word.

Though having reached the age of 961 years and the earthly vessel becoming weary and worn out, yet there was the same spirit of devotion and patient submission to the Lord in evidence, and which was lovely to see. While almost too weak to speak in the last days of the earthly life, the words — “Our Father” — gave evidence of the hope and trust our dear Sister held of being taken “Home” to be forever with the Lord.

Sincere sympathy is extended to all the bereaved members in the family circle as the life of a devoted ‘Christian mother, grandmother and great grandmother is brought to a close, and the words of the prophet seem so fitting in these days of the harvest of the Gospel Age—”They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” (Mal. 3:17.)

A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.—Prov. 29:23.

A humble heart is a vessel of all graces. It doth better the soul and make it holy, for the soul is never fitter for God than when it is humbled. It is a fundamental grace that gives strength to all other graces. So much humility, so much grace; for, according to the measure of humiliation is the measure of other graces, because a humble heart hath in it a spiritual emptiness. Humility emptieth the heart for God to fill it. If the heart be emptied of temporal things, then it must needs be filled with spiritual things; for nature abhorreth emptiness, grace much more.—Sibbes.

Building-Praying—Keeping

(Jude 20, 21).

(Convention Address)

THIS text from the Apostle Jude conveys an idea which is common among the New Testament writers. It is used by Paul and also by Peter. This great and important work of gaining a character similar to that of Christ's is likened to the work of producing a building. When the construction of a vast building is planned, a great deal of care and attention must be given to the foundation. Sometimes great concrete pillars are required and they go down to the solid rock, in some cases many feet below ground level. This is necessary to support the great weight of the building.

Now, our building has a firm foundation. (1 Cor. 3:9-11.) Yes, faith in the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus Christ is all-important. Then we must see to it that our faith is of the right kind. We must have a faith like that of our father Abraham. We must have an obedient faith—a faith which leads on to full and complete surrender of heart and mind to God. (Eph. 1:13.)

Our Lord said that those who heard His words, and obeyed them not, may be likened to a man who built his house upon the sand, a building which will not withstand the strain and testings. How different is the case of the man who hears the Master's words and exercises obedient faith in them. (Matt. 7:24-27.) He is likened to a man who builds upon the rock foundation. "On Christ the solid rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand." The Apostle Peter makes it very clear that this matter of building refers to the development in ourselves of a Christ-like character. (See 2 Pet. 1:5-7, Rev. Ver.)

The development or building up of the Christ-like character in the members of the body of Christ is a very important work. It requires nearly 2,000 years to accomplish this great work of changing the warped and marred, and more or less ignoble and selfish hearts and minds of the believers into the pure, unselfish, lovely and lovable qualities which are displayed in the glorious Head of the Body of Christ. Of course, as far as the individual members are concerned, this great work of transforming or building up a Christ-like character must take place within the limits of one's lifetime; it may be 10 or 20 years, or even 60 or 70 years, as the case may be.

The building up of the Christ-like character in the New Creation is said by Paul to be the work of God. (See Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13; 1 Cor. 3:9.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is said to be the "beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14.) Our Heavenly Father is the supreme Architect of the Universe, but in the accomplishment of His gracious designs He is pleased to use various agencies. The Heavenly Father's chief agent in the development of the church is His well-beloved and only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. By His faithfulness in taking man's nature, and laying down His life in sacrifice, even unto the cruel death of the cross, our gracious Redeemer has gained the privilege to be Head of the New Creation: He is also the grand Example provided by the Father as a pattern for His body members. (Eph. 1:20-23; 2:20-22.)

As God's Foreman, or right-hand man, our Lord Jesus has a very special relationship toward the New Creation as a whole, and toward each member in particular. (See Eph. 5:23.) Christ is the Head of the church, being Himself the Saviour of the Body. (Verses 25-27.) God also has other means which He is using to build up the Body of Christ. (See Eph. 4:11-16.) Here we have a list of agencies which God is using in His work of building up His New Creation. (See also Eph. 4:4-6.)

In 1 Cor. 12:12-27 the Apostle shows that all the various members of the Body need each other. It will not do •for one member to say to another—"I do not need your help." The hand cannot say to the foot, "I have no need of you." All Christians have frailties and weaknesses of the flesh, but, notwithstanding these, the Lord has graciously covered the defects and imperfections with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and made us scented in the Beloved. God loves His children because He sees in our hearts the desire to do His will. He sent His Son to die for us, even while we were yet sinners. (See Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4-10; 1 John 4:7-12.) If God so loved us, we ought to love one another. In 2 Thes. 3:5 Paul prays that the Lord may direct our hearts into the love of God. We surely need divine help to direct our hearts into an understanding and appreciation of this great love of God.

The Scriptures show that the church is God's "workmanship"; she is God's building, God's "temple." This is true of the collective aspect; then it is true also that each individual member is a "temple of the holy spirit." (1 Cor. 6:19.) There is a work of preparation to be done in each individual member of the New Creation, and the Apostle Paul shows that we each have the privilege of co-operating with God in this matter. (See Phil. 2:12.) Yes, with God's help, and *by His* grace, and under the direction and guidance of His holy spirit through the Word, we are to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," i.e., with great carefulness. We are to be very careful to see that our efforts are in

line with the directions of God's Word. (See 2 Pet. 1:5-7.)

Let us keep in mind the word of wisdom in Psa. 127. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." What an amount of wisdom, patience, faith, love and humility of heart and mind is required, and we find we get the necessary lessons and disciplines in our day by day experiences. How much waiting on God is needed to bring us into line with the requirements of the great Divine Architect. It surely takes time and much of the Lord's grace to develop in our hearts the meekness and gentleness and Christ-like love necessary to qualify us to become associates of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our text speaks of "praying in the holy spirit," and it may truly be said that there can be no real, proper building of Christ-like character without prayer. Prayer is one of those God-given privileges designed to assist the pilgrims in the narrow way. Almost the last command given by our Lord to His disciples was— "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." (Matt. 26:41.) Again He said in Luke 18:1-8—"Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Our Lord's example provides us with a very forcible lesson along this line. He was a man of prayer, and let us remember, too, that He was an absolutely perfect Man. He had an absolutely perfect mind and heart; He also enjoyed the fullness of God's holy spirit, yet He saw the need of spending much time alone with God.

Our Lord gave His disciples some directions concerning prayer. (See Matt. 6:5-15.) Also in Matt. 7:7-11 Christ urged His disciples to earnest perseverance in prayer. Note the-thrice repeated exhortation — "ask," "seek," and "knock." Observe how He uses words which mean almost the same thing, and each time repeats the promise so distinctly,— "Ye shall receive; ye shall find; it shall be opened unto you." Our Lord desires that we grasp this lesson — "Everyone that asketh receiveth." Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give the holy spirit to those who ask than are earthly parents to give good things to their children. (See Luke 11:13.)

In Mark 11:24 we have another encouraging exhortation from the Master, — "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." In order that our prayers shall be acceptable to God, we must come before Him with reverence — "Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name." Our first thought is to be not a selfish one concerning our own or other's need, but "Thy Name, Thy Kingdom, Thy will be done."

Then follows the requests for supplies, for mercy and grace, and protection and guidance, etc. For our prayers to be acceptable to God they must be to His glory, in full surrender to His will, in full assurance of faith, in the name of Jesus and with earnest perseverance.

Our Lord gave us some very important and definite promises in respect of prayer. (See John 14:13,14; 15:7,16; 16:23,24,26,27.) In regard to these wonderful promises of our Lord, we need to keep in mind that they are made to His disciples; we should say, to His fully consecrated footstep followers. These, having submitted their own wills to God, and having accepted the guidance of His holy spirit, have learned that there are certain blessings which the Lord is willing to bestow upon us. In this connection, see John 5:14, 15.

Our prayers to be acceptable to God must express reverence for Him, and submission to His will. We must be abiding in Christ, and our prayers must be offered in full assurance of faith. (See Heb. 11:6.) Then when the answer seems to tarry, we must have perseverance; for a lesson in perseverance see our Lord's words in Luke 18:1-8. We must not allow the seeming delay in the answer to our prayers to cause us to lose faith; the very delay helps to exercise our faith and patience, and makes the answer more sweet and precious.

The Apostle Paul, in his beautiful letters to the various churches, has recorded some fine examples of prayer. (See Eph. 3:14-21; Col. 1:9-11; 1 Thes. 3:9-13; 2 Thes. 1:11-13.) Then, this grand servant of God, the great Apostle Paul, shows his humility and lowliness of mind when he earnestly requests the brethren to remember him in their prayers. (See Rom. 15:30, Eph. 6:18, 19; Col. 4:2-4; 2 Thes. 3:1,2.) It seems impossible to over-estimate the value and importance of prayer. Let us remember the Apostle's injunction to—"Pray without ceasing." We can keep our hearts in the attitude of prayer, and cultivate an attitude of mind which is dependent upon the Lord. (See Phil. 4:6.)

As we give earnest heed to the Scriptural injunction to "build ourselves up in our most holy faith," and make full use of our privileges of prayer, we will find that this very exercise will tend, by God's grace, to "keep us" in the "love of God." As children of God we do want to have more of the true spirit of sonship. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Example and Elder Brother, said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." We want to have a larger measure of the spirit of Christ, the spirit of sonship, the spirit of willing obedience. We have some wonderful promises from our Lord in John 14:21,23; also John 15:10. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," etc. Here we see that the spirit of obedience is necessary in order to the enjoyment of the love of God and Christ.

In this connection let us look at our Lord's words in Matt. 5:43-45. Our Lord tells us to "love our enemies, and do good

to them that hate us that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” Also in 1 Pet. 1:14 we are urged “as obedient children” to co-operate with the Lord in exercising ourselves in the ways of holiness, in all our manner of life.. Again in Eph. 5:1,2 we have the exhortation to be “followers of God, as dear children,” etc.

The latter part of Jude 21 has these words —’looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” If we would enjoy the blessing of mercy from the Lord, we will need to cultivate and exercise this quality in all our intercourse with our brethren and with our fellow creatures in the world around us. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (See also Col. 3:12-14; Phil. 2:1,2; also “Manna” text and comment December 14.)

May the Lord help us and bless us each one and prosper the work of His grace in our hearts, and cause us “to increase and abound in love, one toward another, and toward all men,” that thus we may be developed in all the graces of His spirit and “be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.”

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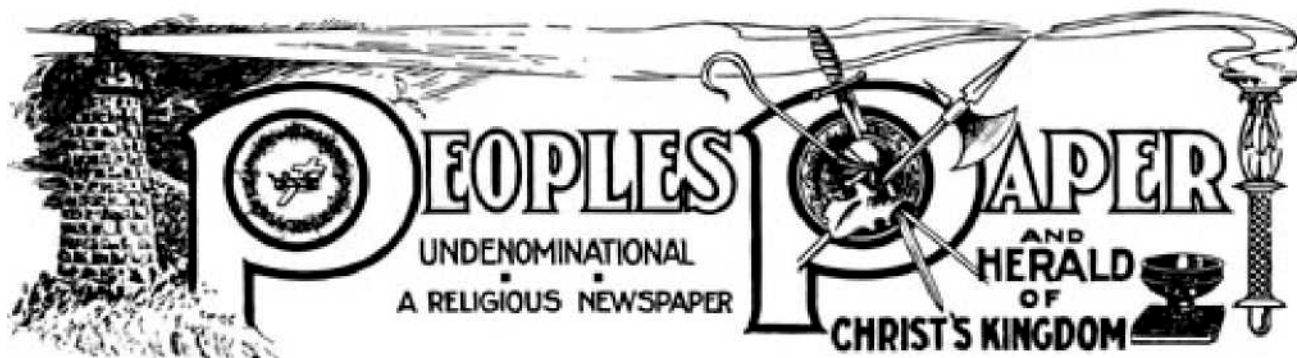
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The Binding of Satan.

THE vision of the conflict between good and evil in the Book of Revelation comes at length to a time when a mighty angel is seen descending from heaven with a great chain in his hands, and having arrived on earth he takes forcible hold of the great red dragon which alone survives of the enemies of righteousness, binds him with a chain, casts him into the abyss, and seals the entrance with the sign of Divine authority that the nations should be deceived no more throughout the thousand years—the Millennium. Ardent longing for that day has led many to watch earnestly the signs of the times, and the questions “Is Satan now bound ? Is he in process of being bound? Is he yet to be bound?” are common.

What is this binding? Quite evidently it is closely connected with the restraint of evil which is a feature of the Millennial Age. Revelation 20:1 indicates clearly that its fulfilment is at the commencement of that Age. This does not necessarily mean, though, that the binding must take place simultaneously with the commencement of the Second Advent. The dragon of Rev. 20 is apparently the last enemy of righteousness to be dealt with after the other great enemies, the “Beast” and the “False Prophet” have been cast into the Lake of Fire. Now, since Rev. 19 dealing with the warfare between the Rider on the white horse and these two enemies, is evidently a phase of the Second Advent, the binding of the great red dragon, coming next in order, would seem to belong to a later phase of that Advent. That binding also coincides with the commencement of the reign of the saints, and since that reign does not commence until the saints have been “changed” and the marriage has been completed, and the Lord must return “for” His saints before the marriage feast and His subsequent revelation to the world “with” His saints, it would seem clear that the “binding of Satan” is to occur after all these things, at the time of the establishment of Christ’s kingdom in power in the earth. That time has not yet come.

From that time onward, the practice of evil shall be restrained. “Nothing shall hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain.” (Isa. 11:9.) Men will not be prevented from thinking evil thoughts or harbouring evil desires; some will yield “feigned obedience” (Psa. 18:44, marg.); but the power to inflict evil or harm, physical, mental or moral, upon another will be lost. We do not know how. Divine power will be exercised here in a fashion of which we have little, if any, conception today. But it will be true that although a man may formulate an intention to do evil to another, he will find himself physically or mentally powerless to put that intention into effect. That restraint will operate throughout the Millennial Age.

A little thought suggests that the same restraint must of necessity be placed upon Satan. He must be rendered powerless to influence the minds of men by evil suggestions. Hence the “binding of Satan” will be a restraint upon his power, at present enjoyed by Divine permission, of instilling evil thoughts and influences into the minds of men. His personal freedom of movement need not be limited any more than is the personal freedom of evilly disposed men on earth during that Age, but he will find himself quite powerless to reach men’s minds in any way.

A glance at daily events should make it clear that the binding of Satan has not yet taken place, and is not yet even in progress. The powers of evil have greater control today in earth’s affairs than they have ever had, except, perhaps, in the early days at the period of the Deluge. Many of the devices and acts of certain classes of men are characterised by a cold-blooded ferocity and disregard for human suffering which can quite literally be said to be devil-inspired. The fearful experiences through which so many of earth’s peoples must pass today are evidences that the archangel of evil is still the god of this world, and that his subjects still render him service. It is sometimes suggested that these facts are the results of Satan’s struggles to resist his binding, and are evidences therefore that the binding is actually in progress, but this idea is built upon a purely human conception of the binding, as though the Most High God finds it necessary to wage war and use the heavenly equivalent of physical force to achieve His end of rendering Satan powerless. Nothing of the sort, God is always master of the situation, and when in His wisdom the time comes for Satan to be bound and

his influence to be restrained, one word from the Almighty and it will be done. It will not require battalions of angels drawn up in martial array, archangels in command of detachments and some spiritual equivalent of carnal weapons, with which to wage an invisible conflict with the hosts of Satan in the fashion in which fallen man wages war, today.

Against this view it is sometimes argued that the 12th chapter of Revelation does contain a very vivid description of war in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting with the devil and his angels, resulting in the devil being cast out of heaven to the earth, and that this surely constitutes a detailed description of the binding or partial binding of Satan at the end of this Age.

It is suggested in this connection that Revelation 12 has nothing in common with Revelation 20, except that the same red dragon is a figure in the symbolism. The time of fulfilment of Rev. 12 is clearly much earlier than the end of the Gospel Age—the anal verses show that much, the picture closing with the dragon going forth to make war with the remnant of the woman's seed, which is quite opposite to the idea of binding and restriction. Whatever the teaching behind this symbolism of war in heaven between Michael and the dragon, it has no connection with the descent of the angel to bind Satan at the commencement of the thousand years. By some this vision in Rev. 12 has been made the basis of a view of the "binding" which declares that at some specified time in history the Lord Jesus Christ did engage in combat with Satan and expel him from heaven, in consequence of which the latter has come down to earth and is continuing the warfare against his opponent with this earth as the battleground. Whilst this view springs from a very sincere desire to explain the apocalyptic imagery of the Scriptures in terms of present-day events and expectations, it is none the less a form of interpretation which debases rather than enhances our understanding of the spiritual world to which we aspire and which we hope one day to enter. And Christians who believe in the propriety of war and conflict between spiritual beings for the suppression of evil forces can hardly complain if the powers of this world demand similar services in earthly armies, for the principle is the same.

It is important to realise that God is omnipotent. "He spake, and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast." Although He allows His ends to be achieved by means of orderly development, "first the grain, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear," and although He permits the continuance of evil up to a predetermined limit for a wise purpose, yet -when God's time to act against evil and evildoers has come, there is none that can resist His will. The fortunes of war—in earthly or spiritual realm—have no place in the Divine order. He brought the evil of the antediluvian world to an end instantly without calling upon the help of Noah. He destroyed the Cities of the Plain without using His heavenly messengers other than to convey the news to Abraham of what He himself was about to do. When the hosts of this world converge upon the Holy Land in the last great day of trouble it is to be God Himself, alone, who will act. As in the days of Jehoshaphat, "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle"; "For the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chron. 20:15-17). So with the binding of Satan. The vision is a picture of the power of God operating from the seat of His government to end, in one instant of time, every scrap of power and influence Satan may possess over men and spirit.

But, one may ask, is it not likely that Satan foresees this catastrophe, and is making preparations to resist his fate; and does this not imply something very much like war between him and the forces which will effect his binding? It may very reasonably be asked in reply whether Satan, a fallen being separated from God by millenniums of sin, really believes in his heart that he will be bound.

Consider man. Men today, in general, do not believe in God. They have lost this knowledge of God, and with it any vital belief in the power or at least the care of God. How common it is to hear—"If God does exist, He either does not care or has not the power to alter things, or He would have done so and put the world right long ago." That sentiment fairly expresses the considered judgment of the natural man who has been separated from God's presence by sin for many thousands of years.

Yet man at the beginning knew God, walked with God, talked with God, and believed in the power of God. That is clear from the Genesis story. What has wrought the difference? The separation wrought by sin! "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over . . ." (Rom. 1:28.) So that today man does not believe that God can or will put things right!

Is it not reasonable to think that the same principle must hold good in the case of Satan? He, too, had the privilege of knowing God, walking with Him, talking with Him, and appreciating His mighty power. He, too, fell into sin, and since nothing that is of sin can stand in the Divine Presence, he, too, from that day must have been banished, separated from God just as truly as was Adam. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil!" For thousands of years, then, Satan has been as far from God as has man, and through all that time has enjoyed full liberty to work out his evil designs. It is true he witnessed the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and knew that He at least had escaped his power—but it is in the highest degree unlikely that Satan has any nearer access to the resurrected Christ than has man, and two thousand years have passed since the Lord passed out of man's, and Satan's ken into the heaven of heavens from which He had come. Would it be surprising therefore, if Satan, like man, blinded by sin, has concluded that God

cannot or will not complete His work on earth, and that Satan's rebellion will, therefore, continue its apparently successful course?

If this be the right conclusion, the great enemy of man will be busy with his plans, continuing still to wage war against all that is holy and true and lovely on earth, unbelieving until the hour has struck. In the heyday of his power, attendant angels carrying out his dark orders, men on earth busy about his fallen designs, the cry of his suffering prisoners going up to heaven, his powers will vanish as one snaps off the electric light. Like a certain modern dictator whose edifice of twenty years vanished overnight, he will stand bereft of power, of influence, of servants, of an empire—alone. Too late he will realise that the omnipotence of God has waited for this moment; that right has prevailed, and as the shades of the abyss close around him he will enter into the terrible solitude of an evil mind left entirely alone with its evil.

Can one picture that lonely spirit through all the thousand years of earth's jubilee? Free to roam through the vast spaces of God's creation; free to observe, to meditate, to scheme, but powerless to affect or influence in any way the mind or the heart of the weakest or humblest of God's creatures. A being apart, seeing all, hearing all, unable to interfere. The seal of Divine authority marks him out and sets him apart like Cain—an outcast, an exile, one upon whom is the judgment of God.

Perchance his presence will linger around this earth until the knowledge of man's happiness under the Messianic kingdom, and the renovation of the once desolate earth, becomes unendurable, and drives him off to far recesses of our universe, where, other worlds in the making, other instances of Divine creative energy, recall to his dark mind the earlier history of our own planet when, a happy and righteous being, he may have been one of the morning stars who "sang together" (Job 38:7). He may translate himself from this material universe which glitters around us every night into that spiritual sphere which is beyond the scope of human sense or understanding, and wander through the celestial land as alone and as remote from the presence and the knowledge of God as when he presided over earth's destinies. He may come back, out of eternity into our realm of time and space, to find the thousand years of restitution still in progress; but wherever he goes and whatever he does, Satan will be bound, altogether unable to interfere further in the plans of God for His creation.

Of the loosing again at the end of the Age we cannot write; we know so little. It would seem that the thousand years of opportunity does not profit the Evil One, for a time is to come, when, freed from the restraints for a "little season," he attempts once more to deceive and enslave humanity. There is apparently no repentance, nothing but an irrevocable determination to fight against God.

And that determination, in God's due time, brings about the only possible sequel. "I will bring' thee to ashes upon the earth . . . and never shalt thou be any more." (Ezek. 28:18,19.) (From "Bible Students Monthly"—1944.)

The right temperature is maintained in the home by warm hearts and not hot heads.

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Convention News.

THOSE who were privileged to meet together at the Easter Convention in Adelaide received a rich blessing from the Lord. It is always good to meet together with those of "like precious faith," and we found the four days of fellowship a very happy and blessed occasion. True to His promise the Lord was "in the midst," and the blessing of His gracious spirit was much in evidence in the hearts of His people.

It was a pleasure to welcome to our Convention a number of brethren and sisters from Victoria, and one sister from Perth, W.A.; also a brother from a country centre in S.A.

The portions of Scripture chosen for our Bible Studies were much appreciated and proved helpful and profitable; these were as follows—Eph. 1:3-10; Psa. 37:1-11; 1 Cor. 13:1-8, and Rev. 20:1-6.

The topics of the addresses given by various brethren were "The Kindness, Humility and Patience of Love"; "Children of the Promise"; "Paul's Conversion and After"; "Let This Mind be in You"; "Blood Atonement was Necessary"; "Will We Know Our Loved Ones in the Resurrection Day?"; "Heirs of God", "At the Turning of an Age," and "Retrospection."

The hour devoted to "Hymns We Like and Why" was well spent, and so also was the time taken for the Praise and Testimony session. It was a pleasure to receive messages of Greeting from Classes and individual brethren, and at the close of the Convention the greeting sent to the brethren is found in Psa. 37:3-7.

The Convention closed with the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," and "God be with you till we meet again," followed by the closing prayer of thanks and praise to God for all blessings received. So ended another very profitable and blessed Convention. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered to observe the Memorial of Christ's death on the anniversary of its institution, in response to our Lord's request that this celebration be continued throughout the Gospel Age. The attendance was very good, though some members were hindered from attending by sickness and other causes.

Preceding the Memorial two studies in John 12:20-28 were very helpful in impressing the full devotion of our Lord Jesus to the will of His Heavenly Father. At no time did He consider any deviation from the supreme purpose for which He came into the world—to give His life a ransom for the fallen human race. While so doing, He also commenced the calling of a band of disciples to walk in His steps of sacrifice during this Gospel Age, as He declared—"If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." (John 12:26.)

It was a solemn remembrance as the appropriate hymns were sung, the prayers were offered up to God and the Scripture readings covered the eventful and tragic last hours of our Lord's life on earth. The address also brought clearly to our attention the great condescension of our Lord Jesus in becoming the "Lamb of God" to take away the sin

of the world, special emphasis being made of the favoured position of the "church of the firstborns" who are privileged to keep this Memorial, not only in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice, but also as signifying their willingness to suffer with Him, if so be that they may reign with Him.

The emblems, picturing our Lord's broken body and shed blood, were partaken of with thankful hearts for the gift of our dear Redeemer, and with prayer that our loving Father in heaven may bless and sustain all His dear children world-wide as they seek to "keep the feast" throughout the earthly pilgrimage, to His praise and by His grace. *Geelong, Vic.*

A small group of friends met together, as in previous years, to again obey our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me." With the knowledge of what was accomplished that night so long ago, there is everything to rejoice the heart of the Christian—Hallelujah! What a Saviour. However, as we gather on such occasion to remember and meditate upon the cost to our dear Lord, it is becoming that we meet with solemnity.

Four suitable hymns were sung, prayer was offered, and Scripture passages were read. One brother conducted the meeting generally while three others shared the readings from Psalm 22 and Matt. 27:27-50, and another gave the

discourse preceding the partaking of the emblems. In the discourse we were reminded that we have not yet “resisted unto blood striving against sin” and of the constant need to “consider him.” (Heb. 12:3,4.) Surely we discern from our Lord’s words to His disciples, just prior to the culmination of His great sacrifice, and as they are enlarged upon in the Apostolic writings, that it is the “inner circle” of those who appreciate His ransom sacrifice who are especially precious to Him just now—those who see the privilege of “sharing” His experiences, both now and in the kingdom.

In a pre-memorial study in John 12 we saw the “corn of wheat falling into the ground” to bring forth a fruitage in due time, to be a beautiful illustration. Surely it is a privilege to be “planted together in the likeness of his death,” and know already that we have been raised “to newness of life.” Just as the grain of wheat is not actually dead when sown, but continues to house and nourish the life of the plant until it assimilates its own life from the soil, so our “old man” is sown unto death, though still housing the “new creature” walking in newness of life. When our consecration “to be dead with him” is consummated in actual death of the human, the Lord will raise us up too with new bodies to share His glory. May we never forget the throne of grace to renew our strength, that we may come off conquerors through Him that loved us and gave His life for us, to participate with Him in the joy of drinking the cup anew with Him in the kingdom.

Adelaide.

In accordance with our Saviour’s request, “Do this in remembrance of me,” the Adelaide Class kept the Memorial of Christ’s death.

This service is always a blessed one because it reminds us that all our hopes of future life and blessing are dependent upon the ransom sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It also becomes an occasion to revive and renew our consecration to be dead with Christ. Only if we “suffer with him shall we reign with him”; only if we “be dead with Christ shall we live with him.”

When we consider the great love of God which prompted Him to give His only-begotten Son for our redemption, and also when we think of Christ’s great love which endured the cross and despised the shame, we feel constrained to bend before Him in love and adoration, and we say in the words of the Psalmist —”What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?”

Gladly we yield our hearts to Him in grateful appreciation, realising that we are not our own, but we belong to Christ. We want to be found “abiding in Him” more trustfully, and allowing Him to “abide in us” more fully, so that we may daily grow into His blessed likeness. “Thanks be to God, for His unspeakable Gift.”

Perth.

A group of ten brethren gathered together on the evening of the 3rd of April, to remember our Lord’s death and admonition to partake of the emblems as He showed the apostles.

With appropriate hymns and an address we had our minds exercised in that great sacrifice of our Lord’s, culminating at Calvary. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13.) “Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.” Our Lord’s sacrificial offering was perfect, satisfying God’s justice, but when our Lord invites His followers to sacrifice with Him they realise the grace by which they stand, and wish that their offering were not so small.

By the service we realised again what it is to be “dead with, Christ,” and that our sacrifice must be on the altar at all times, never to be taken back. May we be ever ready to have our bodies presented as living • sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service.

Sydney.

Although the largest city in Australia the attendance was not large; however, it was a privilege indeed to attend the Memorial Service held in Sydney.

The reading of suitable Scripture by the chairman and a lucid address by another brother contributed to the solemnity of the occasion.

Several brethren travelled long distances to be present, and doubtless were well repaid, as with others present they meditated upon the antitypical Lamb whose sacrificial death will deliver the “groaning creation” from their pitiable plight.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,
And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;
And counting present life and all things loss,
We find in death to self the life of God.

Queensland

The Lord, through His goodness and mercy, gave us strength to travel 127 miles to hold this sacred feast with our brethren. There were eleven of us who took the emblems, two brethren conducting the service. We used a special tape recording for the talk on the Memorial that was received from the “Dawn” and which was enjoyed by all. In the afternoon we played a tape on “God’s Great Gift”, or as Paul puts it, “God’s unspeakable Gift.” It is a wonderful talk and just the thing to direct our thoughts to what was to take place at night.

Pilgrim Way Ended.

Word has been received of the passing of our elderly Sister Haynes of Christchurch, New Zealand, some weeks ago, after having been laid aside for some months with a dread disease.

Our dear Sister Haynes had corresponded for many years, having appreciated the truth for at least thirty years, and had first been contacted through our late Brother Nicholson during one of his pilgrim visits to New Zealand.

Sister Haynes gave evidence of a truly Christian life, having developed largely of the Christian graces, and while somewhat isolated in New Zealand was always cheerful and ready to serve the cause of truth at every opportunity.

In recent years our Sister Haynes had resided at a nursing home, and when unable to write herself had received assistance in doing this, so that she may continue to assist in the work, as unto the Lord. With the trials and pains of the earthly way in the past, we can rejoice that our dear Sister Haynes will have entered into her reward, by the Lord’s *grace*. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (daily dying) of his saints.” (Psa. 116:15.)

“Rest in the Lord.”

“If Thou art mine, Eternal God,
Let fraud or malice, storm or flood,
Bear all besides away.

The soul’s best treasure lies too deep
For spoiler’s arm or fortune’s sweep,
Or time’s more sure decay!

“Death, that all meaner bliss destroys,
And if his stroke can sever
Robs not the spirit of its joys,

The fleshly zeal, ‘tis but to bring
The living waters from their spring,
And bid them gush for ever.”

—Selected.

Pleasing God.

(Convention Address)

IN the natural world if one loves other persons or has high regard for them, there is always a desire to please them. We observe the same with a child and its parents; when love is genuine there is always a desire to please. Conversely, we notice how children will often shrink from strangers. A person may try all kinds of persuasion to gain a young child's confidence, but until it has learned something of the person, has gotten to know their manner etc., it will exhibit varying degrees of aloofness.

There is a kind of creed taught in the professing churches that "all men are brothers, and that all are children of God," but that is not so, as yet. We can look forward to the day when it will be true, but many changes will need to occur. Proportionally few people now regard God as their loving Heavenly Father and seek to please Him. A somewhat greater number may regard Him as the great supreme Being and seek to pay allegiance to Him, but it could hardly be said that they are motivated by love. They seek to serve Him and hope to please Him because they fear certain consequences to themselves if they do not. These are well described in Isa. 29:13 as people who draw near the Lord with their mouths; the lips honor Him but the heart is far from Him. The verse further reveals that this condition of feigned worship arises from false philosophies taught by men whom the following verses imply ought to have known better.

Further verses in Isa. 29, as well as other passages in God's Word, suggest that He looks down with a certain amount of pitying regard upon those who are wrongly taught regarding His character, and in verses 14-19 of this same chapter they go on to tell how, after the Lord has caused upheavals that will uncover the falsity of man-made theories and doctrines, men will have their ears and eyes opened so that in a general way they will rejoice in the Lord as they had never done before, verse 24 showing that then, those who had previously erred shall come to a proper understanding.

The result will be, that, beginning to know the true God, men will desire to please Him as never before—to please Him because they love Him, not because they fear Him. That will be a wonderful time, the culmination of God's purpose or plan to reveal His great love to men, evidenced in the sending of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, in two advents, to be their Redeemer and Deliverer.

More particularly, now, let us consider those who have learned about the true God during this age, the noble ones who have cleaved to God's Word, doing resolute battle with the forces of evil, and who are able to attest God's faithfulness in assisting them in their struggles, so that the light of Truth has continued, and is continuing to shine more and more for them each day. We have learned to love God; to love Him so much that our daily, yea, hourly desire is to please Him. We have tasted (merely tasted) the blessedness of fellowship with Him when we have done the things that please Him; it has whetted our appetite and we yearn to please Him more and more that our fellowship with Him may deepen and increase.

How can we best please Him? In Heb. 11:6 we read, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Whatever else may be needed, this is an essential requirement. This chapter of Hebrews is one long narration of how the ancient worthies exercised faith in God, and how Christians were meant to be profited by their examples. As the Apostle says, in Heb. 12:1, that they are a great cloud of witnesses to us.

Let us refer briefly to one of them. Read Heb. 11:24,25. We remember how Moses was miraculously spared when Pharaoh's decree went out to destroy all male infants. He was brought up as the son of the daughter of Pharaoh in a position of luxury in the king's palace. During his childhood, youth, and young manhood he would want for nothing. He was in a position to receive the very best education that it was possible for one of that time to have, and being a very capable and sensible young man Moses seems to have availed himself of it to the utmost. Josephus, the historian, says of Moses—"He was a man of extraordinary mental powers, and quickness of apprehension." His outstanding education is summed up in a few words in Acts 7:22.

Heb. 11:24 takes up the story at a period "when Moses was come to years"—about 40 years of age. What lay before him in the way of worldly advancement we can only imagine; the adopted son of the king's own daughter, he doubtless could have had a high position of state, a life of ease and luxury, with wealth untold. He refused it all and threw in his lot with the despised, down-trodden people of God—his own countrymen by actual birth. He knew that trial and danger, want and care might follow his course; that it meant the sacrifice of all the honor and comfort he enjoyed in the king's court. He was not driven away from royal circles and its aggrandisements, he deliberately chose to leave because he loved his God and His righteousness and the people who were the friends of God. He believed that this God would supply all his need once he elected to serve Him.

How does our faith measure to the test in this our day? Can we learn any lessons from Moses? If we are true Christians, endeavoring to learn of, and follow Jesus, close watching unto prayer, and are diligent students of God's Word, we will sooner or later be apprised of "present truth," i.e., truth particularly revealed by God for His people in the last days of this Gospel Age.

This truth will reveal denominationalism, with all its conflicting creeds etc., for what it really is—Babylon—and we will be required to make a choice. If we stop in Babylon we can enjoy its emoluments of the hour—social standing, many friendships, luxurious appointments, etc., for Babylon is not lacking in a worldly way; verily, she is rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing (Rev. 3:17.) But if we see Babylon as the Lord **sees** her (Rev. 18:2,3) and heed His voice to come out of her (verse 4), what will be our lot on earth? Will it not be similar to that of Moses — trials, hardships, dangers, persecution, scorn? It will mean identifying ourselves with a despised people. Instead of a stately cathedral to worship in, we will likely find the bare boards of some upstairs room.

Here we would quote what one has said of Moses—"Moses deliberately made his choice, and in all the trials which succeeded it; in all the cares he shouldered as a result of it; in all the ingratitude and rebellion of his people as he led them towards the Promised Land, he never once wished himself back enjoying 'the pleasures of sin' in Egypt."

We would ask, Has any Christian, coming to the knowledge of truth and acting upon it in faith in these last days, repented of throwing in their lot with the Lord and His people? No, indeed! Each of these has learned to say with the psalmist—"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psa. 84:10.) Not that the initial step of faith is all that is necessary; like Moses, situations will repeatedly arise calling for the exercise of faith, and like him we must endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

According to scholars, the literal rendering of Heb. 11:27 is— "For he looked away from that which was before his eyes toward the reward." In other words, we are to look away or beyond our present circumstances and conditions to that which is to be—to exercise faith in what God has told us.

Paul expressed the matter another way, saying we should count any hardships as light afflictions which are only momentary in the working out of eternal glory. If Moses had chosen the court of the Egyptian king, its honor and glory according to worldly standards could have endured at the best for this short life only. He chose instead present worldly disadvantage, and has secured the "better resurrection" which will bring satisfying life forever.

What of our reward; does not God's Word testify that He has prepared some better thing still, for as (Heb. 11:40)

? Yes, the spiritual reward must be a wonderful one. As the Apostle John expressed it—"It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." That is a wonderful thought—"we shall be like him." John goes on to say (1 John 3:3), that every man that has this hope in him, purifieth himself, so that he may be truly like Jesus.

Undoubtedly this pleases God more than anything, that we become like Jesus, for that means becoming like God

Himself. No man has seen God at any time, but Jesus declared Him or manifested forth God's true character. We Christians who live now, have not seen Jesus either, but from His recorded life and teachings, and from the examples of those who followed Him, and particularly as all this is made real to us by the power of God's holy spirit, we do know Him.

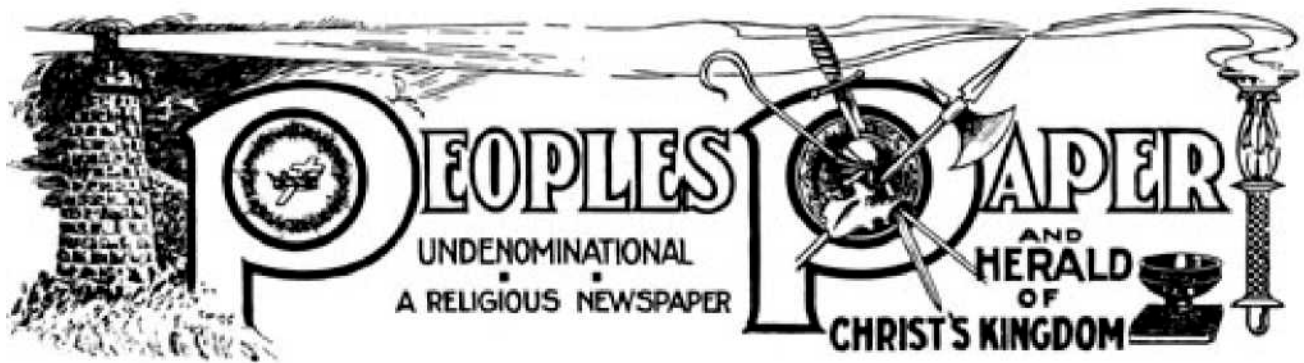
There are many Scriptures that tell of the great reward that Christians will receive; of reigning with Christ as kings; of joint heirship with Him in a wonderful rule; of crowns to be worn; of clothing of kingly array; of cities with streets of gold and so on—symbols no doubt to illustrate to terrestrial minds the King and the kingdom's glory. However, none of these things enthrall so much as the thought and desire simply to become like Jesus. To be able more and more to put away the earthly, fleshly traits that mar the image of His likeness in us — fleshly desire, the selfish spirit, the hasty temper, the ill-considered word, impatience, and love of this world's empty glories—and instead, find these replaced with an ever increasing godliness and contentment, this is the only "gain" worth seeking. Can anything be compared to it; the truly spiritual mind knows that there is nothing. "O, happy Zion; what a favored lot is thine." Verily, we can say with the Apostle Paul that "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

Why do we love Him so much and preach His name so enthusiastically ? Because as Paul answers in the next verse (2 Cor. 4:6) "God . . hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." To become like Christ, therefore, is to become God-like. There is not one of the divine perfections which is not revealed in Jesus. If the divine character is to be seen at all, it is to be seen in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. Did

not Jesus so explain it to one who asked Him, “Show us the Father and it sufficeth us.” Jesus replied (how we can rejoice in its meaning), “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him,”—simply because it would be impossible to know Jesus and not know the Father. Verily, how true were Jesus’ words—”I am the way, the truth and the life.”

How full are the Apostle’s words in 1 Thes, 4:1, 3. “We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus ... how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more For this is the will of God (that which pleases Him above all else) even your sanctification.” God-likeness in the absolute is not possible this side of the vail, but the Scripture teaches that we can approach unto it more and more; that seems definitely to be the Apostle’s intimation when he said—”That I might know him and the power of his resurrection.” Our resurrection life begins on earth, and will be consummated in heaven, when we shall be partakers of the divine nature itself. (Phil. 3:10; 2 Pet. 1:4.)

The thought of rewards to a truly spiritual mind is not like the earthly; we find no special delight in anticipating power to rule for its own sake; our joy will be in being with Jesus and made fully like Him, assured that whatever work we perform, when thus associated with Him, will be so God-like as to satisfy us to the full, nothing more could we then desire; we will be pleasing Him in entirety. Finite minds cannot gauge the immensity of the rewards of joy in having part in bringing the whole human family to a knowledge of the glory of the Lord, and seeing the majority of men respond to the desire to live and walk pleasing to God.



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The Kindness, Humility and Patience of Love.

“God is love.” (1 John 4:7-21.)

(Convention Address)

IN the Scriptures the word love is used to express the complete whole of the grand and glorious qualities which make up the perfection of our Heavenly Father. God is the personification of love. To whatever extent anyone possesses this quality of love, to that extent he has character-likeness to God. Whoever is fully in God's likeness may be said to be love; for love is the great principle which represents most fully the divine character.

“God is love,” our Lord Jesus is love, and when the church is perfect, each member of the body will also be love. This great principle will have full control of all that we do and say, even as now it has control in the hearts of the Lord's people, despite the weaknesses of the flesh which prevent its full expression. When all the imperfections are taken away, those who attain the prize of our glorious high calling will have the image of God, the image of the Lord. The hope of attaining the likeness of the divine character is the great ambition which inspires us to faithfulness of endeavour.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that faith, hope and love are fruits of the holy spirit. Although every good and perfect gift comes from the Father (James 1:17), nevertheless, there is a difference between a “gift” and a “fruit.” Possession of a gift may be acquired immediately, but a fruit requires time in which to develop. So with the fruits of the holy spirit.

Here we see displayed the wisdom of God. Development is a gradual work. With those who have that earnest desire and determined zeal for righteousness which God wishes them to have, every word and every act has something to do with the development of this quality of love. Our Heavenly Father does not expect us to acquire perfection of love in the flesh, for its weaknesses and imperfections will not permit us to do so; but He expects to find in those who will be members of the body of Christ that earnestness of spirit and faithful endeavour which demonstrates that if they had perfect bodies they would always manifest love.

In order to reach this degree of development of character, we must train our minds to desire only those things which are true, pure, loving and good. We must not live after the flesh. We must resist the tendencies of the flesh, and cultivate the new mind. In this sense of the word we are to be copies of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Kindness Not Always Love.

The followers of Christ have consecrated their own wills and have been begotten of the holy spirit, which is the spirit of love, for it is the spirit of God, who is love. Therefore their sentiment toward one another must be one of loving interest. Perhaps we are not always wise in knowing how to exercise loving-kindness; sometimes our fallen nature may lead us to think that a certain course of action would be the loving one, when it is the very reverse —the wrong course. Hence, we need to be on the alert to perceive to what extent we are using the spirit of a sound mind in our conduct and in our dealings with one another.

A person might manifest kindness in word and act without having the right motive. Sometimes kindness is prompted by motives other than love. It might be for selfish reasons, or for the purpose of entrapping another to his disadvantage. This form of fraud has become so common as to call for no particular comment.

The Christian's experience is a continual schooling. Daily we are learning more and more about ourselves and about

the wisdom and justice of God. As we learn these lessons day by day, we are learning more to reprobate and correct in ourselves. In thus discovering our own imperfections, we should learn, as a matter of course, not to expect perfection in others; and we should give them credit for doing their best to exemplify the highest ideals which they have with respect to the unity and perfection required for membership in the body of Christ.

Love is always kind; love cannot wilfully injure another. The parent who loves his child will not do anything to injure that child. He might sometimes make a mistake and punish the child unjustly, but the motive behind a loving parent's action will always be kind and true.

Love might sometimes be regarded as unkind, for the principles governing the actions of the individual might be misunderstood. When our Heavenly Father forbade Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, He had a wise reason for doing so. No doubt he would have eventually permitted them to partake of that fruit, but it was kindness on His part to keep them in ignorance of that fact. Thinking God to be unkind, ungenerous toward them, Eve thought to obtain her rights: So with us. If our Heavenly Father's kindness is not always understood, we may not be surprised if we have a similar experience. Although our spirit, or motive, may be right, yet we may not always have the ability to manifest it; and so we must make due allowance when others misunderstand us.

The Power of Indwelling Love.

Man was originally made in the image of God, but by reason of the fall of Adam, his balance of mind has been destroyed. Those who have the mind, or will of Christ are able to overcome some of the inequalities of their natural disposition and to think soberly of their own knowledge and ignorance and of that of others. This ability to appreciate the true state of affairs is the secret of much of our blessing in the Lord.

When we see others who have a smaller appreciation of justice than we have and who do things contrary to the principles of righteousness, we rejoice that we know better and are able to do a little better than they. The spirit of a sound mind shows us that we have more ability along some lines than have some others, and that others have more ability along some lines than we. Because of the fall of man, all are weak in one direction or another. The knowledge of the imperfect condition of humanity should humble us rather than puff us up.

Humility of mind comes only after the attainment of considerable knowledge of Christ. Knowledge puffs up because of selfishness of heart, because we are more likely to be conscious of our own good qualities than of those of others. Hence, those born with less selfishness have less to contend with, and those born with more of it have more to contend with; and in proportion as we have the spirit of Christ, we are able to overcome the tendency to be puffed up with what little knowledge we possess. Indwelling love has the power to build up, to strengthen character, and to counteract the wrong effect of the fallen human nature.

Proper and Improper Causes of Provocation.

The whole world has a tendency to recognise the principles of justice. Even those whose conduct towards others is far from just seem to crave an opportunity to fight against injustice, provided that the case is not one with which they are identified. This inclination often manifests itself in acts of violence, as when mobs vent their anger against some poor sinner who has done something to provoke their wrath. The least virulent amongst them have perhaps done wrong also, yet they seize the opportunity to show their indignation against wrongdoing and seem to take delight in punishing the offender.

The Lord's people should not possess this spirit of intolerance. We should have patience, sympathy and endurance when things go wrong, and should make due allowance for those who are transgressors. The more we possess of the spirit of patience, the more we have of the spirit of forbearance, the more difficult it is to arouse us to anger. Wherever the spirit of love prevails, its possessor is not easily moved to do or say anything unkind or unjust. Love makes us very patient with those with whom we are associated; it is anxious to throw the mantle of charity over everything that seems to be wrong.

Love would have us remember that while another may be in error, it does not follow that he is at fault. He may not have understood a matter correctly or his judgment may not have been the best, owing to inherited weakness over which he has no control. Before condemning anyone we should make sure that he is at fault. Justice demands that we do no less than investigate before we condemn. Love urges us to be as merciful in the case as possible.

God is the very personification of love, yet the Scriptures tell us that He has been provoked at different times. While passing through the wilderness, the children of Israel aroused His indignation repeatedly. (Psa. 78:40, 56; 95:7-11.)

The idolatrous tendencies of that nation brought divine wrath upon them and sent them into captivity to Babylon. (Jer. 7:17-20.) Finally, their rejection and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ brought upon them “wrath to the uttermost” and caused their dispersion into all parts of the earth.

Righteous Indignation a Proper Feeling.

The Lord’s people are not to be of that immovable kind that cannot feel any resentment of injustice. Lack of ability to have just indignation would imply lack of morals and of harmony with God. Of our Lord Jesus it is written that when He beheld the unrighteous condition of the rulers of His people, and saw the injustice of their conduct, He “looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” (Mark 3:5.) Like Him, we should be wholly out of sympathy with everything not in harmony with God.

We are to love righteousness and hate iniquity. This word iniquity, which means the very opposite of love, is a strong expression. A person who is indifferent to matters of right and wrong is indifferent to the character of God, who is in opposition to all forms of iniquity. Of our Lord the Scriptures say, “Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” (Psa. 45:7.) All who are cultivating character pleasing to God, all who are endeavouring to become exact copies of His dear Son, should put away every impurity, everything not right. Whatever is wrong should always be opposed by our new minds.

On the other hand, if we have love as the Lord has it, we shall hate the wrong, but not the individual that does the wrong. In proportion as love controls our hearts and minds, we shall feel sympathy for those who are in iniquity, for we remember that the race of mankind is fallen from the original perfection. We should think that to do evil is not their intention, their will, but that they are suffering from iniquitous disease. Love is patient and tries to find extenuating circumstances and conditions. It seeks to help the evildoers and is not easily provoked to anger.

But the word “provoke” signifies to incite to. In another place the Apostle says, “Provoke one another to love and good works.” (Heb. 10:24.) Love should say and do those things that will incite to loving words rather than stir up bitterness, which leads to anger, wrath, malice, strife and evil-speaking. (Eph. 4:32.) In other words, it is much better to be a peacemaker than a strife-maker. Yet we are not to have peace at any price; rather, we should have peace if possible, where principle is not involved. We should stir up strife only where some good is sure to result.

The degree of love, the strength of love, may be determined by the ease with which it may be swerved and aroused to opposition or to impatience and anger. We have already seen that there may be times when patience might stand in the way of the real interests of the case and where love would take steps to correct what seemed to be an apparent evil; but we must remember that balance of mind, or judgment, is not ours by nature. Perfection of decision is a quality belonging only to our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Let patience have her perfect work.” (James 1:4.) The Father would not be provoked to anger with anything trivial. With us, however, our balance of judgment is so poor that generally we are too hasty. Very few of us take in the full circumstances surrounding ourselves and those with whom we have to do; therefore growth in grace and growth in knowledge will have to do with the degree of love exhibited by each one.

Generosity and Sympathy to be Cultivated.

We are in the school of Christ, with the Great Teacher. We have the words of the Heavenly Father, of our Lord Jesus and of the Apostles recorded in the Bible; therefore we should know the difference between right and wrong. On the other hand, we see that sin exists in the world. Mankind are imperfect in mind and morals. This condition is hereditary — the result of Adam’s transgression nearly six thousand years ago. Yet, with all our advantages of knowledge, we “cannot do the things that we would”; consequently, we feel a measure of sympathy for ourselves, and we should extend the same to others. Indeed, we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, although the Lord’s Word says that we are not to condemn either ourselves or others. We cannot read the hearts of those around us and therefore are not competent to decide what motives prompt their actions, nor what degree of punishment should be meted out to them.

Nevertheless, we are to observe right and wrong conduct among our neighbours. We may know that they have, figuratively speaking, a bad tree and therefore bring forth bad fruit; and we should consider why they have a tree that produces such fruitage. Perhaps they were less favorably born than we. Perhaps they have never been in the school of Christ and have never heard the Great Teacher or the Apostles. If so, our sympathy should go out to them and our attitude of mind toward them should be such that we will not be provoked by their shortcomings, but should manifest generosity of heart toward them.

To attain this sympathy and generosity is a part of our instruction in the school of Christ, but we do not learn all pertaining to the subject in a day or a week. We get “here a little, there a little.” (Isa. 28:10.) If we are following on to know the Lord, our mental discernment will become clearer and our minds and hearts will broaden in sympathy for others. Thus we shall become more like our Father in heaven, for He is kind to the unthankful and just to the unjust, as our Lord pointed out. (Matt. 5:44-48.)

Pride a Cause of Much Irritability.

Undoubtedly the causes for irritability and for being provoked vary in different persons. With some, it is because of a nervous condition of health, which renders them less easily able to control themselves according to the standards which they themselves recognise. With others, the cause of irritability is pride. In fact, pride is connected with nearly everything that is injurious to the people of God. Wherever pride exists, the person is susceptible to evil influences from every quarter.

Pride manifests itself in various ways. Sometimes it manifests itself as self-esteem, leading one to think too highly of himself and too lightly of others, even to the extent of imagining himself to be their superior. At other times, pride manifests itself as approbateness; anything that conflicts with the desire to appear well before others touches a tender spot.

We are not to be indifferent to these things. If we have pride or approbateness, we are to seek to control it with the spirit of love and sympathy for others, instead of letting the wrong spirit control us. The best way to do this is to practise generosity and to provoke others to love and good works instead of to anger. Let us remember that humility is one of the great lessons, one of the most important lessons to be learned in the school of Christ; obedience to the instructions of the Teacher along this line has very much to do with our ever getting into the kingdom.

One of the best aids to the learning of this important lesson is to learn to judge ourselves—to scrutinise our own motives. If we find that we have acted unjustly toward another, we should go and make amends to the best of our ability; we should properly scourge our own minds, and seek to make matters right with the one we have wronged.

For a person who is proud, or who is sensitive to the good opinion of others, it is very difficult to apologize; but the best thing to do is to set the matter right as speedily as possible, and repeatedly, if necessary. Thus we may have help along the line where we should have it, by overcoming our pride and vanity.

The members of the body of Christ are all to be copies of God’s dear Son. This does not mean that God’s dear people will be able always to control their looks and words and actions, but that the heart must recognise this standard and strive to attain it. Every time a person who has some weakness along this line of pride or vanity will apologise for a wrong done, he will by that act show both God and man that his heart recognises the right principle. A great blessing will come to him because of his following very strictly the divine Word; thus he will gradually overcome his weakness and strengthen his character.

Feet-washing as a Lesson in Humility.

On the last night He was with them our Lord gave to the disciples, and to all the church, a valuable lesson in humility. He waited until supper was being served (not ended as in the A.V.); then, arising from the table, He laid aside His mantle and got a basin and a towel and proceeded to wash their feet. This act was a pointed reproof for their neglect to wash His feet and one another’s. When our Lord came to him, Peter said, “Thou shalt never wash my feet.” Peter had too much reverence to wish the Lord to be his servant. But the Lord said to him, “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.” What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall understand hereafter. (See John 13:7-10.)

In all this the Lord was giving a deep spiritual lesson—that no one is naturally fit for the kingdom. Each one needs to be washed, to be cleansed, before he can be a joint-heir. Jesus said to His disciples, You have witnessed My humility in this matter, and now I want to tell you that you ought to have this attitude toward one another. You should have been careful for even the humblest one in your number.

The incident affords a lesson in humility to us as well as it afforded one to the apostles. We should be glad to do any service, even to the humblest of the members of Christ, in whatever way the opportunity may come.

Our Responsibility to One Another.

This lesson suggests that the members of Christ’s body should have a mutual watch-care for one another’s welfare; to keep each other pure, holy, clean and to assist one another in overcoming the trials, temptations and besetments which

come from the world, the flesh and the devil. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love—can we hope to be helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and in getting rid of the defilements of the world and the flesh.

It requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to assist each other in this respect. Before we can help others to cleanse their way of life in every little particular, so that every thought, word and deed shall be brought into subjection to the divine will, it is necessary that we have experience along the same lines. Only as we cultivate purity of thought, word and deed in our own lives, only as we put on the various graces of the spirit, can we wash the feet of the saints.

Many who would reject well-meant criticism of conduct, who would resent well-meant offers of assistance to a higher standard of character, as interferences with their private affairs, would be very amenable to the influence of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be indicated by the performance of some menial act. It is the sympathetic ones who are the most successful in helping the various members of the body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, how we should study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

How many opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of daily living, or in respect of some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life ! By love we are to serve one another, but not as a mere formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people has, we may be sure, the approval of the Head of the church.

Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example. Let us not merely assume the guise of humility, but let us actually have that grace of character which will enable us to do kindnesses and service to all with whom we come in contact. Then we shall all the more enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the body of Christ.

Thou sweet, beloved Will of God,
My anchor ground, my fortress hill,
My spirit's silent, fair abode,
In Thee I hide me, and am still.

O Will, that wiliest good alone,
Lead thou the way, Thou guidest best;
A little child I follow on,
And trusting lean upon Thy breast.

Thy beautiful, sweet Will, my God,
Holds fast in its sublime embrace
My captive will, a gladsome bird,
Prisoned in such a realm of grace.

Within this place of certain good,
Love evermore expands her wings;
Or, nestling in Thy perfect choice,
Abides content with what it brings.

Oh, sweetest burden, lightest yoke,
It lifts, it bears my happy soul,
It giveth wings to this poor heart;
My freedom is Thy grand control.

Upon God's Will I lay me down,
As child upon its mother's breast;
No silken couch, nor softest bed,
Could ever give me such rest.

Thy wonderful, grand Will, my God,
With triumph now, I make it mine,
And love shall cry a joyous Yes,
To every dear command of Thine.

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Fear Not Little Flock.

Luke 12:32.

WHAT endearing words, so sweet, so simple, so full of meaning and what comfort they bring to the heart in this day of fear! They remind us of a mother, who, hearing a cry in the night, rises swiftly to tend the one she loves. Taking the trembling one in her arms and telling it to fear not, she rocks it to sleep on her breast.

How many times we are told in the Scriptures to fear not, and our Saviour must have realised the great power fear would have over the human mind when He told His little band of faithful followers so many times to fear not.

From whence comes fear, and what makes one fear? The first intimation we have of fear in the Bible is where Adam and his wife hid themselves in the Garden of Eden. So we see that fear comes from a knowledge of sin. Once sin enters the heart we fear. Job, in ch. 11:14, 15, says: "Put iniquity away . . . and thou shalt not fear." When iniquity leaves the heart fear departs with it.

What a persistent and formidable foe is fear. It attacks from every direction. It is the imp and progeny of sin, and where it hides the child of God may be sure that the Adversary is working very hard to stumble the unsuspecting one. Nevertheless, a godly fear is necessary in the composition of a true Christian character, for the child of God must fear to do evil, to wound the feelings of a brother, and should reverence and fear God. Fear makes a splendid watchdog, which should warn if any evil approaches the heart, but it should never repose in the heart.

How strange that in a day of full and plenty, with garner of wheat overflowing, fat cattle and sheep by the million, fruit weighing the branches to the ground, grapes in abundance in a land flowing with milk and honey, and everything that should gladden the heart of man, that fear grips the heart, leaving a dreadful feeling of unrest and insecurity.

Never in our lives do we need faith and perfect trust in God more than we need it today. Men seem to have lost faith in God, and evil and vice abound. What a vivid picture St. Paul paints of the men of today, when he declares that they would wax worse and worse; that in the last days trying times should come, for men would be lovers of self, money-lovers, boasters, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, accusers, without self-control, ferocious, rash, self-conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than God, having a form of piety but denying the power thereof; and from all such he exhorts us to turn away.

O, the blessedness and peace that reigns in the heart of the children of God, who look to the Father with the faith of a little child, never doubting that the Divine hand that has supplied the wants of today, will also provide the needs of tomorrow ! As the mother runs to the aid of her sick child, even so, God will come quickly to the aid of those who call upon Him, and His best gifts are to those who have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. Our Saviour teaches this lesson. When He was with His disciples on the lake of Galilee, a storm arose, lashing the waves to fury; and in the midst of the tempest the boat had sprung a leak and the disciples were in great peril. In fear and dismay they ran to our Saviour and found Him sleeping peacefully. They awakened Him, saying, "Master, Master, we perish." Then, arising, He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and there was a great calm. And He said unto them, "Where is your faith ?" In this case the disciples' fear was caused by a want of faith. Had they had perfect faith in their Master, they, too, could have slept peacefully and would have known no fear.

The Psalmist gives us a splendid pen picture of that storm in the words, "They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths. They reel and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and He delivers them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still" (Psa. 107:23-29). It may be that our Saviour had previously been discussing these powerful words of the Psalmist, and to try the effect of His teachings and to test their faith had permitted the rising of the storm. Even so it is today, amid all the

gathering gloom and the banking of the storm clouds, when men stagger and reel under the power of the Divine hand.

Although the storms are of a different character, they are purposely sent by God to try our faith, and to see if we have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. O, if we could only have that sweet love and trust in God, which even little children teach us every day by their confiding faith in us.

We see many instances where our Lord tested His disciples and gave them warnings. After Peter had made his avowal of love, our Lord had warned him that he would deny Him, and we all know the result. Jesus, revealing Himself to St. Paul on the road to Damascus, told him plainly that he would suffer many things for His Name's sake. And as we follow the Apostle Paul in all his wanderings, we see him buffeted from pillar to post, and treated by some as the scum of the earth. We follow him to prison, and in depths oft, five times he received forty stripes save one, thrice he was beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, in perils often, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, and yet, in spite of all this formidable list of fears and sufferings he counts them all as light afflictions. So real was his faith, so great his love and loyalty to his Master, that fear could find no place in that noble heart. We realise that the many things he suffered acted as the chisel of persecution that shaped that noble character into a gem of loveliness, which has so endeared him to all believers.

As we look back over the mist of years and recall the wondrous words of the Apostle which have shed a halo of glory around the cross of Christ, reaching numberless hearts, stimulating and comforting, and leaving an impression which is the reflex of Christ's glorious character, let us step forward bravely and courageously into the future, and "fear not."

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Christ's Spirit of Comfort and His Second Presence.

