

Volume LXII No. 6

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER—JANUARY 1980

Price—20 Cents

Love is the Road to Eternal Life

(Contributed Address)

IT is interesting how the friends are always sending love to the brethren. One might ask the question, Why do we follow that little ritual? Is it ritual, or is it politeness? What do we mean when we say we are sending our Christian love to the friends? To answer this question we get into the theme of love. There is no question about the predominance of this theme throughout the Scriptures. Open the Bible at random and you come face to face with the theme of love. It dominates the Scriptures from cover to cover. You always see some aspect of this theme; it is indispensable. If you study, if you meditate, if you pray more and more about this theme of love, the processes of love, you begin to see something even more. You begin to discover that the issue of love involves the issue of life itself.

This thought is borne out in 1 John 3:14, and this is our text. Too often we read it casually. We want to look at it carefully at this time. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And he goes on—"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." It seems to me that John is beginning to say something important here. Many brethren speak of love as being one of the fruits of the spirit—Gal. 5. There is nothing wrong with that. But as we begin to tie in Paul's admonition for the graces of the spirit with John's description of love, we begin to uncover the fact that love is an issue of life itself, and not just something interesting to pursue—if we could do it, it would be nice. John is saying, You must do it! The idea is love—or perish as new creatures, spiritual creatures.

Many questions are raised when we look into these Scriptures. Is love an instinctive force present in each individual, carrying out life's processes from birth to death? Does it involve all forms of life, both spiritual and temporal? How do you define it—as being Godlike? How do you know you are Godlike? What is the

criterion? Is love the ultimate criterion? I believe the Apostle John when he says—"he who does not love remains in death"—is stressing that the love process for the brethren is a vitalising force which not only lifts us to God, but lifts us out of the death condition pronounced upon all the rest of mankind. There is no question about Jesus Christ being the Way to life. We know He is the Way; but what is the process? Our Lord is saying, You must live your lives like I am living mine. He lived His life with this love process.

The apostle in 1 John 4:8 tells us the same thing when he says—"God is love." He is speaking of many things, but the most important thing he is saying is that God loves in such a way that His love is a living force which when we have union with Him vitalises us, assists us spiritually, and we live within the fabric of spiritual love. The more we love God, the more we obtain this living force, and the more we obtain of this force the more we live. The closer we are to God the more of this vital force we obtain. This is another way to look at eternal life.

As we gain a greater, deeper, more intense union with God, the more our life's processes are defended and sustained, and therefore eternal life may be defined as complete union with God. What does that mean? It means living like God.

When we ask, How may I have eternal life, the Lord responds—"Follow me." As we shake out the details we find He is saying—"Love like I love." The more we love like God the more we are like Him. The more we obtain of this vitalising force and enter the arena of life's processes, the closer we are to eternal life. There are three characteristics of God's divine

"Peoples Paper" Subscriptions

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper"—now \$1.00—are now due for 1980. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.20 per annum (\$1.50 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the "Peoples Paper" to receive it regularly.

love. There may be others, but there are three. God initiates His love. Human love says, I will do something for you because you did something for me. You see human love at Christmas time—a gift is given, and one is given in return. That is human love. But as God loves, He does things initially, not because someone did it to H.m.

The second characteristic of God's love is, God loves without reward, without exception. Human love says, I will do something because I expect something in return. God's love is exercised without any expectation of anything in return. The third characteristic of God's love is, God loves those who hate Him, or His enemies. It often means that those who work against Him, He loves. These three characteristics define God's love. If we are to be God-like those three things must be present in us also; we must love others first. Second, we must love others without expecting anything back. The third thing is, we must love even our enemies, those who hate us.

Love is such a dominant theme in the Scriptures. We see this in Rom. 13:10—"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." The more we study and examine the processes and the functions of love, the more we become convinced that the law of living is the law of love. Love is more than a grace, more than an endowment, more than an attribute that adorns the being. It is part of life's processes, the issue of life. This law operates in the universe, on the earth, in the animal kingdom, even with the plants. That may surprise some of you. There was some recent research on this matter in the United States. It indicated that plants were affected by human sensitivity. We know about the animals. A dog knows when you are loving him, or when you are hating him. But we did not know that about plants. This research was conducted on the West Coast by a housewife reputed to have a green thumb. They wanted to find out why her plants were thriving and healthy. She would talk to her plants, and she would dialogue with her plants, feeding her plants, giving them all the attention they needed. Her plants responded to that love. They decided to turn things around the other way. They asked her to do just the opposite. She began to scold her plants, abuse her plants, chide her plants, and they noticed a peculiar difference. They became sickly, weak, unhealthy plants.

This love process which is in God, and He says He wants to develop it with His people—does it affect everything around us? Perhaps it is that the law of love is a fundamental law of living. This law gives us a propensity to unite, join, meet together. For those of you who just love to be together, this love process is working within you.

The law of love is throughout the whole

universe, and we all aggregate: an ecclesia, a group, a family. We aggregate, we act together. It seems to be the design of the Creator. Those of you who are familiar with molecules will remember that you never find a single molecule running around. They always come together. They want to be together in groups. The same thing happens with human beings. They want to be together. This inherent force, we think, is the law of living. It affects the fragments all over the world. The law of love, which is life's fundamental law and operates in the order of things, makes isolation impossible and relationships everything. When we isolate ourselves we flout the law. When we detach ourselves, we break the law. "Love thy neighbour" suggests a relatedness to each other. Our need for the brethren is not a matter of religious idealism or organisation. "Thou shalt have relations with thy neighbour" is a law of living, and crucial problems develop when it is broken. The law of gravity is for holding things together in harmony, such as the solar system, the stars. The law of love holds everything together amongst the living. The law of gravity is a physical law. The law of love is the living law; it is for men, women, children, animals, plants, and we think for spiritual creatures too. Gravity is a force of attraction and repulsion. The law of love is a force of approval and rejection. As the physical world is attracted and repelled, the living world is approved or rejected. If you hate your neighbour, you are rejected or repulsed by him like a force. If you love your neighbour, you are attracted to him like a force. The universe can only be understood in terms of relativity; elements and bodies and parts of the universe are nothing in themselves, but meaningful when they come together. The relatedness and relativity give gravity its meaning. So also with the law of love. If right now everything doubled in size, you wouldn't know the difference. Suppose everything shrank—the whole earth. We would not know the difference! Everything would shrink by the same proportions. Whether we treble, quadruple or reduce, it doesn't mean anything. What means something is that one does something the other does not do. Suppose some of you were twelve feet tall, and I remained the same height. Would there be a difference? Of course there would. What I am saying is that the way we relate to each other is the important thing. The design of life is how we relate to one another and act together.

Take the carbon atom, a very, very small, infinitesimal particle we find here on earth—you cannot see it. It is so small one might say it is worthless. But if I take the carbon atom and add another to it, and another, put them in a certain form, I come up with coal. Coal consists of many carbon atoms aggregated in a certain way. The single carbon atom is worthless, but put together in a certain form it

becomes valuable. Break them up and put them together in a different way, and I come up with a diamond. They are made from individual carbon atoms. How could it be that one single worthless individual carbon atom could be made into a worthwhile article? It is how we come together and relate to each other.

When the Lord is allowed to operate continually in our lives, we are brought to a very important point mentioned in 1 John 4:16—"God is love." Then, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." First a definition, then a process. Those who dwell in love, allowing the love processes to permeate their lives, dwell in God. Once we become godlike, His vitalising force lifts us up out of death. Unless we have this we remain in death. So the theme that love is something good to have within us, interesting to have, a grace to work towards, is not true. It is love, or perish!

Some have advanced many theories as to the problems brethren have—personalities, organisation, doctrines, polarisation, leadership—they are at most all theories. I would like to make an observation, and that is that if you look at many of the ecclesias you will find there is no propensity to unite, to want to come together; the love processes are not operating. The processes of love are not operating among the brethren, and therefore I see the fundamental difficulty is a lack of love. We get caught up in the powerful drift into fragmentation—groups spinning off here and there. The spirit of the Lord is not fragmentary! The processes of love are not divisional! It is natural to want to come together, to unite.

There is a tremendous growth in the new fields of psychiatry, psychology and so on, and we find these fields bursting at the seams. They did not even exist a century ago. Some of you might say, We have more people and therefore more complicated relationships, and these fields are flourishing because of that. We have about four billion people in the world now. Go to Bombay if you want to see people. It is incredible. There are so many people they cannot walk on the sidewalks. If you think four billion people in the world today are a lot, wait until you see the population that will be resurrected. We believe in the resurrection, and that all will come back from the grave, as we have it in 1 Cor. 15:22. Consider for a moment the prodigious problems of disunity that will exist among these people! They will come back from the grave with the same notions they had in their minds when they died; so they will have attitudes of fragmentation, disunity. There will be twenty billion people speaking 1250 languages and 1500 dialects; twenty billion people mostly illiterates. They had no education. They are not coming back fully educated. They will be totally uneducated, they must learn how to communicate.

They will babble deeply rooted ideas and beliefs from all the "isms" of this world. If you want to have an idea of how many there are, go to India. Almost all religions are there in India. These people will be coming back with all these different ideas. It will be a big work to unite this fragmented society, this large group of resurrected people.

This gives us another view of why God wants this Godlike capability developed in us. Why do you think God wants you to develop this process of love more than any other group? I would suggest to you that it is because knowing how to love must be taught to others. At least twenty billion people will be taught how to love. The key question to the brethren is, Can you teach them how to love?

With that question comes another one—Do you know how to love yourself? If you do not know how to love, how can you teach others how to love? How could God use you in the Kingdom, if you cannot teach others?

The fact that He wants you to develop this ability to love for yourself is only the first thing for us. The second thing for us is that you will teach it to others. Our Lord Jesus at His first advent showed how God loved. His manifestation was showing how God loves. Our Lord Jesus, when He proceeded to pull together all of His disciples, was showing how He loved. Then He said, Now you do what I do. If so, I can use you in the Kingdom. I have a role for you, a special place. If you cannot do this, I cannot use you. The Lord's rejection of you is not of you personally, for the Lord loves you. The Lord's rejection of you will be because He cannot use you in the programme He has in mind, because you cannot help these people who need help.

We must love; we must know how to love; and eventually we must know how to teach others to love. The work of unifying this fragmentary human race is great. Even now there are people who study behavioural relationships, and they are coming to one conclusion, one solution, to the mental condition of the world. This is what they say. These are the psychologists, those who deal in human relationships. Love is the cornerstone of life, longevity and vitality. Love puts us on the road to good health. If we have the spirit of love within us, it steers us towards spiritual growth. We need fellowship, we need brotherly harmony, we need to unite; and if we do not take care of these needs great conflicts will arise. If we do not take care of these needs we will find we will go off at a tangent, and eventually drift into the world, into the principle which operates with the world, which is not the principle of love but of hate. You are either loving or hating; there is nothing in between. He who hates his brother is a murderer. That does not mean that at the moment he is taking a knife and

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Distress of Nations

EVENTS in the world today impress more and more the sad inability of mankind to order their affairs in anything like the way expected of intelligent humans enjoying the favors and privileges of this day of enlightenment in this 20th century.

It is surely appalling to find in countries where starvation is so widespread, the majority of people not having enough to eat, that the leaders in these nations, knowing of all the circumstances, should engage in war and multiply the miseries of millions of their people.

What a sad picture today's events must present to the Lord above, as He beholds His human creation seeking to destroy one another for the paltry gain of a little territory on the earth. The Psalmist describes the Lord's knowledge of world events and also the outcome, in due time, in Psalms 102:19, 20—"The Lord hath 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."

The Apostle Paul also well described world conditions during this "present evil world" when he stated—"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now", adding—"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth (unknowingly at present) for the manifestation of the sons of God"—the revealing of Christ and His Church for the deliverance of mankind from sin and death—Rom. 8:22, 19.

How we thank God that He has a Plan whereby the groaning prisoners of humanity are to be loosed from the appointment to death. The majority of mankind have been and are now going down the "broadway to destruction"—condemned to death on account of Adam's disobedience. Nevertheless, God's plan provides for a resurrection of the dead through the sacrifice of Christ—1 Cor. 15:21, 22. How futile it would be, however, to resurrect or loose those that are appointed to death back to world conditions as existing today. What a **clean-up** this world needs, and this is what God determines shall be accomplished in the end of this age now at hand, in preparation for the setting up of Christ's Kingdom.

In the language of the Psalmist we read—"Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations **he hath made in the earth**"—through the great time of trouble, humanity being thoroughly subdued by their own awful conduct, permitted of the Lord for their lasting good. Thus we read—"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"—Psalms 46:8-10. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"—Psalms 30:5.

The Saviour, the Babe of Bethlehem

(Matthew 2:1-15)

THIS subject is certainly most important. We feel that a correct understanding of our Lord's life on earth is of the utmost value to all God's people who are seeking to walk in the steps of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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.

There can be no doubt that God could have sent His Son as a fully developed man, direct from heaven, had His wisdom seen that to have been the best way; but inasmuch as Jesus came into the world, born of an earthly mother, this must be accepted as the very best way to accomplish God's plan of redemption, and also 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. This lingering supposition could then 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, it was difficult enough for the most sincere in Jesus' day to understand, after witnessing an outstanding miracle by our Lord, that He really was 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?"

However, our Lord always sought to impress upon His disciples the fact that the works He

did, and the miracles He performed, were accomplished by the power from above—not by his own power. In John 14:10, we read—"The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Also respecting 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 minds and hearts, 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 probably to assist the disciples of Christ in particular that God sent Jesus as the babe, so that He may grow up like other children, only of course He was a perfect child, as God was His Father, and was not affected by the imperfections of the dying human race. God knew, no doubt, that some in Israel would stumble at the lowly manner in which the Saviour came into the world, and would ridicule any suggestion that He was the Messiah. Possibly many thought of Him as stated in Matt. 13:55—"Is not this the carpenter's son?" They would reason that He was just one of mankind; 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 many 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 by the power of God marked Him out as the Father's special messenger, even the Messiah.