THERE appears to be a difficulty with some I to discern the difference between the Lord's being with His Church throughout the Gospel Age, and His presence as Lord of the Harvest at the end of the Age—His parousia—unseen by man and discerned only by the eye of faith, as the signs of His presence are observable.

The Lord Jesus has certainly been with His suffering saints ever since Pentecost. He has so closely identified Himself with the members of His Body that He said to the man who went "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples," "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." "For by one spirit we are all baptised into one Body. All made to drink into one spirit" (1 Cor. 12), so that Christ is represented in His Body-members on earth, in whom the holy spirit operates. "He who receiveth you receiveth Me, and he who receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me." These have the privilege of suffering with Christ, of filling up the afflictions of Christ which are left over, so that *we* might be dead with Him and so might live with Him.

Our Lord is represented in Rev. 1:13, and 2:1, as "He that walketh amidst the candlesticks" and as being thoroughly acquainted with the varied conditions and circumstances of His Church—"I know thy works." He is ever with His people in their trials, and renders aid by His spirit, through the Word of God, and through His people, sending comfort and strength in time of need.

This was His promise when taking leave of the disciples—"I will not leave you comfortless. I will pray the Father and He shall give you another comforter that may abide with you for ever." "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "But the Comforter—the holy spirit which the Father will send in My name—shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall testify of Me."—John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26.

It is in this way that the Lord has been with His people, sustaining them in trial, adversity, persecution and distress, by bringing to their remembrance His love, His care, His interest in their progress, and the many exceeding great and precious promises of grace to help.

As the young nobleman in the parable, our Lord went to a far country, to the heavenly courts, to receive the Kingdom, and then to return, to come again and receive His Church unto Himself, that where He is there they may be also. Then He will take His great power and order righteousness and peace in the earth.

Before dealing with mankind generally, the Scriptures clearly show that the first work of Christ on His return is in connection with His Church, and for this purpose He must be present for a season, "as a thief in the night," unknown to the world. Gradually His presence would be made known to the watching saints—those who, when they hear the "knock" indicating His presence, open their hearts to welcome their Lord and He enters and sups with them, and they with Him (Rev. 3:20). Those who do not hear the knock and those who hear, but fail to open, are left in ignorance of the second presence of the Lord.

The discourse in Matt. 24 shows that there is the work of harvest to be first attended to, a gathering of the elect.

The Lord of the Harvest will say to the reapers, "Tie the tares in bundles, but gather the wheat into the garner." True Christians are to be separated from the false and gathered home into the antitypical ark, into Christ, beyond the veil, and the burning up of the bundles of tares takes place in the "time of trouble such as never has been since there was a nation, nor ever shall be."

The world will be in ignorance of the fact that Christ has returned until this preparatory work in connection with the Church and the closing of the Gospel Age has been accomplished. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the days of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the presence of the Son of Man be" (Matt. 24:37-39). It would seem to be difficult to make it plainer that there would be "days of the Son of Man"—a time during which the Lord would be present, dealing with His people and preparing for their deliverance, but unrecognised by the world. He would come "as a thief," unawares.

The parables in Matt. 25 illustrate the matters dealt with in the 24th chapter. The parable of the virgins shows that only the watchers would know of the Lord's coming, and that even among them some should fail to be properly prepared. It shows a separating work, which is still in process. The varied experiences of the harvest period continue to separate the foolish virgins from the wise. When all the wise virgins are gathered the door will be shut.

The second parable shows the Lord dealing with His people respecting the use of opportunities and talents, and rewarding them accordingly. Not only are the living saints to be thus dealt with and rewarded on completing their course, but “the dead in Christ are to rise first.” This all indicates that there will be quite a period similar to the “days that were before the flood,” in the “days of the Son of Man,” His parousia, prior to His commencing His work with the world, indicated in the next parable.

All this preparatory work could not be accomplished if the old thought that Christ's coming would be like a flash of lightning, if all living and dead saints were to be caught together at the moment of that coming. There is something more beautiful and reasonable, more Scripturally harmonious and more God-like, in the presentation of this subject in the booklet "The Manner of Christ's Return and Appearing" (reprinted from the book "The Time is *at Hand*") which is recommended to read and study.

We see, then, that there is quite a difference between Christ being with the Church during the Age by the holy spirit in His people to comfort and sustain, and His being present again in the earth in this day of His preparation. All the evidences of His “parousia” are with us today. He has surely come, and has prepared the promised feast of Luke 12:37. It is the blessedness promised to come at the end of the 1335 days (from about 1874) of Daniel 12. Those who have experienced the joys of this feast, since the unfoldment of truth at that time, know that He has come. They have heard the “knock” and opened their hearts, and are feasting with their Lord (Rev. 3:20). The fact of seeing these things has refreshed the hearts of God’s people. They are strengthened against the scepticism and human philosophies, theories, delusions and deceptions of this sad day, by the clearer knowledge of the Divine plan of the Ages. They are thus enabled to stand the severe tests of faith in these “days of the Son of Man,” while those who fail to recognise the “knock” seem to prefer the dim light of the dark ages, or when the Church was just emerging from the gloom of Papal errors, to the bright shining of truth radiating from the rising Sun of righteousness. Let us “hold fast that which we have received.” “Continue in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them.”-2 Tim. 3:14.

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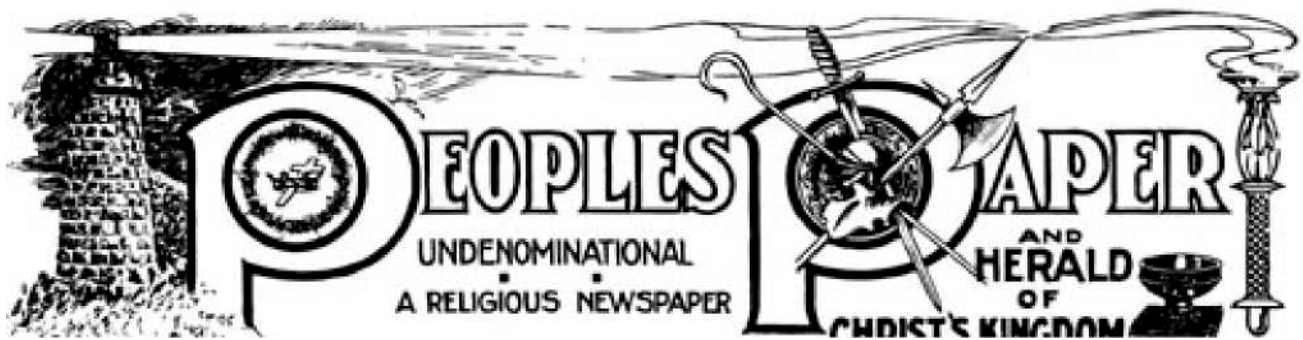
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Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. „ 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ., 9 a.m.

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Will We Know Our Loved Ones in the Resurrection Day?

(This article is published by request).

THE subject of the resurrection and the conditions which will exist at that time are surely so wonderful for us to contemplate. Here on earth we are surrounded with death, and the dying process, in even the healthiest of the human race. Is it any wonder, then, that the thought of the resurrection—an awakening from the condition of unconsciousness in death—should appeal so strongly to us, not only for our own benefit, but also for the benefit of all mankind?

We call to mind one of our friends, who, when anyone died, used to tell her little boy that the departed one would be brought back to life in the resurrection day, and the child was continually asking when they would be restored to life. Truly, the awakening from the dead has a strong appeal to all right-thinking people, and how wonderful this resurrection experience will be for the majority of mankind who were not aware of such a provision when living on earth, or at least had such a vague understanding of it. The majority of business men and women are thinking mainly of their financial state right up to the time of death. Some, possibly a good number, make provision for their death—to see that all death dues and funeral arrangements are covered—but have we heard of many making arrangements for their resurrection?

Our Lord gave His own disciples instructions how they may make provision for their resurrection to life with Himself, when He declared —"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:19-21.)

How truly, then, did the Apostle Paul express the feelings of our hearts, also, when he stated—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But Paul, so fully assured that Christ had been raised from the dead and "become the first-fruits of them that slept" in his day, could declare with confidence — "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his presence." (1 Cor. 15:19-23.)

Let us now briefly examine the position of those whom Paul calls "Christ the firstfruits" in this wonderful 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. These are the "anointed firstfruits" of whom James declared—"Of his own will (God's will) begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1:18.) In Revelation 14:4 we also read—"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

What shall we say of this class of "firstfruits unto God" in the resurrection day? Shall they see and know their loved ones? Throughout the Scriptures there is one prominent fact made manifest, and which is, that first of all, the blessed hope and expectation of seeing the Lord Himself seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the Apostles. As an example, we read in Tit. 2:13—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." And again—"So shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes. 4:17.)

From the Apostle John we also read respecting our Lord's return—"When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.) What a wonderful prospect is this for all the worthy overcomers of this Gospel Age ! However, while John was so enraptured with the thought of seeing the Lord, and being like Him in the resurrection day, he at the same time answers our question as to whether the overcomers will see and know their loved

ones in that resurrection time. For, notice that John clearly states—"We shall be like Him for We shall see Him as He is." Thus in being like the Lord, and seeing Him *as He is*, all of this "We" class will be like each other, and will certainly know each other, as never before.

When our Lord commended those who had faithfully used the "five talents" and the "two talents" in Matt. 25:21,

23, His words were—"Well done, good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And while we are not informed of the details of the "joys of the Lord" in the heavenly kingdom, we know they will include the joys of association with all other loved ones in the Lord's heavenly family, in addition to being confessed before the Father, and before His angels. (Rev. 3:5.)

Later we shall consider if the faithful followers of the Lord may also know other loved ones in the resurrection day who have not been of the "anointed firstfruits" class, but just now we wish to examine some Scriptures which deal with those who will be in the earthly kingdom and which reveal their relationship to their loved ones in the same kingdom on earth.

On one occasion the words of our Lord showed the condition of heart of many Israelites at His first advent, and Jesus' prophecy concerning their attitude when the Kingdom is established and they are raised from the dead is helpful in revealing that these Jews will certainly remember their former life, and their former associates. Thus, they will know those they loved, who were of the same mind as themselves. We refer to Luke 13:28, 29—"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." Undoubtedly Jesus referred here to the time of Christ's kingdom on earth, when the prominent Jews who rejected Him at His first advent will be "thrust out" of the kingdom administration, when they are resurrected, until they acknowledge Christ and fall into line with the laws of the kingdom then in force. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets will be in the places of authority to guide and direct affairs; and the reason that the Apostles are not mentioned is, of course, because our Lord was describing the procedure for the earthly phase of the kingdom only. (See also Matt. 11:20-24.) The fact that it will be "more tolerable" for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom in the day of judgment than for the Israelites who rejected Christ at His first advent, shows that all these nations will be resurrected, and, knowing of their former lives, will have opportunity to repent and come into the favor of the Lord, through His representatives, the Ancient Worthies.

Read Ezek. 16:48-55, 60-63. "Then (thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger ... That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame." In these verses from Ezekiel we find unmistakeable evidence of the fact that Israel, as well as all other people, will remember very clearly their former life when raised from the dead in the resurrection. And if the former life is clearly remembered, so will be the former associates, especially the loved ones, and by obedience to the laws of the kingdom and rendering assistance to others, will progress be gauged under the administration of Christ's kingdom on earth.

Using Israel as an illustration again, we read in Zech. 12:9, 10—"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." Here we see that in the resurrection day, those who sanctioned our Lord's death will clearly remember their part in His crucifixion, and will mourn as they look back on the sad event. However, the Lord will restore them to favor as they indicate a repentant heart condition. As shown by this prophecy, they will be in genuine mourning and bitterness because of their conduct. They will also remember their associates at the time of our Lord's death, and will need to assist each other into harmony with the Lord and His spirit of compassion manifest towards them. Thus, the remembrance of the former conduct will be a great incentive to progress in accord with the requirements of the kingdom then in operation.

Another point regarding the world of mankind—They will also know some in the resurrection who were not their loved ones; they will know some who may have been their enemies ! How will they react toward these? Their reaction towards past enemies will determine their worthiness, or otherwise, to receive the blessings of Christ's kingdom. (See Matt. 25:31-40, 45.)

The attitude of the Lord's people, of course, will be quite different to that of the world of mankind in the kingdom. They will meet many in the heavenly kingdom who were not their loved ones on earth, but they will rejoice to associate with all in God's heavenly family, and will love them just as much as those saints they knew on earth.

Then, there will be some in the earthly kingdom over whom the saints shall reign, and from whom they likely received persecution during the earthly life. How will the over-corners feel towards these? They will certainly have no ill

feelings, but will be sympathetic, and desire to lift up and bless, that those who were persecutors may be gained for the Lord's kingdom on earth. Where required, the Lord will rule with a rod of iron; He will certainly require obedience, but His justice will be tempered with mercy wherever there are responsive hearts. (See Rev. 3:9.) And this disposition to bless even their persecutors, on the part of the Lord's people, must be developed in this present life, or we may be sure that no heavenly inheritance will be gained. So, we realise that the followers of Christ must be truly overcomers of all wrong feelings, thoughts and actions, in this present life, by the Lord's grace, while the world of mankind will eradicate these imperfections during the Kingdom, to be worthy of everlasting life on earth.

We think of the great example of Christ, as shown in Rom. 5:6-10,—“God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us . . . For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” So, as Christ had no enemies in His heart—because He died for them—we also must have no enemies; none that we would not seek to bless and encourage in the ways of the Lord, as we have opportunity. We must not allow the Adversary to stir up our minds or hearts against anyone, whether they be our brethren, or the world at large. We call to mind Paul's words in this connection—“For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief. Even so have these (Jews) also now not believed, that through your mercy (when the opportunity comes in the kingdom) they also may obtain mercy.” (Rom. 11:30,31.)

What shall we say, however, about the relatives of the Lord's people who have no interest in spiritual things and who will be raised from the dead to inherit the earthly kingdom in the general resurrection? We know that there are close ties between the Lord's people and some of their earthly relatives, but because those gaining the heavenly kingdom will be spirit beings, we do not think of the two phases of God's kingdom as being greatly divided. We remember Paul's words—“In the dispensation of the fulness of times he (God) might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.” (Eph. 1:10.) Also in Gen. 28:10-15, where the “Jacob's ladder” dream is recorded, we have an illustration of the co-operation which will exist between heavenly and earthly beings when Christ's kingdom is operative, and especially so when mankind are fully restored to perfection.

We remember when Adam and Eve were perfect in the Garden of Eden, before the fall into disobedience, that God talked with them, and so, when mankind have gained human perfection, no doubt there will be definite communication between the overcoming saints of the Gospel Age and the perfect human family.

We realise, also, that there will be no thought in the minds of the Lord's people in the spiritual kingdom of showing preference to those who were their earthly relatives in this life; the saints will esteem all mankind equally in God's earthly family, with every member of it being appreciated according to their obedience to the laws of the kingdom. This principle was clearly demonstrated by our Lord when He was on earth. (See Matt. 12:46-50.)

We see, then, why our Lord could speak to His true followers as He did, when He declared—“Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Matt. 19:28.) These will be worthy and qualified then to judge Israel and the world, in righteousness. The installation of Christ's true followers in their places of administration in the kingdom is shown also in the Parable of the Pounds, where the “good servants” were rewarded—“Have thou authority over ten cities,” and “Be thou also over five cities.” (Luke 19:11-19.)

What a wonderful prospect lies ahead for poor, fallen humanity during the time when “all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest,” when “The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” (Jer. 31:34; Hab. 2:14.) What a gracious prospect and privilege also lies ahead for the faithful overcomers of this Gospel Age, who shall be favored to participate in the work of the kingdom—“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,” (Matt. 13:43),—to bless and uplift all who then respond throughout the earthly domain of Christ's Kingdom, that they may gain everlasting life, to God's praise.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

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The Institute's Work

IT is with thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings and favors bestowed upon the work of the Berean Bible Institute, throughout another year, that this brief annual report is presented at this time.

The co-operation of our brethren in the work of the Institute has continued as in past years, and sincere appreciation is extended to all who have assisted so freely, as unto the Lord, in the efforts from the centre here in Melbourne.

Each year the efforts continue mainly with the object of encouraging our brethren in Christ, wherever situated, in the Christian way to which they have been graciously drawn and called of the Lord through His word of truth. At the same time the presentation of the message of the kingdom is a general witness to others who have ears to hear and long for the glorious hope for the future, found only in the true Gospel of Christ. Our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" is the main means of contact with the brethren and interested friends throughout Australia and overseas, and many messages of appreciation of our periodical have been received throughout the past year.

As in former years, the contributions to the columns of the "Peoples Paper" are greatly appreciated, and this enables a number of brethren to have a part in this ministry, in the service of the Lord and His truth. Other friends who have helpful articles suitable for publication in the "Peoples Paper" are invited to forward them along.

The number of subscribers to our monthly "Paper" has been maintained, but the price of 5/- per year does not nearly cover the cost of production, so the deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund. However, as a considerable number of the "Paper" is distributed free to interested enquirers the expense is certainly well used in the service of the truth. All readers are welcome to extra copies of the "Paper" for distribution where good may be done, and some friends who forward subscriptions for others are helping very well in the work. The assistance in checking the proofs of the "Peoples Paper" by some friends is greatly appreciated, as is also the help in folding and wrapping of the periodical for despatch to our readers.

The distribution of tracts has been continued where opportunities offered, and supplies of various subjects are on hand for all who can use them to advantage in the days ahead. These tracts are supplied free from the Tract Fund. Consolation Cards are also mailed to the bereaved by some of our brethren, and a number of these have been returned and suitable literature supplied; other friends willing to co-operate in this work are invited to do so.

Throughout the past year, public lectures have been continued at regular intervals, and the brethren have shown good appreciation and co-operation by encouraging their friends to attend, and a number from the public have also shown good interest in the messages presented on these occasions. It was from the lectures that some of our regular brethren were first encouraged to appreciate the truth, by the Lord's grace.

The financial position for the general work is shown from the General Tract Fund below. and all the good assistance has been provided by the voluntary contributions of our friends, in the Lord's providence. This loving cooperation and assistance in the work is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord. While looking back with gratitude and praise to the Lord, it is our privilege to look forward also with confidence and trust in the God of our salvation. The international situation continues to be of great interest to the Lord's people, and often trouble spots could produce another spasm of world-wide destruction, but for one thing — the time is not yet due in the Lord's timetable. While the Lord's time for "sudden destruction" may not be long delayed now, it is the privilege of His people to continue their service, with devotion to Him and His cause -- encouraging the brethren, and sounding forth the message of the kingdom, "glad tidings of great joy to all people" in His due time. The prayers of the brethren. are requested that God's guidance and blessing may be over His work in the hearts of His people, by His grace. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of 'love, which ye have showed towards His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.'" (Heb. 6:10.).

GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/57	£25 10 3
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By Free Tracts and Deficiency “Peoples 1 5 Hall	
Rents, Advertising Circulars, Consolation Cards,	
etc. 40 1 8
General Expenses (Office, etc.)	49 15 0
Towards Personal and House Expenses 350 14 0 47 2 9	
Pilgrim Work 50 15 0
Free Books and Booklets 5 5 6
Travel and Sundries ..	12 15 0
Credit Balance, 1/5/58 ..	35 16 6
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Radio Work

ANOTHER year’s witness by means of the radio has been completed, and it is with gratitude to the Lord for His blessings on this feature of the work that this brief review is also presented. A number of our brethren have gladly cooperated in this witness work, and their good help is gratefully acknowledged, in the service of the Lord.

Throughout the year past, a considerable number of enquiries have been received, and many listeners state that they look forward with pleasure to each Sunday’s broadcast and receive help and encouragement in their Christian life. The same radio stations have been engaged, namely — 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY/NA — and at the conclusion of each discussion printed copies of all that Frank and Ernest say are offered to all interested listeners as well as other Free Literature.

All enquirers to the radio sessions receive the “Peoples Paper” free for at least six months, and are thus introduced to other literature on the wonderful Plan of the Ages in which we all rejoice. A number of friends have been brought to a full knowledge and appreciation of the truth by this means, by the Lord’s overruling. All friends within range of any of the radio stations are invited to encourage people to listen, especially those who are feeling after the glad message of the kingdom.

No doubt others of our friends would welcome the broadcasts on other radio stations nearer their homes, and there have been offers of further financial assistance if this were possible; however, at the present time, it seems almost impossible to obtain time, even on some of the country stations, so completely are their programmes filled on Sundays. However, it is a privilege to be able to sound a+ witness to the glorious truths of God’s Word over four of the large cities of Australia and extending out many miles into the country in each of five states. The Lord is adding His blessing in the hearts of those who are truly seeking His truth in all sincerity. We are glad to acknowledge continued assistance from our brethren in U.S.A., in the supply of many of the subjects for broadcast, while others are prepared here in Melbourne. It is surely a great joy and privilege to be engaged in the service of the Lord in any capacity, by His grace.

The Radio Fund reveals the financial position of this feature of the work, and the very good assistance, by the voluntary contributions of our friends generally, is gratefully appreciated, as unto the Lord in His service. All expenses have been covered, by the Lord’s providence, the brethren in Western Australia still taking care of the cost of the broadcasts over 6KY/NA. Would our brethren join in prayer for the Lord’s blessing upon the witness over the air, that the results may be accomplished in accord with His good will.

RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/57	£65 10 1
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By Radio Stations 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ £694 6 0 „ Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY,

4KQ and 6KY	60 17 6
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Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—**No. 7** Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

HELD OVER.

Some messages from interested friends were intended for this issue of “Peoples Paper” but are unavoidably held over till next issue for lack of space.

It is my duty to distrust my own ability, that I may have reliance on Him that is stronger than all.—J.B.

Consider Him—Lest Ye Be Weary.

“Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds.”—(Heb. 12:3.)

THERE is a natural tendency amongst people to tire of a thing when the novelty wears off. Even the hearing of the truth, strange as it may seem, causes weariness to some after a time. It is the same way with the soldier. It is easy for him to enlist and march forward when the drums are beating and the bands are playing, and enthusiasm runs high; but when the damp, cold weather comes, when ice forms in the trenches, and there is no martial music, he is liable to grow weary, and army life does not seem to be nearly so attractive as it appeared at first. This is true in our spiritual warfare—in fighting the good fight of faith. There are times when all around seem joyous, when the Christian soldiers are marching, and all are stimulated and encouraged; whereas there are times when the clouds hang low and are dark, chilliness surrounds us, ardour abates, and we are liable to get discouraged. It is partly for this reason that the Lord has directed us to “consider Him,” that thereby we might be stimulated and encouraged to press on and to inspire others. He knew just what we would need.

“Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

The Apostle Paul exhorts us not to forget the assembling of ourselves together, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. Why so? Because “this day” has its peculiar trials, its difficulties, its attractions in various directions, and the story of the Cross will likely seem old, not as new as some things, and consequently we shall need to bear each other up. Because there is danger of becoming luke-warm spiritually, it is generally recommended that the Lord’s people meet together, for to do so is stimulating. In proportion as we seek to stir up others in the way of putting them in remembrance, we are thereby reviving our own minds. We can, therefore, see a wisdom in all of God’s arrangements with respect to the truth. In every congregation there is danger of growing weary in well-doing. Well-doing costs something. It means sacrificing. If you are serving the Lord’s cause you are denying yourself in some way. Unless we have some special love for the Lord and for the truth we might say, “This is a very tedious work; I am pressed in many directions.” So many things come to you and to us all, that we might consequently be retarded, and slacken our efforts. The world, the flesh, and the adversary are pressing hard to draw us, not exactly from the prize, but from the narrow way that leads to the prize. They would slacken our zeal and beat our courage down; they would make us faint, and cause us to say, “O, I am so tired; I cannot do any more !” Doubtless we all have had such experiences. If we get faint in body we can rest ourselves, but if we get faint in mind it is more difficult to become refreshed.

What then shall we do in case we get weary and faint in our minds ? The Apostle tells,. “Consider Him.” Whom?

We all know that he is referring to our Lord Jesus, the one great “Him” in all the whole world. We are to consider how much He endured without getting faint or weary, without giving up the work which He undertook to do. He undertook to do, a certain work, and so have we ! In some respects we have undertaken to do the same work that Jesus did. Let us consider Him, lest we get weary and faint in following in His footsteps.

Of course, the world is not exhorted in this. text, but merely those who have come into, the Lord’s family, and have taken up their cross to follow Him; those who have consecrated themselves to Him, those who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice, declaring that they will give all to Him and His service—that they will follow Him at any cost. These are to consider what He endured without fainting in carrying out the Father’s will—what He. endured in the way of contradiction of sinners against Himself. This is the very kind of difficulty which we have in our endeavour to carry out the Father’s will. If there were no devil, no sinners, and no trials, this would be a very pleasant world to go through. It is because we have to swim upstream, against the current,. when almost everything is going in the opposite direction, that we have such a difficult work. Watch the swimmer ! He must battle upstream against the down flowing current; a moment’s relaxation and the current carries him downward. With us there is a natural tendency, as well as in the currents of thought. and activity about us in the world, to pull us back in the opposite direction to which •we are trying to go.

Let us consider His example, His words, or else we’ may become faint. There are many reasons why we might become so. One of them is that we might consider that the opposition against us is too great. Jesus had the opposition of all those of national influence in His day. He was continually misrepresented, until finally the slanders culminated in His being called a profane person, one who had spoken blasphemies against God, who had said that He was like God, and was as great as God. This was a part of the charge against Him. Although the accusation was not true, nevertheless He endured it, even though He had power to stop it. If He could cast out demons and open the eyes of the blind, then surely He could have done something to change things in His own case. Why, then, did He not do it? Because He was doing the Father’s will, and it was the Father’s will that He should bear witness to the truth, and demonstrate His loyalty in connection with it. Is it not the same with us? But why does the Father care about our loyalty ? Because He is seeking a

certain class for a certain purpose. In Jesus' case, He was seeking one to be the Head of the Church. In our case, He is selecting those who will be members of the Body. He has a great plan which contemplates the overthrow of sin and the blessing of all the families of the earth; and He is now looking for those who are in sympathy with all His plans and arrangements. He is seeking for those who would rather suffer death than violate His word or shrink from doing His will.

This is our glorious position, and we are considering One who never made a mistake in carrying out the Father's will. Yet He suffered as though He had made a great many serious mistakes. He suffered as a disloyal person, although He had always been most loyal. The Jews declared that He had no patriotism at all, yet He was loyal to His own nation in every respect. As Jesus said, "They hated Me without a cause,"

Turn these things over in your mind ! Consider Him ! This kind of suffering is necessary, for the Father would not be wise in exalting to such a high position anyone who was not thoroughly loyal. He could not give even His own Son the divine nature without a thorough testing. Our Lord, as a new creature, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was not tempted as a fallen man. The temptations which come to the new creature are different from those which come to the sinner.

Jesus was tempted to grow weary and faint in His mind. This was one of the ways through which special temptations from Satan were placed before Him. Satan told our Lord that He would get rid of these difficulties if He would co-operate with him, and would avoid those things which would necessarily come to Him if He should continue in the way marked out by Jehovah. Our Lord's answer was, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" Another temptation was to show what great power He had received as a spirit-begotten son, to use this power either to gratify His own natural appetite or to make a display before the people. So it is with those of us who may wish to do things in a showy way, instead of in the humble way marked out for us. We may expect to have the same temptations that our Lord had. Therefore we should be on guard that we may prove loyal to the Father.

"If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." The reason why the Father is so careful in making the selection of the Church Class is that they are to reign. He could not take hypocrites or any disloyal ones, or even careless ones, to be rulers and teachers of the people in the coming kingdom. He would not select those who had not resisted sin. He must select those who had first learned humility before He could use them to teach humility to others. God desires such a company of priests and judges to be associated with His Son for a thousand years, in ruling and blessing the world, as will prove faithful under all circumstances—those in whom He can place absolute confidence, who have been tested and found faithful. This is the reason that He tests and proves, during this Gospel Age, everyone whom He will receive for that future work.

The call of this Gospel Age is therefore one to sacrifice. God does not hide this fact from us. He does not call us to simply stand up and say that we wish to be followers of Jesus. No ! Our Lord says, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." There is no deception about the matter. If we have been deceived it is our own fault. The Old Testament says the same thing: "Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Whoever would follow Jesus must prove his faithfulness by his willingness to sacrifice.

In the past, false doctrines confused us, but now "we see Jesus," we see what He accomplished, and how He endured without growing weary or giving up. It makes our course plain when we consider Him. We sometimes say that we have not been careful enough in this or that matter, and have consequently made some mistakes. We can often find some fault in ourselves, thus demonstrating that we are partly to blame for our suffering. In our Lord's case it was different. He received the slanders, the misrepresentations, and everything else that came against Him, without having any fault in Him at all. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners"; still, He endured. We, though following in His footsteps, have not as much to endure as had the Master.

We are also to consider the outcome. While the Father let Jesus die on the cross as a malefactor, yet He did not let our Lord go permanently, but kept His promise to raise Him from the dead. We have the promise that, as the Father raised up Jesus from the dead, so also will He raise those up who are found worthy by being found faithful unto death. In raising up Jesus, the Father has given us a testimony to His faithfulness. In the case of Jesus, no one had set Him an example. It was all by faith with Him; none had gone before. With us it is different. Besides, we have not so much to lose as had our Lord. However, if we trust God He is faithful to keep us and to do what He has promised—to raise us up with our Head. Consider what great things God has done for His Son. Consider also that He has promised us a share in our Lord's glory if we be found faithful. It is amazing, almost beyond conception ! Unless God had made it plain we would not have been able to receive it. It has, however, been stated over and over again in so many different ways, that there is no room for doubt. How wonderful it all is!

Consider Him! Consider that God has highly exalted Him! Consider what a great privilege has been afforded us of walking in His footsteps, especially as our lives are so imperfect, so unsatisfactory, even to ourselves, and as life is all that we have to give. What a thought that God will count our little sacrifice as a part of that which Jesus gave! We are to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, “to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.” Then to think that we are in the last time now! We are right at the close of the Age. The evidences of our day denote this, although the world in general does not understand these signs of changing dispensation. “None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:10).

How carefully the people of God, therefore, should weigh their thoughts and deeds. “Seeing that these things are to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God?

According to His promise we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight. Ye, therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest being carried away by the error of the wicked ye fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and for ever. Amen.” (2 Pet. 3:11-18.)

In view of what we see ahead of us as sharers with Jesus of His glory, honour and immortality, we should be leading holy lives. We should be living in the future rather than in the past. Do not think too much of the past. Let us not live in the past and dwell upon our mistakes and shortcomings, and thus be cast down, but let us believe that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). And we should have such an appreciation of these mercies and blessings of forgiveness as to show it forth in our conduct.

Let us give heed more and more to the suggestion of our text, and consider Him whom the Father has so highly exalted. Let us remember that He has called us with the same high and heavenly calling and has promised to help us all the way through. If we remember this we shall cease to be weary and faint, and shall become strong in the Lord and the power of His might; we shall go on from grace to grace, from glory to glory; we shall be transformed by the renewing of our minds, more and more proving what is 'that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Then, finally, we shall attain unto the glorious things which He has in reservation for those who love Him more than parents, or children, or self, or any other person or thing.

“Hold on thy way with hope unchilled,
By faith and not by sight;
And thou shalt own His word fulfilled—
At eve it shall be light.”

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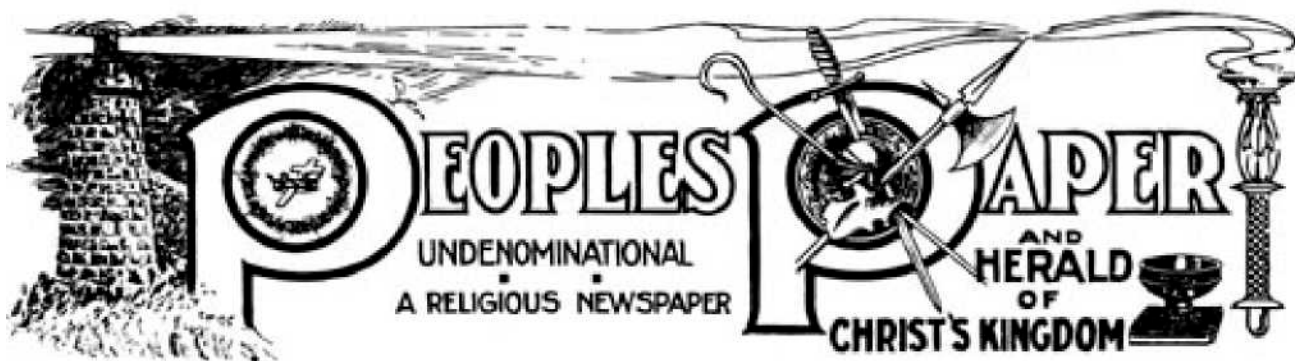
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Heirs Of God.

(Romans 8:17.)

(Convention Address)

The thoughts of this address were born out of the amazement that was revealed while reading an article in a recent monthly truth journal. Never before had the depth of truth been realised, that we, Christians, are to be heirs of God, sharers or joint-heirs with Jesus our Lord and Head; yet this truth is attested many times in the Scriptures.

Think how the natural man cherishes the thought of becoming heir to a fortune in material things. It may not be the lot of many to experience it, but nearly every man would covet the opportunity if it should present itself; it is this desire that prompts the weekly ticket in "Tatts" with a large proportion of the populace. To inherit something for nothing seems to have strong appeal to the natural man.

However, let us try and think what it entails to be heirs of God—heirs of all the wealth of His riches and glory, knowledge and understanding, power, etc. In the major sense it is a tremendous beneficence on the part of our God to offer us heirship; but there is also another angle in which to view it. It will not be 'something for nothing' for all who receive it will be tested, tried and proven. We who are offered the richest inheritance possible to receive were all sons of Adam and under the condemnation of the fall into sin. We were no better than other men, but the all-seeing eye of God seems to have discerned, that, coupled with an affinity for righteousness, was humility and teachableness. God can work wonders with the person whom He will to be taught, but He can do nothing with the self-willed, the proud and the haughty.

His first endowment was to give us a standing before Himself, for, as members of the fallen race we had none; we were all alienated from Him by wicked works (Col. 1:21), so He drew us to Christ, the One in whom it pleased the Father all fulness should dwell, and by whom, alone; any can be reconciled to the Father and share in any of His bounties, either earthly or heavenly, physical or spiritual. (Col. 1:19, 20.)

Those who respond to the Saviour's leading and teaching become His "brethren," and "sons of God," but the response to the exhortation to "Come unto me, and learn of me" must be sustained. We are in the "school of Christ" to be trained for our position, our inheritance. As any child of royal birth, in this present order of things, is trained from infancy with a view to the duties and privileges of the throne, so are we, but with much higher perspective.

The natural man does not like to admit ignorance; he is happy flaunting any knowledge he may have, and what he does not know he will conceal, or make believe that he does know, but cannot condescend to reveal it to any whom he considers "beneath him." However, there is no room for pride in the "sons" whom God has begotten into His family; they must be filled with the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, meekness (teachableness), etc. With all our training we acquire great knowledge, but we do not get it all at once, nor is it after the pattern of a natural man's mind. The fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; yes, and the end of it too.

A lecturer of some little note, and apparently a man of good understanding, once said, "I never considered it a shame to have to answer, 'I do not know' to a questioner. Often I have had to do it; I patiently wait for the answers. Every day brings the answer to something I could not answer yesterday. It will take an eternity to know an infinity." What wise words, and how doubly true when we apply them to ourselves as Christians, and to spiritual things. What a privilege it is to be able to go on learning, that we may be fitted for the position as heirs of God.

Though we are privileged as sons of God to know so much, yet we have the realisation of how much there is to learn. There are so many experiences of people around us, as well as our own, that we cannot explain; we understand so imperfectly why certain things should come to this one, or that, while others escape, at least in the same intensity. Almost all, Christian professors or not, look forward to “a beautiful isle of somewhere.” In times of sorrow or sadness there is a hymn that many sing, the essence of which expresses a hope that a future time will reveal the meaning of present tears; then “sometime we’ll understand.” In the minds of most people, both “the isle of somewhere” and the “sometime” are very obscure, but true Christians who understand God’s plan, have greater clarity as to where the

“isle” will be, and when the “groaning creation” will understand the meaning of present sorrows and tears. It will be right here on earth during the Millennial reign of Christ and His church; the church comprising the present sons of God, (throughout the Gospel Age) undergoing training to become His heirs.

People generally still look forward to the realisation of their present vague hopes, but to the present “trainee” sons of God the “sometime” is today, tomorrow and every day. Today, or perhaps tomorrow, we understand why it was necessary for us to have had experiences of yesterday, a month, a year, or twenty years ago—the “sometime” of our learning is today, tomorrow and continual. So what a privilege it is to go on learning.

Think how much training we need to overcome impatience; God is long-suffering and His sons must learn this lesson too. Think of the training and experience necessary before we can exhibit mercy and love in anything approaching that of our Heavenly Father. We might be helped in displaying this to others, by constantly recalling how much has been extended to us. How easily we are roused to ire, to thoughts of malice; how slow to forgive.

When the Lord appeared in vision to Moses we read — “The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin . . . And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.” (Exod. 34:6-8.) The better qualified we become as God’s sons in the school of Christ, the more continually will we have Moses’ attitude.

One very helpfully explains the parable of the vineyard in Mark 12:1-12. From verse 12 it is clearly seen that our Lord directed the parable against the religious rulers of His day, and that they discerned it to be so. The man who planted the vineyard would be Jehovah, and the vineyard would seem to be the Jewish nation with all its privileges above all other nations of earth. The hedge about it would correspond to the divine law and the prophets—all the special supervision and guardianship that the nation enjoyed and which Gentile nations did not. A place for the winepress was provided, evidently picturing the temple worship etc., a place where God could expect to receive due returns from the vineyard. There was a tower too, a watch tower, seeming to represent the prophets and seers of Israel to give warning of any danger and to instruct in a right course. The “season” of verse 2 would suggest the time when fruit could be expected. The servant who was sent could well be a prophet or teacher sent to these “husbandmen”—the religious rulers, the scribes and Pharisees. The “fruit” the owner of the vineyard sought would be gratitude, love, obedience etc., for all He had done for them. He would look for meekness and teachableness, and He was disappointed at the results. Then He said, “I will send my son, surely they will pay more respect to him,” and we know who the “Son” was—Jesus. And what happened? The husbandmen (the chief priests and rulers) said, “This is the heir”—this man claims to be the Messiah; we shall have to do away with Him if the inheritance is to be ours, if we are going to retain our priesthood and power. (See verses 7 and 8 which are self explanatory.) And what did the owner of the vineyard do? See verse 9. All the time it was “fruit” that God sought; the Son, whom He sent, many times during His ministry expressed disappointment at the lack of it, where He had a right to expect it; and for that reason was Israel - rejected—“The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

For the scribes and Pharisees to desire to become and remain “heirs of God”, was commendable enough, but they sought the inheritance with a wrong heart condition. It was taken from them and given to another “nation,” but with the same proviso—it is paramount that the required “fruit” be brought forth. Are we heeding it well? The promised inheritance may be precious to us, but we will be disinherited if we do not make our calling and election sure by bringing forth the fruit that is precious in our Father’s sight, and without which character formation we would not be competent to be entrusted with His riches of glory as His heirs. Our Father has made every provision for His prospective heirs, and His Word is sure; if we fail the fault will be ours entirely. Not one of the called ones can say that the way was too hard, or that the trials were too great.

The same lecturer already mentioned has further helpful thoughts that can be applied in a spiritual way. He said that obstacles are power stations in our lives when rightly viewed. To illustrate, he used the Mississippi River in America. Being an American he wrote of his own country, but the same illustration could be drawn from our own River Murray in Australia. A mighty concrete obstacle was built right across the path of the river. He said, “Watch the river; it rises higher and higher until it sweeps over the obstacle and goes on its way. Result; light and power are developed that

vitalizes a valley and lights a hundred towns and cities. The light and power were latent in the river, but it took the obstacle and the overcoming to develop it and make it useful. Obstacles are often the power stations in our way. Moans one, 'I am so unfortunate; I could do these great things, but alas; I have so many obstacles in the way.' Says the lecturer 'You should thank God, for you are blessed of Providence.'"

We digress here to think of Paul in Rom. 5:3—"We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope,"—helping to produce the very "fruit" required to become "heirs of God." The presence of obstacles means there is much light and power in you to be developed. Do not waste your opportunities.

The lecturer says, "I hear a person say, 'I hope the time will soon come when I shall have no more obstacles to overcome.' When that time comes they can ring up the hearse, for you will be a 'dead one.' "

Remember Paul—"I do not beat the air; I keep under my body,"—the exercise of self-control under stress. What an example was he! Did any Christian meet more obstacles? At the end he was able to say—"I have fought a good fight." Yes, he fought, and it was a fight; it was no armchair victory for Paul, but he won through; he became an heir of God, the crown of righteousness was won, the required fruits were developed.

Many years ago when Thomas Edison had first success with phonograph recording, he was showing a friend the result of his long inventive work, and is reported to have said "I made over 7,000 experiments and failed each time before I hit upon that." How many would have gone on in the face of 7,000 failures? Are we going on in the face of

our failures? We have all made them and are still experiencing them. Like Paul in his earlier days we can say, "I have not yet apprehended that for which God has apprehended me in Christ Jesus." But with our great Teacher at our side, and as our Advocate before the Father, we can go on and succeed at last, becoming heirs of God.

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Correspondence.

Dear Brother.— We are very sorry in delay in sending the money for the “Peoples Paper”; it is just that we keep forgetting to send it. We enjoy reading the “Paper” also hearing the broadcast on Sundays; it is the only thing we can get to listen to. We do not get to the Class as the transport is not convenient, and we find at our age the hill is too steep to climb, so just have to be content to study at home. We trust you are keeping well; you will find enclosed £1. Praying God’s blessing on your work. Yours in Christian love.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren.—Am enclosing \$2 to pay for my subscriptions; I don’t know how much I owe you, or when the subscription expires. We love your little “Paper” and receive so much spiritual uplift. May God bless you brethren in your service to Him, our God and Maker. Our prayers and love to you all there. Sincerely,— (U.S.A.)

Dear Brother.—Warmest Greetings from “The Promised Land,” in the name of Him who would have done so much for it, even in His earthly life. “How often would I have gathered you . . . but ye would not.” Today, were you here (and I wish you could have been many times), there could be seen the foundations of a great future state. Even in the three years since my previous visit much has been done, especially as far as building and land reclamation is concerned. This is particularly noticeable as one journeys up to Jerusalem, where the once barren hillsides are being terraced and planted in vineyards, olive groves etc. In former times they were intensely cultivated, and the remains of the ancient terracing are still traceable with the eye.

How lovely this land will look after some hundreds of years in the Millennium, when we have reason to believe it will extend from the Euphrates to the Nile, and be the chief nation on earth. May those days hasten forward, for sin today is becoming a terrible weight on the nations, and even we ourselves, who strive in the “Narrow Way” groan greatly because of its shackles.

The Jewish Christian Group that was here in 1955 seems to have almost vanished in one way and another. They did not hold a Memorial, but the “Seder”; that is, a commemoration of their coming up out of Egypt. Much as I would have liked to have been with them, I was unable to do so, as they do not acknowledge our Lord. The commemoration was held on the Friday night. Your article on the Memorial was a very good one, and in perfect accord with certain statements made in the “Reprints” which remove any doubt about the matter in question . . . There are Jews here from nearly 30 countries, and it is an education in itself just to live here. Living conditions are quite good . . . With warmest Christian love. Yours in the Blessed Hope.

Script Writer, Frank and Ernest Programme, Dear Sir.—I was interested to hear part of your programme, a couple of Sundays ago, about the gates of hell being thrown open. I may have missed a few important points in the beginning of this programme but I gathered that you claim that some time in the period following our Lord’s second coming the gates of hell would be opened to allow those within the privilege of eternal life with Christ. I cannot see how this could possibly be. If it were the case, then it would appear that the punishment for sin was only temporary and would be more than compensated for by the joy to follow. Does not the Bible contrast imprisonment in hell with eternal life when it says—“The Wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is Eternal Life.” If the prisoners of hell are later to be released, then it seems to take away some of the motive of putting one’s trust in Christ. I know that there should be love for the One who has loved us first, but I wonder how many of us would be Christians if we knew that we were to spend eternity in the same way as those non-Christians who are enjoying the pleasures of life which we must forfeit. The joy of the Lord is far greater, but most of us would be tempted to leave this for later and have a taste of the world first. Please send me a copy of the script of this programme as soon as possible. Yours in Christ.

(Literature is gladly supplied to all readers respecting the two phases of God’s Kingdom—heavenly and earthly. The world of mankind, awakened from the death or hell condition, will, of course, not inherit the heavenly kingdom with Christ, but rather the earthly paradise restored, if they obey the laws of the kingdom at that time.—B. B. Institute.)

Dear Brothers of Frank and Ernest Bible

Discussion,—I have been interested in your Bible Discussions Sunday by Sunday, and have found much help in my Christian life. I have been a Christian for three years, and I am now 19 years old, and, God willing, I will enter an Institute to train for overseas Missionary Work.

Could you forward each Sunday’s Bible discussion to me? You could send them weekly or monthly, and I enclose 10/- to help expense of postage and printing. These discussions will give me a lot wherein to get parts for sermons in services I hope to take. Yours in Christ’s Service.

Frank and Ernest.—From time to time we have listened-in to your broadcasts with much interest, and were particularly refreshed and helped by that given today on “Your Adversary the Devil.” Could you kindly forward a copy of same ? I am anxious to forward it on to my daughters. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours very sincerely.

Dear Sir—I thank you for the printed copies of broadcasts from 2KY, copies of the monthly “Peoples Paper”, the booklet “God and Reason,” and your promise to send me the Bible study—”Divine Plan of the Ages” after you will get this letter from me.

I read carefully all sent literature and there is only one question I would like to ask you relating to the “God and Reason.” I understand that the “seven times” of the Gentiles represent 2,520 years, but I could not find any reference to the Bible from where it could be seen that Gentile supremacy was prophesied to last “seven times.” I am very glad to know that soon you will send me the Bible study “Divine Plan of the Ages.”

I feel that I need guidance for my Bible Studies. I already found a way to make my Bible study easier. Knowing a few European languages, among them English, German, Latvian and Russian, I decided to use a couple of Bibles in different non-similar languages to be able to make difficult places in the Bible clear. From this point of view an English and a German Bible would not be good because of similarities of the English and German languages. I realised that I must look for two languages with no similarity. Therefore I have chosen an English and a Russian Bible. In this way I am able to make clear the most difficult texts in the Bible. Thank you for your help in my Bible studies. Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs.—I would be very obliged if you would send me your booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave,” also any reading pertaining to reunion with our dearly departed. Your talks are most helpful and enlightening, and I wish you every success. Thanking you; Yours sincerely

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs.—I am a regular listener to your session on 2KY, and find it very interesting. If you would send me some literature I would be very grateful, also information concerning the “Trinity” to enlighten me about this subject would be a great help. Thanking you; Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest.— On listening to your programme, I learnt many interesting facts from the Book of Revelation in the Bible. I would be extremely pleased if you could send me some of your literature to the above address. Hoping to receive the literature as soon as possible. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Please forward your free literature as described in the “Chronicle” to me at the above address, as I would like to know the answers to these questions on religion. Thanking you; yours truly.

Children of the Promise

(Convention Address)

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of the promise.” (Gal. 4:28.)

OTHER translations express our text—“But you, brethren, like Isaac, are the children of a promise.” In Romans 9:7, 8 we read, “Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” You will have noticed a great separation has divided two classes, the children of the flesh and the children of God.

The “promise” has come between. The Apostle Paul, in our Galatians text, has told us that these children of God are in some ways similar to Isaac. He was, of course, a “child of promise.” He was born out of season contrary to all human wisdom. Abraham, Isaac’s father, was in favour with God, for, some time previous to this he had shown his faith by his works, and had left his own people to sojourn in a strange land that he may know God the better. God had promised him that in him and his seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (Gen. 12:1-3.) He was seventy-five when he departed out of his own land; he had varied fortunes but found things combined together for his good, and he always came out on top.

Yet, time was creeping on, and while Abraham had never forgotten the promise that in him and his seed the blessings would come to all, he probably imagined that it would come through the child born to him by Hagar. This was discounted by the messenger of God when Abraham was ninety-nine years of age, and this messenger confirmed the original promise. Both Abraham and his wife, Sarah, laughed at this “impossibility.” There are many kinds of laughter; the kind here recorded for us limits the power of God to work His wonders according to our understanding of natural wisdom. It borders on the edge of disbelief. It laughs at a seeming impossibility. It measures God’s ability by the strength of our own efforts, by our own works, as it were. And so, to emphasize what has been made so plain to us again and again through the Gospels and Epistles, the new life came into existence because of God’s condescension and love towards us.

Isaac was born to the favored pair, and now it was clear that the “child of promise” inherited the chief favors. The difference between the two boys, the difference that separates, was that one was born according to the flesh and the other according to a “word of promise,” outside the course of nature. Both were Abraham’s offspring, one was taken and the other left. Watch this principle of selection right down to the present time. It is God’s work; we are His workmanship. Heirs of the promise—children of God; who are they, where are they? The covenant was made with Abraham and his offspring, and we have seen that it was offspring according to God’s choice, not man’s.

Look into the next illustration of the sovereignty of God in choosing whom He will. Isaac, the inheritor of the covenant promise is about to become the father of twin boys. Here was a problem. According to accepted tradition the elder inherited the chief blessing. But before these boys were born it was intimated that God’s choice was that the younger should have preference over and above the elder. “The elder shall serve the younger” was the command.

It could be argued with Abraham’s offspring that one child was by agreement with Sarah’s maid and so forfeited the right to the blessing that should go to the younger son Isaac. Yet with the later illustration of how God chooses whom He will, the same father and same mother are involved. None could gainsay this, and so it is Scripturally proved that not all are children of the promise just because of descent from Abraham. There has been a selection, and again God’s choice differs from the way man would have chosen. “The elder shall serve the younger.”

The blessing of the Lord that maketh so rich very often begins its work by making us very poor, dejected, isolated, in short miserable, and needing consolation, strengthening, and a confirming of faith. Abraham left all, not knowing where he was going or whom he would meet. A number of important incidents in Abraham’s life seem to have been duplicated in the life of Jacob. He too, like Abraham, respected the blessing of the Lord and sought it with vigilance and determination. The inheritance that was rightfully his was so valuable in his sight that he would sacrifice his own goods, his comfort and security, for the sake of harmony. He desired harmony and agreement between the unfavoured one and the selected vessel of grace. “Sell me this day thy birthright.” Is it any wonder that a “fornicator and profane” person “despised” an inheritance that needs discipline and sacrifice? (Heb. 12:16.)

It is recorded that Esau’s conduct was a “grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah.” He sold his birthright, confirmed the sale with an oath, and when his father called him to bestow the blessing of the eldest he had the audacity to think it was rightfully his. Is it wrong to outwit a schemer and thief? The fraud practised this day belonged to Esau, and because he was thwarted in his deception he immediately became enraged, grieved, self-piteous, and in his own eyes justifies the

murderous thoughts entertained towards his brother. Isaac was surprised at the early return of "Esau." "How is it thou art returned so quickly, my son?" Note this answer; Jacob replied, as if it were Esau speaking, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." Why did he not say, "Because the Lord our God . . .", or "The Lord my God"? Simply because Esau had no respect to the God of his fathers. Isaac knew this; Jacob knew it; Rebekah knew it. It matters not from which angle you view this matter, the deceiver this day was Esau, claiming something that he had already covenanted to sell, and confirmed the sale with an oath, and on top of that, claiming an inheritance in which he had not the slightest interest. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." There must be a separation, sooner or later. In some cases it is sooner, and in others it is later. This is the separating work going on today, just as surely as it separated Esau and Jacob.

Strange as it may seem if the "deception" that so many people believe belonged to Jacob, you would expect some recrimination or word of reproof at a later date from Isaac. Quite the reverse; when Jacob was about to depart, Isaac called him to his side, gave him some good counsel which amounted to this, "Do not on any account do as your brother Esau has done." No, with fatherly advice he concludes with his own benediction, and on top of that, "May God Almighty bless thee . . . and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and thy seed." You would hardly expect such blessings to be bestowed on the head of an "arch-deceiver" as many think of Jacob.

The harmony that Jacob desired was missing. In its place was hatred; so much so that his father and mother counsel him to go for a change of air. Here is Abraham's flight duplicated. Jacob sets off, fearing an attack from the rear by Esau and not knowing what each forward step would reveal. No wonder he is all but exhausted when he arrived at Bethel. Note what respect to the promise meant to him: privation, suffering, anxiety, separation. After these things fail to dim his love for righteousness, he is rewarded. God confirms His original covenant, and gives him abundant inspiration and courage to press on. Read the wonderful promise and protection that was guaranteed him in Genesis 28:12-16. No wonder he could take up his journey with a light heart, armed for not only the journey but for whatever experiences were ahead of him. Promises for the present and the future; who could want more when they are guaranteed by the Judge of all the earth? He, like his father, would understand that the blessing was not so much for him personally, but would unfold with later generations. Note particularly that although the chief blessing may be in the future, there is a lesser blessing that takes care of all today's worries. Are not the "children of the promise" enriched beyond understanding?

The succeeding days and years proved this beyond doubt in Jacob's life. Not only did he enjoy the Lord's protection, but others also came under its influence because of Jacob. The wily Laban quickly recognised this. Laban, who had little before the coming of Jacob, became one of the richest in the land. The account is in Genesis 30. Jacob had his worries, trials, and work to perform, but he also had that something that was missing in other men. Laban schemed and contrived to keep this man with him; "changed his wages ten times" and was loth to let him go. He admitted "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake."

It is interesting to note that Sarah, the beloved of Abraham, was barren. God intervened and then we have the problem of who is the rightful heir, since Ishmael was the elder. Next the rightful heir is pointed out, and he under singular circumstances marries Rebekah. That promise given to Abraham that in "thee And thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" had its worrying aspects when the rightful successor to Abraham also found his wife barren. Special intercession was made, and the prayer answered; then we have the mix-up with Esau and Jacob. Who is the rightful heir? It is pointed out that Jacob is the successor to inherit the "blessing of Abraham." Next we have the complications of tracing the seed with Laban's trickery. Rachel was certainly the beloved wife, but she too was barren. In fact, ten children Jacob could count as offspring before Divine providence again intervened and we have the birth of Joseph, who, without doubt, was the "firstborn" of the real affections, especially as the others, Reuben, Judah, and Co., all had blemishes against their names that excluded them from God's favor. The complications increase rather than diminish, and upon the death of Jacob the twelve brethren realise that the Abrahamic blessing is now a tribal, a national matter, "twelve brothers, and we are of one." It is common history how this little nation of Israel has been blessed of God right down through the ages, yet the mystery of the Abrahamic Covenant deepens rather than clears. "He came unto his own, but they received him not, but as many as did receive him to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name." "Ye must be born again."

It was the same with Joseph. God was with him, and despite all the suffering and varied experiences of Joseph, he knew "God had sent him before the others to preserve life." They may have intended it for evil but God intended it for good. It does us good to be reminded of these wonderful lessons.

However, the "child of promise" had now become "children of promise." Reuben, pleading before Joseph, said, "We are all one man's sons; twelve brethren, the sons of one man." The heads of twelve tribes that were to form the nation of Israel. Where are the children of the promise? They are to be found among these people. Yet "not all Israel which are of Israel." Neither because Abraham was their father are they heirs of God. God selects His heirs according to His own method, and one signal mark of acceptance is faith. "Have faith in God." "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

As a means of justification we have pictured for us in the lives of these ancient people the unbridgeable gulf separating works and faith. "By the deeds of the law," which rested solely on works, "shall no flesh be justified," because all have come short of the glory of God. Perfection is impossible because of our natural inheritance from father Adam and mother Eve. Some other way of reconciliation must be found if we are to inherit some of these blessings that belong to "the children of the promise." And another way has been found.

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Like these good works practised by the sincere folk in Israel, it left us with only a nasty taste in the mouth, and the more one honestly sought to do the works contained in the law the more apparent it was that instead of the Law becoming a blessing it became a curse.

When faith-righteousness opens its arms what joys and peace belong to the happy believers. "All the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus." Galatians the third chapter enlarges on this wonderful theme, and we now find that the "blessing of Abraham," that wonderful promise that God spake unto Abraham, confirmed to Isaac and then again to Jacob, carried on through selected vessels among Israel, right down to "as many as the Lord our God shall call," "for ye are all children of God (children of the promise) by faith in Christ Jesus."

Remember, there was the chief blessing, still future, and the lesser to be now enjoyed. This is it, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose." Jesus Himself declares, no man has left anything behind him but that he does not benefit now, and greater benefits later. Let us go forward, like Jacob, with this assurance, "I am with thee and will keep thee in all the places whither thou goest."

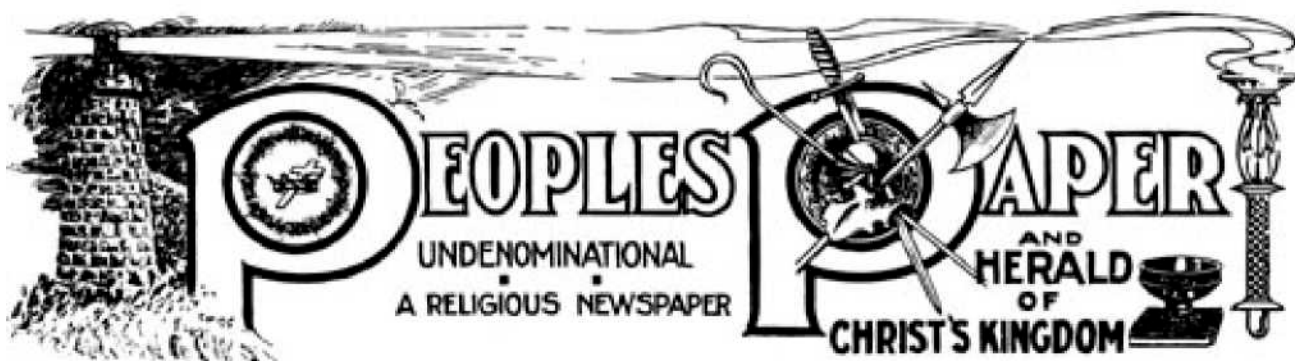
It was during the memorial service that our Lord used the endearing term "little children." Children of the promise, as Isaac was, born not according to the will of man, but according to the will of God. Paul is emphatic in Rom. 9:8 that the children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." These heirs may claim the rich title, "Children of the living God." (Rom. 9:26.)

"Children of the promise"; how can we define it? Remember the "Land of promise"? It is a land specially marked out for a special purpose. Other lands may be richer or more beautiful, more productive, abounding in natural resources, but there is a difference, a separation. The Land of Promise is a particular land; in our day we have seen it change from a barren waste to a productive and inhabited country. That is beside the point; the main point is that God intended this particular land for a special purpose. Many would possibly doubt the probability of Jerusalem becoming the capital of the world when they think of the commercial wealth and influence in London; the engineering and scientific glory of New York, or the rugged starkness and overcoming of natural disabilities of Moscow. Yet, if "the Word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem" as declared in God's Word, well, we can count it as good as done, and a new capital will arise to be a meeting place of these peoples needing direction to rebuild according to a city that has foundations. What blessings will flow from the "new Jerusalem."

So with "children of the promise", special people marked out by God for a special purpose. Where do we fit into this scheme of things? It will be nice to belong to either class, either those blessed or those blessing. The latter certainly have the chief blessings, the inheritance of the first-borns, the "children of the promise," or, as Paul has it, "children of the living God."

Consider the Land of Promise; the work put into it, from within and without, yet if God did not grant His increase the labor would be in vain. Exactly the same with the children of promise; it is not what they are that counts, but what God can make of them. There is the transforming work going on all the time, the work from within and without. Yet, if the increase is not granted by God, this work too will not be of lasting benefit. Yet if He adds His blessing, the blessing that maketh rich, what power or thing can thwart His purpose?

Another similarity among all these "children of promise." Have you noticed how they all must travel? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the nation of Israel; it seems none escape this necessity for travel. The believer of today is not exempt, for he, too, must "leave all", "forget also thine own people and thy father's house." (Psa. 45:10.) He may not be called to make the physical separation that so many have experienced, but he will have his "wilderness" experiences, when that relationship between Father and child will become reality indeed. There will come experiences that you alone can solve; not even the nearest and dearest can sympathise with you. But once the relationship of God and child of promise is real, you will find help from every quarter; even the things that otherwise could be harmful will but accomplish God's will. Just as all these folk of olden times have enjoyed the blessing of the Lord, so we, too, may enjoy it to its full, and find "all things working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."



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Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ's Return?

“THIS subject is surely most timely, for no person can deny that present world troubles are most momentous, and are causing grave concern to most people, especially to the world's leading statesmen, reigning monarchs, and heads of church systems alike.

We refer to the concern of reigning monarchs in particular, because it is now just a few weeks since the assassination of the young King of Irak and members of his family that precipitated the present spasm of turmoil in the Middle East, and brought the great powers of the world facing each other in more definite opposition than had been the case in recent months.

While all decently thinking people deplore the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of the young King of Irak and his household, and the taking over of the government of that country by the revolutionists in such a ruthless manner, a news report from London on 27th July throws some light on the situation. Under the heading —“Slain King's Gold Thrones”—the report states—“Two golden thrones, each valued at £10,000, which King Faisal of Irak had ordered for his wedding to Princess Fazilet, are to stay locked up in a London strongroom—perhaps for years. They were ordered shortly before the King was murdered in the 14th July coup.”

Commenting on this news report the next day, a columnist in one Melbourne newspaper stated—“I cannot sentimentalise over the two gold thrones, now reported to be gathering dust in London, which King Faisal ordered for his wedding not long before his death. Since each throne is valued at £10,000, and most of Irak's 4,800,000 people are miserably poor, the rugged style of King Faisal's removal from the scene becomes understandable, if not praiseworthy.”

From this news report and comment, we gather that some of the remaining kings in the world today are living in the past, when their subjects, lacking in education and initiative, were prepared to submit to almost any treatment in their ignorance. But times have changed, especially during and since the Second World War, and particularly amongst those who were previously the uneducated and under-privileged of the human race. This was well demonstrated in the overthrow of the King of Egypt in recent years (at least his life was spared), and in the taking over of the Suez Canal from the Suez Canal Company. This forward march on the part of the backward races of mankind is in evidence in a number of countries in the world, and that which creates the greatest difficulty is the excesses to which some will go in the exercise of their newly found power.

It may be asked, What is the reason for the change of outlook on the part of the more backward and darker races of mankind in the last 25 years or more? What is it that seems to be stirring these people to strive for their rights, real and fancied, and which has altered the world situation so considerably?

There is one well-known, Scripture which explains the position to a considerable extent, and that is Daniel 12:4—“Seal up the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” We call to mind the quotation—“A little knowledge is a dangerous thing”—and increased knowledge in the hands of imperfect and selfish men can stir up sufficient strife to ultimately bring about revolutions.

This is what has happened in the country of Irak in recent weeks. Certain army leaders in that country have probably reasoned—What right has our young king to live in luxury, and order golden thrones at thousands of pounds, while many of our people are living in misery?—Our people who should be receiving a share of the wealth from our oil

fields. Not that these army leaders may share the wealth to all, but at least that may be their claim, and we must admit there is a great amount of justice in their claims.

Who can doubt that we are living in the days which Daniel described as “the time of the end,” when “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased”? The increase of knowledge on all subjects during this century can be described as miraculous, and all classes of mankind have shared in this knowledge, because we have reached the period in God’s Plan of the Ages designated by Daniel — “the time of the end”—in human history.

Coupled with the prophetic statement of Daniel 12:4 is the equally revealing words of verse 1 of this same chapter— “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” The term “Michael” signifies—“who as God”—and Bible students are generally agreed that this refers to our Lord Jesus who is “the express image of the Father’s person,” and the representative of His authority and power.

In this connection, the Apostle Paul’s reference to our Lord’s return, in 1 Thes. 4:16, is most significant.—“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.” A reliable commentator has this to say on this part of the verse—“With a shout”—as follows—“The Greek word here translated ‘shout’ signifies ‘a shout of encouragement.’ A shout implies a public message designed for the ears, not of a few, but of a mixed multitude. It is generally designed either to alarm and terrify or to assist and encourage. Or it may have the one effect upon one class, and the reverse effect upon another, according to circumstances and conditions.

“The aspect of affairs in the world for a number of years very strikingly corresponds with this symbol, in the outbursts of worldwide encouragement for all men to wake up to a sense of their rights and privileges as men, and to consider their mutual relationships, the principles upon which they are based and the ends which they should accomplish. Where on the face of the earth is the civilized nation that has not heard the shout, and is not influenced by it! The entire civilized world has, in the years just past, been studying political economy, civil rights and social liberties as never before in the annals of history; and men are encouraging each other, and being encouraged, as never before, to probe these subjects to the very foundation. The shout of encouragement started by the increase of knowledge among men has encircled the earth, and under its influence men are banding themselves together, encouraged and assisted by men of brain and genius, to contend and, strive for both real and fancied rights and liberties; and as their organizations increase and multiply, the shout grows louder and longer, and will by and by result as foretold, in the great time of trouble and tumult of angry nations. This result is graphically described by the Prophet Isaiah—The noise of a multitude in the mountains (kingdoms) like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of battle.’ (Isa. 13:4.)”

The following part of 1 Thes. 4:16 reads—“With the voice of the archangel.” The name “archangel” signifies chief messenger, and our Lord Himself is Jehovah’s Chief Messenger. The voice of the Archangel represents Christ’s authority and command. This symbol, then, represents Christ as taking control, issuing His commands, His official orders. This is the same thought given by Daniel where we saw that Michael, the great Prince, would in this “time of the end” “Stand up.” To stand up signifies to assume authority, to give commands. Note the use of the word “ariseth” in Isa. 2:19-21.—“When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”

Some people may reason—Why is it, that when the Lord, the great Prince, assumes command “in the time, of the end,” it is necessary “to shake terribly the earth”? They may ask, Isn’t our Lord the “Prince of Peace”? We answer,

Yes, and He will speak peace to all the world later; but first of all, mankind must learn the lesson of complete submission to the Lord, and their man-made institutions must be shaken down. These include the financial, political, social and religious institutions.

We find also from various Scriptures that the symbol of “clouds” is used to describe the world-wide encircling troubles in connection with our Lord’s second advent. Notable amongst these is Revelation 1:7—“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see (discern) him.” All mankind will recognise that the Lord has taken charge of earth’s affairs mainly by His deliverance from the “clouds” of trouble, after the humiliating experiences have done their work. “And they also which pierced him.” Yes, those who brought about our Lord’s death at His first advent will acknowledge the Lord when they are raised from the dead—not by natural sight, but by discerning His kingdom blessing for their good. (See Zech. 12:10.). “And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” Instead of being converted when Christ is discerned in the “clouds”, first of all mankind will wail, but later will learn to love the righteous laws of the kingdom.

We read further in Psa. 97:2—“Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.” The Prophet Joel adds his testimony concerning world conditions at the time of Christ’s

return, as follows—"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness . . . there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it." (Joel 2:1,2.) From Zephaniah we also read—"The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness . . . Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath." (See Zeph. 1:14-18.)

It is of interest to note also how the symbol of "clouds" was used by God following the Flood in Noah's day, and how He encouraged Noah and his sons by the "bow; in the clouds." (See Gen. 9:8-16.) Again, when God delivered Israel out of Egypt, He used a cloud in a very special way, as recorded in Exod. 14:19, 20—"It was a cloud and darkness to them (Egyptians), but it gave light by night to these (Israelites)."

While to Noah and his sons the "bow was in the clouds", giving them hope for the future; and the cloud which was darkness to the Egyptians had a silver lining to the Israelites, so the dark clouds of this "time of the end" have also a wonderful silver lining to God's people today, as our Lord indicated in Luke 21:25-28. —"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity . . . Men's hearts failing them for fear . . . Then shall they see 'the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

We remember also that when our Lord ascended to heaven, after His resurrection, it is recorded—"And a cloud received him out of their sight,"—out of the sight of the disciples. Then the disciples were informed by the "two men in white apparel" (angels), that the Lord "shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (See Acts 1:9-11.) Quite often we have heard this Scripture used to imply that the Lord would return on a literal cloud in the sky, but that is not what the angels indicated. As we have seen, the cloud symbol portrays encircling troubles, through which our Lord will be revealed to all mankind. But to His own people these clouds have their silver lining, because they know of the glorious outcome to follow. From this standpoint the Lord's people understand Jesus' words in Matt. 24:30, 31,—"He shall send His angels with a great trumpet of (truth), and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"—from the lengths and breadths of the ecclesiastical heavens. This is a wonderful "gathering" to be sure, during this harvest of the Gospel Age.

We have this harvest work clearly revealed as being conducted by our Lord Himself in Rev. 14:13-16.—"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man." We note a special point here—"behold a white cloud." This does not indicate dark judgments upon the world; the "white cloud" is not discerned by the world of mankind, for it indicates the light of truth, the joys of the harvest message which the Chief Reaper has brought to His people throughout this "time of the end," "the days of the Son of man," the harvest of the Gospel Age. "The harvest is the end of the age." —Matt. 13:39.

So, while we hear today various preachers predicting the near return of Christ, because of present world troubles, we find from the Scriptures that present world troubles are the direct outcome of our having reached "the time of the end,"—the days of the presence of the Son of man. God, in His wisdom, withheld the increase of knowledge until these days of "the time of the end," knowing that the natural outcome would mean "a time of trouble such as never was," and the Lord is graciously using the world troubles to usher in the Kingdom of His dear Son, by first of all removing the world governments which would not fit into His new order of things.

Thus it is, that we find the kings of earth becoming fewer and fewer, and ultimately all will be overthrown, as well as all other forms of governments, to make way for the new kingdom of Christ. How vividly did the Psalmist predict the very conditions which we have in the world today in his 2nd Psalm.—"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed. Let us (Jehovah and His anointed) break their bands (the combinations of those who have banded themselves together to preserve the present order of things) and cast away their cords from us (by which they endeavour to retain control of their kingdoms). He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh . . . Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion . . . Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth . . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

We see again, from the Apostle Paul, that while "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain," yet "the earnest expectation of the creature (creation of mankind) waiteth for the manifestation (uncovering, revealment) of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:22, 19.) So, while first of all the Lord "cometh with clouds," yet ultimately "all the families of the earth shall be blessed," for the Lord will then be as "the Sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2. See also Psa. 72:1-8, 17.)

“Clouds have silver linings”
Is a proverb old;
If we trust in Jesus,
Ours are lined with gold.

CLARIFICATION.

In last month's "Peoples Paper" in the "Correspondence", page 4, second column, 6th line from the top, the following appears—"as they do not acknowledge our Lord." In case there could be a misunderstanding, these words are to be taken as applying only in the sense of the Jewish Christian Group not appearing to acknowledge to the full our Lord's request to His servants—"This do in remembrance of me"—regarding the substitution by our Lord of the Memorial of His death instead of the former passover observance. No personal reflection was intended by the writer when on his visit to Israel, and this explanation is gladly presented, at his request.

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The Lord's Guidance.

"I will guide thee with Mine eye."—Psa. 32:8.

THE eye is one of the most important organs of the body with which to give(expression to the feelings. Either anger or pleasure are usually expressed by this means. One thought which we may take from the text is that one may be so desirous of doing the divine will that he will be continually on the alert to please, just as a dutiful child, being on the alert to do the will of the parent, would look at the parent's eye, not waiting for the rod. So all of God's dear children of the Church should be looking unto Jesus for the expression of the Father's will concerning them. They look to Jesus as the Author of their faith and the One who shall be the Finisher of it. They look to Him as the great Counsellor and Guide of life. As we sometimes sing:

“Oh, let no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!”

Another thought is that as the eye is the symbol of wisdom, so God guides all things in wisdom. He sees to it that His children receive the necessary counsel, the necessary aid. Since He is the All-Wise One, nothing can escape His attention. Still another thought is that as we recognise the Divine purpose, the Divine will, the Divine outworking of that will, we see that in the present time God is not trying to save the world, but only "the called," "the elect," who are obedient in sacrifice. All who are of the First-born should seek to follow the same course as God, to be coworkers with Him. They should have no will of their own, but do the Father's will.

One of the most important lessons for the spiritual Israelite to learn is to look to the Lord for leading in all of life's affairs—never to attempt any undertaking, either temporal or spiritual, without seeking to note the will of the Lord concerning it. We are marching toward the antitypical Canaan and know that other experiences are due us and must be undergone ere we can inherit the promises. The lesson for us is prompt and thorough obedience to the Lord's leadings without murmurings—with joyfulness; and this can be expected only on the part of those who have learned the lessons previously given them, and above all, the lesson of faith—confidence in the Lord's power and goodness and faithful-
ness.

The Unjust Steward.

(Luke 16:1-13.) “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.”

WHILE the previous parables of this dinner- table talk were addressed specially to the Pharisees, this parable, and the one following it, concerning a rich man and a poor man (Dives and Lazarus), were addressed not so exclusively to the Pharisees, but, as the first verse of our lesson declares, to the disciples also, as well as to the Pharisees at the same table. The reason why the first three parables were addressed to the Pharisees only, and not to the disciples, is evident—the disciples needed no such instruction, having no prejudice against the poorer classes, recognizing themselves as amongst the “lost” who were glad to be found by the Good Shepherd.

The steward of this parable corresponds to the elder son of the preceding parable, and to the rich man of the succeeding parable; it applies specially to the scribes and Pharisees, -who, as our Lord declared on another occasion, “sat in Moses’ seat”—represented Moses, and the Law Covenant of which Moses was the mediator, and the blessing obtained through that covenant, of which Moses was the original steward, and they now the steward, as his representatives. In what did this steward, ship consist? The Apostle Paul asks this question, and answers it, saying, “What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God,” the knowledge of God, with typical justification and at-one-ment with Him, and an interest in the promises made to the fathers.

The Jews, as represented in Moses and his successors, failed of the stewardship—failed to use in a manner satisfactory to God the favors committed to their care. Nor, indeed, were they wholly to blame for this, as the Apostle Paul points out; they were weak through the fall, incompetent to be administrators of so great a trust; and God knew this when He gave them the stewardship—He knew that they would fail to keep the law perfectly. He had fully intended that in due time He would depose them from the stewardship and give it to the one whom He had foreknown—to Messiah.

Now the time had come when this change of administration was about to be effected, and God was calling upon the representatives of Israel to give an account of their stewardship, and informing them that a new dispensation was about to be ushered in. Our Lord Jesus in this parable wished to point out to them what would be the wisest course for them to pursue under the circumstances. He shows them what an earthly steward would do under such circumstances, and tells them there is wisdom in such a course, saying, “The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children -of light ;” you, as God’s people, more favoured than any others with light on the divine character and plan, are not acting wisely as you would do if you were earthly stewards.

Here we are met with, the difficulty that the majority of people do not clearly comprehend — the scope of a steward’s privileges in olden times. We have no such office today amongst civilized people. A steward’s office was a confidential one; he had the liberty and full authority to do anything and everything that the owner himself could do with his goods. He could make presents, or cancel debts, or use in any manner he chose the goods under his care, and could not be held responsible as a culprit before the law, because the nature of his office as a steward was such that he fully represented and acted for his employer. The latter could discharge him from the stewardship as a penalty for unfaithfulness, but this would be his only punishment, because in making him steward he fully authorized him to use his judgment.

In the parable the unjust steward—unjust in his previous use of his master’s affairs; that is, unrighteous, unsatisfactory, imperfect —as soon as he realised the situation, made no attempt to defend himself, nor to claim that he had done perfectly; but before rendering up his accounts he dealt leniently with some of his lord’s creditors, remitting parts of their indebtedness. (This may have been a wise course, as, for instance, today bankruptcy laws similarly release debtors from obligations which they could not pay; and similarly creditors frequently, in their own interest, agree to accept sixty per cent, fifty per cent, forty per cent, or some other proportion of the original sum as for the whole of a debt, seeing that the debtor is unable to pay the account in full, and with a view to his encouragement to do the best he can. The Jewish Jubilee year of full release from all debts was along the same line of leniency and wise business policy represented in the “Bankruptcy Law” of today.) It is not because of this last conduct of the steward that he is called unjust (unrighteous) in the parable, but because of his previous stewardship, not having come up to the full, perfect demands of his master.

Now, applying the parable to all of the Jewish nation, especially to those who sat in Moses’ seat and had the control of matters, and who decided what was and what was not the proper interpretation of the law, our Lord intimated that if they were as wise as earthly stewards they would make use of their opportunities in a somewhat similar manner. Now how could they have done this—supposing that they recognised the fact that they had not fulfilled the requirements of God under the law and supposing also that they realised that the time had come for a change of dispensation, and that God was demanding an account of them and informing them that a new steward would take possession of matters—under such circumstances how should these in Moses’ seat have acted? We answer, that in harmony with the lesson of the parable, they should have said to themselves: We realise that we ourselves have not kept the law of God perfectly;

indeed that it is not within our power to do so. We realise that a change of dispensation is impending, and that we are called upon to make an accounting, and that we can only admit before God that we made a failure as respects the carrying out of the demands of His Law and the gaining of eternal life under it,—and as respects the use of the many advantages every way which God has given us. We have used our advantages in some respects well, but we failed on the whole to accomplish anything in the world, or to gain eternal life, either for ourselves or for any,—and we cannot dispute, therefore, that “By the deeds of the law no flesh should be justified in God’s sight.”

Since, therefore, it must soon be evidenced to all that our stewardship has resulted in failure and that we are dispossessed, the wise thing for us to do, is to turn about at once, and deal kindly and generously with these sinners (the prodigal son class) and, instead of denouncing them as sinners more than ourselves, we should say to them frankly, We cannot keep this perfect law of God, and we know also that you cannot do so, but now, instead of being hopelessly discouraged and cast down, do the best you can; we will remit part of the exaction of the law, admitting that you are unable to keep it perfectly, and will merely require of you that you keep it to the best of your ability—fifty per cent., or eighty per cent., according to your circumstances and conditions—according as you are able, keep the law.

Had the scribes and Pharisees taken this position they would have healed the breach as between themselves and the people, and their honesty in admitting that they themselves could not keep the law would have been a distinct advantage to them, subsequently, in connection with the new dispensation. And this very conduct of candid admission and of sympathy for others, and assistance in lifting their burdens would have brought them into such a condition of heart that they would have been ready for the Gospel; and the lower classes, from which they had hitherto held aloof as sinners, would have had a kindly feeling toward them, and as a result they would have retained a measure of their sympathy,. at least, in the time of trouble which came upon them when their polity was overthrown.

But did the scribes and Pharisees follow any such course? By no means. On the other hand. they put on a brassy front, made broad their phylacteries, made still louder claims respecting their own perfection of heart and life, deceiving their own selves probably as much as[^] or more than they deceived others. They boasted that they should ever continue to be stewards of the manifold grace of God; and, as our Lord declares, so far from lifting the burdens and condemnations of the law from the shoulders of the people, who were honest enough to confess inability to keep the perfect law, these scribes and Pharisees, on the contrary, bound upon the people heavy burdens. which they would not assist to lift with their little finger.—Matt. 23:1-4.

Thus doing they became more and more hypocritical and case-hardened, until, in His later descriptions of them, our Lord declared them to be whited sepulchres, outwardly fair and beautiful, inwardly full of corruption, dishonesty, hypocrisy; knowing themselves to be infractors of the law they were outwardly claiming and boasting perfection. This not being said to the Pharisees alone, but to the disciples “also,” implies that they were to notice how the parable fitted and how unwisely this steward class was acting. Even at the table the Pharisees, perceiving to some extent at least the trend of the parable, “derided”—being covetous. But our Lord pressed the lesson home to them saying, “Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts.” You are the unjust steward and soon all will witness your rejection. “The law and the prophets (of which you are the representatives) was (recognised of God) until John (the Baptist); since that time the kingdom of God is preached (the new, the Gospel dispensation), and every one (should) press toward it.” (Verses 14-16.) You, leaders of the people, however, not only will not enter yourselves, but those desiring to enter, you hinder. (Matt. 23:13.) You should see that your institution is bound to Moses and the law as a wife to her husband— so long as it liveth. It is needful, therefore, that the law which you represent should die, that Israel may be liberated and thus be prepared to be united (married) to Messiah by a new covenant.—Verses 17,18; Rom. 7:1-4.

We are not informed that this parable had special application in the end of this Gospel Age, but since we know from other Scriptures that natural Israel and its harvest time were a pattern or illustration of spiritual Israel and this age and the present harvest time, therefore we are justified in looking for some parallel as between the condition of the unjust steward in our Lord’s day and a similar class in this present time. And looking about us today for a class corresponding to those who sat in Moses’ seat, we find a class today sitting in Christ’s seat, as respects the Gospel church. This class is composed of elders, Sunday School teachers and superintendents, ministers, bishops, archbishops, etc. These as a whole are representing a great stewardship of divine favor as respects the Lord’s people today. They perceive that a change of dispensation is upon us, that their creeds and traditions from the past are being called in question, and that they are being required to render up an account. They perceive that the account will not be a very flattering one, and that if the whole truth were known to the people as it is known to God, they would be found derelict, unfaithful to their stewardship in many respects. They fear the crisis; they put off the clay of reckoning as far as possible; they hush the murmurs of the people and the questions respecting creeds, and as the Lord said of the steward of His day, so it will be true of these: “That which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of God.”— Verse 15.

These representatives of the nominal church, who hold a position of stewardship as respects the masses of the Lord’s

people, are disposed, as were the Pharisees, their prototypes, to put a bold face upon matters, to brave it out rather than to confess the truth. As for instance, in the matter of creeds that are being called in question: Many, even of those who were at first disposed to demand the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, have concluded that this would be showing the white feather, and admitting that they had been in error in the past, and imperfect in their interpretation of the divine Word, and hence calculated to discredit them with the people; and now the tide is rapidly turning and the same ones who were demanding a revision are now voting to the contrary, that the creed is good, thoroughly satisfactory to them, that they would not change it for anything. They are so anxious to be highly esteemed of men that they seem to forget altogether the one from whom they received their stewardship, and who is about to take it from them.

What would be the proper course for this steward class of the Gospel Age? We answer, that the proper course would be to do what our Lord recommended to the Jewish stewards; namely, they should candidly confess to the people the errors of the creeds and their own imperfection in attempted exposition of the divine Word, and their own failures in the past in respect of a proper use of the oracles of God and a proper application of the exceeding great and precious promises, and while acknowledging their own errors and shortcomings, they should modify the demands made of the people and bring them into conformity with their ability. For instance, they should say to the people, how much did we say that you owed to God, and what penalty did we say would be imposed upon you? If we said that you were to receive a penalty of eternal torment, count that now as being an error, and write down instead, "A just recompense of reward." If we taught you that your obligations to God are according to the Jewish Law, and as are represented in the Ten Commandments, and that unless these were kept perfectly in letter and in spirit you would have no hope of eternal life, alter and amend that feature of your faith, and write instead that God will accept the most imperfect works of those who have consecrated themselves to Him, providing those imperfect works are the best that they are able to offer; and providing they are offered in the name and merit of Him who loved us and who bought us with His own precious blood.

If the present stewards would follow such a course they would undoubtedly be respected through the future, but following their present course, the time is surely coming when they will be despised as hypocrites and blind guides, who mislead their confiding flocks into the ditch of skepticism and the great time of trouble.

This parable may be considered as ending with the 8th verse, the instructions which follow being separate and distinct, and along a somewhat different line, and addressed specially to those who accepted the Lord's teachings, His disciples.

"Ye Cannot Serve God and Mammon"

This after-lesson is on the subject of the impossibility of having two masters, God and Mammon. Mammon represents earthly riches, not only financial wealth, but honor amongst men, etc.—the thing which was particularly hindering the Pharisees from taking the proper course and acknowledging their error and seeking for and obtaining mercy. Mammon still is a great hindrance to all who desire to be the Lord's disciples. Whoever worships Mammon — and it may be self or wealth or fame or position and honor amongst men, one or all of these — whoever worships Mammon cannot at the same time be a true worshipper of God, a true follower of Christ, because God and Mammon are rivals before our hearts. If we attempt to divide our love and attention, and to give part of it to God and to His service, and part of it to Mammon, the results will be unsatisfactory to God, unsatisfactory to Mammon and unsatisfactory to ourselves.

We must, therefore, decide either to live for self and earthly things, or to renounce and sacrifice these in the interest of God and of heavenly things. The worshippers of Mammon may have certain advantages as respects the present life, in the way of earthly prosperity, but Mammon cannot give eternal life. It is the gift of God, and those who would have God's gift must be God's friends, God's children; and He demands of such that they shall manifest their love and devotion to Him by renouncing Mammon, by joyfully sacrificing earthly name and fame and favor and interest, thus showing their higher appreciation of His love and favor, the riches of His grace, and the exceeding great and precious things which He has promised to give them in the life to come.

These are to "make to themselves friends;" in other words, to lay up treasures in heaven, by the sacrifice of the Mammon of unrighteousness;—that is to say, the sacrifice of the various interests of this present time of unrighteousness, "this present evil world."

Some may have very little of Mammon at their disposal to sacrifice; but the Lord encourages us all by saying that he that is faithful in that which is least, thereby gives evidence of how faithful he would be if he had much; and the Lord accepts the little sacrifices which we are able to make as though they were greater ones. "She hath done what she could" is the best of testimony as respects the use of present opportunities in the Lord's service, whether it refer to a mite or a million, a little influence or a great one. It is not the amount that God is seeking, but the character, the disposition of heart; and whoever has the right disposition of heart and is careful in the small affairs of life, to serve the

Lord with all that he possesses and-to the extent of his ability, such an one will have committed to him the true riches—the heavenly riches. Not merely may he expect to enter into the glories of the heavenly kingdom, but even in the present life he will begin to get a first-fruits of those riches in his own heart, in his own experiences; for it is unquestionably a fact that the heirs of glory, those who are in the right relationship with God and running faithfully in the race, not only will get the prize at the end of the race, but already get blessings which the world can neither give nor take away ;—the joys of the Lord, the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts; so that they can sing for joy, even in the house of their pilgrimage—even in the present unsatisfactory tabernacle condition, in which we groan also, being burdened with its weaknesses.

But if we are not faithful in the little things which confessedly are not our own, and merely given to us as a stewardship—the things, the opportunities, the talents, which are merely put within our grasp as stewards of the Lord,—if we are not faithful in using these with an eye single to the Lord's glory, how can we expect that He will ever give us true riches of grace, to be our own forever, either in the future or in the present life. •

The sum of this lesson to the disciples, then, is that as no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, no more can we serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the “prince of this world.” All of the Lord’s consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God must be willing to become of no reputation, amongst those who are not consecrated, and who, whatever their possessions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the heavenly kingdom. (From “Reprints”)

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Why We Never Go to Shows or Football.

THIS SUBJECT was first brought to mind some years ago as the result of a visit one Sunday afternoon to our Bible Class in Melbourne by a reporter of one of our Melbourne newspapers. During the Bible Study it was evident that our visitor was taking an intelligent interest in the proceedings, and at the close of the meeting asked a number of questions respecting our beliefs and understanding of the Christian life.

A weekly article was appearing in the particular newspaper as a result of this reporter attending the various churches and other gatherings week by week. When his report on our Bible Class appeared in the newspaper some weeks later, without any suggestion on our part, it was entitled — “They Never Go to Shows or Football.” The reporter’s summing up of our conduct as respects The world and its pleasures could not have been better expressed, and it was felt that his choice of a heading in presenting some details about our gatherings was quite a good witness in itself.

It has been thought well to take up this subject again as being a very important one, because what we do with the full time at our disposal for the complete seven days each week, will determine, in the end, whether we are really faithful followers of our Lord, and what kind of an example we are upon the people with whom we live, or with whom we come in contact.

Firstly, in taking our subject — “Why We Never Go to Shows or Football,” — it will be evident that the “We” represents the truly consecrated followers of Christ — it stands for real Christians. In this connection it is important to remember that as “Christ” was the title given to our Lord Jesus from the time of begetting of the holy spirit at His baptism, so the name “Christian” applies correctly only to His anointed followers — those also begotten of the holy spirit.

It is very helpful to note the appropriate steps which are necessary to take in gaining the great favor of membership in God’s family of spirit-begotten sons, and the Scriptures are very clear and revealing in this respect. For instance, it is important to note that coming to Jesus is one thing, but coming after Jesus is quite another. Our Lord declared — “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” (John 6:44.) This drawing or prompting by the Father of those in right heart condition to come to Jesus is for the purpose of their receiving justification by faith, Thus coming to Jesus, full of faith that He is their personal Saviour, and accepting Him as such, these have the assurance — “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1) This is truly an important and essential beginning for all followers of the Master.

We see a further and, equally important step indicated by the invitation of Jesus to His disciples, when He declares — “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.”

(Matt. 16:24.) To come after Jesus in the manner stated, —to deny self and take up the cross — appeals only to a comparatively few of those who have come to Jesus. Because it calls for sacrifice, not many respond; but there is no compulsion for those who cannot appreciate the privilege of accepting this greatest of all invitations ever offered to mankind. Explaining this invitation to discipleship in the full sense, in more detail, our Lord's words to the Jews who felt the heavy burden of trying to keep the law of Moses were — "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30.)

The Apostle Paul contrasted the house of servants under Moses, with the house of sons under Christ, when he declared — "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant . . . But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3:5, 6.)

We become members in the house of sons only by taking the Lord's yoke upon us — being yoked in sacrifice, gladly yielding up our lives to His service — as shown so clearly by the apostle in Rom. 12:1 — "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service."

Who, that has been drawn of God to Jesus, and has accepted Him as their personal Saviour, becoming justified by faith, and who appreciates this amazing invitation to walk in the steps of Christ by full consecration, could fail to accept it whole-heartedly, rejoicingly? When it is realised that this invitation is possible only "by the mercies of God", the response of the truly appreciative will surely be — "Take my life and may it be, Lord, acceptable to Thee." What a wonderful proposition it is to know that our lives may really be "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," through the merit of our dear Redeemer.

The words of the lovely Consecration Hymn seem so fitting to express the desires of our innermost being, as we yield ourselves fully and completely to the Lord to be used in His service, even unto death. It seems appropriate, then, in presenting our lives to God as individuals, that we consider each of our members as comprising a part of our being to be laid on the altar, a living sacrifice, — my heart, my hands, my feet, my voice, my lips, my silver and my gold, my moments and my days, my intellect, my love, myself.

"Take my will and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine." How expressive of one who feels he delights to take the Lord as his Head and Guide in every avenue of life, just as our Lord felt towards the Heavenly Father — "I come to do Thy will, O God." In Revelation 20:4 we have revealed the true attitude of the overcoming saints, who gladly give up their own wills that they may do only the Lord's will. — "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,
Accept this *gift* to-day, for Jesus' sake.
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring, within my trembling hand,
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small;
And Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

"Take my heart, it is Thine own; thus in me Thyself enthrone." Truly it has been stated that the heart is the centre of the affections; therefore, our heart, yielded fully to the Lord would give no divided service, but full and complete in every particular. Speaking for the Lord, the writer of Proverbs declared — "My

son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” (Prov. 23:26.) Yes, indeed; and Paul’s words are so appealing — “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.” And further -- “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.” (2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.) How important it is for the followers of the Master to always realise — “Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price.”

“Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.” Yes, truly, as another hymn writer declared, “Let my hands perform His bidding,” for our Lord on one occasion stated — “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, ‘is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62.) From the Psalmist we also read — “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.” And again -- “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” (Psa. 24:3, 4; 141:2.)

“Beautiful hands, are they that do
The work of the noble, kind and true.”

“Take my feet and let them be swift on errands, Lord for Thee.” “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom. 10:15.) What a favor to run with the glad message of the gospel of peace. And while it may be our heart’s desire to — “Let my feet run in His ways” that may not always be accomplished and so we have the helpful exhortation from the Apostle — “Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” Being properly equipped, with “Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” is essential to be able to perform that service worthy of our Lord. (Heb. 12:13, 14; Eph. 6:15.) The instructions which Jesus gave to His disciples as He sent them out in His service are also most important to us today

“And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, peace be to this house (if not literally, then, in prayer). And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.” (Luke 10:5, 6.) “If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.” (Gal. 5:25.)

“Take my voice and let it bring honor always to my king.” It is surely a great privilege to use our voices in the interest of the Lord’s cause, — “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” From the same apostle we read — “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.) From the Revelator we learn of the triumphant chorus which expresses the happiness of all the faithful over-comers during this harvest of the Gospel Age — “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast . . . stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” (Rev. 15:2, 3.) By using their voices to honor the Lord in this life, this class will prove worthy to continue the same in the heavenly kingdom. (See Rev. 14:1-5.) “In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.” See also Psa. 40:1-3

“He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our Lord.”

“Take my lips and let them be moved with messages from Thee.” The faithful apostle helps us in this matter — “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to

answer every man.” (Col. 4:6.) The Psalmist also adds his testimony — “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.” “Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name . . . And my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.” (Psa. 19:14; 63:3-6.) From Paul, further, we read — “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 15:5, 6.) What a privilege it is to — “Let my lips speak forth His praise.”

“Take my silver and my gold; nothing, Lord, would I withhold.” The words of Jesus seem so appropriate — “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt. 6:19-21.) And again — “Make to yourselves friends of the mammon (riches) of unrighteousness; that, when it fails, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much . . . No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:9-13.)

“Take my moments and my days; let them flow in constant praise.” How important it is that the Christian’s time be used faithfully in the service of the Lord, even the moments each passing day. Paul’s exhortation is most timely for us today, — “See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” (Eph. 5:15-17.) “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Yes, we must seek to redeem, buy back, some time for direct service to God — as much as can be from the necessary daily round and common task. In other words, the Lord’s people are to see that no time is wasted in worldly pleasures and frivolities, and that from the indirect service of God some time may be redeemed for direct service to our Lord and Master. “Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” (Rom. 13:11, 12.)

“Take my intellect and use every power as Thou shalt choose.” In asking the Lord to take our intellect and use our best powers, He expects us to co-operate with Him and become more and more acquainted with the truths of His word, as He declared — “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. The servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:31, 32, 35, 36.) From the Apostle Paul we also read — “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.” “Set your affection (mind, intellect) on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:15; Col. 3:2, 3.) (See also Rev. 7:2, 3.)

“Take my love, my God; I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.” Our love that we ask the Lord to take may be very imperfect, but when rendered to Him it will increase and abound as the days go by. What a standard Paul presents to us in 1 Cor. 13:4-8 — “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” No, indeed Love is the filling from one’s own Another’s cup.

Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not "Must I give?" but "May I sacrifice?"

"Take myself — I wish to be ever, only, all for Thee." This surely expresses the rendering of our all to the Lord, just as the lovely words of the hymn likewise present the sentiments of our heart "Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus, I've lost sight of all beside."

There is truly no comparison possible when once we have become attached to our Lord and Saviour by those ties that bind our hearts in Christian love. So, with the Apostle we do, indeed, "Give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers (sharers) of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:12, 13.) Having tasted that the Lord is truly gracious, how could anyone so blessed use consecrated time and talent attending worldly shows or football?

How clearly did the Apostle John express the matter — "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15, 16.)

It matters not if we do not need to "go" to shows — whether they were one mile or more; whether they were next door, or the next room, it would make no difference to God's people. We may be thought narrow-minded, but that is to be expected, seeing that we are walking in the 'narrow way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' (Matt. 7:14.) The words of the hymn give a true assessment of values

"O! what are all earth's gilded toys,
Compared with heaven's eternal joys?
Or even to the feast now spread,
For pilgrims through the desert led?"

The words of Paul in 1 Cor. 13:11 could also apply in this connection — "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man (in Christ), I put away childish things." "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Faithful when with tears thine eyes are dim,
Faithful when Joy's cup o'erflows its brim;
Faithful when God seems to veil His face,
Faithful when He crowns thy work with grace.
Faithful, though thy loved ones turn aside,
Lips that praised thee once, in harshness chide;
Faithful, though success enwreathes thy brow,
Faithful, should the world before thee bow.
Faithful till hath fled life's fleeting breath,
Eager hands lie folded still in death.
"Faithful unto death!" Lord, day by day,
Help me thus to keep the narrow way!
Strengthen me to bear the scorn and shame—
Portion of all those who take Thy name.

“Faithful unto death!” When all is done, Cross is changed to Crown, the victory won, Let me hear Thee say, O blessed Lord, “Child, come enter into thy reward! Faithful thou hast been, come share with Me Glory, Honor, Immortality!”

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

Appreciation of Booklet.

THE following has been received from one of our brethren and is gladly made known for the benefit of all readers of our “Peoples Paper.”

Recently, I have been looking at the teachings concerning Christ’s Second Advent, and have found the booklet “Christ’s Return —His Revealing and Manifestation,” published by the Berean Bible Institute, most interesting and helpful.

Those of your readers who have seen this booklet would be greatly helped by the perusal of its pages, I am sure. It deals with some of our Lord’s parables which illustrate various aspects of His second coming. The “Young Nobleman” of Luke 19th chapter, also the “Virgins” parable of Matt. 25th chapter are examined, showing that our Lord would be present for some time unknown to the world of mankind in general, and known only to His watching servants.

The thought of the secret presence of Christ may be a new one to many Christians, but it seems to me to be the correct Scriptural teaching, as indicated also by the meaning of the Greek word “parousia” used by our Lord in Matt. 24:27, 37, 39 etc., in answer to the disciples’ question in Matt. 24:3. “Parousia” means “presence” (see Diaglott) as of one who has arrived, not “coming” as in the Authorized Version, which applies to one who is on the way. How we rejoice in this thought of our Lord’s “parousia” (presence) as the Chief Reaper of the Harvest, and in the thought of the near approach of His Kingdom.

Copies of this booklet “Christ Return — His Revealing and Manifestation” are supplied at 1/- per copy, post paid, or free to those unable to purchase. Apply **to- BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE,**

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.

Gentleness.

(Contributed Article)

“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy right hand hath holden me tip, and thy gentleness hath made me great.” (Psa. 18:35.)

DAVID, in one of his psalms, is telling us that something entirely apart from himself had made him great — “Thy gentleness.” We cannot wonder over the psalmist’s greatness for the Almighty was his Counsellor and promoting his cause.

Jehovah never failed in manifestations of love and gentleness in His dealings with His typical people, wandering and rebellious Israel, forever disobeying and repenting, forever falling short of the ideal set before them by the prophets whom God raised up to lead and teach them, and always living far beneath the privileges which they might have enjoyed under the gracious provisions of so great a theocracy.

Times without number God had rescued them from most desperate situations, given them glorious victories over their enemies and brought them safely into places of rest and quietness; yes, “beside still waters.” Like as a father, the Lord had pitied Israel, and because Israel feared Him and was striving in her exceedingly human way to obey Him, God was gentle, compassionate, merciful. • He bore with her backslidings, not appearing to mark every failure, but encouraging the feeble attempts which she made to please Him. Every chastisement was given because He loved His people with, divine and fatherly love. He felt every stroke of the rod His hand applied, and in pity He removed their afflictions as they had learned in some measure the lessons He sought to inculcate.

We recall, too, the tenderness that King David displayed as he fled before his wicked son, Absalom, who, with an army of insurrectionists, was following his father, intent upon his destruction. David had numbered the people who had passed over Jordan with him and divided them into three companies, each company under a captain. With unspeakable sadness the king said, “I will surely go forth with you myself, also.” That broken-hearted father could not endure the thought of his men fighting against his beloved son, knowing their intent to kill him. But the people with David would not allow him to go. “And the king stood by the gate side of Mahanaim, and commanded, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom; and all the people heard.” (2 Sam. 18:1-6) What pathos, heartache and humiliation the father’s words displayed. He had shown that he had learned a good lesson from God’s dealings with himself and his people.

We remember the gentleness of our Saviour at His first advent, how His heart overflowed with love and compassion toward the people. We recall the two blind men sitting by the wayside and when they heard that Jesus passed by, they cried out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.” (Matt. 20:31-34.) “And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him,

If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.” (Mark 1:40-42.)

When Judas escorted a crowd of men, officers and soldiers, with torches and weapons to arrest Jesus, our Lord, knowing all things, went forth and said unto them, “Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.” (John 18:4, 5,

8.) This remarkable composure and courage, the calm, quiet poise of mind and heart under such cruel circumstances is nothing short of amazing to us. And when impetuous Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, Jesus gently said, "Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him." (Luke 22:51).

It was undoubtedly because of the trust and confidence Jesus had in His Father, with entire submission to the Father's will for Himself, that He maintained such gentleness, meekness and quiet unperturbed spirit, unruffled in every experience. Consider Him, too, before Pilate; when questioned concerning Himself, "He answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly." Then Pilate said, "Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." (Matt. 27:14; John 19:10, 11.) Jesus knew that His Father's unlimited power was at His bidding; twelve legions of angels were at His disposal had He so desired it that way, but He chose rather the shameful humiliation, the bitter anguish of the cross, knowing that His Father's way was best. Yes, His gentleness had indeed made Jesus the great One that trod this earth.

Also regarding the little called-out class that the Father is developing and proving now, the feet members of His Gospel Age house of sons, how gently has He led these, for "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them. that reverence him." When we consider how the Lord has led us in our individual lives we are amazed how gently He has led us. step by step to the position wherein we now stand. How gently He has dealt with us in our weaknesses, our short comings; how often have we repeated the same errors, and how often we have had to go to Him. through Jesus to receive cleansing and help and encouragement. Yes, and how gently He has chastised us and pointed us to the wonderful example of our Saviour, and said, "This. is the way, walk ye in it." Yes, as David puts it in Psa. 86:15 — "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."

Jesus also exhorts all those who are sincerely striving to follow Him; He tells us in John 13:34 — "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

The Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Tim. 2:24 — "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient," and. this is to apply to us as brethren and sisters in_ Christ. Further, we are instructed in Col. 3:12 — "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forgiving one another; even as Christ forgave - you, so also do ye." In doing this, in helpful, kindly deeds, one to another, we are keeping Christ's commandment, and also showing to our Heavenly Father our love to Him, for it is. written — "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." (1 John 4:20.) Also we are becoming a little more like Jesus in the gentle acts we do, for he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him, for this is the great objective of it all — to be like Jesus and to see Him as He is, to be called the. sons of God. It may not seem very much, but it is the little things that mean so much in our loving Heavenly Father's eyes; so, be kind to one another, be gentle, be loving. Yes, Thy gentleness can indeed make us great.

Keeping the Faith.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”-2 Tim.4:7.

WAS there ever a nobler soldier of the Cross than St. Paul — the Redeemer alone excepted? Soldiers of fortune and patriots have indeed left their marks in the world and on the pages of history, but not one of them has left so indelible a mark as St. Paul. The motive power influencing others has generally been selfishness, but the motive power of the Christian is the reverse — love. Others hazarded and laid down their lives in self-interest, or in the interest of their kin or tongue. St. Paul, copying his Master, laid down his life for Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, to assist in gathering the “elect” to be the Bride of Christ — that ultimately through the glorified King and His glorified Bride, all the families of the earth may receive the blessings which God waits to give through Abraham’s Seed. — Gal. 3:29.

‘ God is seeking only for heroes now. By and by He will deal with the remainder, helpfully. The “elect” must all be courageous, “conformed to the image of His Son” — heroes. Hence the promise to the Church is “to him that over- cometh.” And let us remember that scripturally considered this character which the Lord seeks may be developed in very humble stations; no matter how low, all may develop the overcoming qualities which the Lord will reward. (1 Cor. 1:26-29.)

When writing the words of our text St. Paul realised that the close of his career was near — his course was finished. He recognised as a Christian that he had certain lessons to learn in the School of Christ and this was a part of his course of preparation for joint-heirship with Christ in the glories of the Messianic Kingdom. The course included not merely theory, but also practice. He not only theoretically learned about Christ, but experimentally. He became a partaker with Him in the sufferings of the present time. And sympathetically he was permitted to enter into a large degree of knowledge of the “mystery” of the Divine Plan hidden from the world.

Not only had his own course of instruction been a thorough one, but he had been given a post-graduate course as an ambassador for his Lord and Redeemer and as an apostle for the brethren, the Church. Moreover, he recognised the fact that all such as become members of the Body of Christ are so directly under the divine supervision and regulations that their times are in God’s hand — all of their affairs of life, temporal and spiritual. As the Master’s death could not occur “until His hour was come,” so likewise it is with His consecrated members.

He had kept the faith and the faith had kept him. Many do not realise how important are knowledge and a correct faith. “My people perish for lack of knowledge” is the Lord’s testimony. And their faith can keep pace only with their knowledge, for faith must have a basis. A correct life depends greatly upon a correct faith. Why did our forefathers burn one another at the stakes in a diabolical manner? because they were governed by error. False doctrines, styled by the Apostle “doctrines of devils,” had been presented to them and they had believed them. And the legitimate outcome of the wrong. belief, the wrong faith, was wrong doing. Believing that God purposed the torture of His creatures ‘for centuries in purgatory or for countless millions of years in eternal torment, they copied the misconception of the Almighty in their lives, to our horror.

But St. Paul had kept the faith — the true faith once delivered unto the saints — faith in the Redeemer’s sacrifice; faith in its application on our behalf; faith in our justification by the Father on that account; faith in the glorious promises of God’s Word; faith in the Lord and faith in the brethren. Surely it meant something to keep the faith — especially when we realise that our great adversary, Satan, is on the alert continually to take it from us or turn or twist it to our loss or injury.

The crown mentioned, the Apostle had seen for many years, with the eye of his faith, as a part of the

Lord's promise. He had, absolute confidence in the Lord and in the promise he had received from Him. That crown had been his cause of rejoicing for many years, not because of pride or ambition, but because of love and benevolence. He would love to receive that crown because it would be the mark of Divine appreciation and love for him; and a mark of his faithfulness. He esteemed it because it would afford him untold opportunity of blessing his fellowmen in association with his Lord and the brethren on the plane of glory during the Millennium.

He hoped for this crown, but did not hope to receive it at death. He knew the Bible teaching on the subject of the resurrection—that this was his God's provision for the communication of His blessing, first for the Church, and subsequently for the world. He knew and taught that there would be "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15.) He desired to have a share with his Redeemer in all of His glorious Kingdom work, and he knew that it could not begin until the completion of this Gospel Age, when all the elect Church, as members of the Bride of Christ, would share in "His resurrection," to glory, honour, immortality and glorious Kingdom privileges. — Phil. 3:10, 11.

It was for this reason that he proceeded to declare that the crown was laid up for him—awaiting him—not at death, but at the time of his resurrection. That crown the Lord would give to him and to all others in the attitude of heart to appreciate His revelation at the Second Advent—"that day." True, not many at the present time love His appearing. The majority, not only of the world, but also of Christians, seeking but not finding in pleasures, riches and honours of men, have certain ambitions along these lines which they would like to satisfy first, and then possibly they might be willing for the Lord to establish His Kingdom. But, no! by the time their lives have been spent in such pursuits they are usually thoroughly disappointed and bewildered and generally further than ever from seeking the Kingdom.

None but the faithful will receive this crown. Thank God, the remainder will not be tortured, but, on the contrary, will be blessed by their crowned brethren, from whom, as the Christ of God, will go the blessings of restitution through the agency of the Messianic Kingdom. Eventually all the blind eyes of understanding will be opened—eventually all will see the great Messiah, though invisible to the natural sight. Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.

St. Paul closes his exhortation by reciting that in his trial before Nero some in whom he had full confidence had forsaken him, and he concludes that the Lord, nevertheless, stood with him and strengthened him, and that he had every confidence in His care to the end of the way.

Tracts Available.

The article—"Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ's Return?" which appeared in last month's "Peoples Paper" will be available shortly in tract form. Friends who can use these to good advantage are invited to procure these tracts which are supplied free from the Tract Fund. Various other tracts also available.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid: orders may be placed by quoting numbers. as follows-

- (1') -Just for To-day,"
- (2) "One Here and There.
- (3) 'How Readest Thou?,"
- (4) "The New Leaf,
- (5) "The The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope--Love,
- (6) Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
- (7) "My Bible and I,"
- (8) "Love's Victory,"
- (9) "The Touch of the Master's Hand,-
- (10) -Some Worthy Attainments,
- (11) "Come Unto Me,"
- (12) "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
- (13) "The Secret of His Presence."
- (14) "Watching and Praying,"
- (15) "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,-
- (16) "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,-
- (17) "Hitherto and Henceforth,"
- (12) "The Lord My Shepherd,"
- (13) "Into His Marvellous Light,"
- (14) "Right was The Pathway,"
- (15) "This is My Will for Thee.-
- (16) "Are Ye Able?"

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.-Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.-Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.-Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymoath Street.--Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

"Daily Heavenly Manna."—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/6

Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 19/9, plus 1/3 postage.



Volume XLI No. 11 MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER, 1958 Price— Fivepence

Why Does an All-Powerful God Permit Aggression Amongst the Nations?

It may seem unnecessary to most of us to even question the power and ability of the Almighty God to regulate all things throughout His universe in accord with His good will. However, we have met people who have asked, If God is really all-powerful, and loving, why does He permit aggression by the strong whether it be nations or individuals, with the resulting suffering and distress on the part of the weaker and often innocent of mankind ?

This is an honest and reasonable question, and we believe that it is fully answered in the Bible in a manner that should be satisfactory to all right thinking individuals, even if they are not yet Christians. Noting some Scriptures with reference to the Lord Himself, we read in Gen. 17:1—"The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Through the prophet Isaiah, we also read of the greatness of the Lord in comparison with the nations of this world in Isa. 40:12-28. To visualize a God who was the Creator not only of our planet, but of all the planets in the whole universe--"that bringeth out their host by number"—really passes our comprehension of His might and power. But it does help us to understand the truth of the same prophet, speaking again for the Lord in Isa. 46:9-11.—"For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me . . . My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure . . . Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

Someone may say, Yes, we admit the great power of God to accomplish just what He wills on any matter, but why does He allow such unjust and unequal things throughout the lengths and breadths of this earth ? The partial answer to this question is found in the words of Gen. 1:26, with reference to the creation of our first parent.—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." To be created "in the image or likeness of God," meant that Adam must have a freewill; that is, to be able to make an intellectual choice respecting all of life's affairs. God had instructed Adam what was expected of him in the way of obedience, and he, knowing the love that his Creator had for him, was expected to obey, not because of any pressure brought to bear, but from his own choice—in the exercise of his free-will.

The angels in heaven were no doubt controlled by the same principles—they also having free-wills were required to obey God, not of compulsion, but out of love for their Creator also. This gave the opportunity for Satan to rebel against God, and we know he also engineered the disobedience of Adam, our first parent, who gave way to the subtle deception. The outcome was, as we well know, that Adam must

experience the penalty of death, which would never have been experienced had he resisted the Adversary and remained faithful to his loving Creator. Condemned to death himself, all of Adam's children were born into a dying existence, as we read from the Apostle in Rom. 5:12— "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

However, what about the spirit of aggression which was manifest in the human family even in Adam's day; indeed, the first child of Adam and Eve developed the aggressive spirit so strongly that he killed his brother, Abel. This influence also came from the great Adversary, whom our Lord said, "was a murderer from the beginning."—John 8:44. See also 1 John 3:12.

We may think, and question, Why did not God, the all-powerful Creator, intervene in the day of Cain and Abel and nip that spirit of aggression in the bud, before it blossomed forth into the lives of hundreds, thousands and millions of the human family as it has today ? Apparently, God saw it was wiser not to interfere with His original Plan—that all mankind must experience the sad and disastrous result of disobedience—so that when the opportunity comes to be delivered from the fall into sin, the majority, at least, will accept that deliverance, not wishing to continue eating the sour grape, which has set so many teeth on edge. One great lesson that the Lord wishes all mankind to learn is that expressed in Prov. 13:15—"The way of the transgressors is hard."

Further, in addition to the lasting lesson of the sinfulness of sin being impressed upon the whole human family, God has been proving the faithfulness of two classes of people, over hundreds of years, by the permission of evil, including aggression by a section of mankind.

We think, first of all, of that noble band of patriarchs and prophets from the days of Abel right down to John the Baptist, many of whom are described by Paul in Heb. 11. In verse 38 the apostle declared—"Of whom the world was not worthy." How true ! These faithful Ancient Worthies suffered aggression of a most violent type, and endured "as seeing him who is invisible," being proved worthy to obtain "a better resurrection" in the earthly kingdom. Without the permission of evil, and the aggression displayed against them, they could not have manifest their supreme love and devotion to the Lord and His cause. They shall be compensated, and no doubt counted the Lord's cause well worth suffering for, as they exhibited that overcoming faith in God and His promises for the future.

Of our Lord at His first advent it was prophesied in the Psalms and quoted by Paul in Romans 15:3—"The reproaches of them that reproached thee (Jehovah) fell on me." In Old Testament times the reproaches of them that reproached Jehovah were experienced by all the faithful ones of the class of Ancient Worthies, as we have seen, but Christ experienced the greatest reproaches of all, the greatest aggression of all time. Why did the Father permit these acts of aggression upon Christ ? We have the answer in Hebrews 5:8, 9—"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience (proved His obedience) by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." We read further of our Lord—"Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand, of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Heb. 12:2, 3.)

As with Christ, so with His followers, the experiences through which they pass demonstrate their worthiness of a place in the kingdom with the Lord.' Paul's words to Timothy, respecting his own position and that of all faithful followers of the Master, are most explanatory in 2 Tim. 3:10-12—"But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions . . . what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Again, we have the exhortation from the Apostle--"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.)

In the opening verses of Revelation 17 we have a most remarkable prophecy respecting the judgment of a great system, pictured by an unchaste woman, and we quote in part—"The inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication . . . And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious^ stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great astonishment." (Rev. 17:2, 4-6.) What aggression, what persecution is revealed in the words of this prophecy, and which was poured out upon God's people throughout the centuries of the Dark Ages by the Papal system—and that in the name of the Lord ! It has been estimated that at least 50 millions of people were persecuted unto death by the Papacy over the centuries of this Gospel Age, and as we write we hear of thousands bowing down to the body of the recently deceased Pope, the head of the system which claims that it never alters. Which means, that if it had the power today, it would continue to slaughter those who dared to think for themselves and serve the true God in spirit and in truth.

No wonder we read of the destruction of this great system of iniquity in Revelation 18. We quote again—"All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her." (Verse 3.) We hear in the news at this very time that kings and queens, i..residents and prime ministers the world over have been lamenting and praising the man who represented this system which is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. We can well understand the further exhortation—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Verses 4, 5.) While these words in Revelation describe the Mother system of iniquity, we know that the "Daughter" systems partake largely of the spirit and teachings of the Mother—along the line of immortality of the soul, hell fire, trinity, etc. So, the term "Babylon" includes all church systems which teach these God-dishonoring theories, and the call goes out to all who have ears to hear—"Come out of her, my people."

The further verses in Revelation 18 describe the lamentations at the destruction of Babylon—"Alas, alas, that great city Babylon; for in one hour is thy judgment come." Then the message is addressed to God's faithful saints who would then be with Him in glory—"Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all . . . And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Verses 10, 20, 21, 24.)

In Revelation 19:3 we read in this same connection—"And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." Yes, "her smoke"—the remembrance of such a system of iniquity, Satan's masterpiece, will last in the minds of all people, so that they will never desire again, nor subscribe to such an abomination of desolation. It is estimated at the present time that 450 millions of people are deceived in the Mother system of Papacy alone, apart from those also in the Daughter systems, but all these shall be liberated at the destruction of Babylon, as well as all the millions that will be awakened in the resurrection, at which time we read respecting the saints in glory—"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." (Rev. 3:9.) See also 2 Thes. 2:7-12 with reference to this "mystery of iniquity."

Again, it may be asked, Why did the all-powerful God permit such an aggressive, devastating system to deceive all nations ? One of the main reasons seems well presented in the words of Revelation 20:4—"I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which

had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” These overcoming saints had not worshipped the beast—the beastly Papal system. Neither his image—any similar system, ancient or modern. Neither had received his mark upon their foreheads—did not intellectually yield to the great deception which ensnared the majority of mankind. Or in their hands—did not work for, or further the interest of such a system of iniquity. No, these faithful ones were gladly “beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God,” and the aggression and persecutions against them have but demonstrated their loyalty, and sifted out all those who were not fully consecrated to the Lord and worthy to endure and suffer for His sake.

Coming down the stream of time to our own century, we think of other great aggressions, such as the First World War, and, the devastations inflicted upon many nations, and especially upon innocent women and children. During that war, a Peace Mission was organized in America, led by a Mr. Wilson; an ocean liner was chartered with the peace delegation on board to sail for Europe to try and bring peace to the warring nations. A noble effort indeed ! Reading an account of the voyage, it was reported that during the deliberations in preparation for the peace mission, disputes broke out amongst the delegation—amongst themselves, before they reached the war area. Why ? it may be asked!

The Apostle Paul’s reference to the former lives of the Ephesian Christians is very explanatory—”In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Yes, the Adversary would seek to disrupt any good movement, and accomplishes much along this line in all except those truly controlled by the Lord’s spirit.

It may ‘be asked, But what good was accomplished by God permitting that First World War ? Answer, many of God’s people were further developed for the heavenly kingdom; millions of people gained lessons in the sinfulness of sin that will be to their everlasting gain in the kingdom to come, and Jerusalem was liberated from the Turks, in preparation for the further progress over the 40 years since.

What of the Second World War and the aggression of that time in various countries ? Out of that again, further millions of lessons have been gained by the inhabitants of the world; further developing of the members of the Church on earth, and the driving of the Jews back to Palestine. Read Jer. 16:14-17—”The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them . . . Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain (kingdom).” Harsh methods some may think ! Yes, perhaps so, but the Lord knows best what to permit, and what to restrain.—”Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” (Psa. 76:10,)

What of our own days, and the aggressions which continue in various lands of the world ? We think of the aggression in Hungary by Communist domination. Aggression in the Middle East, and now again in the Far East. Newspaper reports have stated that up to 67,000 shells have been fired from Red China to Quemoy Island in a day ! And this is Chinese against Chinese—their own countrymen and women. Truly man’s inhumanity to man knows no bounds in this 20th century civilization. And God, the all-powerful God allows mankind to be subjected to their own inhumanity. Why ? Because He wishes to impart the greatest lesson of all time in the ending of this “present evil world.” In Psalm 46 we read—”The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth (earthly society) melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.” The prophet refers to the Lord making the desolations because it will be by His permission, and what He requires in His Plan. Then will follow—”He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” (Psa. 46:6, 8-10.) The Lord will surely call a halt to all aggression

of all kinds when sufficient lessons have been learned of the sinfulness of sin.

While the disturbances of earth continue, the Lord's people are to progress with their own preparation of heart and mind for the heavenly kingdom, as shown in 2 Cor. 10:3-6. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." And then follows one of the Apostle's most revealing statements concerning God's plan—"and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your (the church's) obedience is fulfilled."

What a wonderful solution to all earth's aggressions—the Lord will revenge all disobedience when the Church has fulfilled her obedience, her sacrifice in the steps of Christ. How fitting, then, are Paul's words—"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer." (Rom. 12:19, 18, 12.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, *we* cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

Heavens Rolling Together.

THE recent death of the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church has revealed a situation amongst the so-called Protestant Churches which has not been so apparent previously. A news item in the Melbourne "Age" of the 13th October last, is presented in explanation:—

"The congregation at Wesley Church P.S.A., at Dr. Irving Benson's invitation, stood in silence as a tribute to 'a simple, humble, kindly, greatly gifted man who had gone to his reward.' At Scots Church Rev. A. Crichton Barr offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the life of a good man. Rev. Lyall Dixon at Independent Church said 'We share the loss occasioned by the death of the Pope, and sympathise with the members and friends of that church.' "

For the leader of any Protestant Church to declare that the head of the Roman Catholic Church had gone to his reward after serving for about twenty years as director of the great anti-christian Papal system is almost unbelievable. Surely the three church leaders quoted above have read a little of church history, and should know that during the Dark Ages the Papacy persecuted and slaughtered millions of innocent people in the name a Christ. They should know also that not many years ago the claim was made that the 'Roman Catholic Church never alters, and inasmuch as the recently deceased Pope accepted his office on the assumption that his predecessors had acted rightly, then he must have condoned their conduct, and, if he had the power, may also have continued their devastating reign of terror, and that, in the Lord's name.

When Napoleon took the Pope of his day prisoner and broke his power, by the Lord's overruling, that marked the beginning of the end of the greatest anti-christian system the world has known and now in our day we see further amazing evidence of the consuming going on in preparation for the complete destruction of the "mystery of iniquity" which has deceived all nations. In Rev. 6:14 we read —"And the heaven (ecclesiastical systems) departed as a scroll when it is rolled together." How appropriate the expression—"rolled together as a scroll" — showing that the Mother and Daughter systems will combine, making up Great Babylon, which is shortly to be overthrown like a "great millstone cast into the sea." (Rev. 18.)