However, many sincere people today conclude that Jesus 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 anything to do with teachings which tamper with the Deity of Christ." This is to some extent understandable, but how necessary it is to really study God's Word in respect of any teaching, so that we may know the truth, and not close our minds to what the Scriptures do reveal on this, and all other matters.

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 Christ Jesus. 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 perfect man's life for a perfect man's life—that He may pay the death penalty against Adam, and the race condemned to death in Adam. As shown in Heb. 2:9, our Lord Jesus was made "a little lower than the angels", the same nature as that possessed by man in his perfection, as stated in verses 6 and 7 of this 2nd chapter of Hebrews.

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, as was the nature of Jesus when He came to redeem humanity. How clearly did our Lord declare—"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 spiritual kingdom); because I live, ye shall live also"—John 14:19. The Apostle Paul also revealed that in His great exaltation our Lord was raised in the "express image of the Father's person"—the divine nature. Peter also adds his testimony that Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened (resurrected) by the spirit"—Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:18.

It may be considered that it is not important to understand these things, but it is really most helpful and necessary that we become clear and definite on the doctrine of the ransom—the corresponding price which our Saviour gave for the world—and also the manner of His return, so that as members of His Body, we may be in full harmony with the Plan of God 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 much 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, a corresponding price, for the world of mankind. He certainly bore witness unto this truth; and every one that is of this truth (with a heart and mind for the truth), hears the Lord's voice. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"—John 10:27.

Partaking of the Fruits and Laboring

"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits"—2 Tim. 2:6.

IT is a very significant fact to all who search the Scriptures that very rarely does the truth lie on the surface. Because this is so, many give up Bible reading altogether. No beauty is found between the covers of the Sacred Book very often, just because the reader expects the unfolding as simple as reading a novel. We must read carefully and thoughtfully, and above everything else with prayer to God that He, through the spirit, may shed light upon our searching.

If we were looking at the above text on the surface only we might say—"Oh, well, it simply means that the man who does the work is entitled to the first share in the dividends, or to his wages; or that the farmer who ploughs, sows and reaps is entitled to the first portion of the crop." There is a sense in which this may be so, but it does not appear to have been the Apostle's thought here, as evidenced by the following verse—"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

There is a deeper meaning if we can but grasp it. While many have taken the words to infer that before we can expect to receive the fruits or to be partaker of the fruits we must be prepared to labor, the Apostle's thought seems to have been somewhat contrary—that before we can labor effectively, we must be first partaker of the fruits.

We all know that in the varied experiences of our earthly course, if we find someone in trouble or distress of any kind, that we can help far more effectively, and are always more readily sympathetic, if we have passed through some similar experience ourselves. So it seems that the Apostle Paul is trying to show us that before we can become effective laborers in God's vineyard we must be first partakers of the fruits.

What is the fruit of which we must be partakers? We have the answer surely in Gal. 5:22, 23—"The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." We are told that

against such there is no law. There can be no doubt that this is the fruit to which our Lord himself referred in John 15:8—"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples."

We shall not make a detailed study of the numerous fruit of the spirit, for at this time we are concerned only as to how we can be partakers of it. There is but one way of receiving this fruit of the spirit and that is by Him who said—"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"—John 14:6. Some even dare to think they can partake of the fruits otherwise. They realise that to be patient, humble, unselfish, kind, pure, etc., are good and right but they trust in their own strength to obtain or partake of them. As one writer has put it—"Some are ready to doff the cap to Christ but unwilling to bow the knee." We find that the Apostle is warning against such in this same passage, in the preceding verse—"If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully."

In the realm of sport, etc., we see men striving for masteries, striving it is true for a corruptible crown, but even such a crown is not won unless the competitors strive lawfully. There are rules and regulations always to be observed. If these rules are not adhered to, the race or game ends not in a crown but disqualification. It behoves us each one to see then, that in striving for the crown, "incorruptible and that fadeth not away", we do not presume to stand before our God without the wedding garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness, and without taking His yoke upon us and learning of His meekness and lowliness of heart. It is in this way that we become partakers of the fruits of the spirit, the fruits which we must partake of first, before we can hope to be used of the Lord in imparting them to others. The laboring husbandmen need the testimony of the Samaritans—John 4:39-42—"Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves." We are partakers of the fruit of His gospel, and we "know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (postage from 90c to \$2.60, according to distance in Australia).

"The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 70c in Victoria; 80c interstate).

"The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).

"The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).

"Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).

"Daily Heavenly Manna" pocket size—75c (postage 45c).

"Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 45c).

"Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$2.00 (Postage 70c and 80c).

(Continued from page 3.)

killing him. What it does mean is that if you hate somebody, you are breaking the love processes which could exist between two people, which leads from death to life. You have disrupted those processes which our Lord has set down in which we come together to lift us out of death.

I have a friend who is a psychiatrist. He said—"The more I practise and study psychiatry, the more religious I become. I find myself talking and behaving like a minister. I find the ultimate prescription for the mental health of the world is the Golden Rule." He is not a Bible Student, or even a religious person. But "Love your neighbour as yourself" was his observation. They are discovering today what we knew was in God's Word years and years ago. The Biblical warnings against the sins of the flesh, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, activities of the lower nature, are now seen in a new light. They have been thought of as sins. They are sins. They are disease-producing emotions. They are emotions that affect the body and the mind in a negative and offensive way. The Lord tells us not to participate in these sins. It is because they are disease-producing; and this is due to the effect of the mind on the body. Emotion produces a physical reaction. When you are happy, you love. When you are ashamed, you blush. When you are afraid, the heart begins to pump faster. Adrenalin gets into your system, your blood pressure goes up. So emotions affect the body physically. We are getting to recognise that the sins of the flesh can now be thought of as disease-producing emotions. When the Lord says Thou shalt not fornicate, murder, etc., He is referring to that kind of emotion that can destroy the individual. Jealousy, self-centredness, frustration, anxiety and so forth are also disease-producing emotions.

I noticed an article in the "New York Times", one of the most famous newspapers in the United States. There is not a more reputable or significant newspaper than the "New York Times." I was reading about the neurotic seeking help among themselves. "Here are the traits which produce health and happiness—love, tolerance, patience, faith, gratitude, honesty." If you read the 5th chapter of Galatians, you will see them all there. The Apostle Paul encourages us to develop these characteristics. Paul says to do this so we can grow as New Creatures. They are now discovering that these processes produce health and happiness.

"These are the things that will destroy you—anger, false pride, greed, fear, envy, irritability, anxiety." Again I thought I was reading the 5th chapter of Galatians. No longer are we looking at love as nice to have; it is a process of life to lift us from death. Even longevity is affected by these disease-producing

emotions. When we hate, rage, lose our tempers, we threaten our lives. These things have been found out by a life insurance company in the United States. They have now determined those factors which affect longevity. They want to be able to figure out how long a person is likely to live, in terms of what they will have to pay out. These are some of the things they found out: If a person smokes, you can cut off five years. If he drinks alcohol, subtract ten years. If he lives in a city, three years. Australia does not have the same amount of smog as we have in other countries. The insurance company says if a person is hateful, angry, unhappy, despondent, you can subtract seven years from his life. I am not saying this—the insurance company is saying it.

The Psalmist gives us the same ideas in Ps. 34:11-14. The Psalmist tells us how to live a long, happy life. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." The Psalmist gives us a good formula in those verses. We are beginning to realise that these emotions, the sins of the flesh, are more than just a breaking of the Law. They are breaking the Designer's Law. Love is not only an emotion, it is a process. The more we get into this process, the more we are embarked on the road to eternal life.

When love is lacking, when loves does not exist, when love does not operate, malevolent emotions break the process. Not to love is to destroy. Not to be loved is to perish.

As we look at this hostile and violent world, we know that the law of love is not there, it is not being practised, it does not exist. We see hate returned for love. Hate cannot drive out hate; darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can turn away darkness. Loneliness has a chain reaction. There is more and more evil, the world is plunged into misery and darkness and degradation. Hitler hated the Jews, and his hate conditioned the Nazi people and the Nazi party to hate the Jews. It brought about the death of six million people. The hatred of the Nazis generated a counter-hate. Another hatred was generated in the Allies. World War II commenced and brought its destruction. Do you know what the figures are for World War II? Seventeen million soldiers killed; thirty-four million civilians. The hatred of one man, Hitler, brought about the destruction of fifty-one million people. The Apostle John was very much in earnest when he said, He who hates his brother is a murderer. He was referring to the fact that when you break relationships with one another, you then plunge yourself into darkness.

What is the best way to destroy an enemy? We were talking about this recently with some

young people. It is rather interesting how young people come up with all kinds of answers. Many of them said, Get revenge. Whatever they do to you, let them have it. But when you do something to your enemy, what does your enemy do to you? He wants to return it. If you go the whole way and kill your enemy, his family or friends don't like that so they will try to kill you. Then there is a spiral back and forth. But there is one way to destroy your enemy, for good. That is to make him your friend. That is developing a relationship, it is establishing love processes.

As far as wars are concerned, it may surprise you to say that war was not originated with the human family. There has been a war going on continuously from time immemorial. The greatest war of all time started when Lucifer gathered about him such a number of angels that their name is Legion, and led them in rebellion against God. That war has been raging ever since. Herein lies the beginning of man's trouble. The solution lies in reconciliation. If you look at the philosophy of the ransom, it is atonement. It is at-one-ment. If you want to know what was Christ's mission, and say it was to die—that was a process. But He wants to bring men back into harmony with God—reconciliation, atonement. To bring the human race back to the Heavenly Father.

To reach the mark of perfect love, for those of us in the Narrow Way is not a matter of something nice to have, interesting to pursue or an ornament for adorning. For those of us in the Narrow Way, I believe if we do not reach this mark of perfect love we cannot be given the Divine nature. I believe God's insistence that you learn to love like Him is because the nature He has promised you is Godlike. If you are being given a Godlike nature, Divine in its essence, you cannot have any kind of process working in you unless it is Godlike. You see the logic of that. We must love like God does, or we cannot have the nature God has. So John, when he says—"he who does not love remains in death"—was stating a process that leads us not only to eternal life, but the opportunity for the Divine nature.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 22nd, 23rd, 25th and 26th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 45c.

Oxford Reference Bible, with References, India paper, Brevier clear type, Leatherex binding, thumb index, \$21.00, plus postage, according to distance.

Extracts from Correspondence

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I am enclosing a cheque for \$—, and would like you to send me 6 copies of the "Peoples Paper" for Oct.-Nov. I have been reading with much interest your article on—"Gifts of the Spirit." On page 7 it reads that Mark 16:9-20 is spurious, which means we are to cross these verses out of our Bibles. If we do this where do we stop? We could start crossing out a lot of places in the Bible we don't understand, and what about Rev. 22:19? I will be looking forward to your reply and please keep balance of amount as a gift. Yours sincerely.

(The booklet—"Our Bible Translated"—explains why certain passages in the Bible are spurious. Copies of this booklet are supplied free to all interested—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Brother—Thank you for your letter, also for the copies of your broadcasts—"Do Children Grow Up in Heaven" and "Why Does the Bible Contain Apparent Contradictions?"—also the two tapes you sent later on both subjects. I thought they were excellent; to hear the tapes does prove more helpful. I know it has often been said that the Bible contradicts itself, but after hearing and reading on that subject, it's explained very well.

Thank you for the help you have given me in understanding the Bible better. Thank you also for sending so promptly the booklet containing the "Mark of the Beast"; yes, it was very helpful, and I enjoyed also reading the other subjects. I also thought the last Oct.-Nov. "Peoples Paper" very good, especially the article—"Gifts of the Spirit." Yes, you could always send me an extra copy of "Peoples Paper." Enclosed a donation towards your ministry and may God richly bless you in this work. With sincere Christian regards from us both, also regards to Sister—Yours sincerely.

Dear Friends—Thank you for the reading matter you sent me; I have found it to be so helpful along with my Bible study. Would you please send to me the following book and booklets: I have enclosed \$—; if this does not cover the postal costs, let me know. Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends—Would it be possible for you to forward to me 3 more copies of the October-November issue of the "Peoples Paper" with the article—"Gifts of the Spirit—True and Counterfeit." Enclosed \$— to cover costs; keep the change for your funds. Thanking you.

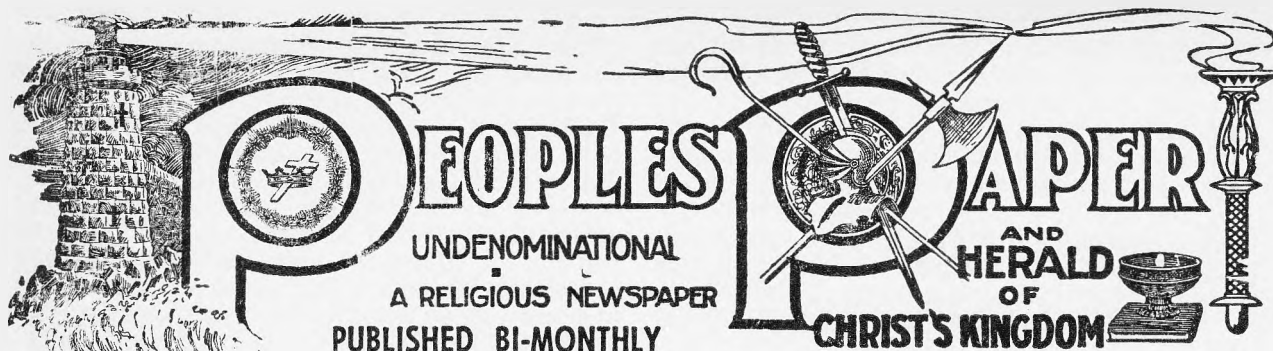
Dear Sir—Enclosed please find cheque for \$—. It will help in a small way to help pay for the printing of these articles. I enjoy reading your religious newspaper "The Voice" and booklets. It is so near the end of the age... God bless you and keep up the good work you are doing. Yours very faithfully.

"The Greatest of These is Love"

The supply of the above titled booklet is exhausted, so a reprinting has been made and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." While this booklet was supplied to all on the mailing list last year, it has been so much appreciated that a rereading will no doubt prove helpful again this year. Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350Yc. — Sundays 11.05p.m.



Volume LXIII No. 2

MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY 1980

Price—20 Cents

God's Plan Revealed Through His Covenants

GOD has revealed His loving plan of salvation for mankind through the covenants He has made with His people. The word "covenant" is not generally in use today as it was in the past. Now the words "agreement" and "contract" are more frequently employed instead. The word "promise" is also closely related to the word "covenant." God promises to do certain things and these promises constitute a covenant, or agreement. If we are to participate in this divine plan as individuals and receive the blessings promised to those who are faithful co-workers with the Lord, then we must abide by the conditions attached to God's promises.

A covenant implies harmony and agreement between those who enter into it. Before his transgression Adam was in covenant relationship with God. The terms of his covenant with the Creator are partially set forth in Gen. 2:15-17—"...And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That was a very important covenant; the terms were simple but exacting. They called for Adam's obedience, based upon the simple test of not eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Thus Adam's part in this covenant was to obey. But we know Adam did not remain faithful to his part of the original covenant, as the prophet Hosea 6:7, margin, wrote, he "transgressed the covenant." This meant that instead of continuing on a friendly relationship with God, Adam was alienated from Him. God's displeasure was manifested in that He pronounced the sentence of death upon Adam, and he was cast out of the Garden of Eden. All mankind came under the same manifestation of disfavour.

The Apostle Paul explains that helpfully to us in 1 Cor. 15:21, 22. This Scripture is most important in respect of the plan of salvation. "For since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Jesus) came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall

all be made alive." What an all-comprehensive statement we have here! We have the plan of God outlined in a nutshell.

While God was no longer in covenant relationship with His earthly creatures as a whole, from time to time He made covenants with certain individuals who through faith and obedience were pleasing to Him. The first one of these was with Noah, after the Flood. Noah had demonstrated his faith in God by his obedience in building the Ark in preparation for the Flood. There had never been any rain on the earth when Noah was commanded by God to build an Ark to save himself and his house. By faith Noah obeyed God, and Noah's family held the same faith as their father, and later shared in the covenant God made with Noah.

This covenant promised that all flesh would not again be destroyed by the waters of a flood. This is found in Gen. 9:8-11, which please read. That was a very definite promise of God to faithful Noah. In the previous chapter also, the closing verse of chapter 8, we read—"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." That is very definite too. Some people say, that is only "while the earth remaineth." But Eccles. 1:4 says—"the earth abideth forever." It is not going to be destroyed. Those promises are sure. They are the covenants God made with Noah. This is important in God's plan for the recovery of the human race from sin and death. While the promise assured Noah and his family that the earth would not be destroyed by water, it is reasonable to think that it would not be destroyed in any way. God created the earth to be man's home, and we can rest assured that neither the earth nor the human race will be destroyed. See Isa. 45:18 in connection with this important matter. God created the earth to be inhabited.

The fulfilment of God's promises relative to the redemption and recovery of His earthly creatures from sin and death calls for a resurrection from the dead. This means that all the pure Adamic stock who died in the Flood did

not perish forever. God's covenant with Noah is a wonderful reminder that the Lord created man to live, and not to be destroyed, and through the other covenants His love is revealed, and an opportunity of salvation is provided for all mankind.

A few hundred years after the Flood God made a covenant with Abram, whose name was later changed to Abraham. This is found in Gen. 12:1-3, which please read. This wonderful man God selected out of so many at that time; God looked into the heart of Abram, and invited him to go forward to the particular location on the earth God had marked out. The last words of this promise to Abram read—"in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This promise was reiterated to Abraham later, in Gen. 22. God tested Abraham's faith in connection with his son Isaac, whom Abraham believed was at least the first of the "seed" which God had promised. Isaac was born when Abraham and his wife Sarah were very old; and they recognised that God had performed a miracle to give them this child of promise. When Isaac was grown, God asked Abraham to offer this miracle child in sacrifice. This was a severe test of Abraham's faith, but he demonstrated his willingness to obey. In the New Testament it is revealed that Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead if he had been sacrificed as a burnt offering. See Heb. 11:17-19.

When Abraham demonstrated his faith by placing Isaac on the altar, his hand was stayed by an angel, who instructed him to use a lamb which God had provided as a substitute. God was very pleased with Abraham because of this marvellous demonstration of faith, and said to him in the oath-bound covenant of Gen. 22:16-18—"By myself have I sworn . . . I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven . . . and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

Turning to the New Testament, we read in Gal. 3:8—"The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." The 16th verse of Gal. 3 reads—"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." From this it is clear that when God promised Abraham that his "seed" would bless all the families of the earth, the One He had chiefly in mind as the blesser of the people was Jesus, the Christ of the New Testament, and the Messiah of the Old. Then the Apostle gives us further information concerning the "seed" of promise in Gal. 3:27-29—"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." This means that the faithful followers of Christ during the Gospel Age are the children of the covenant which God made with Abraham.

Paul further states in Gal. 4:28—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." Then in Heb. 6:13-20 the Apostle Paul again associates the followers of Christ with God's oath-bound covenant with Abraham. Please read Heb. 6:13-20. What an assurance is there given in respect of this oath-bound covenant, that God is going to bless all the families of the earth through Christ and His associates, His Bride, those who walk faithfully in the steps of Christ. How very closely Paul associates the Gospel Church with the Abrahamic Covenant, showing that true Christians are developed under the Covenant made with Abraham.

Following the Exodus, when the Israelites came out of Egypt, God entered into a covenant with the natural descendants of Abraham. We speak of this as the Law Covenant because it was based upon an expression of God's law as outlined in the Ten Commandments. Moses served as mediator between God and the Israelites in the making of this covenant. In the Early Church there were some differences of opinion as to whether or not the followers of Jesus were bound by the terms of the Law Covenant. Paul explained the truth on this matter, saying in Gal. 3:19 that the Law was "added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the (original) promise was made." Then in verse 24 of Gal. 3 the Apostle says—"the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." It is obvious from these statements, that Christians are not under the Law Covenant, although they certainly are in harmony with all its righteous requirements. However, for the natural descendants of Abraham the Law Covenant served a good purpose. First, as Paul explains—"It was added because of transgressions till the (promised) seed should come." God knew that it would be many centuries before His due time for bringing forth the true, faith seed of Abraham. It was in His plan that the Head of this faith seed should come from the nation of Israel. But because of the transgressions of this people, the chances were that before the due time came for the Messiah to appear, the nation would wander completely away from God. The Law Covenant served as a deterrent to this trend. While the Israelites were not too faithful in keeping the Law, it did hold them in check sufficiently, so that there was a small nation of Israelites into which Jesus was born, and to whom He presented Himself as Messiah.

The Law Covenant was a "schoolmaster" to bring the Israelites to Christ; that is, it demonstrated the need of a Redeemer. Paul wrote in Rom. 5:14—"Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Adam's transgression could have been avoided. Had he elected to do so, he could have refrained from partaking of the forbidden fruit and thus

bringing the sentence of death upon himself. But Adam's progeny came under condemnation to death through him, and not because of individual sins of their own. This situation continued, Paul explains, until Moses—referring to the time of the giving of the Law. It was then, in the case of the one small nation of Israel, that a change took place.

This change was brought about through the Law Covenant, through which God promised that if they would and could keep His law they would live. In Lev. 18:5, quoted in Rom. 10:5, we read—"The man which doeth those things shall live by them." This meant that any Jew who lived perfectly to the terms of the Law Covenant, would no longer need to die because of Adam's transgression. However, none of the Israelites could meet the requirements of the Law Covenant, so, as explained by Paul, the Law served as a schoolmaster, a teacher and leader, to emphasize the need of Christ, and the provision God has made through Him to give life to all who lost life through Adam. Not many of the Jewish nation have as yet learned this lesson. Indeed, very few of the Gentiles have learned it. But when the plan of God shall have accomplished its full purpose, all will be fully enlightened and only those who wilfully turn against this light will fail to gain everlasting life.

In Gal. 4:22-26 Paul presents a further aspect of the covenant God made with Abraham, and the Law Covenant into which He entered with Israel. Please read Gal. 4:22-26. The "Jerusalem" which is the "mother of us all", that is, of all true Christians, according to Paul's lesson, was represented by Sarah, the "freewoman." Thus the Apostle refutes the argument of Christians in his day who desired to be in bondage to the Law Covenant.

Another of God's covenants is brought to our attention in Jer. 31:31-34. It is referred to as a "new" covenant, and the promise is that it will be made "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." Please read Jer. 31:31-34. At the time this promise was made the Hebrew people were divided. One segment was known as the house of Israel, and the other as the house of Judah. God included both to emphasize that this promise applied to all the natural descendants of Abraham. Indeed, since the promise to Abraham was that "all families", or nations, of the earth were to be blessed, all outside of the Jewish people will eventually have an opportunity of receiving the blessings of the promised New Covenant. First of all, however, those who were disobedient to the first, or Law Covenant, will be given the opportunity of entering into the New Covenant arrangement. The Lord explains that the New Covenant will be "not according" to the covenant which He made with their fathers. It will be different, in that the law of the New Covenant will not be written on tables of stone, as was the case with the original Law Covenant, but will be

written in the "inward parts" of the people, and in their "hearts." This is a marked difference. We see, then, that these restoration blessings of the New Covenant will be world-wide—"They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Because of this, when the law of the New Covenant shall be written in the "inward parts" there will be no more need for the services of teachers to instruct people in the ways of the Lord. That will be the time when the Lord will pour out His spirit upon all flesh.

The Lord's introduction to His promise of the New Covenant is very enlightening as to the time when the promise would be fulfilled, as outlined in Jer. 31:28, referring to the scattered Israelites. The verse reads—"It shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord." The beginning of that has been going on for some time, but it will be much more fully evident respecting the restoration of Israel in the early days of the Kingdom age.

In the next two verses of Jeremiah 31, verses 29 and 30, we have located the time when the New Covenant is made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah—"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 shall die (who does die) for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." Everyone will then be tried as an individual in respect of life and death. Then follows, from verse 31 of Jer. 31, God's promise of the New Covenant and its blessings, emphasizing that when the time comes for its fulfilment there will be a complete change in the position of the human race so far as its relationship to sin and its consequences are concerned. Figuratively speaking, we could say that it was Adam who ate the sour grape of disobedience to divine law. Not only were his own teeth set on edge, but the result of his disobedience was passed on to the entire human race. In preparation for the making of the New Covenant, Christ gave His life to redeem mankind from death, thus to provide all with an individual opportunity to obey divine law. This opportunity will reach the Israelites and the people of all nations in connection with the making of the New Covenant.

In Matt. 26:28 we have a helpful verse in connection with the Lord giving His Memorial to His eleven disciples, and the Memorial that we keep annually in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice and our participation with Him. Jesus spoke of His blood, the symbol of His sacrificed life, as the blood of the New Testament, or the New Covenant—"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." It is His blood that ratifies

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Forgetting Things Behind

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"—Phil. 3:13, 14.

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 of 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 for 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 as the Lord has promised to do for us for Jesus' sake—"Cast our sins behind his 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.

The Day of Salvation

(Convention Address)

"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"—2 Cor. 6:2.

GOD'S plan for the salvation of mankind from death is the essence of the Gospel. In Rom. 1:16 Paul said—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." The Gospel is the power unto salvation. But there is a time limit. This is what Paul is saying in our text in 2 Cor. 6:2 when he says—"Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Now a "day" is a finite period of time. It has a beginning, and it has an ending. The Day of Salvation is no exception. It also has a time of beginning and a time of ending. Therein lie two questions: When does the day of salvation begin? and when does it end?

When did the day of salvation begin? Perhaps we should assure ourselves that in fact there was a beginning, for salvation has not always been available. Just to bear this point out, we would like to refer to 1 Pet. 1, beginning at verse 9—"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." That expresses the thought that salvation is the essence of our faith. Verse 10—"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." We know that a prophet is one who foretells a coming event. Verse 11—"Searching what, or what

manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." So the prophets looked ahead and could see vaguely this promise of salvation, of which salvation they had enquired and searched diligently.

So we come to understand the full significance of the message of the angel at Jesus' birth—"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." We know why He came, don't we? We have it explained in John 3:17—"God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

The fact that Jesus was that prophesied Messiah is confirmed to us by the Apostle Peter at Pentecost. Reading from Acts 2, beginning at verse 22, Peter says—"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The prophets foretold the sufferings of Christ, and here they are being fulfilled. "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Verses 32 and 33—"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Verse 36—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." So we can see why Paul was so anxious for the Corinthians—"Behold, now is the day of salvation."

What about the ending of the day of salvation—when does it end? That has probably been the most incorrectly answered question of all time. Some think that the day of salvation ends at the time of death for the individual. Some think it ends at the end of the world. Some think it might go on and on. When does the day of salvation end?

That is one of the big mysteries of the Scriptures. One thing we can be sure of is that it is not going to end until the work God has planned to do in it is completed. In Isa. 55:11 we have the words—"My word . . . 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." If God has set out a certain amount of work to be done during the day of salvation, it will not end until that work is complete.

The mystery comes because very few people are privileged to see that the day of salvation is in two parts. We have called them Phase 1 and

Phase 2, but there are at least six individual themes which show that the work of salvation is in two parts. We shall mention three of them.

The first is the theme of the Church. The meaning of the word is called-out ones—ecclesia. That indicates straight away that God's message of salvation is not going to everyone. If it was going to everyone, there could not be a calling out. We shall read a verse or two to familiarise ourselves with the theme of the Church. In 1 Cor. 1:1, 2 Paul says—"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God . . . unto the church of God which is at Corinth"—that is to the called-out ones. The concordance says—"To the assembly of the called out." "Called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." Verse 23—"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Verse 26—"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." In John 6:44 Jesus is speaking, and says—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." So we see that only a few are called and are even able to "come."