The recently deceased Pope, along with all mankind, Roman Catholic and otherwise, will no doubt come up in the resurrection day, to unlearn the grossest of errors, if they will, and learn and obey the laws of Christ's kingdom, if they are to prove worthy of everlasting life on the restored earth. (Acts 3:20-23.)

Retrospection.

(Convention Address)

“Call to remembrance the former days.” (Heb. 10:32.)

THERE is a decided advantage in looking back on things past—calling to mind past experiences, lessons, instructions and knowledge, mistakes, failures or successes learnt in former days, not only in our • natural life, but especially in our spiritual life and character development, noting how our fellowship with the Lord has increased and become more intimate.

Calling to mind our endeavors to obey the instructions of the Scriptures and overcoming our own selfish will and conduct is cause for joy and thanksgiving to our Creator. This joy springs from the fact that the Lord has supplied the necessary help, strength and guidance with corrections and instructions. Looking back over the years we cannot come to any other conclusion than that it is a definite spiritual experience—it is a real thing.

Apart from the Lord and a knowledge of the Scriptures we could not have brought about this change. Although the beginning of this schooling was perhaps feeble and faulty on our part, yet, as we look back, there definitely has been progress.

It is interesting to note in the Scriptures that Israel was so often urged to call to mind their former days and experiences, especially in their deliverance from Pharaoh and the Egyptian bondage.—“Remember this day, in which ye came out of Egypt ... by the strength of the hand of the Lord.” “Remember, and do all the commandments, and be holy unto your God.” (Exod. 13:3; Num. 15:40) Often, they were urged to “Remember, and forget not how thou provokest thy Lord in the wilderness.” (Dent. 8:2.) Forgetting this, so often brought them calamities, punishments and national disasters.

We too, are likewise warned—“If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” (Heb. 10:38.) We, who have confessed Christ and His truth, are also included in that message to the Church of Sardis—“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee.” (Rev. 3:3.)

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews urges his readers to “Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated (enlightened), ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” Calling to mind days, now past, when we were first enlightened surely does encourage and stimulate the consecrated followers of the Lord, causing them to rejoice in His providences and guidance as they observe the manifestations of His love, mercy and power overshadowing them.

On reflection, as we take a mental picture of the past experiences and blessings of the truth, especially “present truth”, the question presents itself to our mind—What would our life, our circumstances, hopes, aims, our going out and coming in, have been, if the heart-cheering, sanctifying and joyful message of Present Truth had not been shown to us ? How it has changed our lives, our former conduct, and choice of friends and fellowship, and given new experiences. As the writer of Hebrews says—Ye became the companions of them that are persecuted and esteemed as foolish by the worldly wise.

Once we were dead in trespasses and sins. “For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles.” (1 Pet. 4:3.) After referring to the evil works of the flesh, the Apostle Paul says—“And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:11.)

Calling to mind those former days, as the Apostle reminds some who were now consecrated to the Lord, was not with the purpose of shaming them, but to remind them of their present privileges; favors and blessings of our merciful Lord, so that joy and love may abound in their hearts one for another, and call forth from them genuine gratitude and praise to the Lord for His goodness which led them to repentance. He does not now refer to them as miserable sinners under condemnation, but “If any one be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17.)

To another group of Christians Paul writes — “When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness (ye freely followed your selfish inclinations). What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed ? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:20-22.)

Calling to mind some things in which we once lived and moved may not be good, and it is proper to forget some things in ourselves and in other fellow Christians. We note the Apostle Paul had put the question—“What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed ?” Nevertheless, seeing our past conduct in this light, we, by the Lord’s illuminating spirit, have turned about, and what a change this has been; no other power could do this—we are convinced this is of the Lord.

O! blessed they, and greatly blest,
Where Christ is ruler and confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes,
To whom this King of triumph comes!

This position which we now occupy before God has been entered into by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the spirit of our God. So great is this change, that the Scriptures declare—“Henceforth know we no man after the flesh . . . If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you.” (2 Cor. 5:16, 17; Rom. 8:9.) Christianity is much more than living a good, moral life. In God’s viewpoint and estimation we are not now regarded as sinners, but as spirit-begotten sons—“I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor. 6:18.) While the Apostle Paul does refer to himself as the chief of sinners in 1 Tim. 1:15, 16, he did not, refer to himself as such after he had been chosen as an apostle of Christ, but he confesses that this was his condition before he found Christ as a Saviour—before he was enlightened. As he had received Christ, so also he walked in His steps, and was “not disobedient to the heavenly vision,” but grateful indeed for the favor that justified without merit on his part, and for the truth which sanctifies.

So, in like manner, we should appreciate the favors and gifts bestowed upon us by Christ without merit on our part. Truly, we can all testify that He guided our steps where we could not see, by ways that we had not known, these many years. And what lessons they unfold — what watchfulness, love, patience and tenderness, longsuffering instructions and experiences, corrections with Fatherly love and wisdom, all given so freely these many years. We feel so unworthy of them, and those who have been forgiven the most love Him the most.

We cannot deny that we have had these blessings and experiences, for we now know for a certainty that His precious truths and promises have come to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot help but sing-

O! come, my Sovereign, enter in;
Yet more Thy nobler life begin;
Thy Word and spirit guide us on,
Until the glorious crown be won!

When we make a comparison of what we might have been without the favor and spirit of the Lord, it is not very happifying as we look back over these many years. How much of the selfishness, vanity, pride, malice, anger, envy, covetousness and other works of the flesh dominated us ? And these works would have increased within us, resulting in unhappiness to ourselves and to others about us if we had not known the wonders of the Scriptures. It is therefore, not presumption to claim the blessedness of the truth, its wonders, its promises, its uplifting, transforming powers, guaranteed to us by the Highest and Holiest personality in the universe. The message in 2 Thes. 2:13, 14 applies to us also.—"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

No, it is not presumptuous for us to claim, and for all the consecrated all over the world to claim that we now stand on higher ground—truly by faith already "seated with Christ in the heavenlies." In Eph. 2:4-6 are words of authority on this matter which are applicable only to consecrated Christians. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved ;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The context from which our text is taken refers to the same blessed fact and experience. "Call to remembrance (how) you took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing ("for" margin) yourselves that ye have ("in heaven" omitted by Diaglott and R.S.V) a better and enduring substance (or possession)." Therefore, when you are tossed upon life's billows, when you are discouraged thinking all is lost, or when you look at others with their lands and gold; think—"call to mind"—that Christ has promised you His wealth untold; count and think upon your many blessings wealth can never buy.

Call to mind the consummation of your trial day, when the shadows lengthen and evening comes; our earthly tabernacle (tent) is about to be taken down; then, call to remembrance your promised reward in heaven and your home on high. Foolish we would be after these many years to have endured a great conflict and many sufferings and trials, to throw away our confidence in the hope, now so near, set before us. No, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has a great reward." (Heb.10:35.) Yes, this is sure to all who fight the good fight of faith.

However, we all still have need of patience, for the Christian's life consists of doing the Lord's will every day, "and having so done" the Apostle says, verse 36, "ye shall receive the promise." The Lord promised—"For I am going to make ready a place for you, and I will return and take you to be with me, that where I am you also may be." (John 14:2, 3, Weymouth.)

The apostle urges the consecrated in Heb. 10:37 to be patient in their trials and sufferings, for in comparison with the eternal fellowship with the Lord these were for a little while only, and "He that cometh will come, and will not tarry."

As we look over 'these many years, the espoused virgin church has waited long for her beloved Lord and Bridegroom. Even to the longing, beloved John, at the beginning of the Gospel Age, the Lord gave a final assurance— "Surely I come quickly." This is His last message to the Church. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," was John's response and every Christian's response these many years. (Rev. 22:20).

It is therefore most fitting for us to call to remembrance the former days (years) in which we were illuminated concerning the message of Present Truth, which is light for the last days, for there may be a tendency to now follow up merely a devotional life, placing doctrines of Present Truth secondary because these have to be contended for. Are we not favored to be living now--enlightened with the knowledge of the Lord's presence, and what is involved in these days of the Son of Man, and the gathering of His virgin

Church unto Himself, also the nearness of the blessing of all the families of the earth. Perhaps the delay or full accomplishment of these things for which the Church is waiting has been trialsome to many.

Although we see the signs and preparations for these things everywhere, yet the giant powers of evil are still very formidable and feverishly scheming how to avoid a total collapse of the present evil world. Nevertheless, the message still comes to the consecrated Christian—"Yet a little while"—and all things written by the prophets shall be accomplished, for there is no tarrying as far as the Lord is concerned, for we are surely living in the "days of the Son of Man"—His second presence. It is now true concerning the signs of His presence, that "when ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh."

After these many, many years these things are beginning to come to pass as predicted. Surely, then, let us press on in watchfulness and prayer, with joy and zeal, for it is also true that we are living in very perilous times; that is, spiritual peril, with foes on every hand to draw us away from the prize. The powers of darkness will not retreat without a great conflict, and with cunning craftiness seek to becloud the issues involved and to belittle Present Truth and its importance.

Call to mind what has happened in the religious and secular world since we were first enlightened; hasn't there been a change since then ? Yes, indeed. Perhaps some can look back 40 or 50 years since they first believed the truth; their

salvation now is nearer, and most of us would say that all the wonderful signs of our times add up to the conclusion that at long last the end of the age, the end of the reign of evil, is in sight,—the celestial city is in view. The reign of righteousness and truth will soon be inaugurated.

If the many years from the first advent of Christ to His second advent is compared to a little while, in Scripture, then, surely, the present period of waiting for the full accomplishment can be compared only to a moment—a moment and all things concerning our good hope shall be fulfilled completely. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." (2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 13:12.)

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth. with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. 'The price is. 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows

1. "Just for To-day,"
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3. "How Readest Thou?,"
4. "The New Leaf,"
5. "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,"
6. "Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
7. "My Bible and I,"
8. "Love's Victory,"
9. "The Touch of the Master's Hand,"
10. "Some Worthy Attainments,"
11. "Come Unto Me,"
12. "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
13. "The Secret of His Presence,"
14. "Watching and Praying,"
15. "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,"
16. "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,"
17. "Hitherto and Henceforth,"
18. "The Lord My Shepherd,"
19. "Into His Marvellous Light,"
20. "Right was The Pathway,"
21. "This is My Will for Thee.-
22. "Are Ye Able ?"

Tracts Available.

The article—"Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ's Return ?" which appeared in last month's "Peoples Paper" will be available shortly in tract form. Friends who can use these to good advantage are invited to procure these tracts which are supplied free from the Tract Fund. Various other tracts also available.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocca binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

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BOOKS WANTED.

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Is It Necessary for Christians to Understand Bible Truths?

THIS SUBJECT is one that has no doubt been presented to the minds of a great number of people at one time or another. Most of us have 'probably heard the remark by well-meaning people that it does not really matter what one believes about the Bible, or if one tries to understand it or not, so long as we lead a good, honest and upright life, do no harm, but try to do good whenever possible.

This outline is certainly very honorable, and if every member of the human family carried it out in their dealings with their families and those with whom they come in contact, the world would certainly be a very different place to what it is today. 'So in dealing with our subject, let it not be thought that we are disparaging such a noble objective.

This formula which is thought by a large number of people would constitute the full requirement for a Christian must certainly be incorporated into the lives of everyone who is seeking to please and honor the Lord in all things, for without this heart-desire all understanding of the Bible truths would be worthless; yes, without this heart-intention the knowledge of Bible truths could bring condemnation. So, when we hear someone say—I try to lead a good, honest and upright life and do no one any harm, but try to do good wherever possible—we should be glad that such a one has the right viewpoint of what a Christian should be in the eyes of those who have not been drawn of God to understand His plans and purposes for the followers of Jesus during this Gospel Age.

However, what about Christians themselves; is it really necessary that they understand the truths of the Bible as a whole? A helpful Scripture in explanation is found in Acts 8:26-38, which please read. It has been suggested that the angel of the Lord likely directed Philip by a dream, in explanation of verse 26; and in verse 29 the information to Philip would probably be communicated to his mind. It was an honest enquiry in verse 30 to this earnest Ethiopian— "Understandest thou what thou. readest?" From the response in verse 31—"How can I, except some man should guide me ?"—we observe the quality of meekness in this man, and which is so necessary in the understanding of the Bible, not only intellectually, but also in the heart.

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture (Isa. 53:7, 8), and preached unto him Jesus."— Verse 35. What a wonderful presentation of the truth concerning Jesus that must have been which Philip explained to that Ethiopian. No doubt he would tell him about the great condescension of Jesus to become a Man, that He might redeem the world of mankind—such as we find in 2 Cor. 8:9. He would explain about the pre-human existence of Jesus,— "the glory that he had with the Father before the

world was” —as shown in Phil. 2:6-9.

Philip would show that Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself was a voluntary one—that He delighted to co-operate with the Father in paying the ransom, or corresponding price for Adam and all mankind condemned to death in Adam. All these features about Jesus would be explained from the wonderful prophecy of Isaiah 53 which the Ethiopian had been reading, and he would show the exaltation of the Lord to the Father’s right hand in the words of verse 12—”Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great.” Yes, the high exaltation of Jesus was to “the express image of the Father’s person.” (Heb. 1:3.).

It would be explained further by Philip that God was “taking out a people for His name”, from both Jews and Gentiles, as indicated by the further words of verse 12—”He shall divide the spoil with the strong.” Yes, with those who are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,—those who are strong for the Lord, strong for truth and righteousness, willing to sacrifice all worldly pleasures and ambitions for the Lord and His cause. Indeed, no others could be of this class “for God’s name,” and to whom the risen Jesus is pleased to divide the spoil, in the language of the prophet Isaiah.

How deeply, also, must Philip have shown that Jesus’ sacrifice began at the time of His consecration, when He was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. He could have shown the great difference between the baptism of John and Jesus’ baptism. John’s baptism signified the “remission of sins” — picturing the heart condition of the Jews who repented of their sins against the Law of God. How different was Jesus’ baptism—He had no sins of which to repent, and we can understand the position of John the Baptist from Matt. 3:13-17.

Philip must have explained this matter very fully, showing that the followers of Jesus, true Christians, should truly understand these spiritual truths, and know that they also are invited to walk in the steps of Jesus’ death baptism, as we read in Rom. 6:3-5.—”Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”

Having made the heart consecration to be dead with Christ, then it would be in order to take the symbol of water baptism, as the Ethiopian desired to do, and which Philip gladly administered, when the query was made—”What doth hinder me to be baptized?” There was nothing to hinder—apparently this man had for some considerable time been devoted to God, and had undertaken this visit to Jerusalem, as is stated in verse 27—”to worship.” All he needed was to get things straight in his mind, his heart being already in a consecrated condition, and Philip was God’s servant for this special occasion.

It has been suggested that this “man of Ethiopia” was probably chosen of God to first introduce the Gospel into Africa, and we can see that it was very necessary for him to understand the truths of the Bible; indeed, he was so yearning and longing to understand the prophecy about Jesus, that God sent a special messenger, in the person of Philip, to “preach unto him Jesus.” We can be quite sure that all who hunger and thirst after righteousness, as did the man of Ethiopia, will likewise be supplied with the heavenly truths, for it is equally necessary today for true Christians to understand the truths of the Bible.

We remember how our Lord encouraged His disciples to understand the truths He was preaching when they asked Him on one occasion why He spake in parables. He answered in Matt. 13:11—”Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (the multitude at large) it is not given.” The Apostle enlarges beautifully on this matter of the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” in Col. 1:26, 27—”The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

What a wonderful favor is this—”Christ in you the hope of glory”—for^ there is nothing in this wide

world to compare with the blessing in the hearts of those so privileged. In 2 Cor. 5:17 we read—"If any man be in Christ, he, is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." It may be asked—What is the difference between "Christ in you," and being "in Christ"? There is no difference; these two expressions but emphasize the reality of Christ's transforming power. To those who have experienced this indwelling of the spirit of Christ—Christ in you—their hearts and minds are in continual harmony and accord with the Lord, the brethren, and all with whom they have to do. This is one way in which we can test our relationship with the Lord and His cause—Do we experience continually the indwelling of Christ's spirit—"Christ in you, the hope of glory?" If not, we could be allowing the Adversary to hinder our appreciation of spiritual things, and we must resist the evil one, with his evil thoughts and suggestions, if we are to be worthy of the indwelling spirit of Christ.

No wonder our Lord declared of His own devoted disciples whom He found worthy to appreciate the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"—"Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which, ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." Yes, indeed, the revelation to the ancient prophets was limited; they could not be invited to partake of the heavenly truths prior to our Lord's first advent. This is made very plain again from the Apostle Paul—"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward; how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. 3:2, 3, 5, 6.)

Those who are favored to become partakers of the heavenly calling in Christ by the Gospel do not need to be reminded of the necessity to understand the truths of the Bible, for the Word of the Lord is truly their meat and drink. They rejoice also that the partaking of the spiritual truths in Christ by the gospel is for all the members of the body of Christ, as revealed in Gal. 3:27-29—"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

It may be asked, What does Abraham have to do with the followers of Christ, seeing he lived so long ago—back in the Patriarchal Age? It is very interesting to find that God made a wonderful promise to Abraham because of his great faith in being willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac, had God required it, assured that God could raise Isaac from the dead to fulfil His promises. This is found in Gen. 22:15-18.—"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord . . . That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." In this promise of God we see two seeds are recorded—"the stars of heaven" and "the sand by the sea shore," —and the Apostle reveals the understanding of this matter in Gal. 3:16—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." So, in that promise to Abraham, God had Christ in mind (also those "in Christ") when referring to the "stars of heaven" seed. Paul reveals this as he continues the connection in Gal. 4:28—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

How clearly we see, then, that the followers of Christ, Christians of this Gospel Age, are called and developed under the Abrahamic Covenant—that unconditional promise God made to Abraham. This the Apostle shows in Gal. 3:17—"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." No, indeed; what Paul is stating is, that while God did add the Law Covenant for Israel through Moses 430 years after His promise to Abraham, yet, when Christ came and the Law Covenant had finished its work, it had not disannulled, or cancelled the Abrahamic promise — to develop the

spiritual seed, Head and Body. That is why, we saw in Gal. 3:29—"If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The Apostle John gives us a helpful connecting thought with our subject when he declared —"If any man sin; we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1.) The Apostle does not say that Christians have a mediator with the Father, as will be the case with Israel and the world when the New Covenant is operating in the Millennial Age. There is an important difference in the offices of an advocate and a mediator. Christ, as our Advocate, stands alongside, and makes up the deficiencies of those who are not opposed to God (we are "accepted in, the beloved", Eph. 1:6); whereas, as Mediator in the kingdom age Christ will stand between two opposing parties—to fully reconcile the world to God. (1 Tim. 2:3-6.)

In 1 John 2:2 the Apostle John continues to expound the truth—"And he (Christ) is the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins; and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world." We surely rejoice that the truths of the Bible are so all-embracing to provide for every member of the human family who has ever lived, and surely it is necessary for all true Christians to know this, for this is part of the gospel of Christ.. In bringing the blessing of everlasting life to the world, God first of all deals with the nation of Israel (after the time of trouble has passed) and makes a New Covenant with them, as stated by the prophet Jeremiah 31:31-34.

The Apostle Paul also mentioned this New Covenant to be made with Israel in various places, such as in Rom.

11:27—"For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." He had stated previously about the "fulness of the Gentiles coming in" to make up the Bride of Christ, and then declared—"All Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Verses 25, 26.) In Acts 15:14-17 we have the same truths of the Plan of God presented,—The taking out of the Gentiles "a people for God's name," followed by the restoration of "the tabernacle of David." We note especially *in* verse 17—"That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

The extending of God's blessings to all mankind through His New Covenant favors to Israel will be a truly wonderful culmination throughout the Millennial Age, following the completion of the "Mystery class," the Bride of Christ, which is even now unknown to the majority in the religious world. However, the time is at hand when "the mystery of God should be finished" (Rev. 10:7)—when the Bride of Christ is completed and united to her Lord, at which time it will be no longer a mystery that God has selected the "stars of heaven" class to reign with Christ and bring blessings to all the families of the earth, even to "the sand which is upon the sea shore," when "they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

Pilgrim Way Ended.

ON November 5th our dear Brother Kaesehagen reached the end of the earthly way after a brief illness. For about 50 years our Brother had enjoyed the light of Present Truth, and had rejoiced in service and fellowship with the Adelaide Class during that period. Always humble-minded and whole-hearted in his service for the Lord, he rejoiced in the wonderful hope of salvation for the Church in this Age, in order to the blessing of all the families of the earth in the Millennial Age.

Our dear Brother looked forward with earnest longing to the coming of the Lord's Kingdom, and his sympathetic nature caused him to feel deeply the wrongs and sufferings of mankind during the present "night of weeping and sorrow" which precedes the glorious "day" of joy, peace and blessing. Much sympathy is expressed to our dear Sister Kaesehagen and family in the great loss they have sustained, and we earnestly commend them to God in this time of trial and need.

It is indeed a precious thought that since we are now living in the "days of the presence of the Son of Man," the sleeping saints have been awakened, and those fully consecrated ones who now "die in the Lord" are "changed in a moment" to be with and like their beloved Lord. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection . . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6; 14:13; 1 Cor. 15:51-53.)

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

Receiving God's Gifts.

ANOTHER anniversary of the birth of our Saviour is at hand, and it does us good to meditate upon the great condescension of our Lord Jesus to become the Saviour of the world, which meant leaving the glory of the heavenly courts and becoming the man Christ Jesus that He may pay the corresponding price to redeem Adam and the human family condemned in Adam.

While a considerable number of mankind know of our Lord's birth as the babe of Bethlehem, His growing up to man's estate, and finally His crucifixion after 31 years of public ministry, yet, so few, comparatively speaking, are able to accept Him as their personal Saviour, and yield their lives to His service in full consecration in the present life. While, then, we read that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," yet the all-important matter for us is to be able to receive our Lord as our personal Saviour, so that we may gain the benefit, here and now, that God made possible by the greatest Gift of all time.

We are reminded of the importance of being able to receive additionally, the Lord's gifts to us through various of His servants, whom He has delegated to carry His treasures of truth throughout the Gospel Age, by the words of our Lord to His twelve apostles as He encouraged and instructed them for the important mission in which they were to engage after His sacrifice was completed. He declared —"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that, sent me." (Matt. 10:40.) It is obvious that our Lord meant that only those able to receive the apostles could gain the blessing that their message would give— being favored as though they were receiving the Lord Himself.

In Matt. 10:41 Jesus proceeded to explain that He would have lesser servants than apostles, even "prophets" and "righteous men" and those who showed a readiness to receive these as representatives of the Lord would receive a corresponding "reward" for their meek and teachable attitude of heart. By receiving a prophet "in the name of a prophet" —knowing that he was a prophet, and desiring to receive him as from the Lord—the reward would be in keeping 'with the prophet's ability to give. If the prophet was not "received" no reward of any kind would be gained. The same would apply in the case of the "righteous man."

Again, in verse 42, the same lesson is implied. Those who would give to one of the Lord's "little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple"—knowing that he was a disciple, and thus indicating a desire to "receive" him—"shall in no wise lose his reward." No, indeed; the Lord's "little ones", appreciating the kindness shown, would impart some spiritual reward or blessing, as from the Lord's storehouse.

How clearly the principle is shown throughout the Scriptures that the degree of reward or blessing gained by the Lord's people in the present life, (and of course in the life to come), depends upon their desire to receive, as Jesus indicated—"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6.)

As another Christmas season comes round we surely thank God especially for the favor bestowed on us, enabling us to "receive" the Gift of our dear Redeemer, and the exhortation from Paul is appropriate—"As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." (Col. 1:6.) Our responsibility in connection with all we have received from the Lord is also impressed by the words of Jesus—"Freely ye have received, freely give"—and we are encouraged by the fact that while comparatively few now desire the precious truths we love to give, yet in the age to come, "all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest," in harmony with the angel's message—"I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10, 11.)

Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper"

The booklet—"Mankind Coming Back From Hell—'Two Ways Out"—is taking the place of January's "Peoples Paper," and is being posted out with this month's issue. Extra copies of this booklet will also be available for general use.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

The Lost Coin.

(Contributed Article)

WE invite your attention to Luke 15:8, 9 which reads—"What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost." This parable of the Lost Coin, in the light of present truth, we believe to be most *significant*, because from one special viewpoint it traces the entire history of the Christian church from the beginning to the end of the Gospel Age.

We are aware that the words found in a series of parables which the Lord gave, *as* for example The Prodigal Son and The Lost Sheep, are generally interpreted to teach the Heavenly Father's willingness to receive any who would come to Him in the divinely appointed way through the Lord Jesus, and we think it very appropriate to apply a general lesson in this way, as we read—"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked, turn from his way and live." Also—"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Ezek. 33:11; Luke 15:10.)

A verse of poetry from the poem—"The Lost Coin"—reads- "Now all Scripture is by God's inspiration Given by Him to us for our instruction,

And all these things are like an allegory
Deep meanings hidden in each simple story.
God sent His spirit forth to choose a bride
Who'd leave the world and stand at Jesus' side.
He took ten doctrines, pictured by the camels,
Do aid him in his search and in his travels.
To God's household, children of faith, he came
To seek for those who thought upon His name."

We read in 2 Tim., 3:16—"All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." In Matthew's Gospel it is also recorded—"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without *a* parable spake he not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 13:34, 35.)

The above verse of poetry, speaking of an allegory or picture lesson, refers to Abraham sending his eldest servant, Eliezer to Haran, to his own people, to find a wife for his son, Isaac. His servant took ten camels

laden with jewels and gold which in due course he gave to Rebekah, and also precious things to her brother and mother; that is, after God had indicated that Rebekah was to be Isaac's wife. This is related to Genesis 24.

Students of Scripture are unanimous that this story is an allegory, or picture, of God sending forth His holy spirit (as represented by Abraham sending forth Eliezer) into the world to choose a companion-company for Jesus, a Bride, to live with Him in heaven. There is much to learn from this allegorical story; for example, when Eliezer met Rebekah at the well, outside the city of Nahor, and Rebekah gave Eliezer water to drink and watered the ten camels, Eliezer gave Rebekah a golden earring, representing the blessed effect of hearing the call to be the Bride of Christ. He also gave her two bracelets, representing the blessed effect of the Divine call on our doings after we hear the call.

But relative to our subject we are here interested only in the ten treasure-laden camels. It has been suggested that each of these ten camels represents one of the ten fundamental doctrines, or truths, given to the Lord's true Church. Also, in the sense that each camel pictured one story, or teaching of God's Word, the ten camels together pictured God's Word, the Bible.

Each camel had two humps, and this could show that the Old and New Testaments were both to carry the truths.

The gold and silver pictured the golden promises of God, and the silver truths of His Word. The jewels also would represent the great and precious promises of God. Even the food the camels carried was to picture that God would provide everything that His spirit and those who carried His message would need, or require in this life, and that He would provide for the Church in her journey to heaven.

Camels can go a very long way without water, and as water is a picture of truth, this shows that God's Word does not require to have new truths added to it; it has enough truth for the journey in itself.

Keeping our subject in mind, we now refer to Scripture respecting the harp, in Psa. 33:2-4--"Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth." Psa. 92:2, 3—"To show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound."

So, then, in our three word-pictures we have —Ten silver coins, one coin being lost; ten treasure-laden camels; and a ten-stringed harp giving forth beautiful music. One thing in common—ten different articles but all good.

When Jesus lived in the East if a young man desired to get married his, parents chose a nice girl, and they visited the girl's parents and a marriage was arranged. Then the father of the man gave the girl a headdress made of ten silver coins; this was a gift from the bridegroom and it took the place of the wedding ring. The girl did not go to live with her husband. then; she stayed quietly at home and got everything ready, making her wedding dress and preparing clothes and linen for her home. So we have ten camels laden with costly treasure; a ten-stringed harp giving forth beautiful music and a headdress of ten silver coins, a symbol of betrothal and marriage.

Imagine the girl's consternation when she found one of those precious coins was lost, and her joy on finding the same again. In the East everyone knew what a chain of ten coins meant, so Jesus did not need to explain. The bride would get word that her husband was coming 'for her, and she would hurry to get everything ready—when she could find only nine of the coins, she would be very worried.

In each of these three pictures the generally accepted thought amongst students of the Bible is, that we

have here ten fundamental doctrines of the Bible. So, with the harp, when these truths are properly harmonized what beautiful music is produced; how sweet to the ear does the music sound. As one has written—"The whole divine testimony must be in harmony, whether it be communicated by the Law, the Prophets, the Lord, or the Apostles. Their entire harmony is proof of their divine inspiration, and thank God we find that harmony existing, so that the whole Scriptures of the Old and New Testament constitute what the Lord Himself calls the 'harp of God.' (Rev. 15:2.) And the various testimonies of, the Law and the Prophets are the several chords of that harp, which, when tuned by the holy spirit indwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of devoted searchers after Divine truth, yield the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears. Praise the Lord for the exquisite melody of the blessed 'song of Moses and the Lamb.'"

Again from the same writer we quote—"We can go forth in Jesus' name, rejoicing as we go, praising Him with our lips, singing the new song which He hath put into our mouths, 'even the loving-kindness of our God.' It costs something to sing this song; only those who have learned to play the harp of God, who have all its strings attuned to perfect harmony, can properly render this song of 'Moses and the Lamb.' Never before has it been possible to produce such melody from this wonderful harp, or never before have all the chords been properly placed and attuned; now its music is entrancing. Then let us take this wonderful harp of the ages, and as we sweep its chords let us sing with the spirit and with the understanding this wondrous glad new song."

The same writer gives the opposite side of the story; when speaking of the past, he says—"God's Word, the great Harp of God, from which comes forth such wondrous music was unstrung. One denomination had one string, another denomination had a different one—Election; Free Grace; Baptism; Second Coming Christ; Time Prophecies, etc. They had twanged away, each on his own string until all were disgusted at the discord, and about ready to quit for relief, as they have since done practically."

We now come to what these ten fundamental doctrines are, as represented by the ten coins, ten camels and ten strings of the harp, and further, in line with our subject, as to which one of these basic subjects was lost and later found, as represented by the lost coin which was later found.

Bible students have listed the following ten 'doctrines in the order stated

1. Creation, as explained in Genesis.
2. Justice, as represented in the law of "the wages of sin is death." Also the law given by Moses of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."
3. The doctrine of the Ransom and a proper appreciation of same.
4. The Scriptural doctrine of Justification.
5. The presentation of Consecration or Sanctification.
6. The Scriptural doctrine of Resurrection.
7. The doctrine of Election.
8. The doctrine of Free Grace.
9. The doctrine of Restitution.
10. The doctrine of Second Death.

All these truths became tarnished and dirty (but one was lost sight of altogether), for example The doctrine of Creation was superseded by the theory of evolution.

Again God's character has been, maligned all through the Gospel Age by the theory of eternal torment, which superseded God's just arrangement, as listed under our second heading of Justice.

The doctrine of the Ransom was made void through the theories and sophistries of science falsely so-

called; for example, the theory of the immortality of the soul.

The doctrine of Justification has been superseded by a doctrine of conversion in an effort to get converts to the “Christian faith” instead of believing in justification by faith.

The doctrine of Consecration is not a doctrine of good works, but of laying the “living sacrifice” on the altar.

The doctrine of Resurrection is made foolish by Satan’s great lie—”Thou shalt not surely die”—which Weans, that at death the spirit is released from the body and is destined to various states or places according to the particular brand of theology to which one adheres.

The doctrines of Election and Free Grace seem antagonistic to each other to those on whom the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of the living God has not shined.

The tenth doctrine of Second Death could also have little meaning in view of the indestructibility of the soul, as taught by the nominal churches.

But what happened to the ninth doctrine, represented by the lost coin. This was the one that was lost sight of; this is, Restitution.

These other nine doctrines had been taught to some extent (miserably as they have been represented), but restitution has been lost sight of for centuries; it has not been preached at all. Nobody has attempted to proclaim anything about restitution until the harvest time. The story of Adam and Eve, their perfection, the wonderful garden of Eden, was discredited as a happy fairy tale, and so the basis of the restitution doctrine—a return to Edenic conditions for the human race—was lost. And so the Lord’s Prayer was seemingly made meaningless, when, through the age the prayer went up from all Christendom—”Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.” And so, this was the doctrine that was lost, as represented by the one piece of silver which the woman lost.

Today, ministers of religion say, as it were, when the house is being swept clean at the present time—”You are raising too much dust; why don’t you keep quiet? Suppose these creeds are wrong, we have left them on the shelf, we have not been doing anything with them. Let them alone; what is the use of raising so much dust.”

However, we today have got to clean the house; all the rubbish, must be cleaned out, we do not want the dust to settle on the furniture; we want it all swept out and the house completely clean.

Now, see what the woman did. Did she sit down and say, “Thank God, I have found the coin? ;” no, indeed, that is not what the Scriptures say. Let us quote again—”And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.”

And that is what we should be doing. That is what the true Church is doing in the harvest. She is calling in her friends and neighbours, saying, “Rejoice, we have found the coin which for so long has been missing; not only that, but all the rubbish and filth has been taken from the nine other coins. Are they not beautiful; we have found that which was lost.”

So, we are rejoicing; we are calling our friends and neighbours in, and the Lord wants us to continue to call them in just as long as there is opportunity to work—”Work while it is called day, for the night cometh, when no man can work.”

Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friend—I have been very much interested and helped by the “Peoples Paper” and also Frank and Ernest talks. I’m sure that we are living in a time prophesied as being the end of this age, but I do realise that I know so little about these things which are so important. I pray that I may be favored, through God’s mercy, to have more of His great Plan revealed to me.

I have the “Divine Plan of the Ages” which I’ve read and enjoyed much. I’m wondering if you could forward me copies of the following booklets—“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy,” “Some of the Parables,” “Manner of Christ’s Return.” I’m enclosing a little for subscription to “P.P.” and for the books mentioned above. I cannot get 3GL plain enough to listen to here. I pray for you and your work. May the Lord bless you all in the service of His glorious Son. Kind regards.

Dear Friends—Please accept the enclosed cheque. Would like you to post to me the booklet “Israel in History and Prophecy,” using the remaining sum as necessary in your work, though I have a special regard for the radio work, as it takes the message to hearing ears.

It is pleasing to know that the wonderful news of the restitution and the thousand year trial and uplift for mankind is going out to the people; as far as I know, there is no other publication that does send it out in its fulness. It is always —“This is your last chance before Armageddon,” so we feel much blessed to see something of the wonder and beauty of this part of the Lord’s great plan; any other teaching seems so bleak,. don’t you think? I am sure you must feel great satisfaction in the thought that you are engaged in bringing it, to people’s notice, though I don’t doubt the path you have taken is not always easy.. May God richly bless you and, keep you His own... With kindest Christian regards; yours sincerely..

Frank and Ernest, Dear Brethren—Would you please send to me the book called “Most Holy’ Faith.” I enclose £2 in postal notes to pay for the book, also my subscriptions to the “Peoples. Paper” and Dialogues. This literature is the most hopeful reading matter I have ever come across, and I do not wish to look further, as I am sure God is giving me the truth, the wonderful truth which may mean everlasting life, to love righteousness and to hate iniquity.

In this hour of great strain it is a joy to believe that there is coming a consummation of the system of things. Before I close, I want to wish you both the rest you deserve from honest labor, and the joy I know is yours in the Lord. Hoping the undeserved kindness of God be on us all. Yours faithfully.

Dear Brother—I am enclosing It Would you please send me “Tabernacle Shadows” and keep whatever change there is to help with the radio work. I do appreciate the Frank and Ernest sessions on Sundays and the literature received from you has been, and still is a great help to me. I can’t stop thanking God to have been so privileged as to have been brought into the Truth, and when one sees so much darkness in those around, one is doubly thankful..

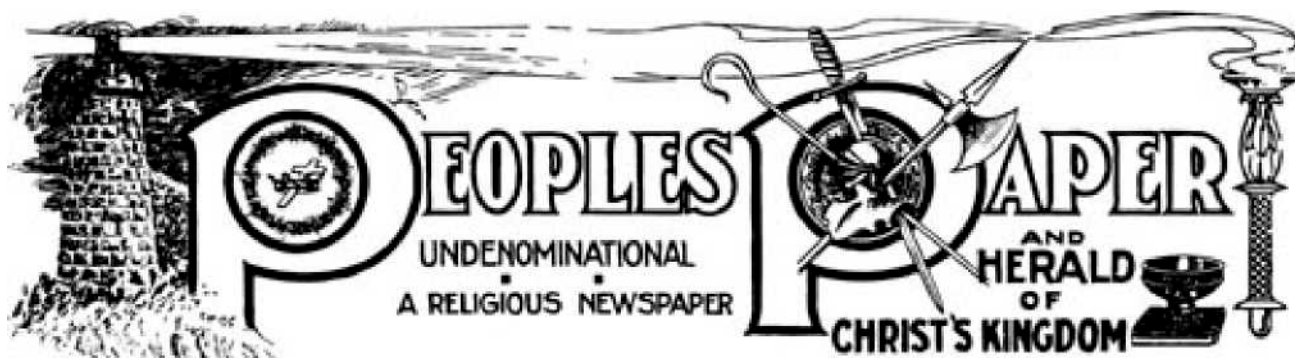
How fortunate I am to have— so close, and to be able to discuss the Scriptures and world events. which are intensely interesting—I am wonderfully blessed. Yours in Christian love.

Dear Brother—if you can spare me 200 of the tracts “Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ’s Return” I think could use them; now may be a good time to put them out as there seems interest up this way in the Billy Graham Mission. By what I see it is the man in the street. who sees the times in which we live; those in the nominal church systems are still asleep. With Christian love.

Appreciation of November "P. Paper.

There has been particular appreciation of November "Peoples Paper," and extra supplies have been printed. Any of our friends who can pass on copies of this "Paper" to advantage should apply for same, stating how many they can use.

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Receiving and Giving.

(Convention Address)

CHRISTMAS is a good season of the year to reflect upon God's goodness to the children of men. Not that we should reserve our reflection in this respect to the Christmas season, but with all the exchanging of gifts and greetings the tenor of the days seems to direct our attention to the topic of giving and receiving. Many of us have probably found how true are the Master's words — "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We would not reserve one or two occasions during the year for gift-giving were we conscious of all God's goodness toward us and endeavoured to emulate Him and thus show our appreciation. "He openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," while the Apostle Paul declares that ever since the creation there is not a spot on earth where God has left Himself without witness — giving rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, the sun, moon and stars, food, and the joy of life. Add to these the beauties of nature — floral treasures, trees, rivers, mountains, birds, thousands of lovely things so close at hand, ours for he receiving. To give back our admiration and gratitude we become the richer. Job also mentions iron, silver, gold, precious stones decking out in beauty the glorious earth. If there be any who fail to appreciate the splendour and beauty of God's gifts in nature because of the mal-administration of the violent who mostly gather up and acquire these beauties for selfish reasons, let us not forget at least that out of the earth comes food, our daily bread.

Poor, hungry, ill-clad folk (and there are millions) who live in cold countries would probably miss "the treasures of the snow and hail," just as the weary, the footsore, the destitute (and there are millions) of the better regions would no doubt trample underfoot the "lilies of the field" without a second thought for the glory that is greater than Solomon's. Nevertheless, because so many overlook daily blessings, there for the receiving, should we be indifferent to our blessings? "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained," the mighty oceans "compassed with bounds", "the earth suspended on nothing", all for the happiness of that creature we call Man, who could fail to ask himself — "What is man that thou art mindful of him" to such an extent?

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the earth sheweth forth his handiwork"; truly the "invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen" leaving those without excuse who fail to receive with gratitude the daily benefits. How fortunate are those folk who attempt to count their blessings, without revering the gift more than the Giver.

Additional to all the many lovely things that surround us, too numerous to attempt an itemized description, God has given us what is termed an Unspeakable Gift. As you know, many declined this precious Gift, even His own people would not receive Him, but to as many who did receive Him to them gave He the power to become sons of God. Further gifts are showered upon this class — to them belong "exceeding great and precious promises" beyond our comprehension, for "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things God hath in reservation for those who love him." "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." It is our endeavour to show that these wonderful gifts may actually be experienced, in part, from this time on, but the strange thing about sharing in these gifts is that one must give before receiving. There are treasures of knowledge, wisdom, faith, love, joy, peace, security, ours for the receiving, provided we give something back to God.

But what can we give that He has not already given us? "What have we that we did not receive?" You remember how God reproved David in this respect when David desired to build God an house. "Hath not my hand made all these things?" "What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits unto me?" The cup of salvation, which we are invited to take involves not only receiving, but giving. There is one thing that we can give; it is a very precious thing to us, embodying all our affections, faith, love, hope, and is termed the heart — "My son give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." Jesus did this, surrendered His will. "Not my will, but Thine," He said, and thus became eligible for further gifts. But these gifts are enfolded in mysterious wrappings, which of course must be broken before

the contents may be enjoyed.

It reminds us of that mysterious book mentioned in Rev. 5, in the hand of Him that sat on the throne. This book, you will remember, was sealed with seven seals which no one, either in heaven or in earth, was able to break. With all their power and glory none of the angelic host was able to loose the seals, and no one on earth, with all our pride of life, able to loose a mere seal. Much weeping was occasioned, for while the book remained closed the plan and purposes of God were not only hidden, but packed away in storage. Then, to the amazement of all, a slain Lamb was pronounced worthy to open, and by so doing, the contents became available to other servants. The angelic choir sang a new song, and this choir you will have noted, bore a close relationship to the Lamb. The anthem they voiced was a real Christmas carol, extolling the worthiness of the Lamb, and now declaring He is worthy to RECEIVE “power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, blessing.” This wonderful anthem was ‘echoed back from earth, all acknowledging the authority of God and Jesus the Messiah. Note that before these treasures were possible the Lamb had to GIVE something. Because it was a slain Lamb there is no question what He gave. “Christ our Passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us.” “God gave his only begotten Son,” and the Son gave Himself for us, a ransom for all.

If Christians acknowledge that they have received so much, Paul says their reasonable service is to give something in return. If the goodness of God led us to repentance, what should all His further mercies do to us? To help us in this respect, for we will find we are insufficient to accomplish it in our own strength, we’ll need help. This is, true to God’s goodness, available for the receiving, for when Jesus ascended on high God gave us gifts in the form of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, all speaking in harmony, to enlighten our eyes of understanding that we may know more of these heavenly treasures.

There was once a colony of lepers, ten men in all, living on the outskirts of a certain village. Outcasts from society, a law to themselves now, forbidden to fraternise, no hope in this world, nothing but a slow torturous death ahead of them, no sympathy from any, for all shunned them; just waiting for the dreaded leprosy to claim parts of the body at a time —their hands, feet, ears, etc., dropping off as the incurable disease spread. Is it any wonder that they cried with a loud voice when it became known that Jesus, the miracle worker, was passing that way — “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” What a cry; what poor, despised dregs of humanity they must have been. The compassion of Jesus came to their rescue, and what joy must have been theirs to find themselves rescued from such a plight. What wonder and amazement to the onlookers, but what relief to the poor sufferers. They received much that day. Nine of God’s “own family,” and one stranger made up the colony. Now, there were ten clean, wholesome men, ready for rehabilitation.

The episode would have had a happy ending but for one thing — the ingratitude of mankind. Nine of the men could not get back to society fast enough. Maybe their parents, or families awaited them with open arms; back to all those important things now needing their attention; the lost job, the pleasures of living, etc., etc. The stranger, the one not satisfied to receive everything without giving something back, came back, alone, to give thanks. Jesus sounds very sad when He asks of this stranger giving thanks — “But were there not ten? Where are the other nine?” The Psalmist has the same sad note — “O that men would praise the Lord for all his goodness to the children of men.” The leprosy of ingratitude is worse than the leprosy of the skin. You can easily trace it out, ungrateful, unhappy, selfish, etc. Gratitude expressed leaves one happy, hopeful, useful, loving and kind. Giving and receiving is vividly portrayed in the above account.

Flowers give themselves to the sun; what a joyous result — sparkling, scintillating, radiating colors, perfume, creating beauty and happiness. Glance again at the colony of lepers, where nine were ungrateful and one returned to give thanks. Those nine, ungrateful beings must always have been the same. They must have “cashed in” on the faith of the stranger. Confined together in the one camp any straw would be clutched at to save from certain death. There was nothing else to do but join in the plea of the stranger — “Master, have mercy on us.” For the sake of the small minority the wrath of God is delayed. Sodom was safe while “ten righteous men were to be found in it.” The master and crew of the ship in distress were safe because of the relationship to the prisoner, the Apostle Paul. For the elect’s sake the days of wrath at the close of the Gospel Age are also shortened. For the preservation of the mass, let the salt give forth its saltiness.

What is known as “The Parable of the Two Seas” pictures our theme very strongly. In the Land of Promise are two seas, the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Separated one from the other by a high tableland for about sixty miles, these two seas have much in common and yet are as different as light is to darkness. They are both inland seas, both fed by mountainous streams and both mainly fed by the mighty Jordan River. Both are well below sea level, yet one is “a most attractive object, a beautiful body of water, blue water overarched by a blue sky. Its rare beauty has kindled the enthusiasm of many hearts.” Jews and Gentiles both sing its praises. The ancient rabbis had a saying — “Although God has created seven seas yet He has chosen this one as His special delight.” Its waters are always “clear, cool, and sweet.” The River Jordan at times brings down much sediment and appears like a very dirty stream. Yet the Sea of Galilee remains clear, cool and sweet. Fish are here in profusion, quality as well as quantity. Its shores were one continuous

garden at the time of our Lord, and no doubt will again be restored to their former beauty.

The Dead Sea enjoys everything that flows into the Sea of Galilee; some of the streams that feed it are teeming with life. Yet this sea is so aptly named because of its lack of life. Not a living thing in its waters, nor in the vicinity of its shores. Its waters yield 24 pounds of salt for every 100 pounds of water, while the Atlantic Ocean's waters yield 6 pounds of salt for the same quantity of water.

Associated with the Dead Sea we have Lot, Sodom, and Gomorrah. Jesus of Nazareth exalted the Sea of Galilee by His presence along its shores, and on its waters, making one of its cities, Capernaum, His home. If its waters could speak what history they would tell. Along its shores He called His first disciples, multitudes came to be healed, He fed the five thousand, and Jesus Himself referred to the "mighty works" that had they been done in Tyre and Sodom would have meant salvation. What makes the big difference, then, between the two seas? The same difference that divides a nominal Christian from a real disciple; the same difference that separated the lone stranger in the leper colony from the nine who failed to return.

With Galilee, water flows into it and also out of it. The Dead Sea will take everything that comes its way and gives nothing back. In the case of Galilee we have beauty, activity, life. With the other sea we have stagnation, death. Galilee receives and gives again, yet loses **nothing** by so doing; in fact, it benefits. The Dead Sea takes everything and gives nothing. Compare the results, for these issues affect the Christian; these two Seas symbolise people.

To give back the life in Christ means an overflowing cup. The more that is given the greater the overflow. We receive and give; we give and receive. This is a Christian life; the result will be as beautiful and useful as the Sea of Galilee; suffering and dying with Christ means giving, but it also means receiving, so that we all may say — "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) "As every man hath received the gift, so minister the same one to another." "Give to him that asketh of thee." "Freely ye have received, freely give."

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, March 27th to 30th, in the Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

Passover Memorial, 1959

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me."

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

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“Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth would'st teach;

Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another soul would'st reach;

It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

“Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;

Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a faithful seed;

Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.”

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Convention News.

ONCE again the Annual Convention arranged by the Melbourne Class over the Christmas period proved a means of great blessing and encouragement to all the brethren able to attend, and we lift up our hearts in thanksgiving to the Lord for all His favours bestowed in connection with the gatherings throughout the four days of Convention.

It was a pleasure to welcome some visiting brethren from other Australian States and districts of Victoria, all of whom contributed to the benefits received from the various sessions listed on the programme. We were sorry that others were prevented from attending the gatherings through illness, but the attendance was very good, being slightly larger at the concluding session than at similar Conventions for many years past.

Messages with greetings from other classes and individual brethren were received at the convention, being conveyed personally and through the mail, and these were all much appreciated and demonstrated the desires and prayers of other brethren for the Lord's blessing to attend the gatherings.

Three Bible Studies were conducted during the Convention on the Scripture passages — Psa. 2:1-8; Rev. 3:14-22, and James 3:13-18. These studies provided a well balanced examination of a goodly amount of Bible truth, with special emphasis on the end of the Gospel Age, the period in which we are now living, and concerning God's true people, Christendom at large, and the nations of the world in this “time of the end” prior to the setting up of Christ's Kingdom. Some thoughts from each of these studies will be found in the Convention Notes compiled by one of our brethren and now available free to all desiring them.

A number of helpful addresses were delivered by visiting and local brethren and were a means of **much** encouragement throughout the gatherings. Each speaker conveyed a message from God's Word which revealed the diversity of talent amongst the Lord's servants, all of which is a means of upbuilding the members as a whole. The chosen subjects for addresses were: “Expectation”; “Some Thoughts on the Resurrection”; “Here Have We No Continuing City”; “Thoughts From a Shipwreck”; “Receiving and Giving”; “The Rewards of Christian Living”;

“The Unsearchable Riches of Christ”; “Fellowship With God”; “Prosperity”; “God Himself Will Provide”; “Our Part, With God’s Promises”; “Glad Tidings, Great Joy, All People” and ‘Thoughts on Christ’s Second Coming.’ A brief outline of these addresses will also be found in the Convention Notes, while some will appear in full in this and succeeding issues of “Peoples Paper” for the benefit of all readers.

Further helpful sessions were the three Fellowship Meetings for Praise and Testimony and a Hymn Service. It is a means of blessing to all to hear of the Lord’s leadings and overruling for good in the lives of the brethren since last they met in Convention. Not many are able to express all that they feel, but a few words often reveal that nearness to the Lord which is a great incentive to others in the Christian way. The session of “Hymns We Love and Why” provided the usual helpful relaxation and meditation upon the words of the hymn writers, while appreciating the lovely melodies of others who have used their talents in this manner to the Lord’s praise.

On the evening of the last day of Convention, the Melbourne brethren selected the message contained in Rev. 3:20-22 as a Convention greeting with Christian love to be conveyed to all brethren who had sent messages, and to all others who love the Lord and His truth in all parts of the harvest field.

The concluding feature of the Convention comprised the usual Love Feast, when the assembly, filing past each other, bade farewell with a hearty handshake, and partook of the symbol of cake, whilst singing “Blest Be The Tie.” “God Be With You Till We Meet Again” was the closing hymn, and concluding prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessing, and desire for His leading and guidance in all the days ahead terminated the very helpful 1958 Convention.

Convention Notes.

Notes covering the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free upon application to this office.

God Will Provide.

(Convention Address) (Genesis 22:1-19.)

OF all the Old Testament heroes of faith, Abraham surely stands out as one of the greatest. His whole life was a journey of faith from God's first call to leave home and kindred, and through the various tests which God saw fit to send. To him also were given great and wonderful promises to apply through the seed of promise. Of Abraham it is stated that he was the friend of God.

The greatest of Abraham's tests of faith was that recorded in Gen. 22:1-19, wherein God asked Abraham to offer up the son of promise, even Isaac. Even here we see that Abraham faltered not, but set out with faith and resoluteness to do God's will.

As Abraham set out, his party consisted of himself, Isaac, and two of his young men, and they journeyed three days towards the place appointed of God. There the young men were left behind, the remainder of the experience being too personal for any outsiders to share. The heart of Abraham no doubt bled as he went on with his beloved son, but we see no wavering of his faith until he stands with knife raised to offer up his son. Just at that point he stands alone before God, with nothing but his faith to support him in the final moments of trial.

In our testing experiences, friends may come so far, but in the final issue we stand alone before God. Do we know Him so well as to be able to trust Him like Abraham in the face of the impossible situation? Abraham had no other seed acceptable to God, nor any prospect of other such seed, nor was there any way but to obey God, yet he believed still that God could do the impossible. How appropriately he is named the father of all them that believe, the faithful seed out of all nations. Let us urge each other on to greater trust like his; God may be calling us to sacrifice some treasure, something we even feel is essential. If we go ahead in faith and obedience, God will overrule in His own way, just as He did for Abraham.

What a great picture there is here of God's own giving of His only begotten and well beloved Son; how beautifully the story of Abraham and Isaac foreshadows the so great love of God in the giving of His first Christmas Gift to mankind and its mighty cost.

Turning now to Isaac, we see a 'picture of unquestioning obedience to his father, Abraham. Without murmur or complaint he goes with Abraham the long three days' journey by foot. How it reminds us of our Saviour's three and a half years' journey of service and self-sacrifice over the dusty roads of Palestine. Then, after leaving the two young men, Isaac carried the wood for the offering, even as our Lord bore His own cross to Calvary.

The only recorded conversation between the two is that given in verses 7 and 8. Isaac sees the very evident preparations for an offering and asks what is a very natural question. His father's answer is a staggering one — what faith in God's provision is displayed — "God will provide Himself a lamb." Yes, even if the "lamb" was to be Isaac, the son of promise who was to be a father of nations. The lesson surely is that we too should trust God even where we cannot trace His designs and purposes. The mind of our Heavenly Father is so far vaster than the limits of men's minds and His immediate call to us may make no apparent sense. Why in Abraham's case should a reasonable God ask for such an apparently futile act. The offering of Isaac would not in itself achieve any purpose or blessing. In fact, humanly speaking, it could only cut right across God's earlier promise of blessing to all mankind through the seed of promise. With much justification, Abraham might have argued back with God on these lines, yet Hebrews tells us that Abraham believed that God was able to restore Isaac to life if need be, which we are told is what did happen in a figure. Of course, the testing and proving of Abraham in itself was the glorious purpose of this experience, even as in our lives it is the trial of our faith that teaches patience and strengthens hope.

Because of his faithfulness in this last and greatest trial God confirmed and enhanced His earlier promises to Abraham, and through him and his seed, even Christ, and all of the faith of Abraham, we have been blessed and ultimately shall all mankind be blessed. Though you and I may not see the purpose of God's dealings with us, let us not murmur or complain, but rather, as did Abraham, believe in our God as the God of all-seeing wisdom and love who does indeed work all things together for good to them that love Him and are called according to His purpose.

Looking again at verse 8 — "God will provide himself a lamb." Yes, there was the ram caught in the thicket, verse 13, and this was offered in Isaac's stead. How Abraham's heart must have rejoiced to see God's loving hand in this provision; he had trusted that God would provide though he could not know just how or when. So God will not tempt us beyond what we are able to bear, but with the trial will provide the way of escape when He sees we have learnt His will, so that we may be able to bear whatever experiences He sees are best for us.

Best of all, this part of the account reminds us of the Lamb of God provided as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. God, as a righteous judge, must needs demand the life sentence of all mankind. All our lives were forfeited by Adam's sin, but God has provided Himself a Lamb, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." How wonderful is God's provision that even before the need existed the remedy for sin had been appointed and prepared.

As it was in the case of the ram offered in Isaac's stead, so the offering of our Saviour was a substitutionary one.

God had asked Abraham for the offering of his son, not that Isaac's death would have atoned for sin or had merit in itself, but that Abraham's faith and suitability for God's purposes might be finally tested. Our Lord Jesus Christ has, however, tasted death for every man — in every man's place — on the cross of Calvary. There He gave up His perfect life that all who by faith, even the faith of Abraham, claim Him as Saviour might escape the penalty and power of sin. In this age, God is drawing to Him only those that He wills for His purposes, but to all who hear His call to their hearts in this time, what a wonderfully rich provision there is in Christ — "the unsearchable riches".

To any who have not yet made God's provision their own, the Christmas season again presents the challenge of the cross of Christ. The human race, dead in sin, sorrow and suffering, desperately needs the grace of God, and we praise Him that He has provided blessing beyond human conception to be revealed in due time. But to those who have the ear to hear and the heart to respond, now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation. The need of each one of us for a Saviour requires no emphasis; in our own hearts we know it is truly so. Why not then take God's provision to our hearts now — accept God's greatest of all gifts at this Christmas time, and make the new year a year of new life and joy in Christ. May His holy spirit speak to each of us at this season, and if we have not yet laid hold on life in Christ may we receive grace to heed the call and to follow Christ in full devotion to His will and service. For us all, may His spirit make the new year one of renewed zeal for His service, for more love for the brethren, for greater trust in His all-seeing overruling day by day.

Let us all earnestly seek to be built up in faith, through trial though it be, to learn the daily lessons of submission and obedience, knowing that He who has provided the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, even your sin and mine, will day by day provide all our needs through His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

"Israel in History and Prophecy" is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

The Christian's Needs.

THE Scriptures furnish rules for holy living in abundance, that the man of God may be complete, perfectly furnished for every good work—none of his necessities are overlooked. For instance, when we come into the world, we need clothing, and so does the Christian—"For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isa. 61:10. "Be clothed. with humility" 1. Pet. 5:5; and again—"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel; but let it be . . . a meek and quiet spirit .

. . for so holy women of old adorned themselves." 1 Pet. 3:3-5.

You need food: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." John 4:34.

You need to be educated: "Teach me Thy will." "Come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Psa. 34:11. "They shall be all taught of God." John 6:45.

You need exercise: "Exercise thyself unto, godliness." 1. Tim. 4:7. "Herein do I exercise' myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and man." Acts 24:16.

You need pleasure: "In Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" Psa. 16:11. "Thy law is my delight." Psa. 119:77.

You need work: "Work out your own salvation." Phil. 2:12. "Let us labour, therefore, to, enter into that rest." Heb. 4:11.

You need rest: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. "My presence shall go with. thee and I will give thee rest." Exod. 33:14.

You want a reward: "I will be thy . . exceeding great reward." Gen. 15:1.

Do you desire riches? "Lay up for yourselves,. treasures in heaven." Matt. 6:20. 1 Tim. 6:17-19. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich." Prov. 10:22.

Do you desire a home? "I go to prepare a. place for you . . . I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, ye may be also." John 14:2, 3. "To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away." 1 Pet. 1:4.

You need company: "He that doeth the will of My Father in heaven, the same is My brother, sister and mother." Matt. 12:50.

You may need a new song: "My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." Psa. 51:14. "And He hath put a new song into my mouth.'

Psa. 40:3. "And they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb." Rev. 15:3.

Do you want to be loved? "The Father Himself loveth you." John 16:27. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Jer. 31:3.

Do you want to know where God dwells? "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit." Isa. 57:15. "If any man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." John 14:23.

Do you want to see God? "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matt. 5:8. "Follow peace and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12:14.

Do you want wisdom? "In Christ, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. 2:3. "The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Prov. 9:10.

Do you want to be true? Think on the things that are true. Phil. 4:8. "Put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour." Eph. 4:25.

Do you want to be free from the power of evil? “Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.” Rom. 12:9.

Do you want to be cleansed from bitterness and hate? “I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.” Luke 6:27, 28. “Let all bitterness be put away from you.” Eph. 4:31.

Do you want to be free from envy? “Be content with such things as ye have.” Heb. 13:5. “In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself.” Phil. 2:3.

Are you in search for happiness? “Happy is the man whom God correcteth.” Job 5:17. “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” John 13:17.

You need courage and strength: “The Lord is the strength of my life.” Psa. 27:1. “Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart.” Psa. 27:14; Deut. 31:6.

The Bible will correct your anxiety and worry; “Cast all your care on Him for He careth for you.” 1 Pet. 5:7. “My God shall supply all your need.” Phil. 4:19.

The Word of God opens the heart, enlarges the affections and constrains us to love others. See Psa. 19: 7-11.

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Ransom - Ransom Price - Sin Atonement.

BUT one Ransom-price was arranged for by our Heavenly Father and provided for in the death of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. That Ransom-price is for the sins of the whole world. But the world has not yet gotten its share of the benefit of that Ransom-price provided more than nineteen centuries ago; for it still “lies in the Wicked One.” (1 John 5:19.) Our Lord, knowing the Father’s will in this matter, declared, “I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.” — John 17:9.

The application of the merit of the Ransom for the Church was made when our Lord Jesus “ascended up on High and appeared in the presence of God for us” — the Church class. (Heb. 9:24.) His application of His merit for us was manifested by the Pentecostal blessing, which has since continued with all of the “us” class, begetting these to the new nature, as joint-heirs with our Redeemer.