The second theme which indicates that the work of salvation is in two parts is the theme of Israel. This theme takes much time to trace out; we shall mention Rom. 11:7-11—"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded"—please read on. Then verse 11 is the crux of the matter—"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." Let us do some reasoning from that verse—"Have they stumbled that they should fall?" Straight away we see that the Jews have missed out on their chance of the heavenly calling because they have stumbled. What would have happened had they not stumbled? He says—"God forbid. But rather salvation is come to the Gentiles." So therefore if the Jews had not stumbled, salvation would not have come to the Gentiles for the heavenly calling. So straight away we see God's message of salvation was not originally intended for everyone, at that time.

The third theme which indicates that God's work of salvation is in two parts, the first part being reserved for a small group, is the theme of the Divine Wedding. We read about that in Eph. 5:22, 23 then 31 and 32—"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body." "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and

shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." This is a great mystery, how a person is drawn away from his parents, after all their love and devotion; even in the natural field it is a great mystery. But listen to the last few words—"I speak concerning Christ and the church." Just as a man will leave his parental home and be drawn unto his wife, so also the Church leaves their fleshly home and is drawn to their husband, Christ, the Head of the Church. When a man goes out to get a wife, he does not go out to choose everyone, but one person, an individual, a selected one. What happens when he has made his selection? That is how we see there are two parts to the work of salvation.

In Rev. 19 we see the beginning of the second part of the work of salvation, reading from verses 1, 6 and 7—"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God." "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters... Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." So we see that when the Bride of Christ is complete, when His wife has made herself ready, then comes the saying—"Salvation and glory and honour and power." There is similar language used in Rev. 21; please read verses 1-5. All referred to there is for us to look forward to when the New Jerusalem is complete, when the Bride in fact is adorned for her husband.

The theme of Israel, while showing God's salvation is not yet available for all, also shows that eventually it will be for the earthly kingdom. Reading from Rom. 11:12, 15—"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" We know that Israel will be received for the earthly inheritance. Verses 25 and 26—"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

So we see that as the fall of Israel enabled the Gospel to be preached to the Gentiles for the heavenly calling, when the Gentiles have fulfilled the required number, then salvation will return to the Israelites for the earthly inheritance.

Likewise, the theme of the Church also shows there is a second positive side to this theme of salvation. Recalling the text read previously in

John 6:44—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Now in contrast we will read John 12:32, where Jesus is also speaking and says—"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me"—during the earthly kingdom. So we see there is the second part of the work of salvation.

Now, when does the day of salvation end? There will be an end, as we see in Acts 3:23. Reading verses 20-23—"He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven 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 your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear 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 amongst the people." Therein is the end of the day of salvation.

As a summary, we will read Psalms 98—"O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen." That is the second phase of the day of salvation. God's salvation has not been shown openly yet.

From verse 3—"He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel"—that is also part of the second phase. "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity." So do we not praise the Lord for the Day of Salvation!

Divine Guidance

"In the mysteries of my life
Where the threads all twist and twine,
'Mid the shadow and the strife,
Sadly missing His design,
With its gracious, loving pleading,
Breaks the tender Voice divine—
'Let Me take the threads in My hands,
Child, before they pass through thine.'
"Lo, a beauteous pattern growing
On a deep'ning ground of love,
Tints all blending, shining, glowing—
Mirror fairer things above;
And the quiet hands rest sweetly
In that strong, sure clasp of Thine,
All the threads now pass through Thy hands,
Dear Lord, e'er they come to mine."

—Selected.

(Continued from page 3.)

God's promise of the New Covenant, and makes possible its fulfilment. The reason is simple. The New Covenant will give life to those with whom it is made, who, prior to the making of the covenant, are members of the condemned and dying race. It is only through Jesus, and His sacrificial death on behalf of Adam and his children, that they can have an opportunity to gain everlasting life.

In Heb. 12:24 we are told that Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. Moses was the Mediator of the Law Covenant, and part of his work as a mediator was the providing of blood with which to sprinkle both "the book" and "the people." See Exod. 24:3-8. Moses sprinkled the book and the people, which was an important picture in type of Christ's blood sprinkling all mankind figuratively when they come under the law of the New Covenant in the Kingdom time. As Mediator of the New Covenant, it was necessary also for Jesus to provide blood, not of animals, but His own precious blood—blood being a symbol of His sacrificed, or poured-out life. Thus we see that Jesus' sacrificial ministry was in preparation for mediating the New Covenant.

Jesus will have associates in His work of mediating the New Covenant. These are the faithful followers of Jesus throughout the Gospel Age, who follow Him into death. In Matt. 16:24 we have the words of our Lord—"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." All who do this faithfully are Jesus' associates referred to in Psa. 50:5—"Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." That is an individual matter, referred to again by the Apostle in Rom. 6:5—"If we have been planted together in the likeness of his (Christ's) death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." These are the associates who, with their Lord, are to administer the New Covenant in the wonderful kingdom time.

In 2 Cor. 3:3 these true Christians are spoken of as epistles of Christ—"written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." Here Paul is not referring to God's promise of the New Covenant when His law is to be written in the "inward parts" of the people, but is comparing the "epistles of Christ" with the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. We do well to meditate on that verse continually—"Written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God", that we may be "epistles of Christ", to represent Christ, as His ambassadors, "known and read of all men."

The entire Gospel Age is set aside in the plan of God for the preparation of these epistles or representatives of Christ, referred to in verse

6 of this same chapter as "able ministers of the New Covenant." Not until these "ministers" have all been prepared **can the inauguration of the New Covenant take place.** Since all of these were originally members of the sin-cursed and dying race, the blood of Christ is essential to give them a standing before God, and to make their sacrifice acceptable to Him. See Rom. 12:1. All true followers of the Master surely enjoy a wonderful hope of sharing with Jesus, as the promised Seed of Abraham, in the work of blessing all the families of the earth.

Do we not rejoice in the covenants God has made down the centuries with Adam, Noah, Israel through Moses, Christ the Head of the spiritual Seed, and the Church associated with Him to bring blessings to all mankind through the New Covenant, all made possible through the sacrifice of God's dear Son.

Have You Been in the Valley?

Have you been in the valley of sorrow and grief
Where there's nothing but death and despair?
Where the mists are so dark
And your life seems so stark
And there seems to be no one to care?

Through the storm that is beating around you today
Destroy all you have cherished so dear,
Though your loved ones forsake you,
Temptations o'ertake you,
Look up for the Master is near.

There'll be light in the midst of your sorrow and grief
If you'll just take the hand He extends.
He'll stay close by your side,
With His wisdom will guide,
Relief for your trouble He'll send.

There'll be visions of joy in the valley of grief
Which Christ in His love will unfold.
Then lift up your eyes
To the light in the skies
And His love and His mercy behold.

In the depths of the valley of sorrow and grief
The stars of His presence appear.
Come close to His side,
With the Saviour abide
And the shadows will soon disappear.

There'll be hope in the valley of sorrow and grief
When once you've discovered His love.
And the way will grow bright
To your wondering sight
When the Father smiles down from above.

L.K.P.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 4th, 5th and 6th, at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinstead, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

Oxford Reference Bible, with References, India paper, Brevier clear type, Leatherex binding, thumb index, \$21.00, plus postage, according to distance.

Extracts from Correspondence

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Please find enclosed a cheque which I hope will continue to supply our copies of "Peoples Paper" and other very lovely booklets which accompany the issues. "Watch Israel—God's Time Clock", the latest small booklet to arrive is, I suppose, the best and most timely piece of literature to date, and both of us liked it so much. As time marches on so fast, I feel sometimes as if I am so far behind in posting for subscription purposes; I hope you will forgive the delay. So with abiding love to you all and earnest prayers. Your brethren in Christ.

Dear Sir—Happy new year. I am writing in to let you know that I believe the Lord is my Shepherd. As King David of old tasted it and saw it, I believe He is the Shepherd of all other shepherds on this earth. I want to know the Creator better than any other thing in my life today. Please Sir, help my believing to know more about Him and Him only. Please I want this explanation of the lovely Shepherd Psalm 23, from an undenominational standpoint. I am a New Hebridean, I enjoy reading what the good Shepherd is doing for me in the past, present and future. I hope that you will send my booklet today. God bless you. Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—I would like to have the little booklet—"The Lord is My Shepherd." In 1974 after I asked for a book you advertised, you continued for some time to send me "Peoples Paper" which I enjoyed very much. I still have the copies which I've read over and over. Later you asked if I still wished to receive this, and I think you mentioned the cost per year was \$1.00.

At the time my husband had a stroke and has been in hospital ever since, until he died recently. I did not get to send the money, but I would like to have your books; I enjoy them very much. I enclose \$1.00, and if it is more I will send balance: Thank you; yours sincerely.

Dear Friend—Thank you for posting my books so quickly. I am so pleased with the children's stories—"The Ten Camels." I am hoping I can have 9 more. I want to send one to each of my families to read to their children. We were a family of 10. I think parents and children can gain a lot out of it, as well as the pleasure of families sharing together; it is well written and presented, so much love and truth in a very natural way. I am enclosing a cheque; if any over, I would be glad for you to use it. Thanking you.

Frank and Ernest—I would like to receive a copy of your discussion—"Why Does God Favor Some People?"—and be eligible for your booklet at the end of these discussions. I do so enjoy your programme each Sunday night. Thanking you. Yours faithfully.

The following is from previous correspondence

Islam is on the march. They are building immense mosques in many parts of the world, and plan to build in Rome to rival St. Peters. Also they plan to place mosques in England throughout the land. Some of us are beginning to wonder whether "the false prophet" is not "Islam" for surely they will be right in the fray at Armageddon. If she is "the false prophet" then how aptly named, as Mahomet claimed to be that prophet of Deut. 18:15, and it is claimed he ascended to heaven like our Lord. It's just a thought, and as the precious oil has brought immense wealth to the Arab world, they can become powerful and even use blackmail. It won't alter the setting up of the Kingdom, for that is in good hands, and all nations will yet bow down to the King of kings.

About Christ's First and Second Advent

At Christ's first advent He lived here a fleshly human being for thirty years, before He was recognised as the Son of God.

All Bible students know that our Saviour comes the second time with His glorious spiritual body. With our human physical eyes we cannot see spirits. We cannot see God nor Satan because they are spiritual beings, then why should it seem incredible, that Christ, at His second advent, should appear in His glorious spiritual body, and yet be invisible to our physical eyes? Though we were educated to believe that we would see our Saviour at His second coming with our physical eyes, that education was erroneous. Bible students all over the world now agree that the only way we can see Christ before our resurrection change is with our mental eyes—the eyes of our understanding. See Eph. 1:18.

Cure for Eye Cataract

Make a solution of Epsom Salts, made up of ½ an ounce to a pint of boiling water. Use a little warm with an eye glass two or three times a day. This simple treatment has restored the sight to a number of people we know.

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (postage from 90c to \$2.60, according to distance in Australia).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 70c in Victoria; 80c interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna" pocket size—75c (postage 45c).
- "Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 45c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$2.00 (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—50c (Postage 45c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Where are the Dead?"—10c (postage 20c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

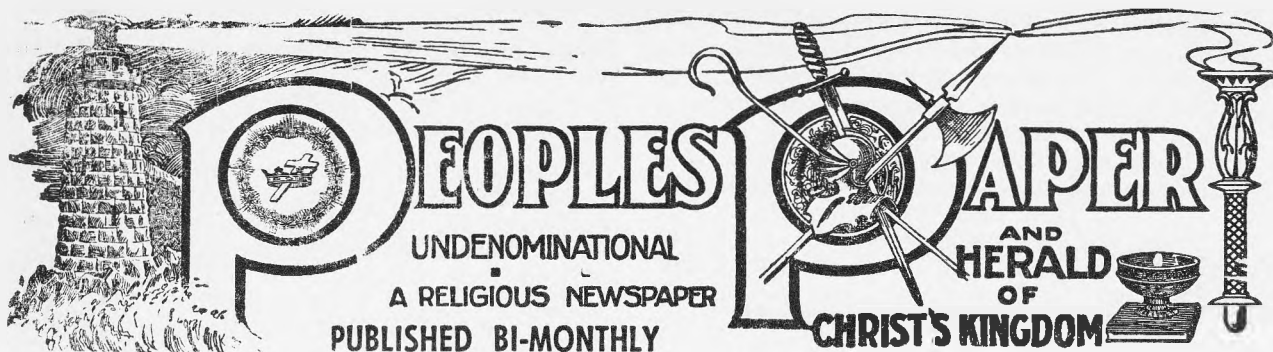
The postage quoted on booklets is for single copies; proportionately less for more than one copy.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350Kc. — Sundays 11.05 p.m.



Volume LXIII No. 3

MELBOURNE, JUNE—JULY 1980

Price—20 Cents

Keeping the Unity of the Spirit

(Contributed Convention Address)

THE Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:1-3 exhorted us to **make every effort** to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. To whom was the apostle writing? The Ephesians? Yes. The Christians of the first century? Yes. The Church of the Gospel Age? Yes. But let us not think of this as an historical note. This is a goal and an issue which bears so heavily on us now at this Convention. **Make every effort** to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Are you making every effort, or are you just drifting along? Some of you may be making a huge effort; some of you might be ignoring it. I might observe that the friends here have made a great contribution by basing this Convention on this important issue, the unity of the spirit. The Apostle Paul spent his life teaching Gentiles, and among many themes he regarded as crucial was the unity of the Church. He did not want to see two churches, Jew and Gentile, but only one. He did not want to see churches within a church. He had a leading theme as he continued his ministry and set up churches in different cities. His prime message to the Ephesians was oneness, harmony, and the unspeakable grandeur of the unity of the body of Christ.

If there was anyone who made **every effort**, took every opportunity to preserve the unity of the spirit, it was the Apostle Paul. If there was a Unity Apostle, it was Paul. He warned against those Jews who wanted to impose the Jewish Law on the Gentiles. Regard them as brothers, he said—stay unified with them. In the early church this was an important issue, a doctrinal issue. Paul said—**Make every effort** to preserve the unity of the spirit. Stay together.