Our great High Priest will not make application of His Ransom-merit on behalf of the world until the end of this age, until He shall have finished the use of it on behalf of the Church — now enabling those drawn of the Father to “present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, their reasonable service.” — Rom. 12:1.

During this Age, He accepts, therefore, as part of His own sacrifice, the offering of the Church. This enables this class, as referred to by the Apostle (Col. 1:24), “to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His Body’s sake, which is the Church.” Thus, suffering with Him in this present time they will shortly be glorified with Him in His Kingdom as His Bride.

To recapitulate: The Ransom-price is one thing, and the Sin-atonement made with that Ransom-price is quite another. The Ransom-price for all was provided by our Lord in the work finished by Him at Calvary. The appropriation of the Ransom-price is two-fold:

- (1) In this Age, for or on behalf of, the Church.
- (2) In the coming Age, for the sealing of the New Covenant with Israel, which will be open for acceptance by all the families of the earth — all nations.

The Atonement so far as God is concerned, all proceeds from the Ransom-price provided at Calvary. The first application of that price was made after our Lord ascended up on High, when He appeared for us, His Church. The second application of the Ransom-price **will be** at the close of this Age, when, as the Great Priest, He will mediate the New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. This Covenant is different from the Covenant under which the Church is developed, namely the Abrahamic Covenant, which has no mediator, and which is a Covenant of sacrifice, while the New Covenant is a Covenant of Restitution, to return man to his original condition of perfection.

Pilgrim Ways Ended.

AT the close of November last our elderly Brother Morris, of Glenbrook, New South Wales, finished the pilgrim way after having rejoiced in the truth message for many years.

Our dear Brother Morris was well known to the friends in N.S.W. particularly, but had also visited other States to and from a visit to England about 30 years ago and met some of the brethren at ports of call around Australia. He was well known for his loveable and kindly disposition to all, while at the same time appreciating the harvest truths so fully. His periodical visits to the Class friends in Sydney were always warmly appreciated, and they will greatly miss his company and fellowship in the truth.

Failing health, with loss of memory over the greater part of last year made it necessary for our Brother Morris to enter a nursing home, but his heart and mind were continually centered upon the Lord and His precious truths. We have every confidence in his having gained the Lord's approval as an overcomer, by His grace, and having entered into the joys of the heavenly inheritance to which he ever looked forward. Sincere sympathy is expressed to the members of our dear Brother's family, who would greatly miss the love and kindness of their aged Christian parent. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Our Victorian friends, as well as others visiting the Melbourne Conventions, will remember our elderly Sister Bannon, who finished the earthly way on January 9th last, after spending a truly Christian life which was evident to all who knew her.

Our dear Sister Bannon first contacted us through the broadcasts from 3GL Geelong over twelve years ago, and it was evident that the truths contained in the Plan of God for the salvation of all mankind immediately appealed to her as being in harmony with a God of love and mercy, and which she had not previously understood. It was lovely to see how our dear Sister appreciated the truths of the Bible and was never happier than attending the Class. meetings with the brethren in Melbourne, and it was not long before she symbolized her consecration to the Lord by water baptism.

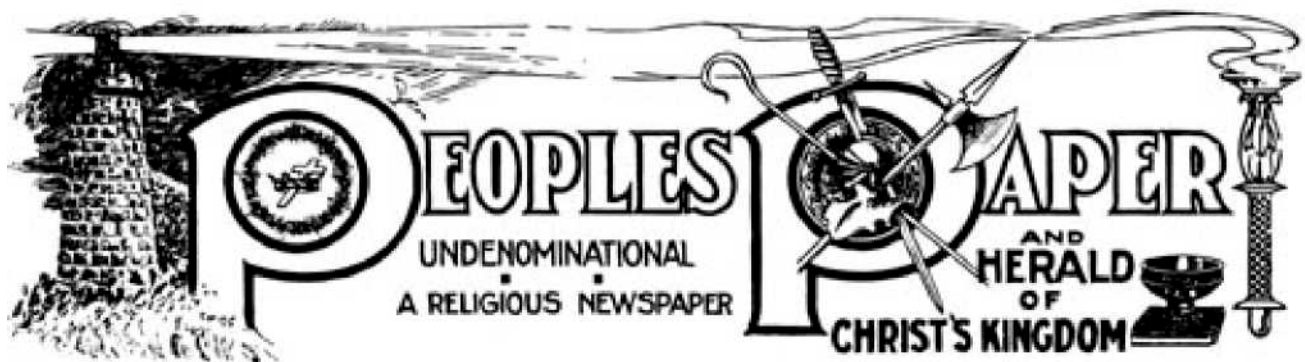
Of a truly humble and lowly disposition our Sister Bannon was a wonderful example of patient endurance as she contended with various physical ailments. No complaints of any kind came from her lips, and when laid up she had her Bible right at hand, from which. to receive the support and comfort of the truth. in which she rejoiced. While not able to study the deeper significance of some of the doctrinal features of the truth, her heart and mind reacted so fully in accord with the attributes of our Heavenly Father's character revealed in the foundation truths, and so our dear Sister was at one with the brethren so fully in spirit. and in truth. Thus it is felt that our dear Sister Bannon has entered fully into the joys of the, Lord, of which she had a foretaste during the earthly sojourn.

To the three daughters, one son and their families, sincere sympathy is extended in their, great loss of a loving Christian mother and' grandmother, of whom, no doubt, they will have lasting memories for good in the days to come,. and possibly also an appreciation of the truth which meant so much to our Sister Bannon over the past twelve years in particular. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." We feel that our dear Sister was truly one of the Lord's. "jewels" to whom it is the Father's good' pleasure to give the kingdom. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (daily dying) of his saints."

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Look straight into the light, and you will always. have the shadows behind you.—A.F.W.I.



Volume XLII. No. 3 MELBOURNE, MARCH, 1959 Price— Fivepence

When will God Pour Out His Spirit upon All Flesh?

IN view of the claims being made by certain preachers at the present time that we are now living when God is pouring out His spirit upon all flesh, this subject is considered quite an important one. These claims are often based on the passage of Scripture found in Acts 2:16-18, which is a quotation from the Prophet Joel, chapter 2. Acts 2:17,18 reads —"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy."

The fact that this prophecy, quoted from Joel, mentions firstly that God would "pour out his spirit upon all flesh," does not necessarily imply that this promise was fulfilled first, in point of time, when Peter quoted it. Rather, verse 18— "And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit,"—was definitely fulfilled first, beginning there on the Day of Pentecost, when Peter spoke.

We do well to keep in mind that the outpouring of God's spirit on the Day of Pentecost was a very special occasion, revealing God's acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ, not on behalf of all mankind, but rather on behalf of the household of faith—"for himself and his house"—as stated in the type, when the blood of the Day of Atonement bullock was sprinkled on the mercyseat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle, and described by the Apostle Paul, in the antitype, in Hebrews 9:24 — "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

So, the outpouring of the holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost was upon God's "servants and handmaidens" only, just as the spirit was poured out upon our Lord at the time of His consecration and baptism at the beginning of His ministry. (See Matt. 3:16,17.). And as those who received the outpouring of the spirit on the Day of Pentecost were Jews (Acts 2:5), it was fitting that when the time came for Gentile Christians to receive the spirit there was another manifestation, or outpouring from God, recorded in Acts 10:44,45. See also Acts 11:15-18.

Throughout all his epistles the Apostle Paul shows how the Lord's people, His "servants and handmaidens," come in under the anointing of the holy spirit when they consecrate their lives to the service of God, fully and completely. How clearly this is shown in Eph. 1:13,14—"In whom (Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." Again, to the same church, Paul wrote—"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:11-13, 18.)

We see, further, the great purpose of the granting the spirit to the followers of our Lord Jesus in such texts as Rom. 8:11—"If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." And again—"As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:14,29.)

The true followers of the Master—"the servants and handmaidens"— have their lives transformed by the spirit in preparation for the heavenly inheritance, as Paul declares in 2 Cor. 5:17—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a

new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” Here we see how the new heart condition, the new outlook, is developed by Christ’s spirit within. Former hopes, aims and ambitions, or pleasures of this world, etc., are forsaken, and counted as nothing in comparison with the spiritual hopes and aims of the new creature in Christ Jesus.

How beautifully did the Apostle Paul give us the true assessment of values when he declared —”What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:7, 8, 13, 14.)

It does us good, at times, to ask ourselves, What things that were gain to us (before we became Christians) have we counted loss for Christ? In other words—What are we sacrificing, as “servants and handmaidens” of the Lord, that would be quite right for worldly people to have and enjoy? Are we truly—”forgetting those things which are behind”; are we really “setting our affections on things above,” or do some things or pleasures of the world crowd in upon us in our associations with relatives or friends? Our Lord’s words help us in all such circumstances, and happy are we if we follow His admonition, as presented in Matt. 10:37,38—”He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

From the Apostle Paul we read further, in Eph. 5:15,16—”See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” “Redeeming the time”—buying back the time from earthly things for the service of the Lord, so far as possible. The point being impressed is, that the invitation to the “servants and handmaidens” of the Lord, during this Gospel Age, is to a “narrow way” of sacrifice, separate from the world in every respect, even as James tells us “The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.” (James 4:4.)

It is very clear from the Scriptures as a whole that to none others than the “servants and handmaidens” has God’s spirit been poured out during this Gospel Age, for we read in 1 John 5:19—”We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” There has surely been no change in the world of mankind since John’s day; “lieth in wickedness” describes the world perfectly at the present time.

We remember, also, that in concluding each of the messages to the churches of Revelation, in chapters 2 and 3, we have the words—”He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches”; that is, to the “servants and handmaidens” in the Lord’s churches, including the Laodicean church period, in which we are living today.

How, then, are we to understand the words of Acts 2:17, already quoted—”It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh”? It will be noticed that the words — “in the last days” — are intended as a guide to a correct understanding just as the term—”in those days” is used in connection with the outpouring of the spirit upon the “servants and handmaidens” in verse 18. We enquire, What is meant by “in the last days”? In Micah 4:1,2 we read—”In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it For the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (See also Isa. 2:2,3.) When shall these prophecies be fulfilled? When shall “the law go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”? Undoubtedly this takes place in the Kingdom Age, and as it is definitely cited as being “in the last days,” we see that the “last days when God’s spirit is poured out upon all flesh” must also be in the Kingdom Age, the Millennial Age.

We are assisted further in this matter, from the Scriptures, to find that the Lord will deliver Israel out of their Armageddon troubles, and bless them with His spirit in advance of the nations at large, as shown from Zech. 12:9,10 —”And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.” From Ezekiel’s prophecy, chapter 37, we are given a wonderful insight into the restoration of Israel to Palestine from other lands, and also from the death condition, when the new age comes in. Quoting briefly from this chapter we read—”And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live and I shall place you in your own land.; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.” (Ezek. 37:13, 14.) “Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.”

(See Ezek. 39:23-29.) That these prophecies are not yet fulfilled is very evident to all thinking people, but what a wonderful prospect is in store for Israel in the time of Christ’s Kingdom, and not only for Israel, but for all nations of the earth.

This is clearly manifest from Isaiah's prophecy—Isa. 59:20,21; 60:1-5, where we see that the light of the Lord received by Israel will be passed on to all nations, — “The Lord shall arise upon thee and his glory shall be seen

upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising thy sons shall come

from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side; [‘And I will give them (Sodom and Samaria) unto thee for daughters’ — Ezek. 16:61], then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.” And again — “Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends, of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” (Isa. 52:9,10; 40:5.)

It may be asked, Why is it that certain claims are made today that the Lord is pouring out His spirit now upon all flesh? These claims are usually from those who are desiring and expecting a revival in conversions, and in some cases with signs and wonders in the way of healings, etc. While it is always good to find those who are desirous of turning to the Lord and receiving His truth, we find from God's Word that there will not be any great revival in true Christianity at this end of the age, but rather the reverse, and what is claimed as God pouring out His spirit on all flesh, is often a very deceptive manifestation, not from the Lord, but from Satan, working — “as an angel of light” — as the Apostle warned. (2 Cor. 11:14, 15.)

We do well to always remember that the Pentecostal blessing was upon God's “servants and handmaidens” only, and not until the new age comes in, after the time of trouble has humbled mankind in all nations, will His spirit be poured out upon all flesh, to bless and uplift, as they obey the laws of Christ's Kingdom. (See Psa. 72:1-6.) “He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth.”

In the meantime, how favored are the “servants and handmaidens” of the Lord, who have been blessed with the holy spirit in their hearts, being prepared now for the wonderful inheritance with Christ. What a privilege is in store for all these faithful who overcome, who become the Bride class, by the Lord's grace, and look forward to the fulfilment of that glorious promise—”And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17.)

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, March 27th to 30th, in the Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 1.0 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

Passover Memorial, 1959

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord's request—”This do in remembrance of me.”

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

Perth.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.45 p.m., at 240 Shepparton Road, East Victoria Park, W.A.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.45 p.m., at Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

“Songs in the Night.”

WHILE the perplexities and difficulties of recent years are deepening the world over, causing much travail of mind amongst statesmen of all lands, and with mankind in general greatly concerned as to the outcome of this period of gloom, it may be asked how the Lord’s people can at this time truly sing “songs in the night.”

The year past has surely witnessed a continuation of the night of weeping. Sickness, sorrow, sighing and dying continue, but those Who have been brought to know the Lord and His plan of salvation realise that these conditions, under the reign of “the prince of this world,” exist only for a limited time—until the glorious morning of Messiah’s Kingdom—and so they have great cause to rejoice that while “Weeping may endure for the night, joy cometh in the morning.” (Ps. 30:5.) How glad we are that we have learned from God’s Word that, then, the glorious change will come to earth! St. Paul confirms this truth when he declares, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:22.)

At present these sons of God are comparatively little known or recognised amongst men; frequently they are considered “peculiar people,” because of their zeal for righteousness and truth and for God. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” Soon the Lord will establish His kingdom under the whole heaven. Soon the Church class, the saintly, “the elect,” will be glorified, and then the time will come for the blessing of the non-elect — for their restitution to human perfection and to a world-wide Paradise which Messiah’s kingdom and power will produce. “He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Death will be destroyed; sheol, hades, the grave, will be destroyed, by the resurrection of the dead therefrom—’Everyone in his own order.”

While the whole creation groans under its load of sin and sorrow, the saintly few may sing, may rejoice, even in the midst of all the sorrows of life, and even though they share the results of sin as fully or even more fully than do others. The secret of their joy is twofold: (1) They have experienced reconciliation to God. (2) They have submitted their wills to His will. They obtained this new relationship by the way of faith in the Redeemer—faith in His blood of Atonement. They entered by the “strait gate” and “narrow way” of consecration to God — surrendering their own wills and covenanting to do the Divine will to the best of their ability.

This submission of the will to God and the realisation that all their life’s affairs are in God’s keeping, and under His supervision gives rest to the heart. They have a rest and peace in this surrendered condition which they never knew when they sought to gratify self-will and ignored the right of their Creator to the homage of their hearts and the obedience of their lives.

Similarly, these have joy and peace and songs of thankfulness to God because to them He grants a knowledge of

His Divine purposes, and shows them things to come. These see beyond the trials and tribulations of the present time—they see the glories that will follow the present time of suffering. These see that the Church, the saintly few from all denominations and of all nationalities, are prospective heirs of God—heirs of glory, honour and immortality and association with the Redeemer in His glorious Kingdom. This encourages them. They see also the outlines of the Divine Programme for the blessing of all the families of the earth. When they thus perceive that God is interested in their dear ones who are not saints, and interested in the whole human family, very few of whom are saints, it causes them rejoicing. When they perceive that God has arranged that through Christ and the glorified Church all the families of the earth shall be blessed, it makes them “joyful in the house of their pilgrimage”—while pressing on in the narrow way, and fully realising how light are their own afflictions in comparison with the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

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Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 19/9, plus 1/3 postage.

Thoughts from a Shipwreck

(Acts 27 and 28.)

(Convention Address)

FROM the Scripture quoted as the basis of this talk, it will be gathered that the shipwreck was that experienced by Paul, while a prisoner, on his journey to be tried before Caesar. The journey throughout suggests some interesting thoughts that relate to our Christian journeys over the “sea” of this life.

From verses 2 to 7 in chapter 27, we find that many times they meant to sail by a certain course, but were compelled to keep altering it; they meant to sail by the coasts of Asia; in those days of travel the safest route, no doubt, **was** to hug the coast lines, but they finished up sailing by two islands, Cyprus and Crete, well out in the open sea. Contrary winds changed their course. Man proposes—God disposes; how true in many affairs of our life. It is good to have determination in the course we take, provided we are sure it is the way God wants us to go. For the Christian, the proper course at all times is—if God will, we shall do this or that. (See James 4:13-15.)

The next point is gathered from verse 9 onwards. Because of their stormy passage it became manifest to Paul that the wisest thing to do was to wait a while for more favorable weather. He warned the captain and the centurion, into whose charge he had been committed as a prisoner. It would seem that he tried to persuade the centurion not to continue, with the result — read verse 11. From verse 12 it seems that personal comfort entered into the thoughts of the captain — the place was not desirable in which to spend winter. Paul had the wisdom of a spirit-guided mind, but how often is the advice of those who live close to God spurned by the worldly wise. It is a good thing to be able to listen to good advice.

So they decided to go on—read verse 13. We can imagine them scoffing at Paul; what a poor weather prophet he was after all. So in life with the self-willed, ridiculing the advice of the saner minded; they have their own way and it often prospers early, and they sometimes like to rub it in—“See, I knew best after all.” But it is the long view that counts how the self-willed finish up; often they learn their lessons from bitter experiences that might have been softened much had they listened to wiser ones. Despite the early, favoring breeze the journey finished up as Paul warned it would—read verse 14. They ran into a cyclone.

Verses 17-21 describe the storm, and what a terrific one it was as they never saw the sun or stars for many days. Can we imagine what they endured in a storm like that in a craft of sea travel in those days? One thing after another they tossed overboard to try and ride the storm.

Read verse 21. Paul reminds them that it would have been better to have taken his advice. The captain’s action had gotten Paul into the trouble, too. How like it is on life’s journey—the high handed, self-opinionated actions and plans of the unruly often lead the Lord’s people into situations that they would not themselves have gotten into. But there is a nice lesson for us here. Paul was gracious; he did not sit down and say, “Well, you got yourself into this, now you will have to get out of it the best way you can,” but he continued to render all the help he could.

Read verses 22-25. He speaks words of good hope and cheer from his God. Paul lets all know exactly where he stands; he is not ashamed to admit himself as God’s representative, allowing no thought that he himself is any great one. Note the reason in verse 24 why Paul was not to lose his life—he must appear before Caesar. Jesus made known that one of the purposes for which He called His apostles was that they appear “before kings and rulers for my name’s sake”; i.e., to bear a testimony to the truth in this way. This being a purpose of God in Paul, God would look after him. Here is another little reminder for us — that God’s saints are immortal till their work is done.

We note that all who were with Paul were graciously spared from death by the goodness of God. This reminds us, somewhat, of Sodom’s destruction. In response to Abraham’s questioning, the Lord made it known that Sodom would be spared, despite her gross iniquity, if so many as ten righteous men could be found in her. On other occasions wholesale calamities were withheld for the sake of one righteous person.

However, it was by no miraculous method, that all in Paul’s company were spared on this occasion, but by a way of much hardship. In the extreme experiences Paul’s faith never wavered as he sought to encourage the others. “Fear not, for I believe God that it shall be even as he has told me”; then read verse 26. They would be saved, but certain experiences had to be faced during which they were going to lose everything. For how many of us has our salvation required “being cast upon a certain island”—certain experiences of hardship during which we lost earthly status or possessions? Paul lost much in this way, but in another place he said he counted it all as refuse in order to win Christ.

Read verses 27-29. What an ordeal; fourteen nights of such an experience, and now the constant dread of smashing on

rocks. How helpless they were, unable to do a thing. They threw anchors overboard and “wished for the day”—nothing to do but wait. How like some of our experiences, our anxieties at “wits-end/corner.” We “wish for the day,” to be able to see a way out of the dilemmas that face us, and for the day of the kingdom.

From verse 30 we find that in the time of anxiety the shipmen (sailors in charge of the craft) were going to flee, and in verse 31 Paul warns the centurion that that would be disastrous for all concerned at that stage. Note Paul’s great leadership, and now the centurion was ready to listen to him and apparently he commanded his soldiers to halt the sailors, which they did by cutting the life boat adrift.

In verse 33 we sense the relief as daylight comes; their hopes are renewed, tension is eased. Apparently for the whole fourteen days of their frightening vigil they had been too tense to eat. Paul reminds them of their physical need; probably even after so long some of them could not find interest in food. The apostle gives thanks to God in the presence of them all. We don’t know what happened to his companions in the years afterwards (276 of them), but we can be assured none of them would ever forget the witness Paul gave to them during this journey. It would be nice to think that our witness before unbelievers in the storms of life is as pleasing, and that they will serve to assist men, if not now, at least in the day of their visitation.

In verses 39-41 we find that, even in sight of land, fresh disaster overtakes them. Everything at last seemed sure for their deliverance, and in confidence they hoist the mainsail, only to become foul of some kind of undertow which grounds and smashes their ship. This is like the Christian’s experience often—from one puzzling difficulty to another. In verses 43, 44 we see that now each one had to exert himself to the last ounce of strength, either by swimming or clutching broken pieces of the ship. There was no miraculous, divine help, just overruling of the various features of the mishap that none should lose his life; even a broken piece of the ship to cling to would be **regarded as** a Godsend by those unable to swim. Whatever of earthly belongings we lose in the storms encountered in our pilgrimage as strangers and foreigners upon earth, we are never left destitute—the “broken piece of the ship” is always at hand. Said the psalmist—“I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” (Psa. 37:25.)

Passing into the 28th chapter of Acts we note their further experiences. After escaping safely from their ordeal they found themselves amongst a barbarous people, with rain and cold. The word translated “barbarous” does not carry the meaning that our language generally conveys. It simply means that they were not of the same nationality as the shipwrecked ones, and could quite easily have proved hostile to them. After a storm of that kind at sea, and they on a small island, can we not conjure up in our minds the miserableness of that morning? Perhaps it was the extreme nature of their plight that banished any thoughts of hostility from the minds of the island’s natives. Likewise, sometimes we find that God so overrules our experiences that the extremity of our plight causes others to show us unexpected kindnesses.

Next we observe Paul gathering a bundle of sticks for the fire, always in the forefront when there was something to do. Like his Lord, he was not in this world to be ministered unto, but to minister, and he was ready on every occasion to do good to all men, as he had opportunity. The incident of verses 3-6 regarding the viper coming out of the sticks on the fire and fastening itself to Paul’s hand has a touch of humor. Said the natives—“There is no doubt that this man is a criminal alright, he escaped the sea, but now his judgment is upon him; he must surely die.” So, they watched Paul—a great while it says—likely all day, and when nothing happened, they changed their minds and concluded he must be a god. How like the judgments of men regarding the Lord and His people; opinions are formed and changed according to what meets the eye.

While in the instance of our story public opinion changed in a few hours in hailing Paul from murderer to god, it was similar with our Lord, though the order was reversed. One day they hailed Him as their King during a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, while a few hours later they were condemning Him of the grossest crime and crying — “Away with him.” We are aware how similarly it sometimes occurs in the lives of Christians. The Lord’s people may have many friends while there is hope of present advantage, but they soon find themselves deserted when others find that the Christian course is one of worldly disfavor.

Let us read a few verses about Jesus in this connection—John 2:23-25. It seems to intimate that Jesus knew that the people’s interest lay in His miracles, rather than in His teaching and practice. The Lord’s people are to be as “wise as serpents and harmless as doves,” and it is a good thing to exercise proper wisdom and remember “what is in man,”—just how fickle they can be. Like Jesus, it may not always be wise to commit ourselves fully to every man first hailing us enthusiastically.

However, on the other hand, we find Paul laboring much in ministering to sick and diseased ones amongst the natives, and it is apparent that he won their high regard and in turn they lavished temporal good things upon the shipwrecked ones. Verse 11 tells us that they had to wait three months before they could continue their journey. How the 276 men

were accommodated during that time is left entirely to conjecture — hardships innumerable.

On their journey again, we find Paul contacting a few brethren. Possibly they in turn found a way of letting others know, and a small company came out quite a distance to meet and greet Paul as he neared Rome — “whom when he saw, he thanked God, and took courage.” What a treat it must have been to converse and commune with others of like precious faith after his ordeal. After all his experiences amongst unbelievers how he would appreciate the company and fellowship of fellow Christians. So with us, with experiences in the work-a-day world, though we meet some fine people, all are unable to appreciate with us the spiritual things. So our little assemblies, week by week, refresh us, and we thank God for these privileges we enjoy, for they encourage us. Likewise, isolated brethren find the convention seasons a refresher for them.

The chapter goes on to describe Paul before Caesar, and his noble witness, and the last two verses reveal that Paul was allowed to receive visitors and probably do much teaching for two years more in his own hired house. We leave him there, undaunted by any and every experience, in the words of the last verse—“Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” With all our experiences, it is good if we continue doing the same.

“Israel in History and Prophecy” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

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He Lived Inside a Whale.

The following article by David Gunston appeared in the Melbourne “Young Sun” of January 22nd, 1959, and was passed to us by one of our brethren. Having obtained permission to reprint it, we believe this amazing account will prove of much interest to our readers, and will serve to show that the story of Jonah and the whale was not the only occasion when a human being was released from such an extraordinary predicament.

TO be swallowed alive by a giant sperm whale is hardly an appetising fate, yet it happened to many old-time whalers who attacked these oil-bearing monsters with handheld harpoons from the bows of frail rowboats. But one man who was swallowed lived to tell the tale.

He was James Bartley, whose well-authenticated story earned him an honored, if little-known, place in the annals of the sea, of natural history, and of high adventure.

Seaman Bartley had sailed the oceans on whaling trips and when the *Star of the East* sailed from England in 1890 he had no reason to believe that, dangerous though it always was in those primitive days, this voyage would hold any special terrors for him.

All went well until one day in February, 1891, when the ship was cruising off the Falklands Islands. The lookout suddenly spotted *a big sperm*. “*Thar’ she bloooows !*” he cried, and two whale-boats, one containing Bartley, were lowered to close in on the quarry.

The first boat’s marksman pierced the whale with his lance, and the enraged beast swung half out of the sea, its 15 ft. tail splintering the second boat and hurtling its little crew into the water.

One man was drowned, and when the first whaleboat checked the survivors it had rescued, Bartley was found to be missing. This sort of thing was the day-to-day risk of whaling, and Bartley’s presumed loss by drowning was duly recorded in the ship’s log.

The whale was finally killed and in a few hours its great limp carcass was lying alongside the *Star of the East*. The crew began *at once* the unsavory task of flensing it for blubber and flesh.

They worked all the day and part of the same night, and next morning laid bare the whale’s vast stomach. Lifting tackle was fixed, and the whole organ hoisted on to the deck for cutting up—when one of the whale-men gave a shout. **ALIVE!**

He had noticed a slight spasmodic movement within. The flensers went to work with their scimitar blades. Perhaps there was a fish here still alive, they thought.

But curiosity turned to horror as the blades leapt back from the doubled up, drenched, but still living body of their missing comrade. Bartley was unconscious, but within seconds was being crudely but effectively doused with cold sea water.

Laid out on the deck, he began to show signs of life. Whale catching and flensing forgotten, the men put Bartley to bed in the captain’s cabin, and gradually he regained consciousness. But he had lost his reason. All he could do was gibber and in spite of all the officers and crew could do for him, he stayed that way for two whole weeks, during which time he was kept under lock and key in the captain’s quarters for his own, and the ship’s safety.

But gradually Bartley began to recover. He became mentally normal again, and physically seemed none the worse for his unique ordeal except for one terrible thing.

Wherever his body had not been covered with clothes the merciless acid of the whale’s gastric juices had eaten deep into his skin, bleaching his face, neck and hands a deadly white. His skin was dried, shrivelled and tautened like a piece of old parchment.

When he was able to talk coherently of his ordeal, Bartley said he clearly remembered being thrown into the sea. Then came a tremendous rushing sound he took to be the swirling of the sperm’s tail through the water, and he was soon, as he himself put it, “encompassed by a great darkness.”

He felt he was slipping swiftly along a smooth passage that itself seemed to carry him onward. Shortly after this, he realised the movement had stopped, and he had more room.

SLIMY WALLS

He groped about in the stench and the darkness to find the walls of his prison slimy and yielding.

Slowly the awful truth dawned in on him. He realised escape was impossible — that it was only a matter of time.

To add to his anguish there was the intense heat of the whale's inside, an oppressive heat which opened every pore in his body and sucked out all his vitality.

Inevitably, he passed out, chiefly from shock, and remembered nothing more until he came, round in the captain's cabin.

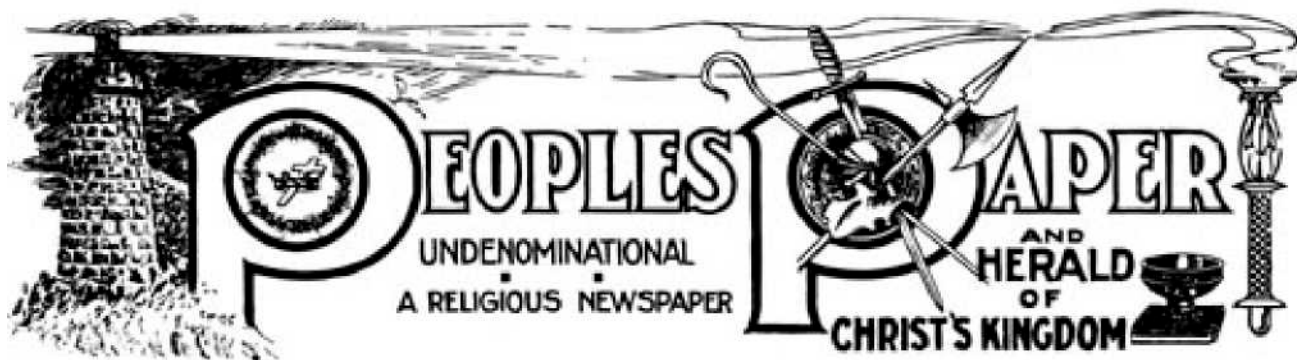
Bartley fully recovered, save for his disfigured skin, and in later years was said to be in "splendid spirits and enjoying life," as well he might, the luckiest man on earth.

The Bible.

The Bible is the torch of civilization and! liberty. Its influence for good in society has; been recognised by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have, looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings.. The grand old Book is unintentionally, but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through traditions of their fathers. Would that such would' awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their. weapons !

Since the light of nature leads us to expect a. fuller revelation of God than that which nature supplies, the reasonable, thinking mind will be prepared to examine the claims of anything purporting to be divine revelation, which bears a reasonable surface evidence of the truthfulness of such claims. The Bible claims to be such a revelation from God, and it does come to us with sufficient surface evidence as to the probable correctness of its claims, and gives us a reasonable hope that closer investigation will disclose more complete and positive evidence that it is indeed the Word of God.

The Bible is the oldest book in existence; it has outlived the storms of thirty centuries. Men have endeavoured by every means possible to banish it from the face of the earth; they have hidden it, burned it, made it a crime punishable with death to have it in possession, and the most bitter and relentless persecutions have been waged against those who had faith in it; but still the Book lives. To-day, while many of its foes slumber in death, and hundreds of volumes written to discredit it and to overthrow its influence, are long since forgotten, the Bible has found its way into every nation and language of earth, many hundreds of translations of it having been made. The fact that this book has survived so many centuries, notwithstanding such unparalleled efforts to banish and destroy it, is at least strong circumstantial evidence that the great Being whom it claims as its Author has also been its preserver.



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Christ, Our Passover Lamb.

IN REVIEWING the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death, when our Saviour met with His little band of apostles in the "upper room" on the evening preceding His sacrifice on Calvary's cross, the careful student of the Bible is at once impressed With the connection between this sacred service and the Jewish Passover ceremony which God had instructed Israel to keep in order to effect their release from Egyptian bondage, and then to observe, year by year, as an, annual remembrance of that great deliverance by the Lord on their behalf.

The importance of Israel keeping their Passover service each year on the anniversary of their deliverance from Egypt is clearly indicated by the Lord's directions, as we read—"And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service, that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when, he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and thy sons for ever." (Exod. 12:25-27, 24.)

God had also clearly impressed upon the minds of all Israel that only by observing all His instructions, principal of which was the slaying of the Passover lamb and sprinkling its blood upon their homes, would their firstborns be spared by the destroying angel in Egypt, and they as a nation be guided out of the slavery from which they longed to be free. No doubt the Lord intended to impress that the Passover lamb was a type of the Messiah whom He would send, and by whose blood, sprinkled upon their hearts, so to speak, the "firstborns" of God are "passed over" during this Gospel Age, as they yield their lives in sacrifice.

Following the commencement of our Lord's ministry at thirty years of age, we have no record of His observing the Passover ceremony with His disciples on the three anniversaries prior to His sacrifice, as these would not be of special interest, but on the anniversary of the Jewish Passover when He was to be the anti-typical Passover Lamb, we read His words—"With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) Yes, the Lord was about to explain the deep significance of the memorial of His death, which, from that time onward, would take the place of the Jewish ceremony in the lives of His true followers. No wonder that the last Jewish Passover that God could acknowledge is the only one recorded in the Gospels, for at that time our Saviour became "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

In addition to the accounts of the Lord's Supper given in the Gospels, we have a most remarkable presentation of the same recorded by the Apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians. While this apostle was not a follower of the Master while He was on earth, following his conversion and complete surrender to the service of the Lord he was given some of the most astounding revelations regarding God's plan of the ages, not the least of which was the detailed record of the procedure when Jesus met with His other apostles to institute this important memorial of His death.

It seems very clear that the Apostle Paul had cause to rebuke and exhort the Corinthian church to observe the Lord's Supper with proper dignity and sacred reverence, and not to make it a common feast, as apparently they were wont to do, and this called for the explanation of the subject of the Supper in some detail. We read Paul's words in 1 Cor.

11:23 —"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread," etc. How influential should the Apostle's words have been when we realise that the risen Lord gave him this special communication from heaven, by the spirit. The words—"I have received of the Lord"—should surely provoke the most profound attention on the part of all who are seeking to walk in the steps of the Master.

The fact that Paul records—"I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you,"—is worthy of note. Apparently the previous sacred information about the memorial of Christ's death had not the desired effect, so the Apostle felt it essential to impress that partaking of the Lord's Supper in a careless or any unworthy manner could bring condemnation upon the recipients, as well as shame upon, the Lord's cause as a whole.

The Apostle continues—"The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread." Yes, it was while Judas was on his final ;A of betrayal, after receiving the sop from Jesus, that our Lord proceeded with the institution of the memorial of His death. It was quite out of place that the betrayer should be present at the Lord's Supper, as we read—"And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. He then having received the sop went immediately out; and it was night " (John 13:27, 30.) Yes, "it was night," and the darkest act of betrayal, instigated by Satan, was then under way. What a warning to all who would be disciples of the Master, to think that within the space of about three years, one, who at first set out with a true heart to serve the Lord, could be overcome by the spirit of avarice and become the betrayer of his Lord he professed to love, because he allowed the Adversary to take possession of his heart. Speaking prophetically for the Lord, the psalmist declared — "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." (Psa. 41:9.)

Most of the Lord's people have similar experiences to those of their Master, whether it be through envy, malice, or tongues "lifted up against them," and what a lesson we have in the life of Judas, revealing to what depths one can fall from the grace of God, as Paul again warns us—"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." (Heb. 12:15.)

"He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this **do in remembrance of me.**" This bread was unleavened; fitting symbol of our Lord's perfect humanity—"For such an high priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) "Take, eat,"—appropriate the merit of my perfect offering for your sins, that you may gain justification by faith in the sight of God. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.)

"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped (after the Jewish Passover supper), saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Again we see that the Lord was showing how to gain justification — by appropriating His merit, partaking of the value of His perfect, life, pictured by the fruit of the vine. We note also that Christ's blood is to make the new covenant operative, and to offer His disciples a participation in His blood that will seal that covenant in the Kingdom Age is a very great privilege indeed. This is the secondary or deeper meaning to our Lord's memorial, and implies all true Christians participating in the cup of suffering with Chris, which they gladly covenant to do when they "present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service."

Likewise, with the unleavened bread which pictured our Lord's body, there is the deeper meaning implied, in addition to that of justification. The breaking of the bread symbolized the broken body of Christ, and His members are also broken in His service to become one loaf, so to speak. So, coupling the two symbols together, Paul declared—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion (common participation) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. 10:16,17.)

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." These words are sometimes misunderstood to imply that the apostle is advising the Corinthians to observe the Lord's Supper "often," and it is well known that some denominations celebrate weekly, others monthly, and still others quarterly. Those celebrating weekly misunderstand the references to "breaking of bread" on the first day of the week, in the Acts, to refer to the Lord's Supper, but that was not so. (1) Weymouth's translation of 1 Cor. 11:26 reads: "For every time that you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death—until he comes." As the Jewish Passover was observed annually, and the Lord's Memorial took the place of that typical Passover, so, every time, or each time that the anniversary of Christ's death comes round, and the celebration is observed in spirit and in truth, it is "showing forth the Lord's death till he come"; firstly, as demonstrating faith in the death of Christ as our Passover Lamb, and also confirming that the breaking and sacrificing of the members of Christ still continues "till he come" in the full sense, when Christ, Head and Body, shall be fully sacrificed and ready to "drink anew in the Father's kingdom." (Matt. 26:29.)

The faithful Apostle Paul continues in 1 Cor. 11 to give helpful exhortation when he states — "Wherefore whosoever

¹The booklet entitled—"Why We Observe the Lord's Supper Annually"—contains an explanation of texts relating to "breaking of bread" in Acts, and is supplied at 6d. per copy, post paid.

shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” (Verses 27, 28.) As one has said, “Each should examine his heart, not his life; the examination of the life can only show that it is imperfect, and is greatly discouraging to many.” This is very true, and Paul was not seeking to discourage any sincere ones, but rather sought to encourage all the Lord’s called ones to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in spirit and in truth—”discerning the Lord’s body”, being willing to be broken with Christ, and have their lives poured out in sacrifice, day by day, in the service of the Lord. (Phil. 2:17.)

It is surely a very great privilege to have been invited into the fellowship of saints, and to be counted worthy to endure something for Christ’s sake, as stated by the apostle—”Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” (Col. 1:24.) The celebration of the Memorial Supper is a means of much encouragement and blessing to all the truly consecrated who approach the Lord’s table with clean hands and a pure heart. “Christ our passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Are Mass Conversions Included in God’s Plan of Salvation for Today?

(Contributed Article)

THIS subject seems a very timely one, in view of the wide publicity and the apparent success of what some term evangelistic crusades, missions to the nation, etc. It seems good to look into these things, particularly as they come closer to us at this time.

We would like to emphasize this point, it is not our intention to decry or voice down any movement whereby people are assisted to live better lives. When efforts are made to take people out of darkness and the drab and dreary existence in which many find themselves, particularly in congested cities like Melbourne and Sydney and other places, any little ray of sunshine that can bring them happiness is worthwhile. If people can give them something to live for, to bring them out of that darkness and dreariness, that is very good. Any movement, wherever it comes from, if it brings sunshine, joy, peace, happiness, love and goodwill, surely must do good. On the other side of the scales are the drab experiences that people find to their sorrow when they, seek fellowship and excitement in the many questionable places all too easily found especially by the young folk in these days. So we are not going to cry down and speak ill of these efforts. Our complaint is not against the sunbeams but against the shadows. Why mix truth with error? Why not open the windows of understanding, too long clouded with ignorance, superstition and darkness, and let in the full sunshine of God’s love and plan?

Our purpose is solely to examine the Scriptural authority of any who claim to come in the name of the Lord. By the same token as we claim this privilege, we invite and plead and pray that each one of you will do the same with what we present to you. You should do the same with us as we propose to do with those who make these pretentious claims.

This is what we invite you to do—”try the spirits,” that is to say, test the teachings. In 1 John 4:1 we read,

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” Our Lord said, “Many shall come in my name, and shall deceive many” — Matt. 24:5. Many also would claim His affection and blessing because of the great works accomplished in His name. Unfortunately for them, Jesus refuses to acknowledge them as His Bride. He says, “Depart from Me.” (Luke 13:25-27.)

But how, or by what means, may we be able to distinguish between true and false? Many religious movements over the years have come and gone. Like comets in the heavens, they shine with great brilliance, but soon the novelty and excitement is finished. Many of us can remember such movements. Not long afterwards we are back in the same ruts and grooves, same old frustrations and depressions. Mighty works have been claimed to be done in the name of the Lord, but there has been no continuity.

You may well ask, how can we test the teachings of great religious leaders? Doctors of religion, doctors of law, men of letters, how can we question their authority? We assure you there is a way, and it is not only your privilege, but your responsibility to prove all things for yourself, so you may be fully persuaded in your own mind that you have the truth.

If we recommended to you a certain man to do a building job for you, you may be disposed to accept our recommendation. You might act on that advice. You would, up to a point, approve of our recommendation, but would you not very soon check for yourself his progress with the blueprints, as he proceeded with the job? Even before that you would have checked the foundations, which are important in any building; but so are the details. At certain stages of construction you would check up, would you not, on this man’s work. You know what you would do if he was not

building according to your specifications.

We would like to emphasise this point—he could be an excellent builder and a very well-meaning, sincere, honest and god-fearing man in every respect. As a man he could be everything you would desire. But if he presented you with something entirely out of harmony with your plans, what would you do? Now that is the precise position in regard to God's Church. Let us read 1 Cor. 3:10-15—Paul says, “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

They are very strong words. So friends, it is important how this building is designed and proceeded with in its various stages of construction. We have it in the words of the Psalmist, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.” God is interested in the human efforts folk make to build His Church. Is it unreasonable to think that God will reject results out of harmony with His will, any more than you as a designer of your house would reject something a builder prepared out of harmony with your design? As these various winds of doctrine blow around the world, you must be assured in your own mind, of your faith. At the close of this article you answer the question, Are mass conversions included in God's plan of salvation for today?

A plan, did you say? Just as in any plan, much detail is given in God's plan of salvation. Supposing the outline is all right, and the detail wrong. Supposing the foundation is all right, and the superstructure wrong. There is confusion. Something is out of harmony. God does take an interest in His building. “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.” In every work of God there is plan and design, from the butterfly's wings to a snowflake, from the ocean's depths to the top of Everest. From the jellyfish to the highest form of life on earth, Man, there is planning.

We may be so foolish as to refuse to admit the Plan and the Planner. Many do this. But you will not read very far in the New Testament without discovering that there is to be a Church, and as in all other arrangements, there is a plan of its structure. But in fact, it is a mysterious building. (Read Eph. 3:3-11.)

Now read Eph. 2:13-22, where Paul is speaking to those Gentile believers who have come into the faith of Jesus Christ. Looking particularly at the last three verses, we have “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Yes, God is interested in a certain building, and this building has for its foundation the prophets and apostles, and Jesus Christ Himself is the apex. God is particularly interested in this building, since He is going to abide in it. It is going to be His habitation. So we may be sure that God is very interested in any movement that claims to be building His Church.

In our city (Melbourne) at the moment we have activity that has for its object mass conversions. Since 1954 this particular movement claims for itself stupendous success in drawing crowds — 25,000 here, 50,000 there, 70,000 somewhere else. In one centre there were 180,000 in one single day. If you have heard and read a little of this movement, you will discern how its gatherings are “sold” to the people. Firstly, the publicity and the initial support—thus success is guaranteed—that is if numbers are any criterion. This publicity is highly organised, with newspaper articles, pictures, T.V., radio and other avenues in which publicity goes before it. Then there is lovely music and singing, the more enhanced because of the way it catches on. It is really delectable.

A man may also use a lovely personality and cultivate talents and develop them to capture the imagination and enthusiasm of other folk. It is interesting to note here that Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, as such, had no personality. Read Isa. 53:1-3. This is the man Jesus Christ, whom we delight to talk about. “He had no comeliness, that we should desire Him.” He must have been a beautiful creature, crowned with the glory and honour of perfect manhood. Sin blurs our vision, while the author of sin complicates it still further by putting light for darkness, darkness for light, sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet. The repentance we preach is more than something akin to a new year resolution.

It is a discernment not only of sin in ourselves, but that Jesus, in His great humiliation, carried those sins. He bore our grief, carried our sorrows and shame, and the peace of God will be absent from our hearts until we see our healing in His stripes, smitten of God and afflicted for our transgressions.

As to the Apostle Paul, one of those “foundation stones,” he must have had a dynamic personality in one way, yet in another way he had no personality outwardly. They said of him, “Yes, his letters are weighty, but his bodily presence is weak.” There was no publicity for him, nothing to attract the fleshly mind.

Paul gives us a lead as to what we should look for in a preacher. He says, “Who is Paul, and who is Apollos? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” The message is the thing that counts, not the man behind it. The Apostles themselves could see that message in detail, the detail of God’s building. It is a message with a man behind it—and that man is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 3:4-8) .

However, let us return to mass conversions. These happenings remind us that some even go so far as to say they are a second Pentecost. Incidentally, there is to be a second Pentecost (Acts 2:16-18). But this great movement that is going around the world since 1954 is likened by some to a second Pentecost. We want first to know what a second Pentecost will be, if we are not to be deceived. This movement reminds us, not of a second Pentecost, but as we look into the Word it reminds us of a harvest. As you know, each age has a harvest. Look back to the harvest of the Jewish Age. That great man, John the Baptist, was there. He had a message similar to the message these prophets have today—“Repent.” John, of course, had something to back it up. “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” Jesus was in attendance six months after John. He supported John, and John supported Him. People flocked in thousands to see and hear John. They trudged out to the place where he was baptizing. It was given to John to point out the Messiah. If John had his thousands, Jesus had His tens of thousands. It was deemed expedient by those in authority, because of this, that they should get rid of Him. “All wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” This is the sad part of it—despite the great crowds, as He continued to reveal God’s plan and continued to point out some of the details of the building in which He was to be the Chief Corner-stone, His followers dwindled. They dwindled until at last there was just the twelve of them. You could hardly believe it. He said to His apostles,

“Will ye also go away?” But they could not leave Him. He had the words of eternal life.

When He sent His seventy disciples out, to winnow the grain from the chaff in the harvest of that age, He sent them not as a body to convert the thousands en masse, but in pairs; sent them to the individual households with a message of peace. The Scripture in this sense would be fulfilled,—“Ye shall be gathered one by one, O, ye house of Israel.”

(Isa. 27:12.) Isn’t that pertinent to our case today? Jesus said it would be similar at the end of the Gospel Age. We are comparing these movements to the time of the harvest. His parable of the wheat and tares is very definite in this respect. (Matt. 13.) He points out that at the end of the age there would be a great harvest, because the wheat and the tares would be separated.. This parable suggests that rather than mass conversions there would be mass declensions.

So does the Psalmist support the idea. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand.” But the promise is, “it shall not come nigh thee”, provided we have taken the necessary precautions. The fields in the Gospel Age are like the fields in the Jewish Age, ripe to harvest, but the labourers are few.

The pages of history repeatedly tell of the struggle of the few, sometimes of the individual, against the minions of evil. The Lord’s people are not to be affrighted though the whole world be arraigned against them. “If God be for us who then can be against us?”

Earlier we showed that plan and design, law and order, is Heaven’s first law—morning and evening, summer and winter, springtime and harvest, sowing and reaping. What would you think of a farmer who brought out his plough and harrows rather than a thresher and binder? The Master mentioned a feast (the Apostle Paul calls it Present Truth), and said that there would be a great separation work. One would be taken from here, one would be taken from there, and one would be taken from another place (Luke. 26:37). It is much the same as it was at the end of the Jewish Age, when people were in expectation of they knew not what. This work of separation is *going* on, and rather than mass conversions, it is one here and there that is gathered. Many say, Here is Christ, accept this and everything will be all right. But is mass conversion what the Lord portrayed as taking place at the end of the age?

It is sometimes helpful to examine a movement or teaching by comparing it with other matters. Now let us open our Bibles, and keep them open. You often hear it expressed of those they term “hot gospellers” that they “have something.” Let us from the Scriptures show you some of the things they have, and on the other hand some of the things they do not have, and then make up your own mind.

They do have that infamous doctrine of hell fire. It makes one wonder regarding their reasoning when we open our Bibles and read Matt. 5:43-45. It is beyond comprehension how any man can teach hell fire in view of this. This is taken from the Sermon on the Mount, and held up as the perfect relationship of man to man. “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them

that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Friends, that means to say, Like. Father, like son. Particularly note the point that we are to be like God. But in the next breath these folk tell us that God does something different with His enemies. It is beyond comprehension. It makes God a hypocrite. He treats His enemies differently to what Jesus tells us we should treat ours. There is something wrong somewhere, is there not?

There is something else these “hot gospellers” have—the Trinity doctrine. Jesus, according to them, is God. How could anyone read John 17 and think Jesus and the Father are one and the same? The detail is all out of harmony with the foundation, if we build that way.

They could not very well teach hell-fire and the Trinity without teaching the old-age lie, “ye shall not surely die.” But they put on this deception a modern garb, give it a different dress and call it immortality of the soul. This cuts the ground from under the plain teaching of Jesus that there shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust. If you subscribe to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, you will have to clip from your Bible all the passages that speak of a resurrection. Then you must clip out all those parts that speak of a restitution of all things. (Read Acts 3:19-25).

Here is sound advice. Repent. But what follows? “Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” If you believe the age-old lie of immortality of the soul, you will not only need to clip from the New Testament those portions speaking of restitution and resurrection. You will also have to cut out from your Bible all those lovely passages that speak of the restitution blessings to come through Abraham’s seed, who you know is Christ and His Church. There is to be a blessing for the world, not consignment to eternal torment. One thing leads to another. Then you would be obliged to eliminate any reference to Jerusalem as the capital of the earth. You would need to cut out such passages as Micah 4:1-4 (please read). But we trust you will retain that lovely promise, and particularly the latter portion, “They shall sit every man under his vine and under his *fig* tree, and none shall make them afraid.” That is quite different to what these “hot gospellers” preach. They are mixing things up. Security is what people want, and they are going to be assured of security under the reign of Jesus Christ. We must test these teachings.

Let us go on. You also, like those of the Jewish faith at the end of their day, would not know the day of your visitation, speaking generally. You would be well equipped to forecast the weather. But you would be unable to read the signs of the Lord’s presence. You would have a false sense of security. It would amount to what Jesus Christ describes as the blind leading the blind.

John Bunyan puts it this way.. When Christian was on his way to the Celestial City, he came to the forked roads, and both were identical. He did not know which way to go. He deliberated for a while which of these two roads he should take. A man came along and said, This is the way. Christian took this way, to his sorrow. For a while it was all right, but ,by and by it became worse. As deeper became the mire and morass and trouble, he had great difficulty in retracing his steps. (2 Pet. 3:16.) That is what is being done with the Scriptures. They are being disguised, and people are being lulled into a false sense of security.

Is mass conversion included in God’s plan of salvation for today? We answer, Conversion from what, and conversion to what? Since 1914, the beginning of the great time of trouble, the walls of faith are in the process of being demolished. They are being shaken as never before. Our Lord asked, when He comes shall He find faith? — implying, of course, there’ would be very little of the true faith as it pertains to His ransom sacrifice and the details of the house God is building, His Church.

Ye’s, since 1914 these things have been shaken, and the walls of faith have tumbled around men and they do not know their right hand from their left as far as the Word of -God is concerned. The ecclesiastical powers, the heavens, are greatly alarmed. These mass conversions seem to be attempts to rebuild the old bulwarks. They were unable to withstand the blast of God’s displeasure. “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.”

Right down through the age there have been two voices, one from the true Shepherd and another from a stranger. Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice; but a stranger will they not follow.” The voice of the true Shepherd will open up the Bible, and as it opens up you will be led beside still waters and green pastures. You are compelled to ask yourself, If these great revivalists know these things, why don’t they tell the people? They know, as we know and have experienced, that if they tell the people these things, very little interest would be shown. There would be one here, one there. But it is just as our Lord said it would be, so why should we be perplexed? God has a plan, and a good plan, which involves not only the Church, but mankind in general. Every man will share the blessings of that plan, just as the Church has enjoyed the blessing of coming into Christ and being associated with Him in this temple God is building for His own habitation. There is one here and one there, and it was exactly the same in the days of the Apostles. A

short time after Jesus Himself had gone there was quite a company together on the day of Pentecost, but after that it was hard going. You do not have to read very far in the epistles of Paul and John to see that very few responded. There were twelve foundation stones, and it was as hard for them as it is for us. Very few responded, just one here, one there. Is it reasonable to suppose that if the twelve foundation stones of the Church could do so little as to mass conversions, that we, so far removed from the purer teachings of Jesus, are going to match and excel their efforts? No.

Our advice to you is to open your Bibles, look at the harvest message, the message appropriate to the time mentioned in Matt. 24. In this chapter, which is referred to as our Lord's great prophecy, you will see at the beginning Jesus had warned them about certain things which were to happen. This chapter is worth reading and pondering, because it provides the answer to all the problems that confront us today in our social world, in our religious world, and as we go among our friends and families. They are the words right from the Master •Himself. It is strikingly apparent that the harvest of these two ages, the Jewish and Gospel ages, are in many respects similar. He told them about the mighty works of that day—look at the great temple buildings, and all the glory and pomp and splendour— but He said not one stone would be left upon another. It was to be razed to the ground. The disciples were worried, and came to Jesus and asked Him at a convenient time as to what was meant. They said, "Tell us, when shall these things be?" You will notice there are three questions, "When shall these things be," i.e. about the great time of trouble that was to come at the end of the age. The next question is, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming"—how shall we be able to understand? They were speaking for the whole Church. The third question is, "And of the end of the age." Keep in mind in reading the following verses that Jesus is answering three questions, and you will *see* that some part of the discourse that follows is in regard to the first question, some parts in regard to the second and third questions.

Jesus had said' previously to Jerusalem, "Your house is left unto you desolate." He had wept over that glorious fortress of God. Later that city was razed to the ground, and truly not one stone was left upon another. The Temple must have been a magnificent piece of work. It was said that because of the amount of gold there, in the conflagration the gold was melted and ran down between the great stones. In their efforts to recover the treasure, the soldiers literally tore one stone from another until not one was left standing. How true the Lord's words became.

Then regarding the next question, the sign of His coming — He had been forewarning them about His departure.

He also said He would come again. "Where I am, there ye may be also." They were anxious to know what would be the sign of His second coming. They also were very anxious to know what would happen at the end of the age. That is what concerns IF. We would like you to read Mat. 24:31-45.

So there is going to come a time in the life span of one person when tremendous events are to be fulfilled before our eyes. We think they have begun. It began, we believe, in 1914. Every unsolved problem dates from then. 1939 was a repetition of 1914. The same troubles are there .to be solved today. Men will not face those problems, so these conditions our Lord says would arise are shortly coming to pass. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass." "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall the days of the Son of Man be." Before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the flood came and took them all away. These things are not in themselves evil. It is no sin to be married, to be eating and drinking and so on. But this is the trouble — men are so preoccupied with these things that they can think of nothing else. "Then shall two be in the field," etc. They are gathered to the spiritual food prepared for them. In another place it says, "Where, Lord ?" Our Lord says, "Where the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." It is a feast of truth. That is where we are today.

Can you in your imagination see that mass conversions are going to accomplish anything as far as God's building of the Church is concerned? It may have beneficial effects on young people. We would be unsympathetic not to wish anyone well in any good work. But we are merely concerned with the authority they claim in regard to the conversion of the world. Nothing could be further from the truth. God has a plan, and His plan envisages not only the Church, but also the whole world of mankind. It is the best news we ever heard in our lives. We should not be enticed away by these great gatherings. The truth is more precious and valuable than anything. It keeps us stable, and with a definite purpose in view.

The verses we have read, and the experiences of the Apostles and others, show us that rather than mass conversions, it will be mass declensions. We have to recognise our part in these things, then we will not be afraid. It may be that this will test us still further when we have to take our stand and speak in regard to the great and glorious details that go to make up God's plan. In it there will be an opportunity for everyone. There is no thought of mass conversion.

“Blessed Bible, precious Word,
Boon most sacred from the Lord—
Glory to His name be given
For this precious gift from heaven.

‘Tis a fountain, pouring forth
Streams of life to gladden earth,
Whence eternal blessings flow,
Antidote for human woe.

‘Tis a mine, aye deeper too
Than can mortal ever go;
Search we may for many years,
Still some new, fresh *gem* appears.”

Passover Memorial, 1959

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord’s request—”This do in remembrance of me.”

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

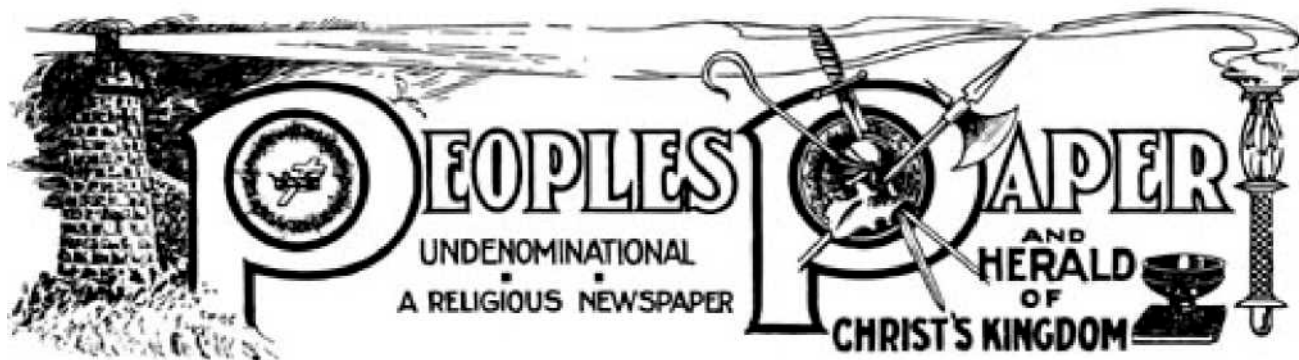
Perth.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.45 p.m., at 240 Shepparton Road, East Victoria Park, W.A.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

Adelaide.—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.90 p.m., at Master Builders’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

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In Your Faith Supply Virtue.

(Convention Address)

“Yea, and for this very cause, adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue” (2 Pet. 1:5, Rev Ver)

THE connection of these words with the preceding is more accurately rendered by the translation of the Revised Version, which for “besides this” substitutes “for this very cause.” That is to say, the exhortations of our text, and of subsequent verses, are all based upon the bestowment on us of “exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”

These radiant words, which seem to carry us far away into a dreamland of ecstasy, are bolted together in the closest manner, with the homeliest duty of diligent self-culture. A fanatic would have said—“We are partakers of the divine nature, therefore we are absolved from toil.” Peter says—“We are partakers of the divine nature, therefore let us fully appreciate our privileges, and yield ourselves in hearty obedience, in co-operation with the heavenly call.”

That is plain common sense at all events, and may assure us that we are not listening to a mystical dreamer with his head in the clouds, when we listen to this writer, telling us that the holy spirit of God is dwelling in and working within the consecrated Christian’s heart.

We have here in this and the subsequent verses, seven of the prominent Christian graces. We will consider, for a few moments, the first of these which the Apostle Peter called “virtue.” Consider first what is this virtue. Now, virtue is not a common word in the New Testament. It belongs to another dialect altogether. It is taken from the language of philosophers and moralists, rather than of evangelists and Apostles. What those call virtue the New Testament calls righteousness; and on the single occasion in which the Apostle Paul uses the word, he puts it, as it were, in inverted commas, as belonging to another order of thinking than his own. He says, “If there be any virtue . . . think on these things.”

The Apostle Peter uses the word three times in his letters; twice in regard to God, and only this once in regard to man. We can scarcely apply the expression in its ordinary sense to the excellences of the divine nature; and here the word cannot be intended to bear its usual generic meaning, if for no other reason, because it is followed immediately by a number of special virtues; and, however little systematical the Galilean fisherman may have been in stating this list of graces, we can scarcely suppose him to start with a word that swallows up all the rest, and immediately afterwards to add a number of specific forms of it. That would be as if one were to say—“There were a crowd of men, and Frenchmen, and Germans, and Englishmen.” If for no other reason than that, we must take this word as meaning some special form of moral excellence, which may stand in line along with its companions.