We see different crises fall on the Lord's people as a whole, and sometimes on ecclesias. Alienations, fragmentations, multiplicity of groups occur. If we look at Christendom, there are over 250 different divisions. Look in the World Almanac and check through the list;

it will surprise you. But is Christ divided? What would Paul's reaction be to the state of things we find today? Is Christianity a failure? I think Paul knew this was going to happen. That is the reason why he says to you and me, **Make every effort**. He saw the natural propensity to disunite. But make every effort! Peter and John joined in with him to project that Christendom would eventually become Babylon, which means confusion. It means there is a mixture of truth and error. Anyone with perception today would be confused as to where true Christianity is to be found. This confused, divided state must be eliminated.

Hebrews 12:26 says—"Now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." We believe this to be symbolic of the ecclesiastical heavens in the time of the end, to get rid of Christian nominalism no matter where it is. Wherever it is located, it must go. Christians in name only must go, it doesn't matter where they are. The shaking is a clearing of the way for the new heavens and earth. It is a purging or cleansing which will wreck the fabric of everything on earth not of a permanent character. All that is not permanent must go. The time of the end is depicted as a great social occasion, when economic systems, false values, social practices and nominalism—the fakes, the hypocrites—must go. You have to be careful when you say you are a Christian. You must be working towards Christian goals, and not say you are a Christian and mean just the opposite. I believe the time of the end is an explosion so great that all that we see now being eroded is going out. In Ezek. 1:4 it is depicted as a great whirlwind coming out of the north as fire infolding itself. If you look around you, you will see great things happening. Even the world of mankind is calling this a temporary society. What they do not know is that we are moving from the second to the third dispensation of the world, and change is very disruptive. The scientific community is now beginning to tell us that they are convinced that

the things on the earth are winding up. The book called "Limits of Growth", a study made by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a very fine institution, made a study of five variables happening—population growth, food production and so on—and put the results into a computer. They discovered that the end of the world will happen in 2034 A.D. Isn't that coming from the Bible? Well, where is **this** coming from? Bible students? No. A religious community? No. A scientific community. They are saying the present-day conditions cannot continue. We have all the ingredients of the end of the world. They call it global equilibrium. We have always said that the period of time between the second and third dispensations is a great period of time. It is interesting to see now the scientific community joining us.

The Kingdom of Heaven will cut out all nominalism and all falsity, wherever it is. It must go even within the Bible Students movement, wherever it is. That which is not permanent must be shaken out and washed away. The crucial test is, Can you hold on? Can you hold on as a united group? Can we make every effort to hold the unity of the spirit? Can we hold on as an ecclesia? Can we hold on with our unity in spite of the shaking? These disunities amongst the brethren have been projected. It will become the last criteria and test for finding out whether, after years of talking about love and discussing services to the brethren, and speaking about sacrifices, we were really sincere in what we said. We can have a beautiful study on the sacrifices and still not get the most important principle out of "Tabernacle Shadows" and that means **my** sacrifice. All the rest is history. If we do not come to the point about **our** sacrifice, it can have no real meaning to us. If we have not developed our character out of the trials and tests we will find ourselves lost in the great disruptive forces operating in this day. Will your love melt when put in the fire? Will service stop when difficulties arise?

I believe love will hold the brethren together with strength and fortitude; that it must be an active effort, as it was with the Apostle Paul. I think if the Apostle Paul had not worked it out the way he did, there would have been a great split between the Jewish and Gentile churches. What do you think we have to do? It is not going to come naturally. If Paul had not been there, there would have been a fracture at that point. The unity of the spirit has to be a pursued goal. The reason for that is, there is a natural propensity to disunity. If I say something you don't like, you may say, You go your way, I'll go mine. We stay with those with whom we are comfortable. In these last days, the crucial test will be unity and love for one another. The projection is that the love of the brethren will wax cold. That means unity will wax cold.

There is a strong connection. If there is no love there will be no unity. Love has a natural propensity to unite. If there is no unity there is no love. Love and unity go hand in hand.

There is an important condition we should all be aware of in Rev. 3:14-16—"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The condition of the Laodicean church, which is the last phase of the church's development in the Gospel Age, is the period we are in right now. The Lord will spue out the lukewarm Christians. Lukewarmness is the most threatening condition we are faced with today.

I see four conditions which affect the love of the brethren, which in turn affect unity. Let us go through them. The first is what I call spiritual mediocrity. The brethren will become mediocre. The energy and zeal amongst the Lord's people will be at a low ebb, barely discernible. They have not realised their spiritual potential. They are barely active in the Lord's work. Going to meetings and Conventions is not what our consecration is all about. A mediocre Christian has a highly contaminating quality. It is infectious. It becomes a point of influence to those around. The zealous, active Christian realises the potential in the New Creature embryo within us. It is dynamic. It can grow or diminish. There is a saying—"Give a busy person a job to do and he always seems to get it done." Give the busy Christian a job to do, and he always gets it done. The more you keep on doing, the more you will do. Your spiritual potential is released. Conversely, the less you do for the Lord the less you are capable of doing, and the less you are capable of doing the less you do. It shrinks. There is no such thing as the permanent indwelling of the holy spirit. It will grow or diminish in direct proportion to the kind of activities and the zeal you engage in and utilise it. You will lose it, friends, if you do not use it. You will lose the spirit of God if you do not use it.

I am afraid that in many cases where there are problems with the unity of the spirit, those Christians have very little to do. Spiritual mediocrity is barely releasing the spiritual potential within the individual. Spiritual mediocrity turns out the kind of Christian who is sometimes boring, who does not have a life style which is exciting. This type of individual does not address itself to any controversial issues. It is hard to understand anyone here is dull or boring and lukewarm. The vibrance of the Truth, the understanding of the Divine Plan, where we come from, God's wonderful new programme for mankind, the staggering prospect of the resurrection, the longing for perfection

and immortality, the thrill of seeing and meeting God—these things alone are exciting. These things bring excitement and stimulation into our lives. There is something wrong when we who are in touch with God, the Author of life, have a lifestyle which has become lukewarm.

Almost anybody can be called a Christian today; ask around. There are all sorts of people called Christians, but most are in name only. The worst pitfall is thinking you are a Christian when you are not; thinking you are practising the lifestyle of our Lord, but living another. There is a gap between what we would like to do and what we are actually doing. When we see the character of Job, we can see ourselves as Job. We can identify with Jesus—but He was perfect, and the Son of God. We know that He knows our infirmity.

The second condition affecting the love of the brethren is spiritual slippage. Brethren have fallen back to earlier stages of growth. You lose what you do not use, and if you lose it you are slipping back. Somehow they fall back to an earlier period of time and become weary, and fail there. 2 Cor. 4:1—"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." Bible Students, by virtue of their commitments of time, energy, devotion and dedication, should be the most outstanding Christians on earth. They should have the greatest characters on earth. Do they? We should find among them the best characters on earth. Why? Because we as Bible Students do not regard Christian development as an after-hours activity. It is the substance of our effort. We are active in this matter of development. It is a very happy personal investment of our time and energy, and we should have the best characters on earth by reason of this investment. But do we? Theoretically most of us do not; some do. The spirit of spiritual divisiveness is present. There are not so much differences in views as differences in development. Given the time and the Truth, and eventually we will all catch up. But then there is this active effort to disunite and separate. Paul says, **Make every effort** to unite. Lukewarm Christians will do things to disunite and separate the brethren. The spirit of the world is disintegration and disunification.

There is a good passage along this line in 1 Cor. 3:3-6—"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." Spiritual divisiveness is human carnality, which encourages identification and attachment to a group. Do you belong to this or that group? If you do not belong to a group, some people will find one for you. I found myself serving in a Convention

where I was not known. I imagined some would come and say, What do you belong to? Should I say a Christian group? No. A Bible Students group? No. What do you mean?

To be putting people into groups is a spirit which we should not have amongst the brethren. The true Christian tries to unite, brings us together. There is enough that divides us, without us working at it. One might say—"I go to that group because we all agree and do not have confrontations." The lukewarm Christian will find the group which will not conflict. He does not like differences. A diamond when surrounded by mud cuts nothing, but it is comfortable. No scratching, no cutting, no grinding, no scouring. But it does not shine. There is no brilliance from the diamond; it is worthless. On the other hand, with diamonds surrounded by other diamonds, there is grinding and scouring and cutting of each other; there is a shaping going on. It is of great value. There is only one way to polish a diamond, and that is with another diamond. If anyone of you here claims to be a diamond of the Lord, the only way you are going to be polished is to meet with other diamonds. Will it require sacrifice? Yes. But these are the processes which God and our Lord use to bring out and develop that character which is so good. Isolation does not do it; separation does not do it. The way is unity, in spite of the grinding.

The third unwholesome condition affecting love of the brethren is spiritual freakishness. By that I mean the spiritual growth of the individual is irregular. He follows only one set of experiences and ignores the rest. He grows abnormally in one direction. Spiritual growth, as I see it, follows four directions—truth, service, sacrifice and character. They are the four components of Christian development. If we focus on one to the exclusion of the others we will become freakish. If you spend all your energy on one thing and ignore the rest, you tend to become freakish in your growth. If you concentrate everything on character development, and forget about the rest, you become freakish. If you think serving the brethren, witness work, is not important, and ignore it, you become freakish. It is only when your energies and time are divided between the four aspects that you have a balanced growth. Do not specialise, but use all four in your development. There is a certain totality to human growth. As an example, what would you say when a person's head gets big in relation to his body? That is a freak of nature, it is abnormal—something is wrong. When a person grows normally, everything grows at the same time. That is what we want with our spiritual growth. If we look at Truth and say, that is all there is, we make a grave mistake. Truth is important; sacrifice is important. Service is crucial, and so is character development.

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Institute's Work

WITH the close of April, another year's work for the Berean Bible Institute has been completed. Again at this time we wish to express grateful thanks to our Heavenly Father for the many blessings received in the efforts to serve His cause of truth. Many of our Australian and overseas brethren have co-operated so well again over the past year; this is most encouraging, and sincere appreciation is expressed to all who have assisted so helpfully in the work. By the Lord's overruling providence there has been some extension in various features of the work, and all opportunities for service are esteemed as so many privileges, as unto the Lord Himself.

Our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" continues to provide a means of helpful contact with many of our Australian and overseas brethren and friends. Expressions of appreciation of the messages in our "Peoples Paper" have again been received throughout the year. This is encouraging, and to all who have assisted with contributions to the columns of our "Paper", in the service of the Lord, sincere thanks for this good help is gladly expressed at this time.

Costs for printed matter have not varied greatly over the year past, but postage rates were increased again recently. Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper" are now \$1.00 per annum, but as the postage on one or up to three copies is now \$1.32 per annum throughout Australia, and \$1.68 for overseas, the General Tract Fund covers this postage expense, this Fund being supported by many of our brethren. Some subscribers, realising the high postage rates, and being in a position to do so, also cover the postage as well as their subscriptions, which is much appreciated. As there is a deficiency in the publication of the "Peoples Paper" each year, the General Tract Fund also covers this expense, this being compensated by supplying free copies of the "Paper" to many new friends, to encourage their interest in the truths of the Bible which mean so much to ourselves. The brethren in India are also provided with supplies of our "Peoples Paper" and "Voice" tracts free, from time to time, to assist their work amidst the multitudes of humanity in their vast country. The continued willing help given by some of our Melbourne friends with shorthand and typ-

ing of articles and addresses for the "Peoples Paper", as well as checking and proof reading and other work in the dispatch of our "Paper", is warmly appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

Throughout the year a further four small booklets have been published and supplied free to all readers with the "Peoples Paper", and these have been well appreciated generally. As these booklets are covered by the same postage as the "Paper", in most cases, there is little extra expense in their distribution. Further booklets are to be produced in this new year of the Lord's work, and extra copies of all issues are available for the brethren able to use them to advantage.

Advertising of certain booklets has been extended over the year, with the use of "Reader's Digest" and popular weekly magazines, with encouraging response from all Australian States, and from overseas in the Pacific region. It is pleasing that people in the far outback of this great continent are being reached, as well as those in the nearer areas, and also that a number are responding further after reading the first booklet and "Paper" etc. To all these new enquirers, the "P. Paper" is mailed free for some months to encourage the interest, and above all we ask the Lord to bless His truth to all sincere friends in every place. Provision has been made for a further advertisement in the July issue of "Reader's Digest", and additional use of this and other magazines will be considered as the year progresses, and the means are available. The distribution of free tracts is also provided for through the General Tract Fund, for all able to engage in this witness work.

Our broadcasts through 3GL Geelong have continued throughout the year at the late time of 11.05 p.m., on Sunday nights, the promise of an earlier time is now not likely to eventuate. While there have been few new enquiries since the change from Sunday mornings a year ago, we know there is appreciation of the messages on the Plan of God by a number of interested friends. Whether continuation of the broadcasts is warranted in the near future will be considered as the new year progresses. The managements of radio stations today seem more concerned in the profits for shareholders, than any thought of real Christian service on Sundays. We are glad that the Lord is able to overrule in this matter, and provide for all who are seeking His truth in sincerity. Printed copies of the Dialogues are supplied to some friends along with the "Peoples Paper", where desired.

The balance sheets of the two Funds below reveal the financial position of the work of the Institute. In the Lord's providence the voluntary contributions of our brethren and friends throughout Australia and overseas have enabled an increase in the work to be undertaken over the past year. Realising that all has been rendered as to the Lord, to all who have gladly sacrificed earthly good things to assist the

efforts so well, sincere thanks is expressed. From the human standpoint, world conditions continue to deteriorate, in harmony with Bible prophecy, clearly indicating the nearness of the Kingdom in these days of our Lord's presence, and for which our Lord asked His true people to pray, and by which all earth's problems will be solved, to God's praise. The passing of the present world order will follow in accord with the Lord's timetable, to prepare a clean foundation upon which the promised Kingdom will function, for the ultimate blessing of all the obedient of mankind who have ever lived. The prayers of all our dear brethren and friends are requested that the guidance and blessing of God may attend His work in our hearts, and that undertaken in His name, that sincere faith and humility may be exercised in all privileges of service still to be accomplished in this part of His harvest field, before "the night cometh when no man can work"—John 9:4.

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/79	\$675.25
.. Donations	7,541.26
	\$8,216.51
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples Paper"	\$605.00
.. Advertising "Readers Digest"	1,300.00
.. Advertising "New Idea" magazine	768.00
.. Advertising "Woman's Day" magazine	480.00
.. Advertising "Weekly Times"	278.40
.. Free booklets with "Peoples Paper"	1,202.00
.. General Expenses (Office, 'Phone, etc.)	590.64
.. Postage	1,218.72
.. Assistance in the work	310.00
.. Assistance to brethren	170.00
.. Service to brethren	323.00
.. Travel and Sundries	120.00
.. Credit Balance 1/5/80	850.75
	\$8,216.51

Radio Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/79	\$265.50
.. Donations	2,443.35
	\$2,708.85
By Radio Station 3GL	\$1,418.00
.. Advertising "Age Green Guide"	1,012.65
.. Printing Dialogues	20.50
.. Travel and Sundries	58.00
.. Bank Charges	24.20
.. Credit Balance 1/5/80	175.50
	\$2,708.85

Convention News

THE joy of the 1980 Adelaide Easter Convention was Fellowship. Surely this must have been like the fullness of joy which the Apostle John wanted to share with his "little children"—1 John 1:3-7. Most of those present had travelled a long way to meet with our Lord and their brothers and sisters in Christ in a way a little different from that possible in our weekly assemblies.

Messages of love and encouragement were received from some unable to attend for reasons of distance, illness or frailties of age. Their love was warmly felt and reciprocated. The prayers they mentioned were surely heard as evidenced by the blessings poured on the Convention.

As would be expected from such passages, the two Bible Studies proved very profitable. On Good Friday we enjoyed together Phil. 4:4-9, whilst on Easter Saturday 1 Pet. 4:7-13 was the vehicle for further exhortation to rejoicing.

Something different for Adelaide was the presentation of colour slides on Israel synchronized with a tape recording explaining each scene. We appreciate very much the efforts of the brothers involved, as unto the Lord.

Ten brothers presented messages based on God's Word. As always, these were a principal means of blessing, no doubt as largely to them that gave as to those who received.

Also much appreciated was the labour of love of the sisters in providing for temporal needs. It should be understood that this does not refer only to the Adelaide sisters but visitors also assisted continually.

The spirit of love and joy which pervaded the Convention showed acceptance of our prayer that our Heavenly Father would see the intent of our hearts and accept the contribution of each one present as service unto Him, and an expression of love to Him.

The Convention's response to the messages received, and to all in every place that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, is one of warm Christian love, coupled with the Scripture—1 Thes. 5:16-18.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

THE annual Memorial of our Lord's death was gladly observed by the Melbourne brethren on the 30th March, while with grateful hearts we seek also to keep the spirit of this occasion day by day throughout the year. When we contemplate how much it cost our Heavenly Father to send Jesus to accomplish our salvation, and the willingness of our Lord to endure so much for us, this yearly remembrance does stimulate our faith and devotion to walk in the steps of our Master, as God intended it should.

Previous studies in 1 Cor. 11:23-29; 10:16, 17 were very helpful in refreshing our hearts and minds on the importance of this remembrance of Christ's great sacrifice for us, and for all mankind. Throughout the service, prayers of thankfulness were offered to God for the gift of Jesus, and on behalf of Christians everywhere; appropriate hymns were sung, and Scripture readings were taken from Matt. 26:17 to 27:56; a helpful address was delivered, leading on to the partaking of the emblems which

our Lord especially requested that we use, symbolizing His broken body and shed blood. Partaking in remembrance of Christ, these emblems also picture our participation with Him in sacrificial death, if so be that we may live with Him and be associated in His great life-giving work on behalf of all the obedient of humanity who have ever lived, to the praise of God.

Adelaide

Class preparation for the Memorial consisted of three Bible Studies prior to the remembrancer. These were subjective studies, this year, and the "Passover of the New Creation" from the 6th Volume was used to point to subject matter.

Then on Sunday 30th March the Memorial was observed at a second meeting at 6.15 p.m. (These days, the Adelaide Class normally has one Bible Study only each week, at 2 p.m., on Sundays. The Memorial is an exception with the afternoon study at 3 p.m., and the Memorial at 6.15 p.m.) It was good that all those who generally attend the studies were able to be present. Additionally, a brother from the country who has difficulty in coming to the studies was able to be with us.

Very forward in our minds and prayers, were our brothers and sisters in the Church of the Firstborn. Notwithstanding the differences in time around the world, we felt that we were not just a small group doing this in remembrance of Christ, but rather part of a world wide body rejoicing together in His victory. The culmination of the event was participating together in the elements, reminding us of His body broken for us and His life's blood poured out in willing sacrifice. Previously an appropriate address was given, and the brothers shared in reading the applicable passages in Isaiah 53 and Matthew 26 and 27.

Of course, we deplore His suffering and our own responsibility for it, but much more do we rejoice in His love, His faithfulness, yes, His courage and endurance. Surely we must place all blame on sin and hate sin just as our Father planned that we should. Our hearts are thankful that the Father's love was such as to provide for our needs at extreme cost. Each Memorial must constrain us the more to our "reasonable service."

Perth

We observed our Lord's Memorial on the 30th March, when our small group participated by heeding the Apostle Paul's injunction—"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come"—1 Cor. 11:26.

Prior to the Memorial Service we had a study from a portion of Psalm 69, which foretold of the reproaches of Christ. It was strengthening to our own faith and allegiance to Christ as we remembered the great cost to Himself for the benefit of us all. Praise God for the gift of His

Son for our redemption and future hope for mankind in general.

Brisbane

In our little assembly of God's children we had the privilege to meet again this year on 30th March, in one of our brothers' private homes to celebrate that most important remembrance. Important, to every true Christian to observe, as our dear Lord asked us to do, saying—"This do in remembrance of me"—1 Cor. 11:24, quoting the Apostle Paul. Therefore, as true Christians and followers of our Lord, we felt the same way in our hearts, to gather ourselves and observe this Memorial of our Lord's death.

While there were only few of us this year, yet it was a true, quiet and loving gathering. Though it was sad from one point of view reminding us of our Lord's death, yet also it was confirming our consecration to walk in His footsteps, by our beloved Jehovah's grace.

Nambour-Toowoomba

The small group of the Nambour Class gladly met and were blessed by being joined by the friends from Toowoomba this year on March 30th, in compliance with our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me." Prior to the Memorial Service an address was given on "The Sacrifice of Christ", followed by a study in Matt. 26:17-30, both of which proved very helpful.

Later came the Memorial address based on 1 Cor. 11 from verse 17, which also was most helpful. Prayers were offered that we might have the Lord's guidance and also on behalf of all His people everywhere. Several lovely hymns were sung, especially selected for the occasion, being—166, 437, 348 and 259 from Bible Students Hymnal. With grateful hearts we partook of the emblems which represent our Lord's broken body and shed blood, bringing life to His followers during this Gospel Age, and shortly to all mankind on the earth during the Kingdom Age. In our hearts we all renewed our consecration to be broken with Him and to follow in His footsteps, no matter how steep or difficult the pathway might be.

An isolated brother also kept the Memorial of Christ's death with the Lord and himself. He writes—It was with thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father that the request of our dear Saviour to "do this in remembrance of me" was kept. The observance opened with hymn No. 2, followed by prayer to thank our loving Father for that most precious Gift. Readings from Exod. 12:1-27; Matt. 26:26 and 1 Cor. 11:23-30 followed, then a dialogue was read showing the type, long centuries ago, which foreshadowed the antitype, as Paul says—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"—1 Cor. 5:7—His blood being sprinkled on our hearts by faith. After this the emblems were partaken of, and with thankful heart to God for the grace sufficient, our great hope is to follow Him in that way He has opened

for us, with quiet confidence. Hymn 437 was a fitting conclusion.

"WHO LOVED ME?"

"Who loved me, and gave himself for me"—Gal. 2:20.

Three little sunbeams, gilding all I see;
Three little chords, each full of melody;
Three little leaves, balm for my agony.

WHO?

He loved me, the Father's only Son;
He gave Himself, the precious spotless One;
He shed His blood, and thus the work was done.

LOVED

He loved, not merely pitied, here I rest;
Sorrow may come—I to His heart am pressed;
What should I fear while sheltered on His breast.

ME

Wonder of wonders, Jesus loved ME!
Wretched—lost—ruined—sunk in misery.
He sought me—found me—raised me—set me free.
My soul, the order of the words approves—
Christ FIRST, me LAST, nothing between but LOVE!

Lord, keep me always down, Thyself above!
Trusting in Thee, not struggling restlessly,
So shall I daily gain the victory.
I—"yet not I"—but "Christ"—"WHO LOVED ME."
—Selected.

(Continued from page 3.)

There are other possibilities besides lukewarmness. 1 Cor. 3:1, 2—"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." So immaturity is another cause of disunity and lack of love. Heb. 5:13—"For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe." We know what the criterion for maturity is. A person is mature when the fruits of the spirit appear, as in Matt. 12:33. A tree is known by its fruits. In Gal. 5 we have the fruits of the spirit enumerated. When there is no fruitage, a Christian is immature. An immature Christian cannot stand up by himself. He relies heavily on the stronger, and cannot take the fire. An immature Christian cannot stand the fire, it is too hot.

I believe the disunity test we are now experiencing is how the Lord is finding out who has the fruits. If you cannot act as the Lord would have you do under the rubbing of other diamonds, you are openly admitting you do not have enough love for the brethren. When it comes to disagreements the thing **not** to do is to isolate. How else can you get agreement? If you separate, the gap is permanent. At least when you stay together there is a possibility there may be agreement.

Another thing is Christian leadership. Our leader is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Head of the Church. In all things He has the preeminence. He is the Master of the mighty, Governor of the governors; Prince of princes, King of kings and Lord of lords. But it pleased Him to have lead-

ers, deacons, teachers, evangelists and other forms of service and leadership as points of influence to help and feed the flock of the Church of God. But some leaders are in conflict and cannot harmonise their goals. They are keeping their polarization strong. They are not making every effort to preserve unity. But the indictment is clear; if polarization results in division the leaders must bear the greater blame.

The Lord gave us the concept of leadership. In Matt. 20:25-27 the Master gave us the model of leadership among us—"Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them . . . But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." The way to leadership in the Christian movement is service, not being served. You remember one strange thing the Lord Jesus did—He set about washing the feet of all the apostles. He wanted to point out something. How many of you would be willing to wash somebody's feet? You may say, If the Lord Jesus did it, I will do it. But it was a symbolic act. Feet are the lowest part of the body, and are often unclean. The face is always the part given the most attention. Do you have any feet mirrors? We must be willing to serve as Jesus served; perform the lowest service called for. Brethren who are in authority must be careful. Brethren who make decisions must be careful. There is no concept of autocrats. Christian leadership is service to the brethren. Not to one group only, but to those who desire service. The Christian form of leadership is not dominating.

The fourth condition affecting the love of the brethren is personality. Someone says Christians are curious, weaklings, soft-minded. Don't believe it! The Truth attracts strong characters. The Truth does not attract the wishy-washy. The Lord's people are strong characters. There are people in this Convention who are ready to stand and defy our government right here and now. They are not weaklings. The Christian is not the anvil, but the hammer. He is not being moulded by society, but attempting to mould those things around him, but having a struggle. His creed is strong, overwhelmingly so sometimes. Affirm! These efforts will keep you fit. The Christian goes against the current. The Truth seems to take hold on the stronger characters. But there are some weaker ones. The Truth quickly builds their character and strengthens their development, and they become very strong. Diamonds—that is what the Lord wants. It is not a substance that can easily be pulverized. Only one thing can do that—another diamond. The Lord is providing these experiences for us—a cut here and there to bring out the brilliance.

In Matt. 7:21-23 the Lord said—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter

into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." These will be the people seeking to justify themselves on the basis of what they have done. The Lord gives these people His final and awful answer. This would be the greatest calamity ever, to hear the Lord say to you personally, I know you not. Such are the trees without fruit, the Christians in name only. They are those who have not made every effort to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

"The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 45c.

Oxford Reference Bible, with References, India paper, Brevier clear type, Leatherex binding, thumb index, \$21.00, plus postage, according to distance.

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (postage from 90c to \$2.60, according to distance in Australia).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 70c in Victoria; 80c interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna" pocket size—75c (postage 45c).
- "Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 45c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$2.00 (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—50c (Postage 45c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Where are the Dead?"—10c (postage 20c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

The postage quoted on booklets is for single copies; proportionately less for more than one copy.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101

Extracts from Correspondence

Dear Brother—Christian love and greetings to you and all the dear brethren there in Melbourne. It has literally been months since we were privileged to be with you, but the memory of our visit lingers on and we think of you so often and your service to the Lord, and our brethren . . . I have also been enjoying the "Peoples Paper" and am enclosing the "green stuff" for its subscription . . . Three weeks have passed since we celebrated the Memorial, and it is good if we continue to remember the events that occurred in that "upper room" so long ago. Sister and I were thinking of you down there, and since you are a day ahead of us, were with you in our minds' eye.

As we get so near the kingdom, the brethren are fast going to their rewards, and how thankful we are that we were able to meet some of those saints who have now finished their course, and as we now offer our prayers to the Heavenly Father, we can truly think of all of you and know the Lord is there. May the Lord continue to be with you is our prayer, and we ask that you remember us also at the throne of grace. Yours in the blessed hope.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Thank you for the book "The Divine Plan of the Ages" which I have read, and am now reading again with a better understanding of the Bible. I am getting much more from the Bible now, thanks to your books and papers. If you wouldn't mind could you please forward to me next time another copy of the booklet—"Watch Israel!—God's Time Clock." It is really worth reading. Am enclosing \$— for subscription fee, and a donation for your good work. May God bless you; yours sincerely.