No better suggestion has been made than that which takes as meaning a certain manly energy, vigour, and firmness of disposition, which is the first outcome of Christian faith, and may well be the first aim of Christian effort. Now, that strength of nature, firm tenacity of character will, at bottom, be neither more or less than a good, strong will; for a man’s strength is the strength of his will. That being understood, we may ask ourselves for a moment what are the shapes in which this strength, this manly energy, will manifest itself?

There should flow from faith a tenacious vigour which masters circumstances, and does not let them work with us as they please. True, the ship can only be carried by the wind and currents, but, equally true, if there be a strong hand on the tiller, and the canvas be wisely set, she can sail almost in the wind’s eye; and two vessels, under the impulse of precisely the same atmospheric and marine conditions, can head and move in almost opposite directions.

Circumstances do make us, but it depends on us what they make us.

The virtue of our text will manifest itself first, in determining what outward things are to do for us, and then in bending them and coercing them, even whilst we submit to them. Man governs Nature by obeying it, and he obeys it in order to govern it. We obey circumstances in order to harness them to our car. Though they supply the force, the guidance lies in the hand that holds the reins and pulls the bit. The strength of the Christian man will manifest itself in ruling outward things, and making them subservient, whether they be sorrowful or joyful, to the highest end of all, even his larger possession of the spirit of courage, the spirit of love and of a sound mind—the spirit of sonship—the spirit of CHRIST.

In like manner, the virtue meant by our text will manifest itself in the rigid subjugation, by the energy of a strong will, of our own inclinations, desires, tastes, passions, and the like, which all seek to assert themselves, and which the more mightily and ungoverned they work, the weaker a man is. A strong passion means a weak man; and a strong will means passions weakened, and all desires and impulses tamed and taught to know the master's hand when it lifts the rod and bids, or if needful beats, the beast that is in us all into quietness and submission. There is no strength, worth calling by the name, in any man who has not the power of weakening and silencing his worse and lower self.

This manly energy, which all Christians are bade in the very first place to cultivate, will teach us independence of other people. As you are strong that you may, and in proportion as you do, master circumstances and give the law to your nature, so wise strength will show itself in, and will be increased by, letting other people go their way. Let them find their own fashions of life and of work; be independent of their praise or blame, whilst profiting by their criticisms; learn not to live upon their smiles; dare to be voices and not echoes, and to take your commandments, not from the habits of your fellow men or your associates, but from the lips which alone have power to command, and whose approval is praise indeed.

In the control of outward things, in the management and mastery of ourselves, and in independence of the judgments and practices of the world, the Christian man's faith should blossom into a virtue which is manly energy enlightened by knowledge, and softened by gentleness, and able to control and resist.

Strength of will and determined purpose of heart to do the whole will of God is absolutely essential, and no child of God will gain anything worth while unless he has that virtue well and strongly developed. For there is so much more in our circumstances of life to draw us wrong than to draw us right, that unless we have this divinely-given strength we are sure to go wrong. A feeble constitution with low vitality catches any disease that is going, whilst a strong one passes with impunity through the infected air. If we leave our field gates open, the wild cattle are sure to come in and trample down our crops, and eat up all the tender herbage that is there. As one of the poets expresses it

“Who keeps no guard upon himself is slack,
And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.”

For peace there is needed strength; for service there is needed this virtue. For all work is warfare in this world, and no man does good service for his fellows or for his Master, except on condition of battling with and overcoming opposing selfishness and slothfulness in the strength which the Lord supplies. Christians must fight in the strength of the Lord in order to do effective work, and unless we have this manly energy and virtue, we shall be lazy workmen in the Master's fields.

The gentle Christ is the pattern of this manly force, as of everything else that is lovely and of good report. All that the world adores as power looks weak, hysterical, and strained by the side of the calm gentleness of that life which bears no trace of effort, and yet is mightier than all besides. He is Power, because He is Love. The might of meekness and the omnipotence of gentleness are taught us in Jesus Christ. “Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass.” The trampling of the warhorse is vulgar and weak beside that slowpaced persistent march of the King, whose goings are from everlasting. “In thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness.” “Be strong and quit yourselves like men”; and that you may “let all things be done with love.”

Now, let us observe that the root of this virtue, or energy, is in faith. The Revised Version, to which we again appeal, improves our translation by reading, instead of “add to,” “supply in.” That is to say, virtue, is not to be piled upon “faith,” and “knowledge” upon “virtue,” and so on, as if they were unrelated graces, put on the top one of another, like bricks upon a wall. It is not to faith that virtue is to be added, but it is in faith that virtue is to be found. The germ, the root, the vital point from which is developed virtue and all that follows is Faith.

The great series of Christian graces here is a case of growth or development, one after another springing from the primary Christian characteristic of faith in Jesus Christ, which Implicitly contains them all. Each link in the chain

grows out of that which precedes, and leads forward to that which follows.

The thought that underlies this exhortation is that a Christian man's faith in Christ is the productive root of all goodness of character. That is not because of anything in faith itself, but altogether because of that on which faith lays hold. We do not for a moment mean to say that these beauties of character which follow in these verses cannot be produced without faith. That would not be true; but if they ever are, they are of a more imperfect form than they might be if they were rooted in the soil of Christian confidence in Jesus Christ. If they are ever produced, as undoubtedly they are, independently of that exercise of Christian faith, they lack at once their best security, their most vital power, and their highest consecration. Apart from that, let us take this thought home to ourselves, that the New Testament knows nothing of a faith the only effect of which is to obtain pardon, and that, unless what we call our trust in Jesus Christ is working in our lives all manner of fair and noble things, there is something seriously, if not fatally, wrong. Trust in Christ is the opening of the sluices, and if the sluices are open, depend upon it, the Water of Life will come in. Faith is that condition of our possessing all things lovely and of good report; because faith opens the door for the entrance of God Himself, and where God comes His holy spirit brings all manner of rich spiritual blessings of peace and joy and love and holy fellowship.

If any have the notion that faith is mainly concerned in laying hold of a certain provision by which we may escape the wrath of God and obtain forgiveness, let them widen their notions of what faith is, and what it is for. If any, on the other hand, are saying that the system of redemption, by Jesus Christ is not in accord with the highest morality because it substitutes faith for character, let them revise their thoughts and understand this, that Christianity does not substitute faith for character, but that it puts faith as the foundation of character, and demands that every man who professes that he has trust in Jesus Christ shall show his faith by his works. A faith which does not grow into virtue and knowledge and all the other links in this chain is, if not dead, at least ready to perish. If it has not vitality enough to fruit, there is but little difference between its enfeebled vital force and absolute death. Let us consider this matter carefully.

Still further, need it be said that the exercise of confidence in God, as revealed to us in Jesus Christ, has a direct tendency to produce this strong form of character of which our text speaks? Trust will always make a person strong. As long as there is confidence, there is power; as long as there is trust, there is peace and vigour. That is why our adversary, Satan, goes about trying to destroy our faith. He will try to make us doubt God. He will try to break down our confidence in the faithfulness and integrity of our brethren. He is the accuser of the brethren. We must withstand the evil one; we must "resist the devil, steadfast in the faith."

Faith, as communion with God, will bring strength. For, when we get close to Him, then all the tumult of life dies into silence, as the city noises were dulled to the ear of the priest in the Holy Place. Faith, as the realization of the Unseen, will bring strength; for in the measure in which we walk in the light of that solemn, certain, blessed future, in that measure will its sun put out the fire in our chambers and dim the glories of our artificial lights. O, hold fast by Jesus Christ, commune with God day by day, realise that great future as we call it, but which we had better call the enwrapping, unseen present, and strength will be yours to resist—"to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." (Eph. 6:13.)

Lastly, a word as to the cultivation of this virtue by our own effort. Again, we invite attention to a preferred rendering of the text. "Giving all diligence" might be more accurately rendered as the Revised Version has it—"adding on your part all diligence." The original word is a very graphic and picturesque one. It means, "bringing in by the side of," when fully and though clumsily, yet accurately translated. Bringing in your diligence by the side of what? By the side of that "partaking of the divine nature," which has just been mentioned. God's gift does not make my effort unnecessary, but rather requires and demands it as its completion and consequence.

This is not the time to talk about the great and wide subject of the relation and co-operation of the divine gift and the human effort in man's salvation. The whole matter may be looked at from the one point of view or from the other. You may so fix attention on the divine element as to lose sight of the human; you may so fix attention on the human as to lose sight of the divine. It is like some complicated pattern, where, as you focus the eye, you can persuade yourself that you see white on a black ground, or black on a white ground.

Our text takes the divine element as first and fundamental, and does not say—"God does, therefore you need not"; nor does it say, "Shut your eyes and open your mouths, and take what drops into them." But it does say that it is God that worketh in, therefore do you work out; and inasmuch as you are partakers of the divine nature, see that you "give all diligence"—a commonplace virtue—on your part, to work into your characters, and to work out in your conduct, whatsoever of the divine beauty or purity has passed from Him to you. Someone has said that man's salvation is one hundred per cent. God's provision; and we say, yes, that is true; but if the salvation freely provided for you and me is to be effective, it will require a one hundred per cent. effort on our part. We are required to love the Lord with all our heart, and mind and being and strength. God will prove us to see whether we love Him with our whole heart.

The general principle, then, is plain; the special application of it here, as to the manner in which, and the degree to which, the weakest of us—weak by natural disposition, and weak by circumstances—may make ourselves strong by laying hold of the divine strength, and cultivating that strength, needs not many words. The best way by which we can give diligence to make ourselves strong, is by cultivating and nurturing the faith which strengthens. Let us get into the habit of thinking about Jesus Christ all through our days; let the word of Christ dwell in us richly; let us get the habit of bringing mind and heart and will under the dominion of the spirit of God's Word, not only on certain days and special occasions; not only at our times of prayer, but all through our common-place work and trivial duties, and we will find His strength more and more controlling and subduing and strengthening our minds and characters. It is by "beholding and reflecting as in a glass the glory of the Lord," that we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.)

This heavenly strength can be obtained in larger measure, too, by the simple process of habitually acting as if we possessed it; that is, we must claim by faith the grace and strength so freely offered to us by our blessed Lord. (See Mark 11:22-24.) We must "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." By the Lord's grace we may cultivate the habit of subduing and suppressing the desires of our lower natures; and of cultivating and fostering the heavenly desires and of setting our minds on the things above. We can stop our ears to men's voices; and we can acquire the habit of mastering and coercing circumstances. The will gets dominion by asserting its dominion, and "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.)

We can accustom the lower parts of our nature to go quietly in harness, and break them in, through faith in the Lord, if we will. Our Saviour said—"Without Me ye can do nothing," and the Apostle Paul said—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

There are probably no better ways of developing this strenuous vigour from faith than these two. First, live near to the source of it in earnest prayer and watchfulness—"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." (Isa. 40:31.) Then let us exercise the little that we have, and it will grow by exercise. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might," and "Put on the whole armour of God." (Eph. 6:10, 11.)

Let us keep close to the food which the Lord has especially provided for us at this time of His presence. The six

Volumes of Scripture Studies, provided by divine grace, are a veritable mine of heavenly truth, beautifully and simply stated. Let us not under-value the help they contain. Let us fill our minds and hearts with God's thoughts by keeping close to His Word and by using the helps to its understanding.

If we are not watchful, the influences of the world will crowd out and hinder the influence of God's holy spirit, and our development in heavenly grace and truth will be hindered. O, how earnestly *we* need to watch and pray, and put on the whole armour of God, so that we may gain that heavenly strength and grace of Christlike character necessary for us to be over-corners in the great fight against our three-fold enemy, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Our Lord, in His prayer for His followers, said—"Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth"; and again, "If ye continue in My Word then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 6:28, 29.) "The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:17.) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John 5:4.)

Increase our faith, beloved Lord!
For Thou alone canst give
The faith that takes Thee at Thy Word,
The faith by which we live.

Increase our faith! So weak are we
That we both may and must
Commit our very faith to Thee,

Entrust to Thee our trust.
Increase our faith! For there is yet
Much land to be possessed;
And by no other strength we get
Our heritage of rest.

Increase our faith! On this broad shield
All fiery darts be caught;
We must be victors in the field
Where Thou for us hast fought.

Increase our faith, that we may claim
Each starry promise sure,
And always triumph in Thy name,
And to the end endure.

Increase our faith, O Lord, we pray,
That we may not depart
From Thy commands, but all obey
With free and loyal heart.

Increase our faith—increase it still—
From heavenward hour to hour,
And in us gloriously “fulfil
The work of faith with power.”

Increase our faith, that never dim
Or trembling it may be,
Crowned with the “perfect peace” of him “
Whose mind is stayed on Thee.”

Increase our faith, for Thou hast prayed
That it should never fail;
Our steadfast anchorage is made
With Thee, within the veil.

Increase our faith, that unto Thee
More fruit may still abound;
That it may grow “exceedingly”,
And to Thy praise be found.

Increase our faith, O Saviour dear,
By Thy sweet sovereign grace,
Till, changing faith for vision clear,
We see Thee face to face!

F. R. Havergal.

Pilgrim Way Ended.

Friends who have attended the meetings in Sydney over some years past will remember Sister Brien, of Guildford, who finished the pilgrim way in February last. Our dear Sister had rejoiced in the truth for upwards of twenty-five years, and had truly made it her own as was manifest by her devoted love for the Lord and the brethren, as well as for His Word.

One of our brethren has written as follows —"The passing of our dear Sister Brien will be a great loss to us, and more so to the members of her earthly family, but her trials are over and she will have entered into her reward. I would like to emphasize Sister's quiet and submissive spirit, and her evident trust in all the precious promises contained in God's Word. It was always a pleasure to behold Sister's smiling face, and her readiness to help those who met in the name of the Lord. We could all learn from the attitude our dear Sister Brien showed so well; that is, to put ourselves in the background and never to show the spirit of opposition or intolerance."

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Convention News.

THE Convention held at Adelaide, S.A., during the four days of the Easter season was much blessed of the Lord, and those privileged to attend expressed their thankfulness and appreciation of the good things provided by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. It is always a pleasure to meet with those of "like precious faith," and especially at Convention seasons when special blessings are bestowed upon consecrated and truth-hungry hearts. It was a pleasure to welcome to our midst visiting brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, Victoria; also two brethren from far away Queensland, as well as from the country town of Murray Bridge, South Australia.

Much thanksgiving and praise is offered to our loving Heavenly Father for the privilege of attending this Convention, and being able, by His grace, to participate in the special blessings bestowed. What "riches of grace" has been extended to those who have been called of God to the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ. As we contemplate the honor bestowed upon us, how we should be humbled with the thought of our littleness and personal unworthiness. The grace (unmerited favor) of God is endless, and cannot be computed. The wealth of the grace of God towards us in Christ is unsearchable, but as we try to discover some of the bounties of His love, encouraged by the promises of His Word, and the leadings of His holy spirit, we are led to fountains of grace and truth, and we exclaim with the Psalmist —"With Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light." Yes, and He "makes us to drink of the river of His pleasures."

The portions of Scripture which were chosen for Bible Studies were as follows—Heb. 12:1-7; Rev. 11:15-19; 1 Pet. 1:13-19; and Col. 3:1-10. These inspired messages from the faithful Apostles were a means of comfort and encouragement to us as we endeavoured to receive the instructions with obedient hearts; and thus to be "doers of the Word and not hearers only."

The various addresses from the brethren were helpful as each one endeavoured to encourage and build us up in "our most holy faith." The topics for these addresses were—"Rainbow Signs"; "Humanity Deluded by Demon Doctrines"; "The Stone That The Builders Rejected"; "Prayer"; "We Have An Inheritance"; "Great Decisions"; "The Bible Teaching on Pentecost and The Trinity"; "Lesson and Blessing from Shortcomings"; "Except the Lord Build the House"; and "In Your Faith Supply Virtue."

It was a pleasure to receive messages of Christian love and Greeting from various Ecclesias and also from individual brethren; and it was good to be reminded that these dear brethren were remembering us in prayer for God's blessing upon our gatherings in His name. Some of our members were unable to attend the meetings because of physical disability, and these were especially remembered in our prayers that the Lord's sustaining grace may support and bless them in the narrow way that leads to life.

The Praise and Testimony meetings afforded opportunity to tell of God's goodness and favor, and of the lessons and experiences along the way, as also did the "Hymns We Like and Why" session. At the closing session the message to the brethren was chosen and is found in 1 Pet. 1:13 and Rom. 15:13.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast and singing of the beautiful hymns "Blest be the tie that binds our

hearts in Christian Love” and “God be with you till we meet again,” followed by the concluding prayer of thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for all mercies and blessings received, and requesting His continued favor and blessing upon our way in the days that lie before us.

Convention Notes.

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are now available free from this office.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocca binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

“Israel in History and Prophecy” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne.

THE memorial of Christ’s death was gladly celebrated by the brethren of the Melbourne Class on the evening of April 21st, in response to the request of our dear Saviour that this be observed “in remembrance of Him.” Though some members were absent through sickness, the attendance was very good, and a blessed time was experienced with the Lord’s presence in our midst.

Our studies prior to the anniversary of our Lord’s death proved very helpful in impressing the graciousness of the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer in becoming the antitypical Passover Lamb, so that the “firstborns unto God,” being “passed over” during this Gospel Age, may then be associated with Christ in delivering the “groaning creation from the bondage of corruption” in the new day of the Millennial Age.

During our service some lovely hymns were sung, prayers were offered in thanksgiving to God and especially on behalf of the Lord’s people likewise observing the Memorial Supper throughout the world, Bible readings from Mark 14:12-46; John 18:12-40; 19:1-30 were used, and an address was given showing the privilege of the Lord’s people in appropriating the merit of Christ, that they may then “present their bodies a living sacrifice” in the steps of the Master. The partaking of the emblems thus signified our “remembrance of Christ,” our justification through faith in His sacrificial death, and also our willingness to be broken with Him and have our life poured out as we continue our daily pilgrimage by His grace and strength.

Geelong, Vic.

It isn’t your position which makes you unhappy, but your disposition.

On Tuesday evening, April 21st, friends of our fellowship met once again to remember our Lord in the manner He requested during His last night upon earth. The quiet, solemn service of suitable hymns, prayer, Bible readings (John 17:1-12, 24-26; 18:1-14, 28-40; 19:1-30; 1 Cor. 11:26-32), and a short address ended with the partaking of the emblems. We esteemed it a privilege to be able to show our love for the Lord in this way.

In our pre-studies to the Memorial season many good lessons were reimpresed concerning both the primary and secondary (deeper) significance in partaking of both the bread and the cup. Journeying out of Egypt, Israel of old complained at the bitter waters, but God directed them to a certain tree, which, when happy, or cast in made the water sweet. The tree which makes our bitter sweet is the understanding we gain concerning our Heavenly Father’s purpose in us, as we become associated with His Son.

These Memorial observances are like breaking our “alabaster boxes” to show our love and appreciation of Him who has done so much for us, and serves to deepen or increase that oneness with the Father and His Son, and with each other, for which our Saviour prayed just prior to His crucifixion.

Adelaide.

The Adelaide Class found it a very sweet and blessed privilege once again to keep the Memorial of our dear Redeemer's death for us. All our hopes of life and blessing, both present and future, are dependent upon the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What an example He left for His Church, of meek and humble submission to the most severe and awful suffering connected with His apprehension, examination and crucifixion.

What an honor and privilege is given to His Church, His Body, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. And what a glorious outcome will be the result, when, in due time He sees "the travail of His soul," and is "satisfied" with the blessing of all the families of the earth, in the glorious "times of restitution of all things," now so near at hand.

"In the cross of Christ we glory,

Towering o'er the wrecks of time;

All the light of sacred story

Gathers round its head sublime."

Perth.

A gathering of 15 brethren remembered our Lord's death and kept the Memorial as He instituted it on that fateful night of His betrayal and subsequent crucifixion.

The chairman led our minds through our Lord's closing earthly scenes when He completed the laying down of His perfect human life. The bread of life was broken for mankind and the blood of cleansing was given that all may have an opportunity of life eternal.

With grateful hearts the earnest brethren partook of the emblems in memory of our Lord's supreme sacrifice, being reminded again of being "dead" with Christ, and that we were prepared to complete our "covenant of sacrifice" with our Lord who is the Head of the Body, and we members in particular of that honored Body. "For we being many are one bread, and one body." (1 Cor. 10:17.)

Sydney.

The Sydney observance of the Memorial was duly celebrated at Strathfield on Tuesday, 21st April. Although comparatively few were present undoubtedly a rich blessing was the result. The presiding Brother ably conducted the service, and the address given by another Brother, dealing with the type and antitype, was very good. Happy the day, when, with our Lord, we will be able to drink anew the wine in the kingdom.

"A little while!" 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Saviour, make our spirit's vision clearer,
And guide, O guide us in the shining way!"

Advocate and Mediator Contrasted.

THE fact that the church is “the mystery of God” has become clearer within the last fifty years. We know that Christ and the church are separate and distinct from the world in every particular. They are neither under the Law Covenant, nor under the New Law Covenant, but are a peculiar people, called, sanctified, developed under a special covenant by themselves. This the Scripture styles the Covenant of Sacrifice. “Gather My saints (holy ones) together unto me (saith the Lord) those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.”—Psalm 50:5. This special class of saints, or holy ones, who make the covenant of sacrifice have as their Head the Lord Jesus Himself. When this company shall have completed their covenant by sacrifice, this present age will end.

Moses, of the Law Covenant given to Israel, represented specially that Law Covenant, which will be given to the world through the antitype of Moses—the Christ. In other words, the Mediator of the Law Covenant was one man, but the Mediator of the New Law Covenant of the Millennial Age is the New Man, of which Jesus is the Head, and the apostle declares that the members are made up of those elected both from Jews and Gentiles. From the time of Jesus down, the Mediator of the New Covenant has been in process of selection, and “the better sacrifices” as the basis for the New Covenant have been in process of offering.

During this Gospel Age Jesus has not exercised His office as Mediator for the world, and the world has no relationship with God, but still lies in the wicked one. The Mediator Himself has been in process of development. As the apostle declares, God raised up Jesus first, and since has been raising up the church, and soon will finish the raising up. It is this Mediator or Prophet of whom St. Peter speaks in Acts 3:22, 23. (See also 1 Tim. 2:5, 6). No mediating can be done until the Mediator of “many members” has qualified for the office. The qualification consists of sacrificing according to the Covenant of Sacrifice. The Christ, Head and Body are, therefore, the Mediator for the world in a prospective sense, in the same sense as Jesus the Babe could be spoken of as the Saviour, and the King. He is only now becoming the King, and has yet saved only a few of His people.

There is a wide distinction between the work of a mediator and the work of an advocate. The great Mediator between God and man—the Christ of glory—will fill His mediatorial office for a thousand, years, and complete it only by the end of that time, when He will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the Divine arrangement.

The work of an advocate is different, and, according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the church during this age. The church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. It is Jesus individually, who is the Advocate for us — “the church, His body.” He advocates our cause, first of all, by imputing to us the merit of His sacrifice, thus making us presentable in the Father’s presence and acceptable as sons of God. Because of this advocacy, we have received the holy spirit, and are new creatures in Christ. As new creatures we still need our Advocate, because we cannot do the things that we would perfectly. We have imperfections of the flesh, which as new creatures we cannot fully control. Hence *we* need a Throne of Grace and an Advocate, through Whom we may maintain our present relationship with the Father, and thus not be condemned with the world.

Character Development.

A GREAT thing to develop in life is character. This is the peculiar quality which distinguishes one man from another, or something that permeates his whole being, prompting him and guiding him in all things. Character is structural, and may be likened to a house, the building of which demands many things, first design. Successful characters are never developed haphazardly, they always show a sequential purpose and plan in the mind. The seed of character is thought. If we sow a thought we reap a word; if we sow a word we reap an action; if we sow an action we reap a habit; if we sow a habit we reap a character. Therefore, it is essential that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, think of these things.

One of the outstanding charming values of Christianity is that it presents to us a perfect character design. A flawless example of whom Pilate had to say, “I find no fault in Him at all.” No sensible man will neglect that perfect life, that pattern character. Having decided on the design, there is the site to consider, though perhaps not to choose. Only a few can choose the site of their activities, the place where they can live and work, but the beauty of character-building is that it is often done best under the least helpful conditions, just as the sweetest flowers are sometimes tucked away in some hidden cranny, so sweet and lovely characters abound that are unnoticed and unknown except to that Omniscience that knows exactly where all His jewels are. The site for your character is where you are.

Then there is the foundation, and that generally is made of materials that are subsequently and permanently covered up. Have you ever considered all those hidden things in the foundations of great structures; well, it is the same in character. If you are only going to be interested in that part others can see, well you will only have a flimsy and superficial structure of character. Attend to those deep, strong secret principles that underlie all successful lives and give them substantial basis. Then you will proceed to lay the bricks of godliness, devotion, purity, prayerfulness, kindness, patience, gentleness, tact, honesty, industry, diligence, straightforwardness, ambition, discretion, commonsense, and so on, and all these cemented together with a sunny disposition and a courageous faith will go far to produce a building greater and of more value than any material structure, for, after all, a character is of more value than a cathedral, and even a palace may be eclipsed by a personality.—Selected.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

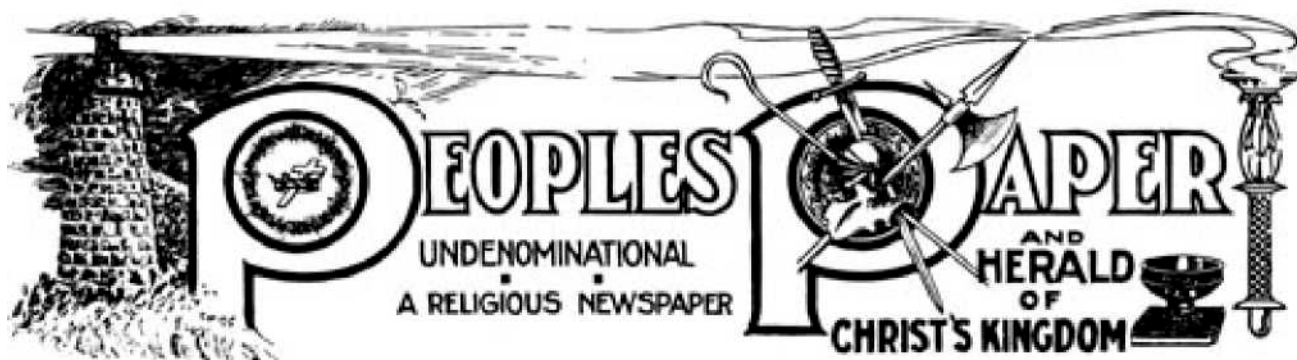
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The Bible Teaching on Pentecost and the Trinity.

(This article is published by request).

THIS subject is closely connected with the Easter season, and has been selected for examination because of some strange statements having been made in connection with the season of Pentecost

Most of our readers will know that the term Pentecost signifies “fiftieth,” and was used amongst the Jews as the name of one of their most important feasts, or religious celebrations. As their fiftieth Jubilee year followed a cycle of seven times seven years, so Pentecost, as a jubilee day, followed a cycle of seven times seven days, from the time of the gathering of the sheaf of firstfruits, which was presented before the Lord as a “wave offering.”

This sheaf of the firstfruits evidently typified our Lord in His resurrection on the 16th day of Nisan, He having been slain as the Passover Lamb on the 14th day of Nisan. The account given in Leviticus 23, is most enlightening, as follows—“In the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan) at even is the Lord’s passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord.” (Verses 5,6, 9-12.)

As our Lord was crucified on the evening prior to the sabbath, “the morrow after the sabbath” would refer to the first day of the week on which Christ was resurrected; hence, the sheaf of firstfruits was a fitting symbol of our Lord’s resurrection, as stated by the Apostle Paul—“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” (1 Cor. 15:20.)

Further verses in Lev. 23 help to explain our subject, as follows — “And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.” (Verses 15-17.) There can be no doubt that this counting forward of fifty days “from the morrow after the sabbath” even “unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath” was to typify the important Day of Pentecost, fifty days after our Lord’s resurrection.

There is also an important comparison seen in those verses in Lev. 23. In verse 6, in connection with the Passover, the feast is of unleavened bread which pictured Christ’s perfection as the antitypical Passover Lamb, and His resurrection is shown by the “sheaf of firstfruits” being offered on “the morrow after the sabbath,” as we have seen. Then, in verses 15-17, when explaining the procedure to determine the 50th day after the “morrow after the sabbath” — in other words the typical Pentecost — we find that two wave loaves, of fine flour, were to be baked “with leaven.” They were “the firstfruits unto the Lord.” This seems clearly to picture the acceptance of the Church, in the persons of the Apostles, on the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after our Lord’s resurrection, the loaves being baked “with leaven” showing the imperfection of the church in contrast with the perfection of Christ. So, the Apostle Paul refers to the Church as “Christ the firstfruits” in 1 Cor. 15:23, our Lord Himself being the first of the firstfruits unto God. (See also James 1:18.)

How wonderfully, then, did those ceremonies with Israel picture the presentation of the first of the firstfruits to God, in the resurrection of Christ; and the presentation of the Church of the firstfruits to God, fifty days after our Lord’s

resurrection, and ten days after His ascension.

The first occasion that we find the word “spirit” in the New Testament is in Matt. 3:16, at the time of Jesus’ baptism in the River Jordan, where we read—“the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.” It would have been much more helpful had this expression “spirit of God” been preserved throughout the Bible when the holy spirit

was mentioned, but in numerous places the expression “holy ghost” is used, and to many people this gives a very wrong impression. When our Authorized Version of the Bible was produced, the translators, believing in a personal holy spirit, conceived the idea of calling it a holy “ghost,” and this term has hindered many from thinking it could be anything else than personal. However, later translations use the word “spirit” wherever the word “ghost” is used in the Authorized Version, and this gives the correct thought to the Greek and Hebrew words which mean power or influence.

We wish to give the translators credit for correct renderings, and one of these is in. Luke 11:13—“How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him.”

As the time drew near to the close of our Lord’s life on earth, and knowing that the blessing of the holy spirit would come upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, He explained this matter to them rather fully, especially on the evening when He observed the Jewish Passover and afterwards instituted with His Apostles the Memorial of His death. These explanations from our Lord are found in John’s Gospel, chapters 14, 15 and 16.

From John 14:16 we read—“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” Verse 17 from the Diaglott translation reads —“The spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, because it beholds it not, nor knows it; but you know it, because it abides with you, and will be in you.” Also verse 26 from the Diaglott states —“But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name shall teach you all things, and remind you of all things which I said to you.” Here we see that the personal pronoun is not used, and which gives us the correct thought. But even when the pronoun “he” is used in speaking of the holy spirit, it is quite in order when we understand that it is God’s spirit—the masculine pronoun represents God. However, the word “it” is just as correctly used for God’s holy spirit or power.

Knowing how disappointed the disciples would be to hear that their Lord must leave them after only 3½ years of ministry, Jesus tried to break the news gently, and as helpfully as possible. So we read—“I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him (it) unto you.” (John 16:7.) “It is expedient”—it is essential—“that I go away.” Our Lord was impressing the necessity for Him to pay the death penalty that stood against all the disciples, as well as all others of mankind.

How expedient, then, it really was; how essential that Jesus die as the ransom sacrifice, and then be raised for our justification, as Paul states in Rom. 4:20-25.

After our Lord’s death and resurrection, we are informed of this by the Apostle in Heb. 9:24—“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Why was this necessary? It was necessary, that Christ may present, antitypically, His sacrifice in the Most Holy—heaven itself—on behalf of His Church, to open up the heavenly calling. (See Heb. 10:19, 20.)

If Christ had not died in sacrifice, and appeared on behalf of His Church in heaven, there could have been no pouring out of the holy spirit, and no invitation to any of the human family to participate in the heavenly Kingdom. This helps us to see, also, that previous to our Lord’s ascension, no one could be invited to be the Bride of Christ.

Even such a devoted servant as John the Baptist could not be of the heavenly calling, as shown in Matt. 11:11. But when our Lord was raised from the dead, and appeared to His disciples from time to time during those forty days, He gave them definite instructions, as recorded in Luke 24:44-53.

Again in Acts 1:3-5, 8, 9, these instructions are recorded for our benefit — “Being seen of them forty days.....

He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father Ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you.” We know that the power of the holy spirit was manifest upon the waiting disciples after ten days from our Lord’s ascension to heaven, and that waiting time of ten days is interpreted by Bible students as fulfilling the words of Rev. 8:1—“There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.”

When those ten days of waiting had passed, the Day of Pentecost came, as we read in Acts 2:1-2 — “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” How

appropriate that this mighty wind was associated with the bestowing of the power of God upon the disciples on that wonderful occasion for wind, being invisible, is a fitting symbol for God's holy power. Indeed, both the Hebrew and Greek words from which our word "spirit" is derived, also mean wind, or unseen power.

Strange as it may seem, however, there are a great number of people, some of them holding degrees in theology, who claim that the power which came upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost was a third person in the Godhead, and they go to some lengths to try and defend their teaching of the Trinity, or the Triune God, as they express it. We remember that the Apostles were accused of being drunk with wine, as a result of the "gifts of the spirit" which came upon them on the Day of Pentecost, but Peter explained the matter clearly in Acts 2:14-18. Also in verses 32, 33 he showed how this outpouring of God's spirit came about — "God hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Did the Father shed forth another God—the third person in a trinity? How strange that would be, if true! Let us note verse 18 of this 2nd chapter of Acts — "I will pour out in those days of MY SPIRIT." Yes, God poured out His own spirit, His own power, His own influence.

Further Scriptures are helpful along the same line—"But if the spirit of him (God) that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11. See also Rom. 8:14-16; Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30.)

It may be asked, How are *we* to understand John 10:30,—*"I and my Father are one."* Comparing John 14:28 we read—*"My Father is greater than I."* Is this a contradiction? Turning to John 17:20, 21, where Jesus prayed for His Church, we read—*"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."*

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Are we to take from this prayer that Christ's Church of thousands of members is to be taken into the heavenly Godhead also, because they are to be one with Christ and the Father? No, indeed! Rather, this oneness is a oneness of mind, of heart, of purpose. So is also the oneness between Jesus and the Father, when He said—"I and my Father are one."

We have a helpful explanation regarding our Lord Jesus in 1 John 4:1-3. Verses 2 and 3 read—"Every spirit (doctrine or teaching) that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Our Lord could not have come "in the flesh" if He were one in the trinity; but how important it was that He did come in the flesh, to redeem mankind, otherwise we are not yet redeemed. (See Heb. 2:9.)

The Apostle Paul presents this matter to us very clearly and helpfully also, when, after referring to the many gods worshipped in the heathen world, he declared — "But to us (Christians) there is but one God, the Father, a whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6.) If the doctrine of the trinity were correct, how easy it would have been for the Apostle to have stated the matter there and then, when the Father and the Son were contrasted with the many "that are called gods" outside the Christian religion. (See also Diaglott translation of Phil. 2:5, 6, and word for word English and Greek of John 1:1, 2.)

As we meditate upon the blessings and favors of the truth received from on high on that Day of Pentecost, fifty days after our Lord's resurrection, how thankful we are that "the faith once delivered to the saints" has continued all down the Gospel Age to our own day, as God's spirit is received into the hearts and minds of all the true disciples of Christ, and they come under the anointing of the spirit following their full consecration to walk in the steps of the Master. From 2 Cor. 1:21, 22 we read "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." The same Apostle also declares — "God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light 'of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'" (2 Cor. 4:6.) We may be sure that God will continue to shine into the hearts of all devoted disciples, enabling them to finish their course successfully, in His own good time and way, to His praise.

Dead and Buried.

In the fourth century a young earnest disciple sought an interview with the great and good Macarius, and asked him what was meant by being dead to sin. He said, "You remember our brother who died and was buried a short time since. Go to his grave and tell him all the unkind things you ever heard of him. Go, my son, and hear what he will answer." The young man doubted whether he understood; but Macarius only said, "Do as I tell you, my son; and come and tell me what he says." He went, and came back, saying, "I can get no reply; he is dead." "Go again and try him with flattering words—tell him what a great saint he was, what noble work he did, and how *we* miss him; and come again and tell me what he says." He did so, but on his return said, "He answers nothing, father; he is dead and buried." "You know now, my son," said the old father. "what it is to be dead to sin, dead and buried with Christ. Praise and blame are nothing to him who is really dead and buried with Christ." (Rom. 6:3.)—Selected.

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Where the Bible and Jesus are Silent.

PERHAPS most people wonder sometimes why the Bible and the sayings of Jesus are so often silent on so many questions which are perplexing. Why is it, they wonder, that so many things they would have liked to see stated in black and white are simply not mentioned at all? Perhaps you discover that for the special doubt of your soul there is no direct word, and you can find no completely satisfying answer to the special needs of your life.

However, would it have been possible to have given detailed and minute instructions and advice so far ahead that it would have covered all the variety of individual need, and all stages of human development? And even if this had been

possible, would it have been beneficial. Would it have been good for us to live by a huge book of spiritual recipes, or by a great code of ethics, which would supply chapter and verse for every emergency? How many of us could stand that, and where would be our spiritual freedom?

Think of what you possess as a child of God; think of what you see in your hours of vision, even if you cannot always express it articulately; think of that which gives you shelter in the assaults and storms of life, and light in the doubts of your soul! It is not this or that particular word or saying, it is not any special command, but it is the deliberate turning of your spirit towards God: the sense of truth, the spirit of reverence for all that is holy, and an ever renewed aspiration—even though it may often be hindered — of desire after a life whose power is not of this world. This is the spirit of God, which you have received, and it will lead you far more clearly into the truth, that is, into the reality of a higher life, than a single word or command could ever do, because as the brook issues from the mountain spring, so the spirit issues from God.

From this spirit, in increasing measure, you yourself will be able to decide what is true for you, and what you ought to do in your necessities and difficulties and doubts. And it is precisely this feeling of freedom which will give you strength.—Selected.

In the Night Watches.

“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips; when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches.”—Psa. 63:5,6.

PSALM 92:1 declares that it is “a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,” also to “sing praises” unto the Most High. The more we learn about our God through an increasing understanding of His Word, the greater will be our desire to sing His praises. As our knowledge of Him deepens into a personal acquaintance with Him, through the outworking of His providences in our lives and the fulfilment of His promises of grace to help in every time of need, our lives should flow on in endless songs of praise to the God of our salvation.

The Lord referred to David as a man after His own heart, and in many of his psalms the sweet singer of Israel declares his love for the Lord and his delight in the law of his God. In one of them he writes — “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” — Psa. 19:7-10.

David speaks of meditating upon the Lord in the “night watches.” It was these meditations that enabled him to write “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3,4.) And again, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.”—Psa. 19:1,2.

The hours from sundown to sunrise in David’s time presented a somewhat different situation than they do today. Now the electric light and other means of artificial illumination very nearly turn night into day, with the result that the vast majority of the people keep active, either in work or in pleasure for such long hours that there is scarcely time left for the proper amount of sleep, and seldom is there any opportunity for quiet meditation.

‘But this was not the case in David’s time. With the flicker of a dim flame from the burning of olive oil almost the only means of securing light after the sun went down, probably most people spent much more time in bed than is the custom now. And since the body requires only a certain amount of sleep, there were doubtless many sleepless hours during the night.

In the case of David, while he was a shepherd boy, and later as leader of Israel’s army, he no doubt spent many of his nights under the canopy of heaven. It was under these conditions that he rejoiced as he meditated upon the goodness of the Lord, and marvelled at the wonders of creation. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that the subject matter of many of David’s beautiful psalms took shape in his mind as he thus meditated during the night watches. How wonderfully such surroundings would prepare him for the influence of the holy spirit which guided him in his inspired writings.

Truly David was a man of God, and the spirit of devotion and praise found in his writings is a sincere expression of his own heart, a heart that had been given to the Lord. When he wrote, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” he was expressing his own feelings in the matter, giving utterance to his own confidence in the keeping power of his God.

But beyond the expression of his own delight in the Lord, David was inspired by the holy spirit to pen messages peculiarly fitting to the needs of the people of God during the present age. Indeed, in the divine providence, this is the chief purpose of his writings, even as it is of the writings of all the Old Testament prophets; for, as the apostle declares, not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister. They wrote for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come.—Rom. 15:4, 1 Cor. 10; 6, 11; 1 Pet. 1:12.

This being true, we might think of David’s experience of meditation upon the goodness of the Lord upon his bed during the night watches as having a counterpart even more blessed in our own experiences. We are not suggesting the making of a type of his experiences, but merely that they remind us of something greater in the divine arrangement than literally lying upon a bed meditating upon the goodness of the Lord during the dark hours of a night.

In God’s creative design there are seven “days,” six of them having been completed about the time our first parents were created. Each of these days began with an “evening” and closed with a “morning.” There is reason to believe that each of these creative days was a period of seven thousand years in length, with the seventh, or last “day,” beginning with the creation and fall of man, and ending in the “morning,” a morning which will become fully bright at the close of

the thousand-year reign of Christ.

In each case the “evening” of the creative days marked an obscure beginning, with darkness settling down into a night, until the “morning” marked the close of each period. And so it was when sin and death came upon the scene at the beginning of the seventh creative “day.” From then until now, the world has been passing through the long hours of a night of darkness. “Weeping” has continued throughout this night, David tells us, “but joy cometh in the morning.”—Psa. 30:5.

During this long night of weeping the world has been greatly distraught and unsettled. But those who have had faith in the promises of God have enjoyed rest of mind and heart. This has been particularly true of Jesus’ followers during the Gospel Age. Paul wrote concerning these, saying, “For we which have believed do enter into rest.” (Heb. 4:3.) We are keenly aware of the evil with which we are surrounded, and of the motions of sin in our flesh, but *we* place our faith in the finished work of Christ on our behalf and know that through Him and His kingdom all evil will eventually come to an end, and that even death itself will be destroyed.

Thus *we* are at rest. It is a rest “by” faith, and a rest “in” faith; that is, in the “most holy faith,” the foundation of which is the meritorious sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Based upon the merit of the shed blood are all the various features of the divine plan of salvation — its times and seasons; its heavenly calling for the church, and the hope of restitution for the world; its prophecies pertaining to the end of the age, and its promises concerning the new age at hand; its explanation of the divine permission of evil, and its assurance that evil will not rise up the second time.

Yes, all this, and more, is contained in our “most holy faith,” that wonderful outline of the divine plan in which we find peace of mind and rest of heart. No matter how dark the night, or how far distant the morning hours at times may seem, we can continue to rest in this “bed” of divine promises, and while we rest, continue to sing the praises of our Lord.

In Isaiah 28:20 we read about a bed which “is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” Two verses previous to this we are told of some who make a “covenant with death,” and an “agreement with hell.” The Hebrew word here translated “hell” is *Sheol*, meaning simply the death condition. Contrary to this plain Scriptural statement, it has been agreed by the molders of religious thought throughout Christendom that there is no death.

Upon this false premise the creeds of the nominal church have been built—creeds, or confessions of faith, which have been designed to give “rest” to believers, but which, when they are put to the test, fail to do so. These creed “beds” are too short. One who endeavours to find satisfaction in them upon the basis of reason discovers that they are too short. Nor do they provide adequate covering to protect one from the chilling drafts of doubt and fear which plague the soul.

These, apparently, are the beds referred to by Jesus in His great prophecy pertaining to the end of the age when He said that two would be lying in a “bed,” that one would be taken, and the other left (Luke 17:34-37.) And such was the position of some of us. We have experienced the shortness of these creed beds of Christendom, and have been most uncomfortable under their limited conceptions of the love and grace of God. But the Lord has favored us in that we have been lifted out of these beds and given rest upon the bed of present truth.

This is not because we are wiser than others, nor more worthy, but simply because of God’s grace in permitting us to know “the mystery of the kingdom of God.” (Mark 4:11.) Surely this is great cause for rejoicing, and for praising our God, as now, while it is still dark, we are privileged to rest upon this soul-satisfying “bed” which the Lord has provided for us.

Our rest of faith in Christ, and in the great plan of God of which He is the centre, is not designed to induce sleep. While we are resting upon this bed of present truth during the world’s dark night of sin, sorrow, and death, we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Concerning this Paul wrote, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness.. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”-1 Thes. 5:5,6.

“Let us watch and be sober.” In our text David speaks of the “night watches.” In order to participate in a “night watch” one has to be awake and alert. Night watching is a very old institution, made necessary because of the sin and selfishness of fallen man. Darkness serves as a sort of natural protection for prowlers, thieves, opposing armies, or whoever would rob another or inflict damage upon him or his property. As an offset to this, watchmen are stationed to detect the approach or presence of enemies, and to sound an alarm.

Obviously, a watchman would fail of his •duty if he fell asleep. It is not his privilege, during the night, to “sleep as do others.” Rather, he is to “watch and be sober.” And, as Christians, this is our position during the night time of sin and death. We are “watchmen” in Zion, as it were, and we should keep alert and be on guard against the approach of

“enemies” of whatever nature they might be which would rob us, or others of the Lord’s people, of their heritage in Christ Jesus.

Paul continues: “They that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” (1 Thes. 5:7,8.) This, of course, *is* all symbolic language. To “sleep” suggests spiritual lethargy, and to be “drunken” indicates an intoxication by false theories, doctrines, and hobbies.

We can avoid these conditions, Paul reveals, by “putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” In his letter to the Church at Ephesus, he admonishes us to “put on the whole armor of God,” that we may be able to stand against the “wiles of the devil.”—Eph. 6:11.

The truth, in its many aspects, and in its various applications in our lives, is the Christian’s armor. The very truths in which we find peace and joy and rest are also our protection against the insidious attacks of the Adversary during these dark hours of the night. It is for this purpose that the Lord gave us the truth.

Among the very important truths which guard the Christian’s heart and life today is a proper knowledge of the times in which we are living. It is this that Paul speaks of particularly when reminding us of our privileges as watchmen.

We quote — “Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” — 1 Thes. 5:1-4.

The reason the “day of the Lord” does not overtake the “brethren” as a “thief in the night” is because they are “awake” and faithfully watching. In this lesson Paul is closely following the thoughts presented by Jesus concerning the time of His second presence and the end of the age. Jesus said, referring to a possible advanced knowledge of His coming, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man.” (Mark 13:32.) For this reason he admonished His disciples to “watch.”

Paul says, “Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.” Jesus said that no one would know in advance, and Paul was not assuming that he did know, but he added, “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” The Thessalonian brethren knew this “perfectly” because they had confidence in what Jesus had said on the point.

But the thief-like coming of the day of the Lord was to be true only so far as the outside world and drowsy professed Christians were concerned. “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness,” Paul insisted, “that that day should overtake you as a thief.” When Jesus gave His great lesson pertaining to the time of His second presence, admonishing His disciples to watch because they did not know the day nor the hour, He did not say in so many words that their faithful watching would be rewarded by a discernment of His presence and the beginning of the day of the Lord. But this is how Paul understood what the Master had said. That is why he wrote, “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

But this can be true only of those who are awake. “Let us not sleep, as do others,” Paul wrote. And oh, the joy with which the faithful watchers are rewarded! Concerning the saints who would be living in this time, and to whom, because of their faithfulness, the Lord would reveal His presence, Daniel wrote, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.”—Dan. 12:12.

Yes, “blessed” indeed is the David class in this most wonderful time during which we are now living! From the human outlook it is the darkest period of all time. In this darkness there is fear and apprehension. So frustrated is human wisdom that peace is feared almost as much as war. It is the time referred to in Psalm 46:2,3, when the symbolic “earth” is being “removed,” and when the “mountains” are being “carried into the midst of the sea.”

But “we will not fear” wrote David. No, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in (this time of) trouble.” He is helping in every needed way, and especially by having favored us with a knowledge of the • truth. When on every hand there is unrest, nervous apprehension, chaos, and distress, we have a “bed” upon which we can recline and “rest.”

And if we keep properly “awake” during these dark hours, watching the on-moving events in the great plan of God, the very things which increase the world’s fears, make our rest more complete. For among the things we see as watchers in Zion is the near approach of morning. Indeed, the Morning Star has already appeared, and through the din and confusion incident to the death of Satan’s world we discern the first gray streaks of dawn!

Surely, as David wrote, our souls are “satisfied with marrow and fatness.” The rich feast of truth, the “meat in due season” served to the household of faith by our returned Lord, satisfies our longings as nothing else could do. It is as manna from heaven, sweet, nourishing, and soul-satisfying.

And when we think of the many blessings which the Lord has so abundantly bestowed upon us, we cannot help, while resting upon our “beds” during the night watches, to sing aloud the praises of our God. David makes six al mention of this in Psalm 149:5, where we read, “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” Yes, we are “resting” but not “sleeping,” and while we rest, we “sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.”

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,” David continues, “and a two-edged sword in their hand.” In Psalm 92, where David says that “it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,” he also speaks of showing forth His loving-kindness. We give thanks to God in our personal and collective prayers to Him, but we show forth His praises when we speak of His loving-kindness to others. So, to sing aloud upon our beds, and for the high praises of God to be in our mouths, call for activity in making known the glorious Gospel of the kingdom.

This is the great privilege of all who have been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the divine plan.

We rejoice in the fatness, the richness of the “meat in due season” upon which it is our privilege to feed. Resting upon our “bed” in the “night watches” we delight to meditate upon the goodness of the Lord, and to give thanks to Him for His boundless grace.

But this should not be all. The result of our meditations should be a bursting forth in song, even the “new song” which the Lord has given us to sing. And when we take into consideration all that the Lord is doing for us, how can we keep from singing? Surely we will want to praise the Lord with joyful lips!

In Psalm 92:3 David speaks of praising the Lord upon an “instrument of ten strings.” We might think of these “ten strings” as representing the various fundamental doctrines of the divine plan. It is the beautiful harmony of these doctrines, when these “strings” are played upon by those who have learned the “new song,” that really brings praise to our God.

These doctrines reveal the wisdom, justice, love, and power of our God which, blended in perfect harmony and unison, make up His glory. It is our privilege now to show forth this glory, while, resting upon our “beds,” we joyfully contemplate the time now nearing when a knowledge of His glory will fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. Praise ye the Lord! (From “The Dawn.”)

Discord Precedes Harmony

It seems to me the trials and the temptations of this life are all making us fit for the life to come—building up a character for eternity. You have been in a piano manufactory; did you ever go there for the sake of music? Go into the tuning room and you will say, “My dear sir, this is a dreadful place to be in; I cannot bear it; I thought you made music here.” They say, “No; we do not produce music here; we make the instruments and tune them here, and in the process much discord is forthcoming.” Such is the church of God on earth. The Lord makes the instruments down here, and tunes them, and a great deal of discord is perceptible, but it is all necessary to prepare us for the everlasting harmonies up yonder.—Spurgeon.

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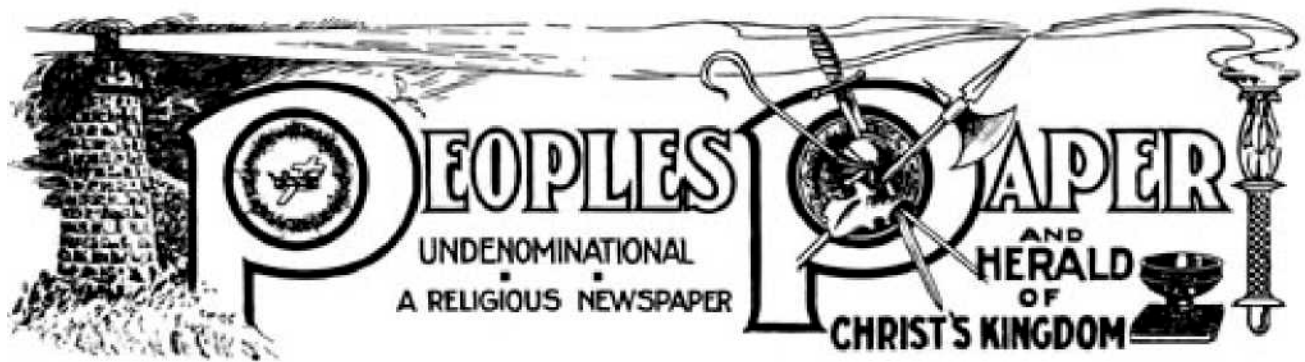
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Thoughts On The Second Coming.

(Convention Address)

“This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11.)

THERE are a number of Scriptural statements bearing upon the nature and purpose of our Lord’s second advent, and to get the correct understanding all these Scriptures must be considered, even though some texts seem to conflict with each other, which, however, they really do not. There must be harmony in the Scriptures for they are the words of Divine inspiration.

The purpose of this address is not so much to show what is the nature of our Lord’s coming, but rather what it is not, and why. In our text, quoted above, it is evident that none of the world was aware of Jesus’ ascension to heaven; and actually the text does not state that anyone will see Him come, but merely that He comes in like manner as He went away—quietly, secretly, with no supernatural demonstrations, unknown to all but a handful of disciples.

But the Scriptures do not leave the matter here. Oh, no! Many prophecies both in the Old and New Testament, describe the, manner of our Lord’s second advent and the work He will do, dealing first with His Church, and then later with the world of mankind at large. This work covers a period of more than 1000 years, for, after gathering His elect, He will, with His glorified Church, inaugurate His reign over the earth, which, in itself, will cover 1000 years.

To attempt to understand all these events as taking place at the moment of His arrival leads to a maze of confusion.

The same would be true, on a smaller scale, of events at His first advent. Numerous prophecies in the Old Testament told of events occurring with our Lord’s first visit to the earth; these covered various phases of His first presence.

Some told of His birth as a babe; some told of His consecration at Jordan; some told of His miracles; others that He would speak in parables; still others of His sufferings and death, and that lots would be cast for His garments; and others referred to His crucifixion and resurrection.

Now, it should be evident that if we apply all these prophecies concerning His first advent to any particular moment of His life on earth, it would result in destroying the meaning of those prophecies, making them contradictory and meaningless. Even so it is in regard to the second advent of Jesus.

Consider some of the things which are to be done during His second advent. The gathering of Christ’s Church is referred to as a harvest and the sending forth of reapers to gather them, exalting them to joint-heirship in His Kingdom; the destruction of Antichrist; the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world; the binding of Satan, followed by the establishment of the new kingdom; the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies, and then the general resurrection and judgment of the world; the times of restitution; the destruction of the incorrigible sinners, including Satan; then the turning over of the triumphant kingdom to the Father. Is all this to be done in a moment—A literal day of 24 hours as some misguided Christians teach? No! No! This great work calls for a period of time; a presence after the arrival.

We have already referred to the statement by the angels that Jesus would come “in like •manner” as He went away—very quietly, unobserved by the world. However, note, in contrast with this, the words of the Apostle in 2 Thes. 1:7,8—”The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God.” Were there any mighty angels visible with Jesus when the disciples saw Him go into heaven? No! Did

they see any flaming fire? No! Obviously, then, these two prophecies refer to different phases of our Lord's return.

Let us take another event pertaining to the second advent, in Rev. 14:14—"And I looked, and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." Jesus is represented here as sitting on a white cloud with a sharp sickle in His hand. No flaming fire here, even as there was no sickle in either of the other prophecies just mentioned.

In Luke 12:37 there is another prophecy differing from any of the foregoing mentioned. It states—"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh (arrives) shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Here we notice that the Lord is represented at His return as being one who serves at a table. No sickle, no flaming fire, no clouds, as in other prophecies.

Take another text. In Rev. 3:20 Jesus is recorded as saying — "Behold I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Jesus sups with those who hear His knock and open the door, but there is nothing said about girding Himself and serving, as in the prophecy stated in Luke 12:37, and nothing about flaming fire, or sickle.

In 1 Thes. 4:16 is still another prophecy on the second advent, differing from all those to which we have already referred. Here the Apostle says—"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." How unlike the quiet manner in which Jesus left His disciples is this coming with a shout, the trump of God, and with the voice of the archangel?

Try to imagine what the return of Christ would be like if all these prophecies, thus far mentioned, were to be fulfilled literally, and simultaneously, in a few hours. We would have the monstrosity of a glorified man sitting on a white cloud, blowing a trumpet, shouting and talking, with a sickle in one hand, and a platter of food in the other; with

Him would be a company of mighty angels, and sitting at His feet, eating from His tray, would be His disciples, and in front of Him, near enough to be reached, would be a door upon which He would be knocking, and the whole scene would be engulfed in flaming fire which would be reaching out to destroy His enemies. All this, and there are still other prophecies pertaining to Christ's second advent which call for consideration.

Do not misunderstand us; we are not attempting to make light of the Scriptures, nor even making light of those who attempt a literal interpretation. No, we are merely attempting to show how utterly impossible it is to arrive at a reasonably accurate conclusion as to the manner of our Lord's return unless we give due consideration to the chronological order of the prophecies relating thereto, and realise also that many of these prophecies are highly symbolical.

This subject must be studied chronologically and symbolically, bearing in mind also that Jesus' second advent covers a long period of time. We need to examine whether a prophecy is stated in symbolic or literal language. If we thus rightly divide the Word of Truth, a beautiful harmony will be found in all the prophetic utterances concerning Jesus' presence and kingdom.

In addition to the prophecies already mentioned, there are still others which must be taken into consideration. For example, instead of sitting down to feast with His disciples at His return, Jesus says in John 14:3 — "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also."

The Apostle Jude, quoting a prophecy of Enoch, declared that the "Lord will come *with* myriads of saints." (Jude 14.) Notice that the text in the Gospel of John states that He comes, not bringing His saints with Him, but *to gather* them and take them to the place He has prepared, and this entails sending messengers to gather His elect from one end of Christendom to the other. (Matt. 24:30.) The coming *faro* His saints cannot be the same moment of time as coming *with* His saints, but must refer to an earlier phase of His presence.

When Jesus left His disciples, and the angels said He would come "in like manner," only those few saw Him go, yet in Rev. 1:7 it is said—"every eye shall see him." To what time does this refer? Not to the beginning of His presence, for Jesus said mankind would go on with their natural occupations, unaware on His arrival, until His revelation.

We have already mentioned Luke 12:37, where Jesus is represented as coming to His Church and serving them, but in Matt. 25:31-46 we are told that when He comes with His Church all nations will be gathered before Him, and He will divide them as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. This is an absolutely different viewpoint to that of any of the other prophecies.

Furthermore, He says, “He comes as a thief in the night.” It is also recorded that during the day of His return “heaven and earth will pass away with a great noise.” (2 Pet 3:10.) If this is to be understood literally there would be no clouds upon which the Lord could sit, with sickle in hand to do the reaping, and nowhere for mankind to stand during judgment day. And so we might go on quoting and comparing and contrasting various inspired Scriptures.

There is still another in Acts 15:16, which states that when the Lord returns, He will “build the tabernacle of David.” Also in Acts 3:20,21 the Apostle Peter says that when the Lord returns there will be ushered in “times of (years of) restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all God’s holy prophets.” All the prophets say this will be a wonderful and blessed day for mankind in general, during the Lord’s presence. No reference to flaming fire, sickles, trumpet, clouds, or burning of heaven and earth.

Why go on confusing in this manner, you say? But no, the object is not to confuse; all these references to the Lord’s second advent are not confusing when interpreted in harmony with the Divine Plan of the Ages, but to give them a literal interpretation, then, yes, most confusing.

There is one Divine Plan only into which all these texts fit perfectly; they will not fit into any other plan, without distorting the picture. It is similar to the boys’ box of wooden blocks; upon each cube is a part of a design, and if correctly fitted in place, according to pattern, there is displayed a beautiful design which gives credit to the designer, but to lose sight of a block, or to misplace any, spoils the picture. It won’t do to say that this, or that text, or those three texts, show the manner of our Lord’s return. The all-comprehensive view is necessary; all Scripture bearing upon the subject must be used.

Now, it seems that if we are to understand and harmonise these apparently conflicting Scriptures, we will need to have a correct understanding of the nature of Jesus. If we try to understand these prophecies and associate them with the coming of a flesh and bone being, we will certainly get into confusion and unreasonable theories. The Scriptures teach that Jesus, since His resurrection, is a powerful, invisible Divine Being, carrying on His work invisibly to human eyes, even as the Heavenly Father has always done, for the Scriptures declare that Jesus is “the express image of the

Father’s person,” (Heb. 1:3)— “whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” And in order for the members of His Church to see Jesus, each one must be changed in the resurrection, born of the spirit. “This mortal must put on immortality.”

To understand Jesus’ second presence to be secret and invisible to human eyes, unknown to the world, during the first phase of His presence, does not contradict the fact of a personal presence in the earth. When Jesus rose from the dead He was personally present with His disciples for forty days, a glorious, invisible, spirit being of the highest order, before He ascended to heaven. During those forty days He manifested His presence about twelve or thirteen times, all of them covering no more than three or four hours, yet He was personally present all the time, though invisible to the disciples most of the time. This should help us to understand our Lord’s personal presence now, even though invisible to the physical eye.