Dear Brother—I praise God for the way He works, as this afternoon I was handed your Dec.-Jan., '80 copy of "Peoples Paper." Reading it tonight, I thank God again and again that He is revealing the way of love all around me. Please forgive me getting excited, but I would like a copy of just about everything mentioned. I enclose a cheque for \$— for the following—Last 12 months "Peoples Paper", money for next 12 months sub., copy of broadcasts—"Why does the Bible Contain Apparent Contradictions", "Our Bible Translated", some copies of "The Greatest of These is Love", and "The Ten Camels." Please let me know if the amount does not cover everything. Looking forward to your reply, and praise the Lord again. Your brother in Christ.

Dear Sirs—Thank you for sending me some copies of the "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom." The articles are very well written and presented. I would like to subscribe to this paper, and so have enclosed one dollar, \$1.00 only, at this stage. Thanking you.

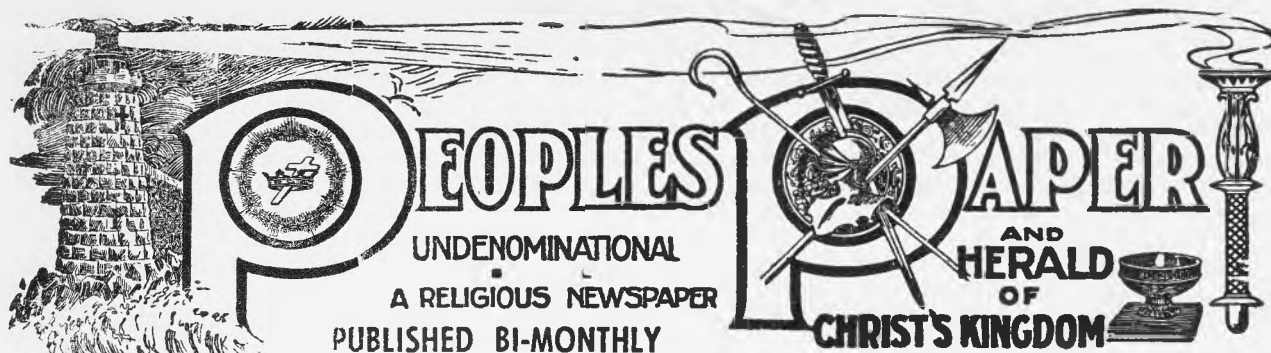
Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Having read a booklet entitled "God and Reason", I would like to have a copy for myself, and one to lend; if you could supply me with 2 copies I would be grateful. The cost of same I would promptly mail to you when informed. Yours sincerely.

Nambour Convention

The Nambour Convention is to be held (D.V.) on 26th and 27th July, in the Staff Room, State School, Coronation Drive, Nambour, to which interested friends are invited. Further information from—Mr. G. Tosh, Paynters Creek Rd., M.S.I. 1102, Nambour, Queensland, 4560.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350Kc. — Sundays 11.05 p.m.



Volume LXIII No. 4

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—SEPTEMBER 1980

Price—20 Cents

How Often Should Lord's Supper be Celebrated?

THIS subject is really very important to those who have respect and admiration for the institutions set out in God's Word, for the instruction, encouragement and blessing of all people who desire and delight to please the Lord in all things.

At the outset, it should prove helpful to trace the institution of the Lord's Supper, or the Last Supper, and note why the Lord delayed giving this Supper to His disciples—His Apostles—until the last night of His earthly life, at the time of the Jewish Passover Feast. There must have been some very important reason for choosing the very time when the annual Jewish Passover became due, for Jesus immediately added this ceremony of the Last Supper, which can be rightly called the Memorial of Christ's death.

Let us now trace the institution of the Jewish Passover ceremony and see what connection, if any, it has with the Lord's Supper. Turning to Exodus 12, we find detailed instructions which the Lord gave through Moses and Aaron to Israel. We will quote liberally from this chapter because it contains a wonderful outline of the type to prefigure the institution which our Lord gave on the evening of His betrayal which led to His death. From verse 3 the Lord is speaking through Moses and Aaron, and please read to verse 12, noting in verse 11—"It is the Lord's passover." Verses 21-33 are also very helpful, then please read verses 40-42, which end with the words—"This is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."

So with more or less appreciation Israel had kept the remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt on its anniversary each year, until our Lord's first advent. Then when Jesus commenced His ministry, He would have kept three Jewish Passovers, no doubt with His disciples, so we can quite understand their inquiring, when the next Passover came around, as we find in Matt. 26:17—"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 passover." This undoubtedly was the usual custom. This would be the fourth Passover the disciples had observed with their Lord. In verse 20 it reads—"Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve"—to partake of the annual Jewish Passover Feast. Then verses 26 and 27—"And as they were eating (after the Jewish Passover Feast), Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it." Thus did our Lord institute the Memorial of His death. In Luke 22:19 Jesus added—"This do in remembrance of me."

There can be no doubt of the meaning of the Lord's words here. He was instituting this Memorial of His death, this supper, the Lord's Supper, to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover first carried out in Egypt. Instead of killing the Passover lamb each year on the anniversary of the Lord's Passover in Egypt, Jesus asked His disciples to use the bread and wine to represent His body and blood, and in partaking of these emblems, to thus show their full faith and confidence in Him as the "Lamb of God." John the Baptist, after having baptized our Lord, under the guidance of God's spirit, declared in John 1:29—"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." The Passover lambs slain in Egypt and each year following were types of Christ, the real Lamb of God, who only could take away sin. We know the Passover and the deliverance of Israel from Egypt were wonderful types or pictures of the reality enacted at the close of our Lord's earthly ministry. It would not have been appropriate or pleasing to God for any of the Lord's people to continue the Passover ceremony with the literal lamb, when the actual Lamb of God, Christ, had shed His blood to take away the sin of the world. But this is what our Jewish friends have been doing all down the centuries since they rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, their Messiah.

Turning to Matt. 27:51 we see God's reaction immediately after the sacrifice of our dear Lord. The verse reads—"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent." This indicated the rejection of Israel and any further services for God in the Temple. They would be of no account in the sight of God from that time onward. Our Lord's sacrifice had been consummated on the Cross, and the Israelitish types were finished as far as God was concerned. So the keeping of the Jewish Passover year by year is of no value in the sight of God, because the sacrifice of the real Lamb has been consummated, and as we read in Heb. 7:25—"He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." So the Jewish ceremonies were finished. The veil of the Temple being rent from the top to the bottom indicated God's judgment manifested, and their ceremonies were no longer pleasing to the Father.

In 1 Cor. 5 we have a helpful reference, where Paul is exhorting the Corinthians in respect of their daily life as Christians. Verses 7 and 8 read—"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even 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." The Passover ceremony lasted for seven days, and that is a picture of the whole life of the Christian, from when he becomes a true follower of the Master. Therefore Paul says—"Let us keep the feast"—as a continual observance in spirit and truth, in that Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

Someone might ask, Who are the "us" class in the text—"Let us keep the feast"? That is a good question. The answer we have in 1 Cor. 1:2—"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." It seems that two classes are indicated here—"the sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints"—and—"with all in every place that call upon the name of Jesus Christ." It is those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, who are the "us" class to whom Paul says—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." Those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus are approaching the state of being sanctified in Christ Jesus, as they continue faithfully.

We have the same lesson in Exod. 12:22, latter part—"And none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning." All the Israelites were under the blood of the lamb, but the firstborns only were in danger of death. So now, during this Gospel Age, all who call upon the name of Jesus are under the blood of Christ, but only the firstborns or firstfruits

unto God are liable to the second death. In James 1:18 we are told—"Of his own will (God's will) begat he us with the word of truth (through understanding and obeying the truth), that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." These are called out of the world to walk in the footsteps of the Saviour, being pictured by the firstborns in Egypt who were passed over when they obeyed the instructions given to strike the blood of the lamb on the lintels and doorposts of their houses. These firstborns are "saved to the uttermost", as we read in Heb. 7:25.

Appropriating the merit of Christ's sacrifice, pictured by the emblems of the bread and wine, we have the opportunity for full justification, full sanctification—"sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints"—"to be saved to the uttermost." Paul shows this clearly in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17—"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." The Lord's true people are participating in the death of our dear Lord, being offered up as **part of His own sacrifice**. This is a great mystery to all except to those whose reckoned perfect human lives are being sacrificed as the Body of Christ, that they may reign with Him in the wonderful kingdom, to bring about the deliverance of all mankind, pictured by the deliverance of all Israel out of Egypt on the first Passover night.

The Apostle Paul explained this matter to Timothy, when he declared—"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory... If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him"—2 Tim. 2:10, 11. In Rom. 6:5 the same Apostle outlines the sacrificial death of Christ's body members, and the outcome, in the words—"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." That is a lovely thought—that God accepts our Lord's true followers as **part of Christ's sacrifice**—"holy, acceptable unto God, our reasonable service"—Rom. 12:1.

How, then, should the Lord's Supper be celebrated? Some denominational churches celebrate weekly, some monthly, some quarterly. Do the Scriptures give us a key? We believe they do. Paul was given some very wonderful revelations, including the matter of the Lord's Supper. We have an enlightening passage in 1 Cor. 11 from verse 23. This Scripture gives us almost the same wording as we have in the Gospels. This is because God was dealing with Paul, in this special way, giving him this information by revelation in respect of every part of the truth, including the Lord's Supper. Paul says—"I have received of the Lord that which

also I delivered unto you." He had communicated this message to them previously. "That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread"—and instituted the Memorial of His death. Verse 26—"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

Does this mean that the Lord's Supper should be observed quite often, when it says—"as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup"? We do not think so. Without stating in so many words, our Lord Jesus definitely implied that His Memorial—"Do this in remembrance of me"—was intended to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover. So as often as the anniversary of His death comes around would clearly seem to be Paul's meaning when he says—"As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." As the anniversary comes around, it is fitting that it be kept on the anniversary, the time when the Lord paid the supreme sacrifice. Instead of killing a literal lamb, "Do this in remembrance of me", the Lamb of God, using the emblems He requested. All the typical sacrifices were to cease when He completed His sacrifice on the cross.

There are some Scriptures, particularly in Acts, which some Christians take to infer that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated every first day of the week. Turning to Acts 2:42 we read in the King James Version—"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The word "and" is omitted in the original manuscripts, so it should read—"the apostles' doctrine and fellowship in breaking of bread." The partaking of bread was not intended to be apart from the fellowship.

Verse 46 of Acts 2 reads—"And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house." This was a daily fellowship together in the early years after our Lord's sacrifice. It was a rejoicing time, they realised the Lord was risen from the dead. He spent 40 days appearing to them at various times, and then ascended to heaven. They were rejoicing in the fact that the first day of the week was the Resurrection day. Our Lord appeared to them on the first day of the week at His resurrection, and then on the next first day of the week. This verse 46 does not imply they kept the Lord's Supper daily. Some people today think it means the Lord's Supper when reference is made to the breaking of bread. But there is no mention of the cup in any of these instances. With the symbols the cup was as important as the unleavened bread.

Reading Weymouth's translation in Acts 2:42, it states—"And they were constant in listening to the teaching of the apostles and in their attendance at the Communion, that is, the Breaking of the Bread, and at prayer."

That is not correct; some translators colour their translations with preconceived ideas. We have help from these learned translators, but have to take note of some renderings which are not correct. When we understand the true meaning of the breaking of bread, we are helped. The Lord was risen indeed, the disciples rejoiced in the fact that the Lord was above, and so they fellowshipped and ate a meal together. We do not condemn people who keep the Lord's Supper every first day of the week, but when we are able to see the Lord's intention in regard to it, it is more effective in our minds and hearts. We rejoice in the fact of what the Lord is teaching us.

We have a reference to the Apostle Paul and the breaking of bread in Acts 20:7—"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." This was the usual custom on the first day of the week, meeting together as Christians as we do on the first day of the week. They had a meal together, rejoicing in the Lord's wonderful resurrection. Verse 11—"When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread"—we can see that was not a celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Lord was risen, and they were rejoicing in His salvation and broadcasting His truth as they came together.

We remember the walk to Emmaus, in Luke 24 from verse 13. At the end of the journey we have another instance to help with our subject. We see what a thrill the disciples got from the Lord's teachings. The Lord told them of the experiences through which He had passed, and that Christ had to rise on the third day. "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." They knew at once it was the Lord. He had been used to breaking bread with them during His ministry. This was not another Lord's Supper, but it would have been, if the breaking of bread meant the Lord's Supper. The Lord asked a blessing on the meal in the familiar way, and so revealed to them that He was their Lord. The Lord had created the material body, which He did on a number of occasions to demonstrate His resurrection during that 40 days. He could come into the room as a spirit being, create the special body, dematerialise and disappear again. It was all beyond human comprehension. It was the Lord's way of revealing Himself. That proves to us that the breaking of bread is not intended to refer to the Lord's Supper being taken on the first day of the week. It was not the celebration of the Lord's Supper at all, but a rejoicing in the Lord's resurrection.

"As often as ye eat this bread"—as often as the anniversary comes around, we delight

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Blood of New Covenant

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"—Matt. 26:28.

THESE words of Jesus, spoken at the time He instituted the Memorial of His death on the last night of His earthly life, have been difficult to understand by some sincere followers of the Master. The two previous verses in this chapter, verses 26 and 27 are under review in this issue of "Peoples Paper" in the article—"How Often Should the Lord's Supper be Celebrated?"—and it is thought well to consider this verse 28 separately. The main difficulty seems to be why Jesus said that the emblem of the wine, which He passed to His disciples as well as the unleavened bread, should be termed—"my blood of the new testament", or new covenant. The remaining part of the verse—"which is shed for many for the remission of sins"—is more easily understood, inasmuch as Jesus "tasted death for every man"—Heb. 2:9. And again—"And he is the propitiation for our sins (Christians); and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world"—1 John 2:2. How thankful we are that our Lord's sacrifice on Calvary provided the opportunity for salvation from death for every human being who has ever lived, as many additional Scriptures testify.