One difficulty in understanding the manner of the Lord’s return has come about by a faulty translation in the question asked by the disciples in Matt. 24:3 — “What shall be the sign of thy coming?” Scholars give the meaning of the Greek word translated “coming” here, as “presence” (Greek—*parousia*). The Greek word “*parousia*” does not mean coming, but the presence of a being after arrival. Both the American and English Revised Versions give the marginal reading as “presence.” Also Professor Wilson’s Diaglott gives the word for word translation as “presence,” and Rotherham in his 3rd edition of his N.T. translation gives a note saying that there is no real reason why this word “*parousia*” should not be translated “presence” in each occurrence.

In addition to this, the Lord gives us this same understanding. It is not His coming or arrival, but His presence after arrival, of which the world will be ignorant. Here are His words in Luke 17:26,27 — “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man.” The coming of either of these is not implied, but their presence. “They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark.” It does not say, “In the days before His coming” which is the commonly accepted belief. No, but in the *days of*, means, of course, during the Lord’s presence after He has come, the world will carry on its legitimate business as usual, for quite a while. Jesus said His day would come upon all “as a snare.”

They will not know the cause of the great changes taking place until all are involved in a great time of trouble in which the social and religious arrangements will pass away with a great noise — a great commotion with which this Gospel Age closes. In fact this is one of the effects of the Lord’s presence in the earth, just as He predicted. It is one of the signs given to the watchers. None will know of the coming or arrival of Jesus, not even His watching, faithful Church. Here are His words—“Watch, therefore; for ye (disciples) know not what hour your Lord doth come (arrive).

. . . Therefore be ye ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (will have arrived). (Matt.

24:42,44.) But to those who are watching and ready, He will give signs of His presence after His arrival; while not knowing of the hour, they will know of the day. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thes. 5:4.)

The 24th chapter of Matthew should be studied, for therein are given the signs or indications of His presence. These signs will be, and are being fulfilled, not before He comes; no, but during His presence. Note this point well, for it is distinct from the generally accepted belief of His return. His presence will be made manifest later to all mankind, and this is referred to as "apokalupsis"—the revealment, or uncovering, as a thing previously present, but hidden. In due time all will recognise that a new, heavenly power has taken control of the affairs of mankind, and all will see, not with the literal eyes, but the eyes of their understanding will be opened.

In the Apostle Paul's day the Church at Thessalonica seemed to have gotten the thought that Christ was already present, in their day—that He had returned—and in view of what this would mean some members had given up the ordinary pursuits of life, had given up working. The Apostle corrects this error in 2 Thes. 2:1,2—"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (Greek, parousiapresence) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand,"—or is present (Rotherham—"has set in.") Note how he corrects this premature idea. He did not say, as some would tell us now,— "You foolish brethren, do you not know that when Christ returns there will be supernatural signs in the sky, great and sudden demonstrations, and every eye will look upon Him, while you and all the saints will be drawn up to Him, while flaming fire destroys His enemies." How simple it would have been to refer to this, if it were the correct understanding of the manner of Christ's return. No, the Apostle had no such view, nor did he teach that Christ's return would occur in this literal manner.

Rather, Paul taught that Christ's return would be a presence; he taught that the Church would be gathered to the Lord during that time. However, the declaration that the second advent had occurred was premature. This announcement did not come from Paul, nor from any of his letters, nor from the spirit, or disposition, or conduct he manifested. The Apostle goes on to say that there must first come a falling away from the faith and antichrist must develop and reign in the earth, and this is followed by a revealment (uncovering of antichrist). Antichrist was in the world a long time before it was revealed as a deception and counterfeit of the true, but the Lord's people see it in its true light. Truth has revealed its claims as being false, and then verse 8 shows this antichristian system will be consumed and finally destroyed with the brightness of Jesus' second presence.

The brightness referred to here is from the Greek word "epiphania" which means "bright shining, or manifestation," which is an effect of His presence. This bright shining means a diffusion of light, of truth — an increase of light and knowledge. This will, and is already affecting all people, and especially antichrist. Light makes manifest, but this affects the Church differently to the world. Who can deny that all the world is being enlightened; increase of light, of knowledge along all lines, is turning the world upside down. This light reveals to the Lord's people the real character, spirit and teaching of antichrist — the false church. Furthermore, this great, false church system has been for some years past, and is now being consumed; its power is being destroyed — a direct effect of Christ's presence, just as this prophecy predicts. But remember that this sign is not given us to warn us that Christ is coming soon. No, but of His presence after He has arrived.

The Lord gives us also an illustration in Matt. 24:27 that His presence would be marked by a great increase of light, of knowledge, and that this would be actually a sign of His second presence. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the presence of the Son of man be." It seems that the Lord does not mean a lightning flash here, for strictly speaking lightning does not shine, it is just a flash and disappears. The Lord refers to the great light that comes out of the east and shines even to the west—the sun. So in like manner will the Lord's second presence be. Not His coming, for that was not the question asked by the disciples, but "What shall be the sign of thy presence?" The same Greek word translated "lightning" in this text is translated "bright shining" in Luke 11:36 where it refers to the bright shining of the light of a candle.

This worldwide diffusion of light, this illumination by means of the printing press, radio and general education of the masses of mankind is what we are now witnessing. It is one of the chief or outstanding signs of the Lord's second presence. In this our day the world is being flooded with accumulated ideas, representing the sum total of knowledge gained through all past ages.

This has also been predicted by Daniel the prophet (Dan. 12:1,4.) "Michael shall stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. In the time of the end many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Michael is Christ, assuming His

authority. His second presence brings with it this effect in the world today, causing worldwide trouble and the breaking up of our present order of civilization.

This should help us to understand the prophecy already mentioned, that the Lord cometh with, or during a shout. This, of course, is not a literal shout, nor are we to understand that Jesus will blow a literal trumpet. Remember, it is also true that "He cometh as a thief in the night," and a thief does not shout, or blow trumpets. This shout is symbolical. Professor Strong defines the Greek word used in this text as meaning "a cry of incitement." The thought seems to be that Christ's return would be accompanied by a general increase of knowledge, which would incite people to rise up and demand their long-desired rights. This symbolic shout is closely related to the bright shining of the Master's presence.

This increase of knowledge is exerting a powerful effect in the affairs of the church, and the world. Even China and the Asiatic peoples who have slept for centuries are now awakening and demanding recognition, and are throwing off the powers which oppressed them for so long. Yes, this shout rises up all over the world. (Compare Jer. 25:29-33.)

Time does not allow discussion on other symbols and prophetic statements concerning the second advent, and to show how these are meeting fulfilment in present day events in the religious and social world. There is also the fact, however, that since 1914 — the date when the Gentile Times ended — the nations have not been able to gain their equilibrium since the first smashing blow of World War One.

Since that time peace conferences, disarmament conferences, the League of Nations—the world court — and other conferences all have failed, and the nations have become more fearful. Then World War Two has greatly hastened the final collapse, and to avert this billions are being spent on armaments, each great power hoping that it may save itself, even though civilization as a whole will be destroyed. The symbolic clouds are dark and ominous, hanging low over the world, for Jesus "cometh with clouds."

These things are signs to the watching Christians who have their lamps trimmed and burning—signs, not that Jesus will come soon, but signs of His presence, and the fulfilment of His promise that He would gird Himself and make them to sit down to meat and would come forth and serve them, with a feast of Truth.

PEOPLES PAPER ND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

The Institute's Work

ANOTHER year's work has been completed for the Berean Bible Institute, and we lift up our hearts in thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings and overruling providence in connection with the work being carried on in co-operation with our brethren in various parts of this land and across the seas. In rendering thanks to God, it is also desired to express sincere appreciation to all the dear friends who have assisted in various ways, in the service of the Lord, in the undertakings carried on at the Institute.

The work each year is of a similar nature, being directed mainly towards encouraging our brethren in the Christian way in which they have been privileged to walk since responding to the invitation to walk in the steps of Christ.

The presentation of the kingdom message is also a witness to others who have ears to hear "the joyful sound" of the truth, and who long for a substantial and lasting hope for the future, especially in view of the precarious international situation. The principal means of contact with the brethren and other interested friends is provided by our monthly "Peoples Paper," and it is encouraging to receive the words of appreciation of the "Paper" from many of its readers.

The contributions to the columns of our periodical throughout the year past were also much appreciated, and other friends who have helpful articles suitable for publication are also invited to send them in. The subscription list for our "Paper" has been generally maintained, though the price of 5/- per year does not cover the production costs, so the deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund. Considerable numbers of the "Peoples Paper," are distributed free throughout the year, and all subscribers are welcome to extra copies for distribution where good may be done. Those friends who supply subscriptions for others whom they feel may be helped are also assisting well. The work of proof reading for the monthly "Paper" on the part of some of our friends is greatly appreciated, as also is the folding and wrapping for despatch to our readers.

Supplies of tracts are on hand for distribution by friends who can use them to good advantage, these tracts being supplied free from the Tract Fund. The mailing of Consolation Cards to the bereaved has also been continued by some of our brethren, and suitable literature is forwarded when the cards are returned. Any other friends desiring to assist in this work are invited to contact our office.

Public lectures have been continued at regular intervals also throughout the past year; good appreciation has been shown by the brethren who have encouraged their friends to attend, and others from the public have also expressed appreciation on these occasions. By the Lord's overruling, some who appreciate the Bible truths in this way are encouraged to attend the regular Bible studies.

The General Tract Fund account listed below reveals the financial position for the general work, and the voluntary contributions of our friends have provided all the good assistance in the Lord's providence. This loving co-operation and sacrificing to assist in the work is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord. The outlook from the natural standpoint may well give cause for apprehension, but from the Lords standpoint we are living in one of the most wonderful periods in human history, as the harvest work continues for the Gospel Age church, in preparation for the heavenly inheritance for all the faithful over-corners, by the Lord's grace and strength. It is the privilege of the brethren to continue their service with devotion to the Lord and His cause, building up themselves in the most holy faith, and encouraging others to do the same, while sounding forth the message of the kingdom to all who may have ears to hear. The prayers of our brethren are requested for the blessing and guidance of the Lord to be over His work in these last days of the Gospel Age. "Therefore, beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.)

GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/58	£35 16 6	
„, Donations 608 6 0	
£644 2 6		
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples Paper" ..	£99 12 0	
„, Hall Rents, Advertising Circulars, Consolation Cards, etc. 36 4 6	
General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	52 6 9	

f I Towards Personal and House Expenses 350 0 0 *f* Postage .. 47 13 6

f Free Books and Booklets 4 12 6

f. Travel and Sundries .. 20 2 9

I Credit Balance, 1/5/59 .. 33 10 6

£644 2 6

RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/58 £75 15 5

„, Donations .. 829 18 4

£905 13 9

Radio Station, 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ £723 6 0

Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY,

4KQ and 6KY .. 54 10 6

Freight Charges .. 8 2 9

Printing Dialogues .. 22 18 10

Travel and Sundries .. 9 15 2

Bank Charges .. 1 10 0

Credit Balance, 1/5/59 .. 85 10 6

£905 13 9

Radio Work

THANKFULNESS to the Lord for His I blessings in connection with the radio witness in Australia throughout another year is also gladly expressed at this time. Many of our friends have freely co-operated in this witness over the air, and their good assistance in this work is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord.

Considerable numbers of enquiries have been received from the radio programmes, and while some Bible subjects promote special interest, a wide circle of listeners state that they consider each Sunday's message a means of blessing and encouragement in their Christian life, and that they always look forward to the sessions over the air. It is nice to know that the Lord will grant the increase as He sees good. The same radio stations have been used, — 3GL, 2KY,

4KQ and 6KY/NA — and printed copies of each broadcast are offered to all interested listeners for further investigation, as also other Free Literature.

Copies of the "Peoples Paper" are also sent free for at least six months to all enquirers to the radio sessions, and in this way they are brought into contact with the truth generally, and a number have become subscribers to our monthly "Paper." All our brethren are invited to advertise the radio stations within hearing distance, so that the message may reach as many as possible, especially those who may be looking for the glad tidings of the kingdom.

The financial position for this branch of the work is shown by the Radio Fund Account, and the voluntary contributions of our friends reveal the very good assistance received, and which is much appreciated, in the service of the Lord. All expenses have been met, and provision is also in hand to continue this work, in the Lords providence, our Western Australian friends continuing to cover the cost of the broadcasts through 6KY/NA. Again it is requested that our

brethren join in prayer for God's blessing to attend this witness of His truth, that He may grant the increase as He sees good in this part of His harvest field.

Tracts Available.

The article—"When Will God Pour Out His Spirit Upon All Flesh ?"—is now available in tract form and friends who can use them to advantage are invited to obtain supplies.

Other subjects available in tract form are — "Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon ?"; "Refrain Thy Voice From Weeping"; "Is There a Second Chance for Salvation After Death ?" etc. Apply for these according to opportunities for wise distribution.

The sentiment that it matters not what a man believes, so long as he is sincere, is as unscriptural as it is absurd.

Sincerity in belief has no more effect in warding off evil in the spiritual than in the natural kingdom. If the teachings and persuasions of a reputed chemist should prevail on you to believe that arsenic is harmless, would it therefore be harmless? Could you mix it with your bread, and eat it without injury? Oh, no, neither will the sincerity of your belief save you from the consequences of error in religious faith. Right belief— truth, God's truth, my brethren, is the only foundation on which you can safely rest your hopes.—Selected.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier **clear type, Persian Morocco** binding, is now available at 60/-. **Same** Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-,

Correspondence.

Dear Brother—Thanks for your letter, and it is good to hear of the helpful meetings, also of the Memorial of our Saviour's death kept by the friends in Melbourne Thanks

Brother for the Convention Notes compiled by brother Smith. It is very good to have reproduced such a nice outline of the various talks and studies—another cause of thankfulness to our Lord, and also to Brother Smith and yourself.

We know the matter is a labour of love for the Lord, cheerfully rendered, and I'm sure much appreciated by those who receive them.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Christian Friends—Most loving Greetings from your elderly Sister across the water, in the name of our blessed Lord. It has occurred to me that it is up to me to be sending you an offering for your work in publishing the little "Paper," so full of the meat that perisheth not, so please find herein my check for—for that purpose.

O, the blessedness of the truth! In these end days, when everything that can be shaken is in process of disappearing, how humble it should make us who know the future, as revealed by our God, to realise this great favor of being in His confidence, thus we need not fear, no matter what the future holds, for God is at the helm. . . . May our faith keep on in the narrow way 'till "life's last hour is fled," is the prayer of your Sister in Him.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs — Re your broadcast last Sunday, 3rd May, from 3GL, I should like to have a copy of this talk, as I have come up against the subject of healing in these days, "Jesus the same yesterday, today, and forever," being used as the reason why we should be able to heal. I have had reason to study the subject closely in recent months, and thought your talk was very helpful, and to be able to pass it on to any others who are undecided on the point, would be a privilege for me, so I am hoping you still have some copies left, and be able to send me some.

I would like you to know that I often listen to your Sunday morning talks, and gain quite a lot of helpful information from them. May God be with you as you carry on helping people to understand His Word and Plan for us. Yours in Christ.

Dear Christian Brethren—Will you kindly post to the above address copies of the last two addresses that you have given over the radio, in which I was very interested, as you put forth some truths about which I am not too familiar? The study of the Scriptures is my constant delight and I often wish I had more time to devote to them, although I can truly say they are always first place in my readings. May the Lord be pleased to bless your messages on the air.

Sincerely yours in His precious love.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Please send me to the above address a copy of your Biblical Discussions of May 3rd and 10th about healing' and speaking with other tongues; they were very good. Thank you for your sessions to which I have listened for several years. Enclosed is a small donation towards your broadcasting fees. Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs — I was extremely interested in your discussion about salvation after this life. I tuned- in to it quite accidentally last Sunday, and missed part of the talk, so I would be very grateful if I could have a copy. Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir — Please find enclosed a donation of £1. Will you please continue to send me your "Peoples Paper"? I enjoy reading it; it is very enlightening reading, especially to myself, as there are quite a lot of the passages of the Bible I cannot grasp. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Am enclosing a small donation for your funds. Thank you for your continued messages; your music too is very lovely. May you continue. Thanking you; yours sincerely.

Dear Brother—Thank you for the books; we are very grateful to be able to read still more of the wonderful truth.

We were also very thankful that we could manage to attend. at the Memorial Supper; such a great privilege indeed! Perhaps Brother will come along on Sunday afternoon, but as this is not sure yet I am sending you this cheque. Would you please keep the change towards the work. Thanking you again. With Christian Greetings; your Sister in Christ.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Fellow Christians —We are regular listeners to your Sunday morning sessions from the G.L. Station, and I am writing to ask for copies of the last four talks that have been given, especially yesterday's. May God continue to bless the broadcasts each week. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours sincerely.

Dear Sir—I was wondering if you would be kind enough to send me (if any) the Scriptures condemning blood transfusions. I am doing Bible studies and have been shown a few Scriptures from a book, but somehow I am not satisfied with what I have been told, particularly after reading in the Sydney newspapers about a person in Melbourne not allowing his baby to have blood transfusions. I would like to know what the Scriptures say regarding this matter. Trusting you will be able to help me. I remain; yours faithfully.

(An article entitled — "Should Christians Accept Blood Transfusions to Save Life?"—covering this subject in some detail, will appear in next month's "Peoples Paper" and copies will be available for all. — B.B. Institute.)

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

Immovable for Christ.

The old Lollards were called "Holdfasts," not only because of their firmness under persecution, but of their strong grasp of the truth. Coleridge said, with a practical aptness unusual with him: "What does not withstand. has no standing ground." "Hold fast, then, the form of sound words, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." Be modest, unostentatious in all that is your own, willing to concede everything you have a right to yield, but be scrupulous and immovable about all that is Christ's.—Selected.

BOOKS WANTED.

Any of our friends having a New Testament with Tischendorf's notes for disposal are asked to communicate with this office.

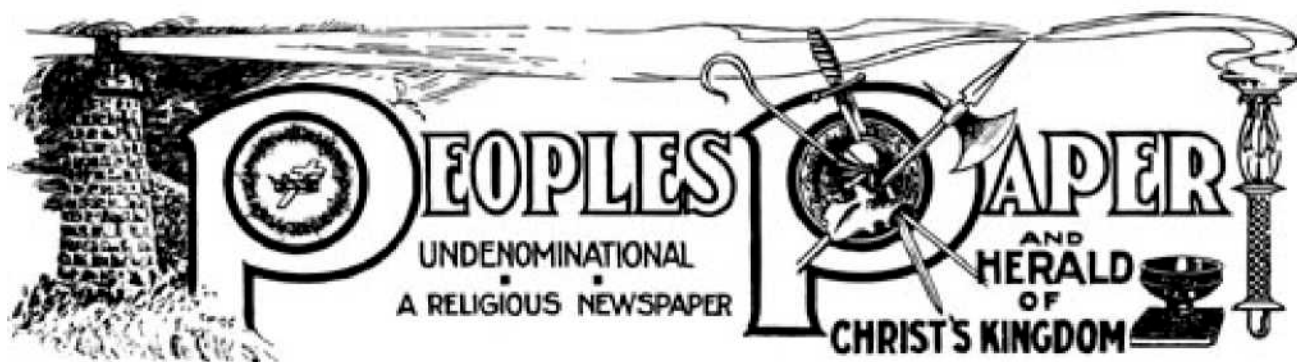
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ,,4.45 p.m.

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Should Christians Accept Blood Transfusions To Save Life?

IN taking up this subject we do so without any thought of criticizing the opinions of others in matters personal or relating to conscience. Our object is wholly to seek to determine from the Scriptures what the Lord would expect from us as His followers now that we are living in a day when such things as blood transfusions are common and everyday performances in all the large hospitals of the world. You realize that it is a very common matter now for one to receive a blood transfusion, and appeals are going out continually for people to make donations of blood for the benefit of those in need.

In the days of our Lord and the Apostles, such scientific attainments in the medical world as blood transfusions were absolutely out of the question, and we cannot expect to find any direct statements on such matters recorded in the Bible, but there are Scriptures which do help us in a general way to arrive at right conclusions in matters which are not especially revealed in so many words in the Bible.

One of these Scriptures is found in 2 Tim. 1:7—"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and a sound mind." True followers of the Lord surely desire to have a sound mind about all they seek to do for the Master, and this promise of the Apostle Paul's is just as applicable today as when he wrote those words to Timothy—that is to those who have truly given their hearts and lives in full consecration. Again, we have Phil. 4:5. "Let your moderation be known to all men." The meaning of the Greek word from which our English word "moderation" is translated carries the thought of "appropriate", or "reasonable." "Let your reasonableness or appropriateness be known to all men." In other words, do not be extremists so far as the world's affairs are concerned. Rather, the Lord's people are to be in the world, but not of the world, seeking to be reasonably minded and having the spirit of a sound mind.

We know that one of the greatest deceptions of the Adversary is to try to influence the Lord's people in one extreme or the other. An example is the theory of eternal torment as proclaimed by some for the majority of the human race. Then on the other extreme we have the theory of universal salvation proclaimed by others, who claim that God is too loving to destroy any of the human family. Both these teachings are unscriptural. We read in Ps. 145:20 that "all the wicked will God destroy", and know that this will mean destruction for those who are not worthy of life when they have been fully tested and wilfully reject the love of God. They are not going to be allowed to interfere with the progress and blessing of others who do wish to serve the Lord in every respect. So the sound mind of the Christian agrees with this procedure in God's dealing with the human family as being in keeping with His attributes of justice, love, mercy and power, whereas the erroneous teachings of eternal torment and universal salvation are at once discerned by the Christian's mind to be of the Adversary. They are not in accord with God's character. That is one way we can test any teaching. Is it like God? When we see the wonderful plan of God in all its glory, we cannot help saying, "It is just like God." Those who will not accept the grace of God after knowing fully and wilfully rejecting it, must be destroyed. "Nothing shall hurt or destroy" in all the Lord's Kingdom. He will not have anyone interfere with the desire of other living creatures to obey and serve Him.

Another verse in connection with our subject is found in Acts 17:26. This verse is from that wonderful sermon Paul gave on Mars Hill. He delivered to the Athenians there a wonderful sermon indeed. In v. 26 he says, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." This is a very important point, especially in respect of colour discrimination. We find in this enlightened twentieth century, white people having some kind of a grudge against dark-coloured people, even in so-called Christian nations. Yet we read here in the Bible that God hath made of one blood all nations of men.

While there are different blood groups, the colour of the skin should provide no objection to anyone willing to accept a blood transfusion. Let us 'suppose that there are four or five main blood groups amongst people of each colour of skin. It will be seen that the blood of a dark man or woman of the same grouping as a white person would be much more suitable for that white person than that from other white people of different blood groups.

Now there are two main classes of people who feel that the giving or receiving of blood transfusions would be improper. Firstly, there is the class who objects mainly because they feel that the blood of some people would likely be impure. We have heard people put it this way, Take people who smoke or take alcohol freely. Surely their blood would not be pure and clean. So for health reasons some seem to think it would be improper to receive blood of uncertain purity. While being uninformed as to the processes of keeping blood in the blood bank, surely in this day of increased knowledge it would not be difficult to remove any likely impurity from blood received from people who had made donations of their blood. A little investigation should be all that is necessary on the part of those who object to blood transfusions for health reasons.

An illustration may help here. Those who have been on dairy farms and have seen the separating process of milk will know one thing that is most surprising. The milking machines are on the cows, and the milk is not touched by human hand at all, but is in the pipes right through the machinery and runs immediately into the separator, and the cream and milk are separated. The amount of sediment in the separator is the most surprising thing. Where does it come from? A considerable amount of sediment is obtained from milk which you would think would be absolutely pure. We use this illustration because some years ago in an advertisement for blood donors in the city, there was shown a separator for separating blood. In regard to the milk, it has been suggested that by using separated milk and then bringing it back to the appropriate richness with cream, it is much purer than if it had not been taken through the separator. In the same way, blood can be cleansed and made quite pure for the use of blood transfusions. Possibly there are more recent processes in this art than the one mentioned. We have simply used the illustration to show that there should be no question of people feeling that for health reasons they could not accept a blood transfusion.

A second class of people object to accepting blood transfusions for themselves or their families on the ground of conscience, feeling that certain Scriptures infer that accepting blood would be contrary to the Lord's instructions.

It is quite right that our consciences should be our guide in the Christian way, so long as the conscience is correctly adjusted, shall we say, to the precepts of God's Word. The Apostle Paul's words in Acts 24:16 are appropriate—"Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." This is a wonderful condition of heart to be in. He would exercise his heart and mind to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. The same Apostle informs us of some whose consciences would not be a true guide,

— we refer to 1 Tim. 4:2. This is a class who the Apostle says "have their consciences seared with a hot iron". In other words, they had drifted away from the Truth, and their consciences would be no longer a true guide. They could be quite wrong. That is why we say our consciences must be regulated by the Word of God; the principles that go to make up the character of God, along with His Word in our hearts, must be the test as to whether our conscience is dictating to us correctly in respect of any matter regarding ourselves or our families. So it is not sufficient to say, My conscience tells me so and so is correct and proper. It must be true, according to the principles of God's Word.

The "Manna" comment for November 24th gives us a good thought—"Our consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a timekeeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully; so our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God."

It seems that is most important in connection with our subject. Our consciences must be regulated in accord with the Word of God.

Now let us examine some Scriptures which are used to imply that blood transfusions are improper for human beings. Firstly we have Gen. 9:4 as a text that is used in this connection. After the Flood in Noah's day he was given instructions in regard to eating. "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, ye shall not eat." This instruction was given to Noah, and intended, of course, for his family and all mankind since that time. The Lord would have his people know they must not eat flesh with the blood in it.

Another instruction was given to Israel some considerable time after Noah's day—Lev. 17:10,11. "Whatsoever man

there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for the soul; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” Then in Lev. 19:26 we have a plain statement, “Ye shall not eat anything with the blood.” Deut. 12:16,23—“Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water. . . . Only be sure that thou eat not the blood; for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.”

Those instructions given to Israel were most important. They were strict. There could be no excuse for the Israelites to be misinformed in regard to this important instruction from the Lord to abstain from eating the blood of animals God had given them for food. There seems to be good reason for the Lord’s strict prohibition of Israel eating blood.

We read in Lev. 17:11 “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls.” Did the blood of the animals really make atonement for the Israelites? We answer, only in a typical sense. The atonement made by the blood pointed forward to the real atonement which would be made for Adam, by Jesus’ blood. In every instance where the reference is to the blood making atonement, it is in the typical sense of looking forward to the real sacrifice for sins.

Heb. 9:22,23 gives us this most important lesson very clearly. “Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” Under the law of Moses, the Lord made provision whereby Israel could be typically cleansed for twelve months ahead by the sacrificing of the bullock and the goat on the Day of Atonement, by following those instructions and sprinkling the blood. They were then accounted clean in the sight of God. That was intended to keep them a separated people. By repeating this sacrifice of the animals every year, it reminded them, of course, that this was only a type. The repetition showed it was not actually accomplishing the redemption, but that it was picturing what would be done by the real sacrifice of Christ Jesus in due time. It was necessary for these animals to be actually slain and the blood sprinkled. But the heavenly things themselves had better sacrifices. The real sacrifice for sins was accomplished by much better sacrifices than animals, even the blood of Christ Jesus Himself.

We remember the offerings of Cain and Abel to the Lord. They had a mind to commune with the Lord, and offered sacrifices to Him. We see that the desire to worship the Creator was not obliterated by the fall. Gen. 4:3,4—“And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain he had not respect.” Abel was in tune with the Lord and was able to grasp what the Lord would desire, so his offering was acceptable to the Lord. Cain being an agricultural man, thought he would bring the firstfruits of his fields, but the Lord did not respect him. It was not a fitting type, it did not point forward to the blood of Christ, and so was not accepted. Cain was wroth. Vengeance came into his heart. We see the spirit of the Adversary coming in, and Cain slew his brother because of revenge. What a dreadful condition in the first generation! But the point is that God had respect unto Abel’s offering because it was an offering of blood. The blood pictured, then, the blood of Christ that would take away the sins of the world. We have repeatedly in the Old Testament the illustration of the value God placed on the blood of the animals, and that which He impressed on the hearts and minds of Israel, was that it pictured in reality the real Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

It was necessary first of all that those types be purged with blood, and God arranged that the types should be made with animal sacrifices; that the patterns or pictures of things in the heavens should be purified with those animal sacrifices. But the heavenly things themselves had better sacrifices, even the blood of Christ Himself. We see, then, that as the blood of bulls and goats pointed forward to the blood of Jesus Christ, God attached great sacredness to animal blood, and did not want the Israelites to consider it a common or ordinary food. The blood of animals was sacred, and would impress the great value of the real atonement blood of Jesus on the minds of all Israel, who were God’s Covenant people. There can be no doubt that the impression would be conveyed that if the blood of animals is precious, how much more precious would be the blood of Christ, that actually cleanses and takes away the sin of all mankind, and will give life from the dead to all who would accept the sacrifice when given the opportunity.

It may be asked, What relationship is there between God’s prohibition of eating the blood of animals and the matter of receiving blood transfusions? In the first place, God’s command had to do with the blood of animals only, and the prohibition was against the taking of blood into the digestive organs, eating it. In the case of blood transfusions, no animal blood is used, and human blood is not taken into the digestive organs, but transferred to the blood stream of the patient. There seems no ‘real similarity, and we know of no Scripture which would give the slightest indication that blood transfusions for Christians should be rejected. We know of no Scriptures at all that would seem to imply they should not be accepted. There does not seem to be any similarity in the prohibition against eating animal blood and receiving human blood by patients who are gravely in need of some sustaining source to prolong their human life.

In New Testament times, when Gentiles were received into the early Church, a situation arose which called for a special presentation from the Apostles, and this is found in Acts 15:19,20. God's covenant people were a prepared people, and their hearts were being trained; the Law was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. If they had been obedient people, they might have been able to enter the Heavenly calling and become the Bride class. But when they rejected Christ, God called for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles. Cornelius was the first Gentile convert to be received into God's favour, and was granted the opportunity to become one of the sons of God. About 31- years after Pentecost we find that the Gentiles who were becoming interested in the Lord's teachings through the ministry of the Apostles, had been associated with the customs of heathen nations; and many of those customs were abhorrent to the Jews, and to people today. Some would have been partaking of blood in their heathen revelries. Some coming into the Church would bring with them a certain amount of their former life. Their minds would have to be helped in the way the Lord would want them to walk now they were becoming Christians. So there was a necessary presentation given by the Apostles as to what the Gentiles should be expected to subscribe to in regard to their Christian conduct. The Jews, of course, would try to enforce some things that were not necessary on the Gentiles. They had been used to form and ceremony, and now, while accepting Christ, they would want to continue some of those ceremonies, which now would not be necessary at all. In other words, when the Lord invites His followers He does not say, Thou shalt do this and thou shalt do that, but He appeals to their hearts and minds. He gives them a sound mind by His spirit.

So Christians arrive at conclusions not because they are servants as they were under the law of Moses, but they are brought into God's family as sons, and that makes the relationship very much more intimate. A man in business brings his son into the business arrangements and makes his son an associate. The father and son now co-operate in the business so differently to the servants. The son may stay behind for an hour or two, with the interests of the business in mind, and there are no restrictions. There is a liberality and oneness of mind. Just so, Christians are given the spirit of a sound mind, and want more and more to do the things the Heavenly Father would have them do, just like Jesus Himself. He "learned (proved) obedience ,by the things He suffered". He always obeyed God, and as He said, "I know Thou hearest me always". He always most lovingly did the Father's will.

When the Gentiles were coming in with their Jewish compatriots they would have to eliminate some of those baser things they were associated with in the heathen customs. So the Apostles came together to say what would be essential. And this is what is written in Acts 15:19,20—"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." The Gentile Christians would be delighted to conform to the main principles, shall we say, to which the Christian life must be directed.

Yes, but strangely enough that instruction from the Apostle of "abstaining from blood" is taken by some, conscientiously they say, to refer to human blood for the purpose of blood transfusions. Comparing Scripture with Scripture we can see that what the Apostles would mean would be to abstain from eating animal blood. Something strangled would not be bled. We cannot take any other interpretation than this. It is a plain direction, that as God told Israel over and over again that they were not to eat blood, so these Gentile Christians were having the subject presented to them, that they should abstain from things strangled, and from blood. In the majority of cases it would be abhorrent to them and they would not think of doing it anyway. But the Apostles were not going to lay any other burdens on the Gentile Christians. They knew that as Christians they would receive more and more of the spirit of the Lord, and come more and more into accord with the law of love; for the Christian life calls for the laying down of the human life, laying it down in service of God in as direct a way as possible. Also in an indirect way, because all that the Christian does is a service unto the Lord. The Apostle says, Even if you eat or drink, do it to the glory of God. That is a great help to us. We would not eat or drink anything to bring dishonour to the Lord's name. Especially would we refrain from blood. This blood in the minds of Israel was very sacred. The animals' blood pictured the blood of Christ, given to make atonement for sins; in addition, of course, to being absolutely unhealthy to be partaken of. God gave it that sacred touch so they would realise it was pointing to the sacrifice of Christ. These restrictions could be clearly understood in the Apostles' day. How any Christian could interpret this to include blood transfusions is very difficult to understand. There seems no connection.

In the case of children under the care of parents or guardians, it would be a great responsibility to deny any little ones a blood transfusion if it would likely save their life. Perhaps parents and guardians need to remember that the children under their care are first of all God's little ones, and would need to be sustained by every reasonable and possible means at their disposal; and even if they rejected a blood transfusion for themselves because of conscience, they should think more than once, they should think very, very deeply in respect of their children. God has given all parents their little ones to sustain under every reasonable circumstance, to sustain their life while there is hope. We would say that even if anyone felt that he himself could not take a blood transfusion, the principle should not be applied to others under his care. The necessity for conscience to be regulated by God's Word is very essential.

It may not be out of place to mention a suggestion put forward in a recent Coroner's Court by an assisting Counsel. We do not know whether he would be a professing Christian, but it would be a very wise and helpful suggestion—that, say in the case of infants, perhaps a few hours old, where the parents felt they could not agree to a blood transfusion, the Counsel suggested that there should be an appeal made to some overriding authority such as the Child Welfare Department; to some body of people who have given their lives to assisting in the welfare of children. That would relieve the parents' own conscience in respect of this matter, inasmuch as in objecting, their conscience would be clear, but the authority could give a ruling and instruct the hospital to go ahead and save the life of the infant. That seemed a reasonable suggestion, because some consciences undoubtedly can become twisted, and by not sustaining the life of one given into their care, or not allowing others to sustain that life, they could be giving a very wrong judgment, and in later life they may have much to learn that could be avoided by a little more wisdom and a rightly-regulated conscience in the matter.

We mention in passing that even in men of the world, sometimes there is wisdom that should be appreciated, that is in respect of natural things. We realize that there is a belief in the hearts of some that if a refusing of a blood transfusion results in death, there will still be a resurrection; but that does not fulfil the obligations of a parent or guardian. We should not take the position of saying, If the child cannot live without a blood transfusion I cannot take the responsibility of agreeing to it, for even if it does die it will be resurrected. That is not God's way. Life must be preserved by every reasonable and possible means. God wants His children to realize that life is precious. The few short years *we* have are very precious to us. During this time we may have the opportunity, by the Lord's grace, of being invited to the heavenly- inheritance, something which could never be gained by anyone if he did not live long enough. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a person may have his life sustained by wonderful medical science, and grow up and be invited by the Lord to become a member of His heavenly kingdom. Sometimes we might feel that a life is, as it were, hanging on a thread; but to save a life and have the opportunity of the High Calling **is one of the** greatest privileges that anyone can receive from the Lord. For God to pass over even the angels and condescend to invite human beings to such an inheritance is a marvel beyond our thoughts.

Another matter of great importance for all Christians is to see that they do not agree with and obey any injunction of any church or organisation simply because it is put out by such a church or organisation; that we do not agree with or subscribe to anything because it comes from headquarters. The regimentation of the Lord's people seems to have been a great temptation all down through the age. If you look at church history you will find the Papacy ruled with a rod of iron, and made decrees as to what people should believe, and those who dared to contradict were slaughtered. What a dreadful system of iniquity was instigated under the direction of the great Adversary. We are thankful it is not so today; but nevertheless there are similar efforts along these lines, to regiment beliefs, prepare tables or creeds of what people should believe when they belong to a particular church or organisation.

When we come into the church of Christ we come into the liberty of the sons of God. God gives us His spirit, and teaches us by His spirit, and we have the spirit of a sound mind as we progress along the way; by comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn right from wrong. We will act becomingly in His sight. When the Lord sent out the Apostles, He said, Be not concerned about what you will say when brought before governors and kings. The spirit of the Father will **tell you what to say**. So in regard to the truths of the Bible. We are not to try to regiment one another. Organisations must not do so. If they do, they are not of the Lord. If there is any effort along that line, then far better to be away from such organisations or churches.

The Lord's people need to learn that they gain the Lord's approval by being individual Christians, exercised in their own minds from the Bible as to its meaning, and the truth or otherwise of any teaching put out by any church or organisation. The Lord did not call people because they belonged to any organisation. He called individuals. He called them in twos by the seaside. He did not say, To what 'organization do you belong? No; but "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He knew they needed to be instructed. So it is with all of us. We are learning in the school of Christ day by day. As we preserve our humility and meekness and desire to be instructed along the lines of the Lord's Word, we will find it is a very happy condition in spite of the narrowness. There are multitudes associated together in some movements. It is quite an experience to be with a multitude. Some people feel that numbers make strength, and that they are all the more secure if they are surrounded by numbers. But not so in the Lord's family. It is one here and there, comparatively speaking.

So in answer to our question, we will say we know of no Scripture which can be rightly taken to prohibit anyone accepting the benefits of a blood transfusion if they are in need of it. Our hospitals today do not give transfusions for the fun of it. They do not do it to experiment. All the experimenting to save life in this way has been done years ago.

It seems that for one to refuse for themselves it would be their own responsibility, but to refuse another human being under their care would be a very grave injustice. Such an one perhaps has much to learn, and by the Lord's grace they may be able to learn, too, if not in this life, then in the life to come.

We could just briefly refer to the wonderful kingdom of God, when all minds will be cleared of obscurity, the veil taken away from all faces, the misconceptions and superstitions removed. The kingdom of God is going to be a time when all will be enlightened on every subject. All shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. In the meantime, special light is for God's called-out people, those responsive to the love of Christ and who have been instructed in regard to the mysteries of the Kingdom. These are highly favoured now in their Christian life and development along the lines of the character and attributes of God. That is, to a great extent at least; we are still imperfect beings and cannot be like the perfect Master, but we can become copies of God's dear Son. That is just what we need to be to inherit the heavenly kingdom. God's spirit is the means of transforming human beings more and more into the likeness of His dear Son. As the Redeemer paid the price that all mankind may have life, so we now must also cherish human life, not in any way treat it cheaply. While there is no intention, possibly, with those who reject blood transfusions to treat human life cheaply, it may come to that when the conscience is not rightly regulated by the laws of God. The laws of the land might need to be changed so that parents or guardians would not have the only say in respect of infants particularly, to give them an opportunity of growing up, and ultimately living forever in the kingdom of God. Sometimes a combination of minds may arrive at a better conclusion than one individual.

So let us appreciate our privileges as children of the Lord. Let us appreciate the increase of knowledge in the world today. We should cherish our Bibles, knowing it was impossible to have them only a short while ago. All the additional, benefits of our age are to be used for the Lord. So in the matter of blood transfusions; they should be accepted as one of the blessings, the increase of knowledge that can be used gratefully and thankfully to God's praise. If we are healthy enough to give blood donations, it would be a good procedure. Otherwise we should not. We should not make ourselves ill about it, but if anyone is healthy enough, that surely is a contribution to help some who are otherwise unable to help themselves.

Christians are not to separate themselves from the world into better environments, but to be representatives of the Lord and to be seen of men, not to be hidden away like some mistakenly believe. The Lord's people must be representatives and ambassadors for Christ. Let their moderation be known to all men, their reasonableness, their appropriateness. Let their spirit of a sound mind be an evidence that they are upholding the Word of God, and are in hope of the heavenly kingdom, and helping others with whom they come in contact day by day. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." We see the individuality of the Christian call. We do not gain the heavenly kingdom by belonging to a church or earthly organisation. We grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as individual members. We are taught in the school of Christ that we might be able to appropriate the truths to ourselves, being guided by them more and more along our Christian pathway. May it be that we appreciate all our privileges as we walk along the way day by day faithfully, by the Lord's grace.

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Stephen's Dying Prayer.

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God (R.V. "the Lord"), and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."—Acts 7:59,60.

AS usually understood, the "spirit" referred to by the persecuted saint, is an immortal part in man, which, in the case of the pious, is borne aloft to the nightless world at the final hour. About to die, it is assumed that the martyr committed himself, or his spirit, to the Saviour, in the hope of enduring happiness as soon as liberated from the tenement of clay. A pleasing representation, no doubt; but one encompassed with difficulties we dare not overlook.

This common view is diametrically opposed to our Lord's testimony in the hearing of His Apostles immediately before His crucifixion, — "I go to prepare a place for you." — John 14:2. At the conclusion of their toils and pains were they appointed to go thither—as orthodoxy assures its disciples now? It seems not (verse 3)—"And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also ;" words which may be regarded as explanatory of John 13:33-36. When He rose in sublime majesty from the mountain top, the attending angels said to those who were spectators of His removal — "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner"—that is, quietly and unknown to the world—"as ye have seen Him go into heaven."—Acts 1:11. The doctrine of Scripture then is, there is no such thing as going to Him at death; not one saint will be privileged to behold His face till He revisits this world, according to His promise.

The Apostle Paul understood the Divine plan and ordination perfectly, and therefore anticipated neither reward nor inheritance till the Lord should be manifested a second time without a sin-offering unto salvation. "I am now ready to be offered," he says, "and the time of my departure,"—that is, from life—"is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me"—at death? No—"At that day"—when He returns; "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." — 2 Tim. 4:6-8. Was not Stephen educated in the same grand errorless spiritual school? Knew he not that the Deliverer in whom he trusted had spoken in this manner, "I will come again and receive you unto myself?"

Following His hours of agony on the hill of shame, and when the last moment had arrived, the Man of Sorrows, after crying with a loud voice, closed His utterances with these words—"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (literally out-breathed); that is — died — Luke 23:46. According to Matthew 27:50, He "yielded up the ghost" (literally, dismissed His spirit,); that is, drew His last breath, or ceased to live. Stephen, the earliest martyr among the disciples, appears to have imitated his Master in the closing scene. Jesus said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." When the stones were cruelly battering his quivering form, Stephen appealed thus — "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The original word used by the dying Lord, and by His dying servant, is *pneuma*, translated "spirit," and both passages are given in Robinson's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament as illustrations .of the term, when indicating "the principle of life residing in the breath ;" turning our thoughts back to the old record. — "The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."—Gen. 2:7.

Taking this as undoubtedly correct, the right interpretation of this expiring witness' devout language is not hard to find. He called on his exalted Lord to receive back the life-giving breath, or to accept his life which he rendered up as a sacrifice on the altar of Christianity. Very different from the popular view, but quite in accord with the general teachings of Scripture, and the rest of the narrative itself. After exclaiming,— "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"— did he pass upwards to the heavenly abode? As a spirit, winged he his flight to the Redeemer's presence? No, verily, "He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, — Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." He was stoned to death, he returned to the dust. For him there was no release till the "dead in Christ," during His presence and by His power, burst forth in the bloom and blessedness of immortality.—Selected.

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Pressing on Toward the Goal.

(Contributed Article).

READING Philippians 3:8-17 according to the Revised Standard Version seems to convey further helpful thoughts. In the Authorized version it is a passage well known to all Christians.

Firstly, the “all things” which Paul counted as loss were chiefly, if not solely, the advantages of which he could boast in Israel after the flesh. Paul’s lineage was such of which the average Jew would boast. Instead of glorying in the above average station in which he was born, he repudiated it, because he had found something better. Quoting from the R.S.V., he says that though he had reason for confidence in the flesh above other men, he had been led to see that it was no gain at all; in fact he repudiates it gladly in order to lay claim to something better. The only thing Paul wanted was to gain Christ, and be found in Him, — “not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.”

This faith that Paul had was not mere credulity; it was not a blind faith, but based on knowledge and reason. To use a simple illustration; we do not put faith in any person who is a complete stranger to us. When we confide in a person, or seek advice in personal, important affairs, the faith we have in that person is based on our previous knowledge of him; we know he is reliable and to be trusted. Faith, then, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. We are not asked or expected to believe in something that cannot be understood.

When Paul says in verse 10,—“that I may know him (Christ) and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,” he was not desiring or seeking something that was obscure to him; he knew what he was talking about. How many professing Christians today really desire to share the sufferings of Jesus, and become like Him in His death? Rather, many fear the death that Paul desired. (Heb. 2:15.) If there is one thing more than any other that the flesh, or natural man, shrinks from, it is suffering. As for being made like Jesus in His death, how many really desire it? The ignominy of Jesus’ death is hard to appreciate in this day, when, outwardly at least, the cross and the death of Jesus are somewhat glorified. But in His day such a death was viewed as the lowest of the low. Few seek after that kind of death; most have a regard that they might make their mark in the world, and that their posterity shall look back upon their life and work with pleasure and pride.

Paul had a reason for desiring such close association with his Saviour, and verse 11 tells us what it was,—“that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” We know that this was the first or chief resurrection that he desired, the spiritual or heavenly inheritance, the glory of the Lord. It was the glory of

the Lord that inspired Paul; he wanted that above everything, and he was no misinformed Christian. “If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him”; “if we are planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” The one is necessary to attain the other. Paul knew that no earthly path of roses leads to glory.

In verse 12 he acknowledges,—”Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; (no, but he was daily continually seeking to attain it) but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.” What beautiful expressions are in this version. Christ Jesus had made Paul His own; yes, had bought him with a price, had cleansed him fully, so that now there was no condemnation in him. What a miserable thing the Law arrangement was by comparison. It was fully to be expected that he would regard his previous connections with the Law as *a* loss; he had been wasting time and effort to no end, but now Christ Jesus was his aim. All that Christ Jesus offered him was not yet his own, he said, “but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Let us carry that beautiful thought with us every day—the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus” — more and more the things of earth fade and the things of heaven grow nearer and dearer. Not only so, but our lives become daily more sanctified in the Master’s service; the daily round and common task has more lustre the longer we live, because we *see* that in every moment we can glorify our Father above, and what does not do so, we disdain to touch. While in tune with Him there is no experience of any kind that can befall us except it work out good for us in respect of the upward call of God — all draws us nearer to Him, removes dross of the old nature, and matures further the fruits of the spirit.

At times we may question this, and doubt if some experiences do really draw us closer to the Lord, but if we take the long view we are fully persuaded that all things do work together for the lasting good of those who are reaching out toward that great foundation Headstone of the corner, laid in heaven.

In the messages to the seven churches in Revelation, we know that the one addressed to the church of Thyatira (Rev 2:18-29) is historically addressed to the church during the time of the Papal reign. We need to read history to realise what the Christians of that time had to endure; indeed, they were persecuted practically to extinction. The Son of God, with piercing eyes like a flame of fire — eyes that miss nothing, either of good or evil — commends those who had maintained their zeal, through terrific trial for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

In Rev. 2:19, we read — “Your last works exceed your first.” (R.S.V.) He loved and appreciated their first works, imperfect though they had been as “babes in Christ,” but all the long years of their trial time had worked out good, had mellowed and matured them, so that now the latter works of these true ones were more prized by their Lord. It is good for us all to know and realise that whatever our experiences, the fruits of the spirit are developing, the call of God in Christ is drawing us ever upwards, even though our earthly body is going down in ignominy—”becoming like Jesus in His death.”

Phil. 3:15 reads—”Let those of us who are mature be thus minded,” and verse 17 — “Brethren, join in imitating me.” May God help us to do so.

May we conclude with a special word to the younger folks who may not yet be “mature” ones, but who have in some measure meditated upon the things relative to the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Your numbers will be few in this day; care not for that, the Lord is sufficient. Watch unto prayer and keep close to Him. In this world of today you face peculiar difficulties, but Jesus knows the position. We are in the world, even if we are not of it. The majority of professing Christians today are both in the world and of it too. Then there is the unrealistic Christian who tries not to be in the world, or of it either, the monk-like tendency that shuts-in to self, and all else out.

You are young, with life before you, and like all Christians you are expected to provide things honest in the sight of men. This is the day of the specialist. There is no degradation in earning a living with pick and shovel, but we need to realise that today no such jobs exist. The world of tomorrow will know little labor but skilled labor, and the wise youth of today will fit himself. To the truly Christian youth this may present a test and a problem. If you have heard the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus,” and are minded to press on for its prize, you will probably feel that the time and energy required for your education for secular things is taking everything. Think of the old hymn—”Fight manfully onward, Dark passions subdue, Look ever to Jesus, He’ll carry you through.”

Learn to order your ways; remember, you have not got to do things because everyone else is doing them. As youths, your education to fit you for secular work is necessary; pay good attention to it, but seek and pray for the spirit of a sound mind. Even in this, as in everything, remember there are many things the world counts gain which are not really so. The most blessed experience that any of you can have is to know that “Christ Jesus hath made you His own.” Thus, going through His “school” make progress in “the upward call of God” that it might be true of you, that “your latter works exceed your former work,” in making Christ Jesus your own.

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The Presence of Christ.

THE subject of Christ's return is surely of paramount importance to all His disciples, and it is of special interest to all sincere students to know that eminent scholars of the Bible are agreed that the English word "presence" is the equivalent of the Greek word "parousia."

When we may look forward to having an absent friend with us for a season, we know that there must be a moment of arrival, also a time when he will be journeying, and thus "drawing near," but it is his presence to which we look forward. Though in speaking of the matter, we may say we shall do this or that when he comes, we do not mean, when he is drawing near or at the moment of arrival, but while he is present with us and we are enjoying the renewed fellowship.

The word "parousia" occurs 24 times in the Greek Testament, and there would seem to be no other word than "presence" that can so well be used to translate it in every instance.

In the Epistles we have:-

(1) 1 Cor. 15:23. Speaking of the resurrection of Christ (head and body), as the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's during His "presence." James also speaks of the church—the body of Christ—as being a first-fruits unto God. Christ died, rose and revived, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living, thus all belong to Him by right of purchase. All are Christ's — the just and unjust—and are to be raised during His 1000 years' reign. "As all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:21,24. Rom. 14:9. Acts 24:15. John 5:28,29.

(2) 1 Cor. 16:17. Here Paul is expressing his gladness at, the presence of three brethren. "For they have refreshed my spirit." That was not by their journeying "or "drawing near," nor by the act of "arrival," but by their "presence" and fellowship.

(3) 2 Cor. 7:6; (4) 2 Cor. 7:7. Here the Apostle speaks of the comfort he had by Titus having come to him. It was not that Titus was coming, but that he was comforted by his presence and fellowship, and the good news he had brought.

(5) 2 Cor. 10:10. Here:the word "parousia" is correctly translated presence, and it should be clear to all that that is what is meant. One could not reasonably say that His bodily "drawing near" was weak, or that His bodily "arrival" was weak.

(6) Phil. 1:26. Certainly Paul did not mean that the act of his arrival would do the Philippians good; it was his presence and fellowship, his instructions and counsel that would increase their joy.

(7) Phil. 2:12. The word is again correctly translated "presence," and is placed as the alternative to absence. No other word could so well convey the meaning of the passage.

(8) 1 Thess. 2:19. Again the meaning is not the "arrival," or "drawing near," but the "presence" of the Lord, for the Apostle speaks of the church as being in the presence of the Lord all that time.

(9) 1 Thes. 3:13. The word rendered "coming" should be "presence" here also. The Apostle is referring to the same event as in the previous passage, namely, the church being present with the Lord at His second presence with all His saints.

(10) 1 Thes. 4:15. Here again the word rendered "coming" should be "presence." If the Lord was to come

like a flash of lightning, as some so misunderstand Matt. 24:27, then no one could await with joy, nor could there be any time when “The dead in Christ, having risen first,” some could be left over or remain. With the true rendering of “parousia,” i.e., presence, all is harmonious and reasonable. When the Lord should be present, He would first raise those who had fallen asleep in Christ, and then those who were still alive in the flesh would be caught away just as they finished their course to be together with the Lord, with those who had preceded them. These do not sleep as others who died before the presence of Christ, but at the moment of death are “Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and so they together with all the body of Christ shall be “forever with the Lord.”

(11) 1 Thes. 5:23. Again read presence instead of coming. It is not the act of His “arrival” we look forward to, but to His presence.

(12) 2 Thess. 2:1; (13) 2 Thess. 2:8; (14) 2 Thess. 2:9. The word should undoubtedly be rendered presence in each of these texts.

(15) James 5:7; (16) James 5:8. It should be evident to all that the “presence” is the thing which James referred to and not the act of “arrival,” or “drawing near.”

(17) 2 Pet. 1:16. That Peter had in mind the “presence” of Christ in Kingdom glory, is evident from the fact that he refers to the “Transfiguration” which was a picture of the Kingdom.

(18) 2 Pet. 3:4. Should read “Where is the promise of His presence?” This verse is having fulfilment in this our day.

(19) 2 Pet. 3:12. This has reference to the time called, “The day of God,” “The day of the Lord’s wrath.” It will not be a flash of lightning in length of time, but a period, “A time of trouble,” even greater than that in Noah’s day, or at the destruction of Jerusalem.

(20) 1 John 2:28. If the coming of the Lord was like a flash of lightning, there would be no time for anyone to feel ashamed “before” Him, but John had no such thought. He, along with all those who love His appearing, looked forward to being like the Lord and with Him, and to “see Him as He is.” Such have confidence that they shall not be ashamed before Him at His presence.

Thus we have gone over all the instances of the word “parousia” in the Epistles, and see that no other word than “presence” can so well convey in English the meaning of the inspired writers. Now we turn to Matt. 24, where the remaining four translations of the word occur, and find that the same word “presence” is clearly the Lord’s meaning in each case.

(21) Matt. 24:3. Here is the inspired question which was asked of the Lord, in order that the inspired answer could be provided for our edification, and it is only when we allow the proper meaning of the Greek word “parousia” four times used in this connection that we can comprehend the “meat in due season.” V. 45.

“When shall all these things be and what shall be the sign of thy presence (parousia) and of the end of the age?” So that the answer given is not indicating signs that the Lord was soon to be near, or to arrive, but rather that He would be present when the signs should be seen.

Had the Lord intended returning in a way visible to all human eyes, there could be no value in providing any sign of His presence, but as He had said that it would not be with observation, the signs are given, and the signs are all now to be seen.

(22) Matt. 24:27. It would be indeed a sorry thing if the Lord was to come and go just like the lightning flash, but when we see that the Greek word rendered “lightning” is elsewhere used for the shining of a candle, we readily perceive that it is the glorious sunshine, rising in the east and shining all day, setting at evening in the west, that is here used to show the glorious reign of the “Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in His wings.” Also, that it is not just the “arrival,” “coming,” or “drawing near” that is referred to, but the “presence” of the Son of man, which will continue for a 1000 year day. The word rendered “lightning” simply means “brightness,” or “shining,” and could be used for sunshine, or shining of a candle, or brightness of lightning, and is dependent upon connections respecting translation.

(23) Matt. 24:37; (24) Matt. 24:39. “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be.”

The word in the Authorized Bible is mistakenly rendered “coming.” As Noah was present in the “Days of Noah,” so, of course, our Lord must be present in the days of the Son of man. See corresponding passage in Luke 17:24,26.

Earthly Way Ended.

Recently our elderly Brother Neale, of Adelaide, reached the end of the earthly way. In recent years our Brother had been hindered by ill-health from attending Class meetings, but always warmly received those who visited him in his home. Brother Neale was one who had learned to trust the Lord, and he bore the effects of a painful malady with patience and fortitude, and looked forward with desire for the coming of God's Kingdom of righteousness and peace, when sickness, sorrow and death will all be done away. Much sympathy is expressed to the members of our Brother's family, and especially to Sister Neale and son John, who have lost a loving husband and kind father. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psa. 30:5.)

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Contentment.

"Charge not thyself with the weight of *a* year,
Child of the Master, faithful and dear;
Choose not the cross for the coming week,
For that is more than He bids thee seek;
Bend not thine arms for tomorrow's load—
Thou may'st leave that to thy gracious God;
Daily only He saith to thee,

'Take up thy cross and follow me.'

Except the Lord Build the House.

(Psa. 127:1,2.)

(Convention Address)

“EXCEPT the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it in it.” So reads the margin rendering, and we think this is quite applicable to our topic. This supports what we know to be true, that much energy, influence, time, expenditure, conscription of forces, flattery, violence, guile, falsehood, truth mixed with error, art, talents, beauty and ugliness, sacrifice, science, learning, inventions, in short, all the resources of which man is capable are exercised for one purpose. That purpose is to build a house, a collective house.

People build houses for a variety of reasons —(a) For shelter from the elements; (b) for protection from enemies; (c) for independence; (d) for creative expression; (e) for raising a family; (f) for investment of wealth; (g) for rest and peace. Our text definitely teaches two things— (1) The Lord takes a part in human affairs; (2) only when man’s efforts are in harmony with the Grand Architect can the building be passed as fit for habitation.

None should need convincing of the inability of any house to withstand storm and tempest, tidal wave and earthquake, lightning and fire. “The world that was” perished in a flood. Regarding those who build houses for rest and peace, we wonder if they find any peace outside of God’s peace.

Other houses are constructed with a view to something different to habitation; a place of worship or a religious institution; a legislative assembly embracing either the building itself or the assembly itself; a place of business, many big business houses being prefixed with “The House of So and So”; and there is the Stock Exchange.

A house could also refer to “a household,” a family, including ancestors and descendants. You have heard of the House of Windsor, the House of Stuart, the House of Jacob, the House of Israel, Judah and David. “Moses was faithful in all his house”; that is, the house of servants, and there is also a house of sons, the Head of that House being Jesus Himself. “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub,” Jesus queried of the disciples, “how much more them of his household?” Our text still holds good, “Except the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it in it.”

Many houses are built embracing one or more of the foregoing ideas or ideals for construction. Irrespective of how many houses may combine for greater strength (since unity is strength), God’s sanction for continuance is needed.

Just as a group of houses may combine and become a village, so villages may combine and become towns, towns amalgamate and become cities; cities affiliate to become nations; nations combine for commonwealths. Yet this same simple truth is applicable to either the humble tent in the wilderness as it is to the magnificent temple, the city of gold, or the “impregnable” nation. Our text warns, too, that any conspiracy to defeat God’s plan will be of no avail. “Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” (Read also Psa. 2:1-6.)

In case we think “it couldn’t happen to us,” turn the pages of history back and ponder the might and strength, pomp and glory of nations that have ruled the world and today are no more than a memory.

God invites us to ponder a few things about “the watchman.” He was the employee of the group to be alert, awake, and about his business so that the other occupants of the city could enjoy their sleep, their

rest. The watchman would instantly raise the alarm the moment danger threatened. It could be invasion, enemies, natural disturbances, “underground” movements, etc. Once the alarm was given remedies could be taken to offset the coming trial. One could not blame the watchman for doing his work; in fact he is to be commended. The cause for complaint was without doubt in the house, in the village, the city, or in the nation.

The housebuilders of the city, the builders of it in it, transferred their responsibility to the watchman; he would safeguard their interests. The watchman would no doubt call for reinforcements as needed; his garrison would be strengthened as the occasion demanded. The watchman’s efforts are said to be all in vain except •the Lord keep the city. Ponder how men have striven to ward off the wages of iniquity. In the city we call Christendom are four big houses—social, political, financial and ecclesiastical—and all have their watchmen.

Are there any watchmen in today’s cities? Remember his duties of yesteryear; to guard against, to protect, to warn, etc. Think of all the money and effort expended annually to protect the city, the nation, against disease; the military forces that console us with security and defence; the political armies who arrange our welfare conditions; the scientists who contribute their share towards defence and arresting disease, etc.; the research workers; sometimes conscripted armies of watchmen; the huge watchdogs that raise their towers to overlook the cities’ walls, we call them insurance companies; banks to guard our wealth; newspapers, radio and television to cry aloud the moment danger is sensed; the economists to solve all our currency troubles; the firemen; public servants, etc., are all “watchmen” guarding our cities from trouble that may develop either outside or inside its walls.

The text of our subject further describes activities organised for the city’s continuance. Troubles have come; they have increased both in size and importance. To counter these troubles, these calamities, has meant many long hours of fatigue; rising early, retiring late, a thousand-and-one sacrifices by all inhabitants. We have not been as successful as we hoped, as we prided. The “bread of sorrows” has in some way come to every home, every house; the aftermath of two world wars left bread of sorrows which we still eat. The stain of sin we cannot cover. Instead of fewer hospitals we need more, still more, and bigger than ever; mental institutions, too.

If the watchman wakes in vain, except the Lord keep the city, it surely means that the inhabitants have no peace, no rest, despite transferring their responsibilities to the watchman. Could anything be truer? It also means that despite all efforts, trouble, calamity, death has found us unprepared.

Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, a city built not on the sand of surface values. Jesus described the progressive troubles of the house, or city, built on sand. He said in His parable — “*And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it.*” Please note the gradual deterioration until the final phase, when “great was the fall of it.” The watchmen are on the job, but the Prophet Isaiah says they are “blind, ignorant, dumb dogs that cannot bark, greedy who can never have enough, shepherds that cannot understand, all looking to their own way, for their own gain, thinking that tomorrow will be the same as this day.” (Isa. 56:10-12.)

A house, a household, a village, a city or a nation, or a commonwealth of nations built on selfishness, hatred, envy, violence, deceit, idolatry, would possibly find it hard to believe, while the builders of it are in it, that dire experiences are just around the corner. When the “best of them is as a brier and the upright among them sharper than a thorn hedge,” Micah says the day of visitation is on *its* way. The condition is so grave, they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net, contention and strife, no confidence in another, no mercy to intervene for other suffering folk; what a sorry picture. Micah says this will happen when the “enemies of man in his own house” are not subdued. Things progress from bad to worse until all that can be done is to “wrap it up” for bitter vexation, perplexity, fear, and destruction to

take its toll. (Mic. 7:1-4.) It has happened before, many times.

Despite this gloomy picture, there is a brighter side. In this respect our text says, “He giveth his beloved sleep.” There may be fightings without, fears within, the “mountains may be cast into the midst of the sea,” “men’s hearts may be failing them for fear of those things which are coming upon the earth.” It could be a time of great shaking, as prophesied in Hebrews 12:22-28, yet all the while “He giveth his beloved sleep.” Rest, peace, belong to the Lord’s people. Jesus left us a legacy of peace; who can take it away? If God be for us who can be against us?

Why do His beloved rest in peace when all around is confusion and strife? Because their faith is in God’s House, a House in which are many mansions; a mansion for the House of Sons; a mansion for the house of servants; a mansion for the house- (hold) of man — the family of man. Because their faith is in the City of the Living God, the New Jerusalem, a city whose Builder and Maker is God. It was Solomon, a man of peace, of rest, who built the typical house of God; the same qualities of rest and peace will be found among the House of Sons who are to assist, (“coworkers together with God”) in building the “house not made with hands.”

When that gracious building is complete a strange work is promised; God has promised to re-build a house now in ruins. It is the tabernacle of David, fallen down in ruins, but, thank God, is to be restored to its former glory and power for the blessing of mankind in general. “Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.” “He giveth his beloved sleep.”

Jesus, the “thief in the night” has broken into the *house*, the “kingdoms” of this world. “The present evil world” will soon be a thing of the past, and then the New Jerusalem, the House of God’s building, will take control, and what a prospect! This will be a house, the labour of which will not be in vain.

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Faith and Sight.

(Contributed Article)

LET us draw your attention to Hebrews 11:1 —”Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” As we intend to show ;the difference between Faith and Sight, we could look at 2 Tim. 2:15 —”Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

It will be observed by what follows that the dividing of the word of truth indicates a time feature, or time period.

The whole plan of God is divided into such periods; we refer to the time of the Prophets, the time of the Judges, the Kings, the time of Christ, etc. The particular time we have under consideration is known in the Scriptures as — “In those days,” “the last days,” or “the time of the end,” which brings us to the period in which we see our faith turning to sight. Once having seen something we no longer need to have faith in it in the sense of still expecting it.

Getting back to Hebrews 11:1, this is what one concordance has to say about it—”Faith is a dependence on the veracity of another”—and as God is the author of all prophecy it must increase our faith in Him. Having our faith in God and His prophecies, let us examine Zech. 12:3—”In that day (the last days or time of the end) will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” Look at Matt. 24:6-8, which has reference to the last days —Bible students recognise this as the end of the Gentile times; namely, 1914 onwards.

Another prophecy which helps us in this matter is Dan. 12:4 which could apply now only, and can be recognised and understood. With all these things happening before our eyes, seeing •them must increase our faith in the author of them; namely, our Heavenly Father.

We would like to draw your attention. to Dan. 11:40—”And at the time of the end shall the king of •the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” This is the time of the gathering of the nations by God. See also Isa. 10:24-34; 17:12-14; 34:8,9; Joel 3:1-4,9; Zech. 14:14; Ezek. 37; 38; 39. This gathering is to be to the Promised Land, which boundaries are shown in Gen. 15:18; the latter part of the verse reads— ”From the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

Have a look at a map of the Middle East, the focal point being Palestine; trace the Euphrates from its mouth, at the top end of the Persian Gulf, back to its source. You will observe that the north takes in a considerable portion of Syria, while to the eastern side of Palestine is Jordan and Iraq, while on the southern border is Saudia Arabia, and all these countries are hostile to the Jews,—God’s people.

Let us look now at the gathering of Israel. We are familiar with the 37th chapter of Ezekiel which shows the gathering of the “dry bones.” (Also Ezek. 36:31-38.) We can see that this process began with Zionism and the Balfour Declaration, the release of the Promised Land from the Turks in 1918, and Israel becoming a nation in 1948. The last phase is shown in Ezek. 37:14 when the breath of life, or the spirit, is given, when God comes to their aid at Armageddon, at which time they will recognise their Messiah — “Him whom they had pierced.”

We have already said that all nations are to be gathered together; how do they line up; can we recognise

them?

Today they are commonly known as East and West, with two distinct ideologies. How do the Scriptures define them? As North and South. Does the Bible show this division? We will draw your attention to the description in Ezek. 38:2,3,5,6. We see in these verses the names of Gog, Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, Togarmah, Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. We must include Egypt in this group, as they are the avowed enemies of Israel, and are now in league with Russia.

What about the king of the South? Let us look at Ezek. 38:13,—”Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, and all the young lions thereof.” Look at the map again. Sheba and Dedan are on the southern tip of the peninsula, bounded by the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Today Sheba and Dedan are names only, but the locality is the important point, because the British control this sector, which is known as Aden. It is generally conceded by Bible students that the “Tarshish” mentioned in Ezek. 38:13, means Britain, and if we take the whole of chapters 38 and 39 they show that Sheba and Dedan are there right to the end.

We think it is right to bring in Zech. 12:3 at this point. “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut into pieces,” etc. The term “that day” (or time of the end) is used again. We know that Turkey held great sway in the Middle East in 1914, and were in control of Jerusalem; they lost it to Britain in 1918. What has happened in the time from 1918 till now? Britain has lost possessions or alliances with these countries—Egypt, Canal Zone, Jordan, Iraq, India, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore and Cyprus, thus forcing her into the only safe position in the Middle East, that of Aden (Sheba and Dedan), which we know is south of

Jerusalem. This leads us to the conclusion that Britain and all she represents is the King of the South.

This may seem like a presentation on history and geography, but we feel that what has been stated is the prophetic utterance, as we see it in the Scriptures pertaining to the time of the end, and also the signs of the time of the end as shown in Matthew 24, and other similar Scriptures, such as Daniel 12:4. Seeing all these things does not hold our interest simply on account of their military or national *significance*, but because they show us the times in which we are living, and their prophetic value, knowing that they are the culminating part of God’s Plan. Therefore, having seen them, our faith is increased in the Word of God, and in Him who inspired the accounts to be written, hence our dependence on the veracity of our Heavenly Father.

Our justification in watching these things is borne out by the life of our Master. He was very conscious of things going on around Him, and we know He came to be the Redeemer of mankind by His sacrificial death. He could have gone straight to the temple after His baptism and sojourn in the wilderness for forty days and said, “I am Jesus of Nazareth! I am the King of the Jews! I am the Son of God,” and then have been promptly executed for so-called blasphemy, as He was eventually, and His death would have brought the salvation of mankind. But our Lord had many things to do, chiefly the inauguration of the Church. He associated with all kinds of people from the least unto the greatest in the land. He healed the beggars, the sick, etc.; He dined with publicans and sinners; He had discussions with the priests and Pharisees who were considered the spiritual leaders of Israel; He also came in contact with high civil officials of the land, such as Herod and Pilate.

All these things He did that He may become a sympathetic and understanding High Priest. (See Heb. 4:14,15.)

Can we as followers of the Master do less? We know if we are faithful unto death we will be made kings and priests; therefore, we too must be sympathetic and understanding. We are told to watch and pray as we see these prophecies being fulfilled, such as the 24th chapter of Matthew, Daniel 12:4, etc. May God

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“Because the Days are Evil.”

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time; because the days are evil.”

THE word “circumspect” is from circum, signifying around, and spectus, signifying to look, to watch. The true Christian pathway is so narrow, so beset with tests and pitfalls and wiles of the evil one, that, if we walk carelessly even (not to say wickedly), we will be in great danger of mishap. It requires not only that we look all around at every step, but, more than this, it requires that we be wise, — wiser than our fellow creatures of earth—wise with the wisdom that cometh from above, which is pure, peaceable, loving; yet first of all loyal to the Lord and His Word.

We wish to call attention to some general principles, applicable to every member of the body of Christ, at every time; and especially necessary to be remembered and practised at the present time, because of the special activity of our adversary; — “because the days are evil.” For it would appear that, as in the “harvest” of the Jewish age, so in the present “harvest” of the Gospel age, opposition prevails not only in the synagogues, from the Scribes and Pharisees, but in the home circle —between parents and children, and husbands and wives—and among the Lord’s people.

And in proportion as the adversary seeks to stir up strife, let each of the consecrated be the more on guard to give no avoidable offence either in word or deed. “Walk circumspectly, . . . because the days are evil,” — days of special trial and testing.

The rules we have to suggest are as follows:—

- (1) Let each resolve to mind his own business.

The Scriptural injunctions along this line caution us not to be busy-bodies in other people’s affairs. Everyone of experience in life has learned that this is a good rule; yet few walk- by this rule, circumspectly. If we have not sufficient of our own business and of the Lord’s service to fill our hands and moments and mouths, there is something wrong with us that needs careful prayer and study of the divine Word to set right.

This does not mean that we should be indifferent to the welfare of others under our care, or for whom we are in any degree responsible; but, ‘even in doing for these we should be careful to recognise their rights

and the rights of others, and especially careful not to exceed our own rights. Let us never forget that justice must govern in our interferences with the affairs of others, though we may not require full justice in respect of our own interests, but exercise mercy.

(2) We should exercise great patience with others and their faults — more than in dealing with ourselves and our own shortcomings.

When we remember that the whole world is mentally as well as physically and morally unsound through the fall, it should make us very considerate for their failings. Since the Lord is graciously willing to cover our blemishes with the merit of the precious blood, we cannot do less than be “very pitiful” and of tender compassion towards others;— even though their failings be greater or different from our own. This general rule is specially applicable to your own children. Their defects to some extent came from you or through you; hence, in dealing with their faults, you should do just as in correcting your own faults, — earnestly, rigorously, for their correction in righteousness, but sympathetically, mercifully, lovingly.

(3.) Do not be touchy and easily offended. Take a kindly, charitable view of the words and acts of others. A trifling slight or rebuff could well be passed unnoticed—covered with the mantle of generosity and love. A serious offence should be assumed to be unintentional, and inquiry should be kindly made in words that would not stir up anger, but in “speech seasoned with grace.” In a majority of cases it will prove that no offence was meant.

This rule in the Scriptures comes under the instructions not to indulge in “evil surmisings,”—imagining evil intentions and motives behind the words and acts of others. “Evil surmisings” is ranked by the Apostle as contrary to the words of our Lord Jesus, opposed to godliness, and of the same spirit as envy and strife—of a corrupt mind, works of the flesh and the devil.—1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21.

The other side of this subject is brought out by the Apostle’s injunction respecting the elements of the spirit of love, of which God’s people are begotten and which they are to cultivate daily,—the development of which is one of the chief proofs of their being “over-comers.” He says, “Love suffereth long and is kind, . . . is not easily offended, thinketh no evil, . . . beareth all things, believeth all things (favorably), hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

It may be urged that such a disposition would be imposed upon frequently, by the evilly disposed. We reply that those who possess this spirit of love are not necessarily obtuse nor soft; their experiences in cultivating this degree of love have served to develop them and make them of “quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” They will be cautious where there is even the appearance of evil, even while avoiding •the imputation of evil intentions until forced to concede them by indisputable evidence. Besides, it would be better far to take some trifling risks and suffer some slight losses, many fillies, than to accuse even one innocent person. And the Lord who has directed this course is abundantly able to compensate us for any losses experienced in following His counsel. He is both able and willing to make all such experiences work together for good to those who love Him. He places obedience in His arrangements first (even before sacrifice) saying, “Ye are my disciples, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

Whoever neglects the Lord’s commands along this line of “evil surmisings” weaves a web for his own ensnarement, however “circumspectly” he may walk as respects other matters; for a heart impregnated with doubt and suspicion toward fellow creatures is more than half prepared to doubt God; the spirit of sourness and bitterness implied is at war with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. Either the one or the other will conquer. The wrong spirit must be gotten rid of, or it will defile the new creature and make of him a “castaway.” On the contrary, if the new nature conquer, as an “overcomer,” it will be along this line; if evil surmisings are overcome, half the battle against present difficulties and besetments is won. The surmisings are from the heart, and lead us either to good words and acts, or to evil words and acts.

(4) If you have been slandered you may explain, to set yourself right either publicly or privately; but surely avoid doing more than this. If you slander in return you make two wrongs out of one. Let no man render evil for evil to any one; — no, not even if what you should tell be the truth, while what your neighbour told was falsehood. And in contradicting and explaining false charges, remember not to go beyond this to make counter-charges against your defamer; for thus you also would become a slanderer.

This is the Scriptural rule. We are to do unto others as *we would* that they should do unto us, and not *as they do* unto us. The wrongs done toward us will never justify wrong doing on our part. God's true children are to have no sympathy with Satan's delusion "Do evil that good may result." But while no Scripture forbids our explaining away the errors and false statements of slanderers, experience proves that, if we followed Satan and his deluded servants of unrighteousness around, to contradict every adverse criticism and evil report, we should be kept more than busy. And if Satan found us willing to do so, he would no doubt lead us such a chase as would prevent our having any time to tell forth the good tidings of great joy; thus he would gain a victory, and we should lose one.

Rather let us commit our reputation to the Lord, as part of the sacrifice we laid at His feet when we surrendered all in obedience to the "call" to run the great race for the prize of our high calling. If thus we suffer some loss of reputation, by reason of our resolution not to neglect the King's business to fight for our own tinsel, we may be sure that it will count with Him as so much endured for Christ's sake; and so much the more will be our reward in heaven, when the battle is over and the victors are crowned.

Meantime, however, it behoves each of the Lord's people to be as circumspect as possible at every step of the way. Remember that in proportion to faithfulness and zeal in letting the light shine we will have the malignant opposition of our great Adversary, who seeks to turn and twist and maliciously distort and discolor our every word and act ;—because the accuser of the brethren can find no real charges; and because he is exceeding mad against the humble servants of the truth, as he was against the Chief Servant—our Lord. He, let us remember, was crucified as a lawbreaker, at the instance of the prominent ones of the church, and betrayed to them by one of His own disciples.

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds" when attacked by the adversary whoever may be his agents and whatever their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lord's sight, if we endure faithfully, and he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the good of His cause—though that good may sometimes mean "siftings" of chaff and tares from the wheat.

(5) Evil speaking, backbiting and slander are strictly forbidden to God's people, as wholly contrary to His spirit of love—even if the evil thing be true. As a preventive of anything of the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out *one only way of redress of grievances*, in Matt. 18:15-17.

Even advanced Christians seem to be utterly in ignorance of this divine ruling, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandal-mongers. Yet this is one of the few special specific commandments given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, Ye are my disciples *if ye do* whatever I command you, its constant violation proves that many are not far advanced in discipleship.

If any brother or sister begins to you an evil report of others stop him at once, kindly, but firmly. "Have not fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove •hem." Refuse to have any share in this violation of our Master's commands, which does great mischief in the church. Supposing the brother or sister to be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject—Matt. 18:15, and 1 Tim. 5:19. If the conversation is not directed to you but merely in your

hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evilspeaking," "back-biting" and telling you his "evil surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go,—I cannot, must not hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are—violating the Lord's command.

And even if I were to hear your story, I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow His plan of **redress** for grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word cannot be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples. If to any extent you listen to such conversation or express "*sympathy*" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.—Heb.12:15.

A slanderer is a *thief* according to worldly standard; as Shakespeare wrote:

Who steals my purse steals trash;
But who filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

According to the Christian standard, still higher, as voiced by the Great Teacher, slanderers are murderers (See Matt 5:22; 1 John 3:15, Revised Version). Thus seen, the very suggestion to slander is to be shunned, as of the spirit of Satan.—John 8:44.

(6) God's people should beware of pride as they would avoid the most deadly plague.

This rule, always good, and well backed by Scripture, seems doubly needful to those who are blessed with the light of present truth. This may seem strange. It may be reasoned that the receiving of so much grander views of God's character and plan would make His people feel the more insignificant and humble, the more dependent on divine goodness, the more trustful of God and the less trustful of themselves. And this should be the effect, always and ever; but alas, with very many it is not so.

Many get to feel that the knowledge of the plan of the ages proves them especially wise or great or good; they seem to forget that God hides the truth from the wise and great—that no flesh should glory in His sight. They love the truth selfishly, as dealers love their merchandise, for the sake of what they can get out of it. If they cannot hope for wealth in exchange for the truth they can hope for small notoriety—to appear wiser than others, that they may dole it out in fragments and thus perpetuate their notoriety for wisdom, and gratify their pride or vanity. Such people do little to help circulate the present truth.

We therefore caution all who by the grace of God have been translated out of darkness into God's marvellous light, that they walk proportionately the more humbly before the Lord: because, if the light received should become darkness, how great would be the darkness, and how hopeless the condition! It would, as the Apostle declares, be better for such never to have known the way of life. If salt loses its flavor it is good for nothing more than sand.

(7) Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and men. Begin with the heart—the thoughts. Harbour no thoughts that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded upon you, either from without or from within, lift your heart to Him in prayer for the grace promised to help in every time of

need. Keep constantly near you the thought and prayer, “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.”

(8) While treasuring and seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come into sympathy with the *principles which underlie* the divine law: this will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord’s Word. Indeed, as we get to understand and sympathise with the principles of divine law, to that extent we are getting at the spirit of the divine Word.—See Psa. 119:97-105.

(9) Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit or disposition of Christ—contrary to love.

A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil and their various snares, and this fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and the Master’s cause if rightly and wisely directed; — against sin, first in ourselves and secondly in others; if used for the Lord and His people, and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This in the Scriptures is called fighting the good fight: and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for right and truth, lovingly defending our Captain’s honor and His people’s liberties.

But such a good use of combativeness is not pleasing to the prince of this world, and he will seek to pervert what he cannot directly use. Consequently he attempts with some to make combativeness appear a chief virtue; he encourages them to fight everything and everybody; — the brethren more than the powers of darkness; — nominal churchmen more than the errors and ignorance which blind them and make them such. Indeed his desire is to get us to “fight against God.”

Let us be on guard on this point. Let us first of all *judge ourselves* lest we cast a stumbling block before others: let us fight down in our own hearts the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over little and non-essentials. “Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city.” Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the truth be not from motives of self glorification; but from love for the truth, love for the Lord and love for His people, the brethren. If love be the impelling spirit or motive, it will show itself accordingly, in loving, gentle, patient, humble efforts toward the fellow-servants; and let us be “gentle toward all.” Let “the sword of the spirit, the Word of God,” which is quick and powerful, do all the *cutting*.

(10) Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, strife, hatred.

Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do you great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all His creatures,—the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have His spirit and walk in His directed way.

(11) Do not trust your conscience. If it were a sufficient guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws of God given to guide conscience. And still worse off than these are those mentioned in I. Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord’s Word, and walking *circumspectly* according to its light.

(12) Do not be bold, except for the right, the truth. So far as yourself is concerned, preserve a reverential *fear* — of sin, and of displeasing the Master, and of losing the great reward—”the prize of our

high calling.” Nearly all who “fall away” first lose all fear and become self-confident. They forget that it is only “If ye *do these things* ye shall never fall.” (2 Pet.1:5-10.) “Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it.” (Heb.4:1.) Partly because of the loss of this proper *fear*, “It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.” (From “Reprints.”)

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Dalai Lama Asks U.N., “Save Tibet.”

UNDER the above heading a New York news item appeared in the Melbourne “Age” of September 11th, as follows:

The Dalai Lama last night asked immediate intervention by the United Nations against Communist China’s moves in Tibet. But diplomats said one nation would have to raise the issue before the world organisation could discuss it.

Tibet is not a member of the United Nations.

The Dalai Lama, in a letter, put his appeal directly to the U.N. Secretary-General (Mr. Hammarskjöld), asking that the matter be placed on the agenda for the coming General Assembly session by the organisation’s general or steering committee “on its own initiative,” without waiting for any member to raise the issue for debate.

The Dalai Lama’s indictment said the Tibetan people were undergoing sufferings beyond description and that it was imperatively necessary that “this wanton and ruthless murder of my people should be immediately brought to an end.”

He accused the Chinese Communists of sterilising Tibetan men and women “with a view to the total extermination of the Tibetan race.”

He said thousands had been dispossessed and driven from their livelihoods. Men, women and children were put into labor gangs for military construction work without pay or with small pay.

The “god-king” of Tibet said leading Tibetans had been murdered and “thousands of innocent people of Tibet have been brutally massacred.”

Finally, the Dalai Lama charged, the Chinese Communists sought to destroy the Buddhist religion, razing thousands of monasteries and wrecking religious paraphernalia. “Life and property are no longer safe,” he told Mr. Hammarskjöld, “and Lhasa, the capital of the State, is a dead city.”—A.A.P.

The above report reveals something of the terrible experiences inflicted upon the Tibetan people over recent months. Apparently a very peaceful, inoffensive people, and living in their little kingdom for generation after generation, it is most pathetic for these people of Tibet to be subjected to such ruthless treatment by a great power seeking to overrun and absorb this little country into their way of life.

Some people may say, Surely this appeal by the Dalai Lama, the “god-king” of Tibet, will stir the United

Nations into action to save this kingdom from further aggression, and repel the invaders. Others may question, Why does not God prevent such onslaughts upon innocent people? And will not God answer the prayers of this religious leader for deliverance and reinstate him in his rightful place in the minds and hearts of the Tibetan people?

Only through a knowledge of God's Plan of the Ages can these questions be answered satisfactorily. The Scriptures clearly reveal that we are now living in the end of this "present evil world" and that the time has come for the removal of all man-made kingdoms in preparation for the setting up of Christ's kingdom of peace. This necessarily means much hardship and suffering in the process, and man's inhumanity to man will not go unpunished either, even though it is accomplishing the Lord's will. (See Psa.76:10.)

It is very evident, therefore, that the United Nations will be unable to save Tibet, just as the appeal from Hungary against the aggressor was ignored in recent years. The time has arrived for the passing of all the "god-kings," and when the Tibetan people receive the truths of the kingdom, in God's due time, they will never regret having their errors and superstitions removed for all time, and even the Dalai Lama himself will then also realise that being a "god-king" was dishonoring to the true God and our Lord Jesus Christ, as they only are worthy of praise and worship by all the human family.

How revealing is the statement from the prophet Haggai, speaking for the Lord—"Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land (the religious and social order of this world); And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai 2:6,7.) We thank God that when all nations come to a true knowledge of the Lord, they shall then acknowledge that all their desires are fulfilled in His wonderful Kingdom, for "nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Mic.4:1-4.)

We Have An Inheritance.

(Convention Address)

"In whom (Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, having been previously marked according to a design of Him who is operating all things agreeably to the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11. Diaglott.)

THERE are three Greek words of similar meaning translated "inheritance" in the New Testament. The, one used in our text, according to Strong's Concordance, means—"To allot, to assign (as a privilege), sometimes acquired in ancient times by casting lots."

In Heb. 1:4 it is used to denote Jesus' superiority to the angels since His resurrection. "Having made purification from sins, seated himself in right of the majesty on high; thus becoming so much superior to the messengers, inasmuch as he has inherited a more distinguished power than they." (Fenton.)

The second Greek word, used in Eph.1:14,18 and elsewhere, means—"Heirship, patrimony, or possession." It seems to refer to more than merely allotting; rather the nature of the allotment, as in Eph. 1:13,14, where it is a spiritual portion. "Ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest (or pledge) of (obtaining in full) our inheritance." A spiritual inheritance, appointed for the spirit begotten new creatures. Also in 1 Pet.1:4—"Begotten again to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, reserved in heaven for you." A heavenly, spiritual portion has been allotted to a special class.

The third Greek word translated "inheritance" means—"A portion, whether allotted by God or man." In Acts 1:26 it is translated "lot." The Apostles cast lots for one to take the place of Judas; the lot fell upon Matthias. The land of Canaan was divided by lot; on the basis of this a portion of the land became the inheritance of each tribe of Israel.

The three Greek words referred to all seem to suggest a portion as distinct from the mass, or lump, as a potter may take a portion of clay and make a vessel of honor and another of less honor. Whether the portion thus allotted is heavenly or earthly can be determined usually by the context in which the word is used, or by comparing other Scriptural references bearing upon the matter.

From the Creator comes every good and perfect gift. He allots portions of His blessings and bounties to all His intelligent creatures. “The heavens are the Lord’s; but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” From the mass of the human family God has chosen some to occupy a special place in His plan and presence. Also among mankind He has given some priority and favors above others.

In Deut.32:9 we read—”For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.” Also Zech.2:12 states—”The Lord. shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.” Natural Israel is the Lord’s portion from among the nations. He chose them and gave them an earthly inheritance, and it is written in Heb.9:15 that Christ redeemed them who were under the first (law) covenant, that they which are called may receive the (fulfilment) of the promise of eternal inheritance.

In the spiritual world also some beings occupy a special place and honor and power above others. Jesus said in John 14:2—”In my Father’s home (universe) are many mansions (planes of being) . . . I go to prepare a place for you.”

Gabriel was one such who was so honored by Jehovah. This mighty angel announced to Zachariah prior to the birth of John the Baptist, in Luke 1:19—”I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God,” and in Matt.18:11 those angels who minister to the heirs of salvation are spoken of by our Lord “as always beholding the face of my Father.” Apparently all angels are not thus favored. In whose presence seraphims (fiery ones) cover their face—as unworthy to behold the divine majesty; and cover their feet, as a token of reverence — an Eastern custom when approaching the presence of a monarch. (Ise. 62:2.)

When describing the splendour of the Lord the Psalmist says—”Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment.” (Psa. 104:2.) Again in 1 Tim.6:16 we read—”Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” Before whom seraphims cover the face, and proclaim — “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” (Isa.6:3.) We are indeed also filled with reverence and awe when we read (Jude 24) that before such a Being we shall be “presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”

In His pre-human existence the Logos was highly favored, and on becoming the Messiah’ and proving faithful unto death was given the pre-eminence—raised up, and sat down on the right hand of Jehovah. And bear in mind that none dare take these favors without dire consequences unless called by Jehovah to do so.

During this Gospel Age there is a poor despised company of whom the world is not apprised, to whom our Heavenly Father has given a special portion in His “House” — a place prepared. As the Apostle Peter says (2 Pet.1:4, Diag.), to these He has given the greatest promises. They walk in yonder narrow way, beset by many foes. They are of a royal line, all children of a King. He has begotten them through His Word of truth (James 1:18) that “they should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

In Acts 15:14 these are referred to as “a people for his name.” Also in 1 Pet.2:9—”Ye are a chosen generation (race), a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a purchased people.” (Diag. a people for a purpose.) And in Isa. 62:3 we read—”Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” For these, the Lord Jesus, the Head or Captain of this company, is preparing a special place, and the Apostle’s prayer for such is “That the eyes of your understanding being

enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his (God's) calling (invitation), and what the riches (or wealth) of the glory of his inheritance among the saints." (Eph.1:18.)

Neither are we able to fully comprehend the grandeur of this wonderful, eternal, unfading inheritance which belongs to God's own, of whom the Lord Jesus is the Head—the One altogether lovely, and we glory in His kingly power. "The fairest of the fair is He." And He, too, will rejoice over you with singing — "a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." In 1 Cor. 2:9,10, it is stated that no human "eye hath seen, no ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," but "God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit," and you know that this is true. As humans we could not appreciate this, but only as begotten of His spirit. Already our spiritual vision and hearing has seen and heard wonderful things, — "Visions of rapture burst on my sight."

"Oh, what a foretaste of glory Divine!
Heir of Salvation, purchase of God;
Born of His spirit, washed in His blood."

Those who will be accounted worthy to be heirs of God and joint-heirs of Jesus Christ must be changed from glory to glory — a character of holiness, purity, meekness, gentleness, loveliness. These things we see and appreciate in our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, we have a present inheritance already, as a foretaste,—"For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. 4:6,7.) Fellowship is also truly established—the Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus make their abode with us, if we keep His Word and love Him supremely. (John 14:23.)

This new life has begun and this new relationship has been established because we have consecrated ourselves and all our earthly portion unto Him, and God's pledge is that if faithful unto death we shall be born of the spirit. Unto this end the Lord "has given us the greatest promises that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4. Diag.) Already, by faith, we are "raised up and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." (Eph.2:6,7.)

From these heavenlies we focus our telescope—the Word of God—upon the precious things promised; through this we are able to view celestial mountains, and life-giving streams, and contemplate upon the ages to come and the glory of the temple (Psa.48.) "Beautiful for situation . . . on the sides of the north." "How lovely is thy dwelling-place, O Lord of hosts." (Bsa.84:1.) Search we may for many years, and still new beauties shall we see.

The length and breadth and height of our inheritance is much grander and more lofty, sublime and pure and enduring than we once thought. The Designer of our telescope has taught us to adjust and focus it more accurately, and the heavenly beauties and loveliness, also the earthly wonders, have been greatly enlarged, and what a joy this has been. Jesus said,—"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy may be full." (John 15:11.)

Nevertheless, the Christian life has its seasons of "heaviness through manifold temptations." We are still in the night of trial and temptation, even though the night is studded with these precious gems of sparkling light, and promises, and realities. There are and must be, strivings within and without and we sometimes wrestle, not merely with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in high places. Faith, love, humility, self-control, patience, endurance, watchfulness and prayer are still so necessary, or else, like Moses, after being taken upon a high mountain to view the glorious land, so near, we too fail of receiving that full reward. In the words of another—"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are

sanctified.” (Acts 20:32.)

Pilgrimage Ended

SOME weeks ago we learned of the passing of our Sister Davidson, and one of our brethren who had met her quite often has gladly supplied the following which we feel is a fitting remembrance of one, whom to have met, was to love in the Lord.

As one by one of the Lord’s “jewels” are being gathered Home, we are reminded of the words of John the Baptist, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Sister Davidson, whose home was in Sydney, reached the end of the way recently, after a long life of loving devotion to the Lord and His people. Being the eldest of a large family, our Sister was obliged, through sickness in the family and difficult economic conditions, to bear a large share of the burdens of the family even from her early girlhood.

It was early in 1913 that the clear enfoldment of God’s Plan came to Sister Davidson, who joyfully received it, and co-operated in making it known to others. When the Photo Drama came to Sydney in 1915 Sister Davidson rendered much assistance to the cause of truth, and encouraged and entertained the colporteurs and other workers in her home.

In 1921 Sister Davidson’s husband was shipwrecked and died at sea, leaving our Sister with three young daughters to train and guide. Our Sister’s life provides another instance of how God’s grace, operating in a faithful, humble heart, can turn tragedy into triumph. Sister Davidson was one whose life showed very rich development of the graces of Christ-likeness. Full of loving sympathy for human need; never-ending patience, deep humility, practical wisdom, and an a//-conquering faith, combined to bring to our loved one’s life a rare sweetness which God’s grace alone can bestow.

As some rare perfume in a vase of clay Pervades it with a fragrance not its own So, when Thou dwellest in a mortal soul,

All heaven’s own sweetness seems around it thrown.

Our Sister is much missed by the members of her family, and the friends who knew her; but while mourning our loss, we are also-comforted to know that another of God’s “little ones” has reached the end of the way. “She hath done what she could,” and we feel sure God has crowned a life nobly lived, by His grace. “Precious in the sight of the Lord. is the death of His saints.”

When with dear friends sweet talk I hold,
And all the flowers of life unfold;—
Let not my heart within me bum,
Except in all I Thee discern!

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. 'The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows

1. "Just for To-day,"
2. "One Here and There,"
3. "How Readest Thou?,"
4. "The New Leaf,"
5. "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,"
6. "Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
7. "My Bible and I,"
8. "Love's Victory,"
9. "The Touch of the Master's Hand,"
10. "Some Worthy Attainments,"
11. "Come Unto Me,"
12. "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
13. "The Secret of His Presence,"
14. "Watching and Praying,"
15. "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,"
16. "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,"
17. "Hitherto and Henceforth,"
18. "The Lord My Shepherd,"
19. "Into His Marvellous Light,"
20. "Right was The Pathway,"
21. "This is My Will for

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. „ 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. „ 4.45 p.m.

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Pride -- Its Manifestations.

(Based on notes by Brother B. H. Barton)

PRIDE is a poisonous manifestation of selfishness. It is, as someone has well said, selfishness gone to seed. Every Christian should be on the alert to resist the encroachments of pride, because to whatever extent it is permitted to influence our thoughts and actions, it will blight our peace and joy in the Lord, and distort our every outlook in keeping with its own ugly form.

One of the manifestations of pride is that of undue self-esteem. Paul speaks of it as thinking more highly of one's self than is warranted—than one ought to think. Self-esteem manifests itself in many and unsuspecting ways. It may prevent one from accepting the truth from a humble source; and by the truth we mean not only the doctrines relating to the divine plan, but details of truth on any and all subjects. It is so easy for any of us to be wrong, even in the everyday things of life, that we should be willing to be corrected no matter from what source the correction may come.

If a person hesitates to seek advice for fear that it may reveal his own lack of knowledge, it is a sign of pride. In the world, the men and women who are the most successful are those who seek the advice of others, especially in fields with which they are not too well-informed themselves. This is still more applicable in the Christian life. Our understanding of the truth of God's Word is less likely to be complete if we are unwilling to take into consideration the viewpoints of others of like precious faith. This is the reason it is so essential that we meet together for mutual study, and fellowship.

Undue contention in presenting our views may be a manifestation of pride. The truth is such a bulwark of strength against error, that we do not need to be contentious in its use. To be over-concerned about a point may indicate that what we are presenting is partly our own view, rather than God's, and our pride is causing us to be contentious in its presentation. If such be the case, then pride will cause us to be very reluctant to change our opinion; that is, to admit that we are wrong even when the truth is apparent.

The self-esteem manifestation of pride also may cause us to resent reproof, even though the reproof may have been deserved and necessary. On the other hand, a Christian who is properly humble before the Lord and before his brethren will not resent reproof even though it may not be merited. Elders of ecclesias should be specially on guard along this line; for, unless they are, pride may ruin their usefulness as servants of the brethren. If an elder resents having his thoughts called into question by even the humblest member of the ecclesia, it is a sign of undue self-esteem, and he should take the matter in hand before he is slain by the monster.

Elders are the servants of the Lord's people, and it is not fitting for servants to resent questioning by those whom they serve. If there is any doubt in the mind of a brother or sister as to where one of their servants, or would-be servants, stands with respect to doctrine and practice, it behoves that servant to display the greatest of patience and painstaking care to make his position clear. A refusal to do this may represent a lack of true humility before the Lord and before the brethren.

Self-esteem also sometimes manifests itself in the habit of interrupting others when they are talking. This may not always be the cause for rudeness. Sometimes it is just a plain case of nervousness. But if we find ourselves constantly interrupting others in order that we may talk ourselves, it could easily be that we, inwardly think that what we have to say is more important than what that other person is saying. Such would represent undue self-esteem.

A willingness to listen to others is one of the evidences of true humility, and is of prime importance to our growth in grace and knowledge. The lowliest saints of God, from the standpoint of education and ability, may often express thoughts which are golden nuggets of truth, more valuable, perhaps, than a whole discourse by one more talented. If we are not listening when these thoughts are expressed, we lose them; hence we lose the blessings that would accrue from them.

If we are not humble enough to listen to our brethren, we could easily become proud enough not to listen to the

Lord. God speaks to us through His Word. If we go to **His** Word merely to find that which will bolster up an idea which we have developed in our own minds, it means that we are not truly listening to the Lord, but misusing His Word to satisfy the desires of our own self-esteem. Let us be on the alert, dear brethren, to note the slightest manifestation of pride along this line, and in prayer before the Lord, ask Him to help us to be free from it.

Social Pride

Social distinctions among the brethren are, thank God, pretty well broken down, but the spirit of pride which was responsible for fastening the un-Godlike theory of class distinctions upon the unhappy world is still liable to manifest itself among the brethren. We may, for example, find ourselves seeking the fellowship of only the better educated and talented among the brethren, and ignoring those we consider not to be of "our kind." If we find any such tendency to be influencing us, we may be sure that the grace of God has not yet taken as full control of our lives as it should. There is also danger that we may develop what might be called a spiritual class distinction complex. That is, we may wish to fellowship with only those whom we consider to be as well developed spiritually as we consider ourselves to be. Sometimes a fear is expressed that newly interested brethren coming into the ecclesia, may spoil our deep fellowship. This is to our shame, and is unlike the spirit manifested by the Master. If we feel that we are well developed spiritually, let us rejoice in whatever privileges we may **have in** helping others to the same condition. **If we** do not rejoice in thus helping the weak, **it is** a very good sign that our own development is not as rounded out as it should be.

While it is true that Jesus seemed to love some of His apostles more affectionately than others, this doesn't mean that He didn't love them all and was not glad for every opportunity He had of being with them all, and serving them.

In our truth association there will be those to whom we are drawn more than to others, but this doesn't mean that we should ignore any of the brethren, and not rejoice in every privilege we have of being with them and enjoying their fellowship. There should be no cliques among God's people —"all ye are

brethren.”

Approbateness

Too great a desire to be well thought of by the brethren may manifest itself in various ways. One may hesitate to speak, read, or pray in meetings. To the on-lookers this may seem to be a display of humility; yet, actually, it could be on account of fearing criticism if a mistake is made. We might decide that it is better not to give a testimony at all than to give a poor one, which could give the brethren the thought that we are not very good at giving testimonies. Thus pride in a very subtle form, would be ruling our hearts.

We may have an ambition to lead. The apostle says that one who desires the office of a bishop, or elder, desires a good thing. To have a desire to bless others through leading meetings, etc., is not in itself an evidence of pride; but it does expose the brethren to the dangers of pride. We can check on ourselves in this connection by noting our own attitude when others are speaking or leading meetings. Do we feel like staying away from meetings if we are not leading? Or, if present, are we uneasy and not paying attention to what is being said; all the while thinking to ourselves that we could bring out the thoughts much better than is being done? If thus we muse, let us beware — pride is gaining the ascendancy and, if encouraged, will cause our downfall.

Along this same line, pride will hinder us from rendering faithful service unless we can be foremost in affairs. One who is truly humble will be just as happy to serve as a deacon as he is to serve as an elder. Indeed, he will be happy to serve in every way possible even though the ecclesia does not recognise his service or confer any office upon him. For some reason the idea of preaching has taken on altogether too important an aspect in the minds of many of the Lord's people, with the result that, at times, brethren may get the idea that if they can't be foremost in the service along this line they are being neglected and ostracised. If we find ourselves feeling that way about it, let us beware.

From the Lord's standpoint, the brother or sister who serves *faithfully* even in obscure ways and who does not, therefore, receive the praise of the brethren, is just as honorable as those who are out at the forefront, perhaps more so; at least, there is less danger that such service is rendered in part because of the expressions of appreciation by the fellow-workers. It is most proper that we afford every encouragement to those who serve, but how nice it would be to accord those who serve unheralded and unsung a little more attention along this line. They deserve it; and if they continue to be faithful in that which is least, surely rich blessings will be theirs in the *Kingdom*, whether or not we recognise and appreciate their services.

Another possible manifestation of pride is the disposition to talk too much about one's humility, as though the friends wouldn't know we were humble unless we told them. Humility doesn't need to be advertised. Like the fragrance of a beautiful rose, its presence is manifested without the necessity of special attention being called to it. The rose does not need to say, How sweet is my perfume; nor does a truly humble Christian need to call attention to his humility.

If we discover, then, that we are fearful the brethren will not recognise our humility, and feel that we have to call their attention to it, it is a sign that we have more approbateness than we thought. Of course, no brother or sister would actually say to others, See how humble I am! No, the flesh finds more clever ways of advertising its feigned humility than that. A brother might get upon the platform to speak and open his discourse by *saying* that he didn't understand why he was there, for there were others who could serve so much better. The chances are that if the brother really felt that way about it, he would have seen to it that he wasn't there. This might not necessarily be the case, but it could be, so deceitful is the human heart, and so desperately wicked. True humility will cause one to serve as well as possible in whatever position

in the Lord's providences he may find himself, without making apologies, excuses, and explanations.

Another habit which may represent the spirit of approbateness is that of constantly referring to what "I said," or "I did." "Brother so and so asked me such and such, and my answer was thus and so," is an attitude *we* will do well to avoid. Deep down in our hearts the referring to matters of this kind may be a desire to let the friends know that we are very brilliant, and in such high standing with the Lord that our advice in spiritual matters is constantly sought. We say it "might" display something of this kind. In any case, it is well to be on guard.

Another good test of humility is to note our attitude when others get credit which may properly belong to us. An interesting thought concerning some passage of Scripture may be under discussion. The thought may be based upon a suggestion that came from us. Do we "itch" to let the brethren know this; or are we happy in the knowledge that they are being blessed as a result of our efforts? Right along this line it is well to scrutinize the motives of our every word and deed. In our association with the brethren opportunities are constantly arising for rendering a little assistance here and there, by kind words and deeds. If, **when** we do these things, we look to see whether or not they were noticed by the brethren, it means that a little bit of pride is still left in our hearts. "Playing to the gallery," as the thought is expressed in modern language, will never get us into the Kingdom.

Along the line of seeking approval from the friends for what we do, is the other test of our own attitude **is** when someone else is complimented and we are ignored. Do we resent this instead of rejoicing in it? This is a heartsearching test, yet by it we are able to measure our growth in humility and to determine whether or not we have reached the point where we are able to actually esteem others as being better than ourselves, and are therefore glad to see them put forward.—Phil. **2:3**.

Although the habit of "foolish jesting" is generally looked upon by brethren as a waste of time, yet it *could* manifest a spirit of approbateness in that one may seek to draw attention to himself and his brilliance through his ability to make the brethren laugh. **In** such an event the motive behind the jesting would be a whole more detrimental to the brother than the jesting itself. A humorous play on words, if wholesome and harmless, may help to relieve nerve tension, but if prompted by approbateness, it will do serious injury to any Christian indulging in it.

Just as one may hold back from giving a testimony for fear of making a mistake and thus having his pride injured; so a Christian may seek to give a very eloquent testimony in order to display his ability. Here again approbateness would be displayed. To make sure that love, zeal, thankfulness, sincerity, etc., are the motives that prompt us in speaking, it is well to ask ourselves such questions as, Is it my desire to speak only for the Lord? Am I truly seeking to be clothed in humility? Am I depending wholly on the Lord's strength to help me speak? Do I really sense my own weakness?

Pride may also be manifested in our characters by a reluctance to distribute truth literature for fear our friends and neighbors might see us, and on account of it not think so well of us. Then again, does pride in any way hinder us from firmly, freely, and gladly acknowledging our belief in Present Truth no matter who may ask us. Or, are we just a little bit ashamed of being a "Millennial Dawnist"? Are we reluctant about being seen associating with the truth people; or do we rather own them as our friends wherever and whenever we may be seen with them? In these ways also we may check to determine the degree to which pride rules our hearts.

Accomplishments

Success in life, whether connected directly or indirectly with the Lord's service, proves a test to our humility. If we have, by God's grace, learned to do something real well, how anxious are we to display our ability? Do we become fretful and assume a persecuted attitude, when we imagine someone is holding us back? If so, it is well to realise that it is probably the Lord that is holding us back until we have learned well the lesson of humility. In all such matters it is important to remember that there are really no secondary causes so far as our relationship with the Lord is concerned. If our ambitions or plans are frustrated, let us not blame this brother or that sister, but realise that all the brethren on earth, whether true or false, could not keep from us that which the Lord wishes us to enjoy.

When we maintain this proper viewpoint of our relationship to the Lord, and of His watch-care over our highest spiritual interest, we will be greatly helped along the road to true humility. If our ambitions are checked we will search our hearts, and enquire of the Lord for the reason why; instead of blaming the brethren and becoming embittered toward them. Perhaps the brethren may be wrong in their dealings with us; if so, that's something for the Lord to deal with. Of this we can be sure, that our own position in the matter could only be possible through the Lord's permission. And our faith in His watch-care should enable us to believe that He will permit nothing to happen in our lives but what will be for our highest spiritual welfare. In this let us rejoice.

The same viewpoint holds true even though our brethren in Christ may not be involved. In the business world, at our work in the factory or the office, we may seem to be held back from doing things which *we* aspire to do, and which we believe we have the ability to do. If this be the case, let's not blame our competitor, our foreman, our office manager, or our fellow-worker. Let us rather, as in our association with the brethren, seek to ascertain what lesson the Lord may have for us in our experiences. If they accomplish nothing more than to keep us humble before the Lord, they are very valuable indeed. But if we become embittered toward those whom we imagine to be responsible, we have failed in the test.

Some of us may have imaginary accomplishments, and these cause more trouble than real accomplishments. Real accomplishments often represent years of patient toil and trials and tests in the school of Christ, hence the cost a attainment is a counterbalance to keep the Christian humble who has attained. On the other hand, mushroom-like development of ability, even if it is real ability, is frequently not accompanied by development along other lines, hence one in such a position needs to be especially on guard. But if one's attainments are only imaginary, then the danger is truly great. Such an one may prove to be a great trial to many of the Lord's people. Seemingly there is always someone to sponsor the cause of a brother who imagines he is being persecuted by the brethren, and thus his pride is further encouraged, and his overcoming made the harder.

We have all heard the fable of the bird which tried to make an impression by wearing borrowed feathers. We may be tempted to do this along spiritual lines. We may reason that we wish to serve the truth in the best way possible, hence use the material of others, letting on to the brethren that it is our own. The friends may say, as they have said of various ones in the past, "What a talented brother !" The friends, no doubt, received a blessing, but the brother's blessing would have been greater had he presented his own, though inferior outline; or else, told the brethren the source of the thoughts he was presenting. The point in this is, that the desire to **get** ahead among the brethren, which is a form of pride, may lead, also, to mild forms of deception.

We can check the attitude of our hearts along this line by carefully scrutinizing the motive of everything we say and do. For example, it is always commendable to quote the Bible in proof of what we believe, whether it be from the platform, or in private conversation, but there is a possibility of quoting long passages of Scripture merely for the purpose of parading our knowledge before the friends. Let us watch ourselves along this line, and make sure that all we say and do is with the motive of glorifying the Lord, and not to display self.

Spiritual Achievements

It is well to examine ourselves to discover what progress we have made in overcoming pride. Along this line, here are a few thoughts for prayerful consideration:

Are we truly glad to express approval of any grace of the spirit we see manifested in others; feeling at the same time that we have not reached such a high attainment ourselves?

Are we always looking for superior qualities in others, and happy to acknowledge them when suitable opportunity offers?—Phil. 2:3.

Have we learned to measure ourselves, not by ourselves, but by the perfect standard, Christ Jesus?—2 Cor. 10:12.

Are we humble enough not to fear that the brethren will think we are not humble?

Are we truly glad to take a back seat while others take a leading part in the service?

Are we patient and gentle in defending the truth?

Do we rejoice when various doctrines of the truth are repeated for the benefit of learners, even though we know them ourselves?

Are we able to enter whole-heartedly into the comments and prayers of others, even of the least talented, and not to rankle with the feeling that we could do it so much better ourselves?

Have we developed beyond the point where we are resting on the laurels of past service, but instead, are rejoicing in the golden opportunities of the present?

In this whole lesson of pride, Jesus is our pattern. He had all knowledge, all ability—earthly and heavenly — yet He said that His teachings were not His but His Father's. He said that He could do nothing of Himself, but only as the Father helped Him. His words, Jesus claimed, were not His own, but the Father's. In view of this wonderful example of humility, how should we walk who once were sinners, enemies of God, and without any spiritual knowledge, wisdom or ability?

May we indeed remember that before honor, goes humility (Prov. 15:33, 18:12); before destruction is pride (Prov. 16:18,19); and that pride is so displeasing to God that it is classed with murder, bearing false witness, and with lying. (Prov. 6:16,17.) Let us then endeavor to be clothed with humility, and being adorned with this and other graces of the spirit, be truly “meet for the Master's use.” (Reprinted from “The Dawn,” 1942.)

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A Saviour, Christ, The Lord

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord.” (Luke 2:11).

IN recording the birth of Jesus, the Scriptures are most careful to point out to us that He was not begotten after the usual manner—that He had no earthly father, but was begotten by •the holy spirit. The necessity for this is manifest. The father is the life-giver, the mother is the nourishes, of the offspring. If Jesus had received His life from a human father it would have been tainted, impaired, under condemnation of death, as is that of all others. This would have frustrated any work on His part as the world’s Redeemer, because no imperfect man could have redeemed a perfect one, as the Psalmist declares.—Psa. 49:7.

In order for Jesus to be able to give His life a redemption price for father Adam’s life (and for the life of his race, forfeited by disobedience), it was necessary that He be perfect, sinless; as we read, “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” And again, “A body hast Thou prepared Me,” for the suffering of death.

It is not enough, then, that we recognise Jesus as good, well-intentioned in mind. We must see in Him human perfection sufficient as a sacrifice to offset the forfeited life of the first perfect man, Adam. And we must see also that He was begotten from above—that the holy spark of life in Him as the babe was a transferred life-principle from a pre-existent condition, mentioned by our Lord when He prayed, “Glorify Thou Me with the glory that I had with Thee before the world was.” St. Paul explains to us that “He was rich and for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich.”

Few babes in all Judea or in all the world were born in a more humble place than Jesus. Joseph and Mary had gone to their native city, Bethlehem, for tax registration, under the imperial edict. The little city was crowded with others on similar errand. And so it came that Jesus was born in an out-house of the inn, where Joseph and Mary had been compelled to lodge for the night. Ah! we cannot wonder that it is difficult for many to understand why our Heavenly Father sent forth His Son for our redemption under such ignominious conditions! Only those who have the spirit of the Divine Plan, through the begetting of the holy spirit, can see the wherefore.

The Message of the angels was surely an inspired one, fully in harmony with God’s promise to Abraham — only an enlarged statement of the same—the same “all people” to be blessed — and it still meant great joy; but now, two thousand years later, the Message pointed out the very Individual through whom the good tidings would have fulfilment —the Babe of Bethlehem.

The angelic announcement, “Fear not,” is interesting. All humanity realise that they are sinners and naturally have forebodings. They find it difficult to believe that God is really gracious and loving. The gods of the heathen nations are ferocious. unloving and unlovable. But the God of all Grace, the Father of Mercies, Is a God of Love, who delights to use His Divine power for the blessing and uplifting of His erring children. Therefore He was peculiar in sending the Message of good “tidings of great joy unto all people,” as well as sending His Only Begotten Son at great cost to be man’s Redeemer—that He might be just and still be the Justifier of those who believe—Rom. 3:26.

The message declared that a Saviour had been born—the Anointed, the Lord. He was to be the antitypical Moses, the antitypical Aaron, the antitypical Melchisedec, the anti-typical David. In addition to the qualities pictured in these various typical characters, He was, also, the Son of the Highest. He was to be the Saviour—the Deliverer—the Mediator of the New Covenant, so long looked for, hoped for, prayed for.

There is a special force or meaning in the word Saviour — it signifies life-giver. The Syriac version is the one in which the Saviour is translated life-giver; and Syriac was, likely, the language spoken by Jesus and others of Palestine at that time. And is there not a special fitness or appropriateness in this name life-giver? What had man lost and what would he wish to have back? The Scriptures answer that Adam lost life and came under the penalty, “Dying, thou shalt die.” He did not lose heavenly life, for he never possessed it. He lost earthly life, an Eden home, human perfection. And Jesus declared that He “came to seek and recover that which was lost.”—Matt. 18:11.

Hence, as we have seen, He was provided with a perfect, human life, that “He by the grace of God might taste death for every man,” and that by thus suffering, the Just for the unjust, the penalty of the sinner, He might become the purchaser or the Redeemer of Adam and all his race, with a full right to restore to perfect life and to all that was lost as many as would receive it at His hand—thankfully. Throughout His entire Messianic reign of a thousand years He will be the world’s Life-Giver, raising the willing and obedient up out of sin and death conditions to perfection and everlasting life and earthly, human blessings.

But our Lord also does a work for the Church, the “elect,” His bride and joint-heir in the kingdom, and this blessing to the Church begins before the setting up of His kingdom. The Church, “were by nature children of wrath even as others,” but they are not to be restored to what was lost. The offer to them is that they shall become copies of the Redeemer and lay down their lives, walking in His footsteps, and that He will make up for all their deficiencies and that thus the father of Mercies will bring them like their Lord to the divine nature, will assist them in making their “calling and election sure” to the heavenly state which God has promised them, for “if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him; if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him.”-2 Tim. 2:11,12.

In verse 14 we have a kind of Hallelujah chorus or angelic response to the Message of the angel already given.

A heavenly host sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” How grand! How inspiring! But we see not yet this glorious condition achieved. The proper glory to God is not yet rendered on earth as it is in heaven. Nor does peace yet wave her banner, even over so-called Christendom.

What is the matter? Ah, said the Apostle, that is a secret, a mystery, hidden from past Ages and Dispensations!

The mystery is that God not only intends to have Jesus for His Anointed One, to rule and bless the world, but He has foreordained also a company of footstep followers to be with Him and share His work, and this entire Gospel Age has been devoted to the work of selecting this class, variously called the Body of Christ and the “espoused virgin,” which eventually, at the Second Coming of the Lord, is to become “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife” and joint-heir.

It is for this that the Apostle declares that the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now — waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God—the revelation of Jesus and His Bride in the glory of the Kingdom for the blessing of natural Israel and all the families of the earth with knowledge and assistance, that the willing and obedient may be recovered to the image and likeness of God and to everlasting life on the restored earth.

Pilgrimage Ended

A RECENT issue of the Murray Bridge, S.A., newspaper reported the passing of our dear Brother Faehrmann as follows:

“A well loved Murray Bridge identity whose life was characterized by painstaking tradesmanship and Christian ideals died recently in the person of Mr. August Charles Faehrmann. He was 76 years of age, and had spent 57 years as a Murray Bridge resident. He and his brother were associated with their father in his business as a wheelwright, and the name of Faehrmann was closely identified with the early trading of the town.

“The subject of this review worked on many homes and other buildings in Murray Bridge, and his brisk efficiency kept his services much in demand. He was an earnest student of the Bible, and its teachings governed practically all his actions.”

It was in 1918 that the light of God’s Plan came to Brother Faehrmann, and he gladly received the message and responded to the heavenly call in fulness of consecration to God. For many years our Brother visited the Adelaide Class periodically, and his helpful addresses were an encouragement to us all. Our Brother took pleasure in sacrificing the **good** things of this life to serve the interest of the higher things.

Brother Faehrmann will be missed by those who knew him; nevertheless, we rejoice in his faithfulness to the Lord, the truth, and the brethren, and in the thought that he has now entered into the wonderful reward of the faithful overcomers. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” (Rev. 14:13.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

An Accuser Silenced.

Two fellow-travellers were seated together in a railway carriage engaged in earnest conversation. It was of a religious nature, and one of them, a skeptic, was evidently seeking to excuse his skepticism, by expatiating on the various evils which afflict Christendom. He was detailing, with manifest pleasure, the hypocrisy and the craft and the covetousness and the divisions found in the professing Church, and then he pointed to some of the leaders as the most markedly corrupt of the whole.

In front of them sat a Christian who was compelled to hear all this. Had he felt the accusations to be false, he might have suffered them, as a part of the hatred the world bears towards Christ, and been truly happy in so suffering; but he knew them to be true—too true to be concealed from the most charitable mind, so all he could do was to bow his head and bear the deserved reproach.

Soon, however, the accuser, anxious to extend the circle of his audience, addressed this fellow-passenger in front of him.

“I see you are quick to detect evil,” answered the Christian, “and you read character pretty well. You have been uncovering here the abominable things which have turned Christendom into a wreck, and are fast ripening it for the judgment of God. You have spared none but given all a, good measure. Now I am a Christian, and I love the Lord Jesus and His people. Not a word shall I offer in defence, but I here solemnly challenge you to speak the first word against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.”

The skeptic was surprised He seemed almost frightened, and sheepishly replied, “Well, no; I couldn’t find fault with Him. He was perfect.”

“Just so,” said the Christian, “and therefore was my heart attracted to Him; and the more I look at Him, the more I found I wasn’t like Him at all, but only a poor, sinful, guilty man. But tell me yourself if I haven’t a right to be happy and to love Him when I found out that He had died for me; that on the cross He had fully paid all my debt, and thus cleared me of all guilt? Ever since then I truly love Him, and all the evil which professed followers of His may do, cannot turn me away from Him. My salvation hangs on what He has done, and not on what they are doing.”— Horatius Bonar.

Question Box'

Question.—Col. 1:24 — Fill up that which is behind.” What is the meaning of “that which is behind”? Were not all Christ’s sufferings perfect and finished at the Cross?

Answer.—The actual personal sufferings of Christ Jesus, of course, ended on Calvary’s Hill; but the sufferings of the Church, the members of Christ, are not yet completed. It has pleased God to invite a “little flock” to first “suffer” with Christ and then “reign” with Him. (Compare Isaiah 53:7 and Rom. 8:36.) The reward of such exaltation to the Divine nature and to reign in kingdom power was contingent upon first proving loyal and perfect in obedience under great suffering and humiliation. As it was with our Lord, so it is with each member in Christ. “The servant is not above his lord.” First the cup of suffering and then there will be the cup of joy in the Kingdom. “Are ye able to drink of My cup and to be baptized with My baptism,” said Jesus to the two disciples who would sit on His right and on His left in the Kingdom. Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is His body. The body members must, like the great Head, learn perfect obedience under similar experiences, and prove loyal and true before they receive the great reward of joint heirship. He was “tempted in all points like as we are.”

The Church is a very special class which the Father has given to the Son. The prayer of Jesus (John 17:11) was, “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.”

So great is the oneness between Christ the Head and the members of the Church which is His body, and the Apostle

says, “All things are yours for ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.” The little hymn has put it beautifully

“I am His and He is mine
For ever and for ever.”

Whatever happens to the members of His body is as to the Lord Himself (Act 26:14), and not until every member of the Body has completed the Christian narrow way, finished the way of the Cross and drank to the dregs the cup of humiliation and pain, will the sufferings of Christ be ended and the Body be complete in glory. So then, it was the sufferings of the Church, the body of Christ, which were left over, and of which Paul could say, “I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of

Christ, in my flesh, for His Body’s sake, which is the Church.”

“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death.” (Rom. 6:3.) **CLARIFICATION.**

In the October issue of “Peoples Paper,” page 3, first column, second paragraph, a mistake appeared with reference to John 7:7. It was stated that Jesus was here speaking to His disciples, whereas they were His brethren, or kinsmen, as is clearly shown by **verse 6**— “For neither did his brethren (kinsmen) **believe** in him.”

Booklet for January’s “Peoples Paper.”

The booklet “How Are the Dead Raised Up ?—With What Body Do They Come?” is taking the place of January, 1960, “Peoples Paper,” and copies are being posted out with this issue.

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