When our Lord proved faithful unto death, it is well to always keep in mind that He qualified for every office in which He will officiate not only during the Gospel Age, but also throughout the Kingdom or Millennial Age. In other words, Christ dies no more, so all His qualifications for office appear in the Scriptures, and Bible students must determine when each office of our Lord is due for fulfilment. For instance, Isa. 9:6 states that "His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Most Bible students agree that these titles of our risen Lord belong to His wonderful work in the Kingdom Age. Likewise, we believe that the title of Mediator of the New Covenant also will be fulfilled in the Kingdom Age. If this is correct, why then did Jesus refer to the new covenant at the time of instituting the Memorial of His death, at the beginning of the Gospel Age?

The answer is, that when Jesus passed the emblem of wine to His disciples, He was inviting them to share or participate in His death, as a part of His sacrifice, thus participating in His blood which will ratify the new covenant when all the sacrificing of His members is completed. Jesus had previously told His disciples—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you"—John 6:53—no spiritual life, as members of His Body. So when Jesus gave the Memorial emblems—"Take eat"—"drink ye all of it"—He was repeating what He had already told them, and which was essential for members of His Body—that they must die with Him as part of His sacrifice, being broken with Him, and participate in His blood, the blood required to ratify the new covenant with Israel, when the "fulness of the Gentiles be come in"—Rom. 11:25. Then would follow—"All Israel shall be saved (for the earthly kingdom) . . . For this is my covenant unto them (the new covenant), when I shall take away their sins"—Rom. 11:26, 27.

That the members of Christ's Body, His true Church, are really part of Christ Himself during the sacrificing period of this Gospel Age, from Pentecost onward, is well illustrated by our Lord's words to Saul when he was apprehended on the Damascus road, as recorded in Acts 9:4, 5—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me . . . I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Saul was persecuting Christ's Body members, and so was persecuting the risen Christ. From this standpoint, the words of the repentant, converted and consecrated Apostle Paul can well be understood—"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.

Additional thoughts on this subject are available in the recent "Peoples Paper" article—"God's Plan Revealed Through His Covenants"—and the booklet—"The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing"—and these copies are gladly supplied free to all, especially to new readers.

Passover at First Advent

THE following short article has appeared in these columns before, but as this matter is important and continually exercises the minds of the brethren, it is repeated again at this 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 correctly accomplished have perhaps not been evident throughout the years.

In the year 1957 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 the following extract offers a helpful and enlightening explanation of the celebration in the year of our Lord's sacrifice. The quotation is as follows—

“The Last Supper was taken on the 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 the 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.”

Stand Fast

HOW many times do the Scriptures admonish us to “stand fast”? “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong,” says Paul—1 Cor. 16:13. He also says to the Corinthian Church—“Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for, by faith ye stand”—2 Cor. 1:24. Then again—“Only let your conversation (behaviour) be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel”—Phil. 1:27.

These admonitions, so necessary at that time, are much more necessary now. How easy it would be to drift with the tide and become weary and faint.

The Apostles were arrested for preaching Christ and healing a lame man at the temple. They were illiterate fishermen, unaccustomed to speaking before the learned, and we may well be amazed at their courage, and at the straightforward presentation of the Gospel given by St. Peter. It astonished the High Court, too. They wished to arraign the Apostles, not for the good deed of healing the lame man, but rather for their preaching of Jesus. However, under the guidance of the holy spirit, Peter wisely and properly drew attention to the fact that they were on trial really for the healing of the sick. Again he disowned any power on the part of himself and his companions; admitting that they were merely ordinary men, he credited the miracle entirely to Jesus.

What a lesson is here for all who would represent the Lord, as His ambassadors, as Paul said—“We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ”—2 Cor. 4:5. How courageous were the Apostles' words—“Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole.” St. Peter was not only preaching that Jesus was the Messiah, whom the Jews had long expected, but, additionally, he was declaring that the Sanhedrin had murdered the Messiah. It was the truth, and it was necessary to utter the truth. To have evaded the point would have shown fear.

Next, the Apostle quoted to them from the prophecy of David—Psalm 118:22—saying “This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved”—Acts 4:11, 12.

Perceiving the boldness of Peter and John, and noting that they were unlearned and ignorant, these leaders in Israel marvelled; and “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Of Jesus, it was also said—“How knoweth this man letters; having never learned”—John 7:15. They knew of His power with the people through the spirit of the Lord, and of His straightforward presentation of the truth. They recognised these men as of the same character, filled with Jesus' spirit.

To this day, this is true of the followers of Jesus. “God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and a sound mind.” The Lord's people should remember this point and should cultivate such a spirit, and be copies of the Lord Jesus, and of the faithful Apostles, so that all might take know-

ledge of them that they have been with Jesus and have learned of Him.

As the Apostle indicates in his discourse, "There is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved." We must consecrate our all to follow in His steps faithfully, even unto death. On these conditions, we become His disciples, and having become His disciples, learners in the school of Christ, and having been begotten of the holy spirit, we are privileged to show forth more and more His praises, and to let our light shine before men, that they, seeing our good works and our likeness to the Master, may glorify God on our behalf.

The Sanhedrin was perplexed. They perceived that the disciples had so strong a case, and had really turned the tables upon them, charging them before the people with being the murderers of the Son of God, the Messiah. As they looked at the man who had been healed, they perceived a great miracle, and they could say nothing. So they put forth the disciples from their midst, that they might discuss the case privately. They could not deny the miracle, and they were afraid of what it might lead to if talk of this kind about Jesus, and about their being His murderers, should spread amongst the people. They thought it best to let the disciples go, charging them not to preach any more in the name of Jesus. Then was shown the marvellous courage of the Apostles. They replied—"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"—Acts 4:19.

The Bible directs the followers of Jesus to be subject to the powers that be; but while seeking to be thus law-abiding in every respect, Christians are to recognise that there is a still higher Ruler, and are to be subject to the worldly powers only in the absence of a contrary divine instruction. God had commanded the disciples through Jesus, that they should preach the Gospel. It was, therefore, the duty of the Apostles, as it is the duty of all the followers of Jesus, to make known the Gospel message wherever there are hearing ears, and not to fear what man may do.

The church, young in faith, had been greatly distressed by the imprisonment of the disciples, and, when they were released, a general meeting for rejoicing and praise to God was held, thanking the Lord for the courage given to the Apostles, for the promise of His Word, and for the miracle which led up to this. As a consequence, all were so encouraged that "they spake the Word of God with boldness"; and "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all"—Acts 4:33.

This text is properly an exhortation to all of God's people everywhere, to be faithful and

loyal to God and His cause. Let us each apply it to ourselves. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong."

News Item

THE following short article appeared in the Melbourne "Age" on Saturday, 19th April last, and permission has been granted to use it in our "Peoples Paper." We believe helpful lessons can be gained from the thoughts expressed.

At a time when the Soviet Union is in the bad books, it is interesting—and charitable—to reflect on the scene that will be re-enacted throughout Russia today. It is Subbotnik: the national spring-clean day.

If recent years are any guide, about 140 million people will perform some "voluntary" community service in cleaning up the mess left by five months of the northern winter. Salesmen will rake up leaves in parks; secretaries will sweep gutters; old and young will scrape and paint street seats and wash telephone booths. Workers unable to join this spruce-the-nation programme will work overtime at their jobs and "donate" the extra pay to the State-run charity.

This annual event on the Saturday nearest to April 19 commemorates the anniversary of Lenin's birthday. Lenin introduced it in 1919, and it was revived in the early 1960s. Tomorrow the whole country should be a cleaner place after all this collective effort.

In our society the idea of the Federal Government's marshalling of, say, one million "volunteers" and for such a purpose is inconceivable. But the Russian event does suggest that our own environment could be a more pleasant place to live in if more citizens took a greater personal pride and initiative in making and keeping our country beautiful.

In any area of life things tend to become untidy. On the domestic scene, in an earlier generation spring cleaning was a ritual. Carpets were taken up and beaten, dark corners that had escaped the broom received special attention, curtains were taken down and laundered. The more general use of wall-to-wall carpets and regular application of the vacuum cleaner and use of the washing machine has largely rendered less necessary a special annual attack on dust and grime.

Nevertheless, most families tend to accumulate broken furniture, disused utensils, burnt-out appliances, worn-out clothes, old letters, books and newspapers that clutter up the home. Not necessarily in spring, but certainly periodically, such unwanted items need sorting out, useless things conveyed to the tip, recyclable ones put out for charity collectors, and those still serviceable dropped off at opportunity shops.

In personal life also there is constant need to clean out the mind. During a person's winter of discontent he or she accumulates resentments, grudges, animosities and other bitter feelings that rob life of its exhilaration. Birthdays, wedding anniversaries and similarly emotional occasions are appropriate times to cast out such rubbish and replace it with kindlier sentiments.

In the wider world, the human scene is cluttered with international tensions, political strife, social injustices that need to be swept away. Those people, motivated by high ideals and skilled in conciliation, who are ceaselessly working to clean out the world's disharmonies depend on the support of all persons of good will.

They can also draw encouragement from the visions of all great prophets, of an age in which all that defiles and corrupts society, and "all sorrow and sighing" will be cast out; and when peace, good will and joy will fill the earth. It is a goal worth pursuing.

(Continued from page 3.)

to keep this simple, sacred, hallowed service, in memory of our Lord and also in memory of our own consecration, appropriating the merit of His sacrifice, and participating in the death of our Lord as His body members, and day by day be overcomers by His grace, and later be participators with Him when all the obedient of mankind shall be blessed. "Do this"—keep this observance in remembrance of Christ, and no longer keep the Jewish Passover ceremony with the literal lamb.

1 Cor. 5:6-8 is a wonderful Scripture, and Exodus 12:15 helps to reveal the full meaning, the first part of which reads—"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread." The seven days picture completeness. When we study Corinthians, Paul is telling us to keep the complete Christian life committed to the Lord as we have come into this wonderful family of God, that we may be His people indeed as we work out our salvation. This Corinthian passage is a lovely Scripture to keep in mind as we go on our pilgrim journey throughout the year. Paul had to correct the Corinthians when he says—"Your glorying is not good, Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." That is when we come under the merit of Christ, and God beholds His people through the sacrifice of Christ. Seven days in the type pictured the whole Christian life in the antitype. We must commit our lives to the Lord all the days ahead. "Not with the old leaven"—the old ways—"neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The Lord does love sincerity in His people. We should keep the spirit of the Memorial daily in our hearts. We ask the Lord

to guide our steps, our hearts, our thoughts, day by day, then at the close of day we thank the Lord for His care over us. Our lives are fully committed to Him, we belong to His family. God is taking many sons to glory, after having made the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering. God is still taking out a people for His name, those who will represent His name, and die for His name, as Jesus did, sacrificially, joyfully, gladly using up the human life day by day, not in worldly-mindedness and pleasures. Those things which are quite right for worldly people to engage in, the Lord's people gladly sacrifice, because now they have laid their little all on the altar. They have made their vows of consecration to be faithful unto death, and by the Lord's grace that is possible.

The Christian's baptism has a similar deep meaning as observing the Memorial of Christ's death. "As many as are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death"—Rom. 6:3. Not baptized in water, water baptism is taken correctly only after the real baptism into Christ's death is undertaken. So the same lesson we have in our Memorial service is contained in our baptism. The symbols in both are helpful, but the true realities are much more important, and should be fully understood before the symbols are taken. When we commit our whole lives to the Lord day by day, what a privilege we enjoy in really knowing the Lord—"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"—John 17:3. Our Christian life is indeed a joy and pleasure all along the pilgrim way. All that we do, the daily round and common task, can be done as unto the Lord. Nothing is a drudgery if all is committed to Him. That is what consecration really means.

In the observance of our Memorial annually, the spirit of it must be kept in our hearts day by day, or the annual observance would be of little value, just as the symbol of baptism in water would be of little value if we are not keeping the reality of our baptism into Christ's death in our hearts continually. So may His grace assist us day by day along the narrow way that leads to the heavenly eternal life.

Divine Paradoxes

"Because thy loving kindness (favor) is better than life, my lips shall praise thee"—Psa. 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 favor is more desirable than life; that is to say, he would rather die than live without divine

favor. 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 favor 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, honor, immortality, the divine nature. We are glad that we can appreciate these glorious things represented in the divine favor 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, and 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 from 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 today. All the persecution comes about from the making known of the truth. In no time that we know has this not been true. 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. With the lips one might

praise God, and with the lips he might injure men. 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.

Pilgrim Way Ended

OUR elderly Brother Andersen of Melbourne finished the pilgrim way on May 29th last, after rejoicing in the truth for upwards of 25 years, having also previously loved the Lord dearly for most of his long life of 93 years.

When living in an outer suburb of Melbourne he was attracted by the broadcasts of Frank and Ernest and attended with us at Conventions and Memorial Services whenever possible. Of a very loving and devoted Christian character, the wideness of God's Plan of Salvation for all mankind appealed to him so fully, and he sought also to witness to others of the truths which refreshed his own heart.

In recent years failing health kept our dear Brother Andersen confined to a Nursing Home, where his Christian disposition was well appreciated, he being also well visited and comforted by his daughters and their families. His attitude towards his grandchildren and great grandchildren earned for him the title of "Grandpa-the-Great." Sincere sympathy is extended to his children and their families in the passing of a very devoted father and grandfather. By the Lord's grace, he shall have entered into the joys of the Lord, where there are pleasures for evermore.

Dr. P. Stock, whose brother was the minister of a Baptist church, was once left at home on Sunday morning to look after two little nieces. After a time one of the girls asked if they might play at having church.

Their uncle remarked that this would be quite proper, but of course she would have to preach a sermon. To this she agreed. She used the back of an armchair for a pulpit while the "congregation" sat on a stool in front. Then she leaned over her "pulpit" and solemnly said, "You must be good, Amen."

It was the shortest—and one of the best sermons Dr. Stock ever heard!

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 45c.

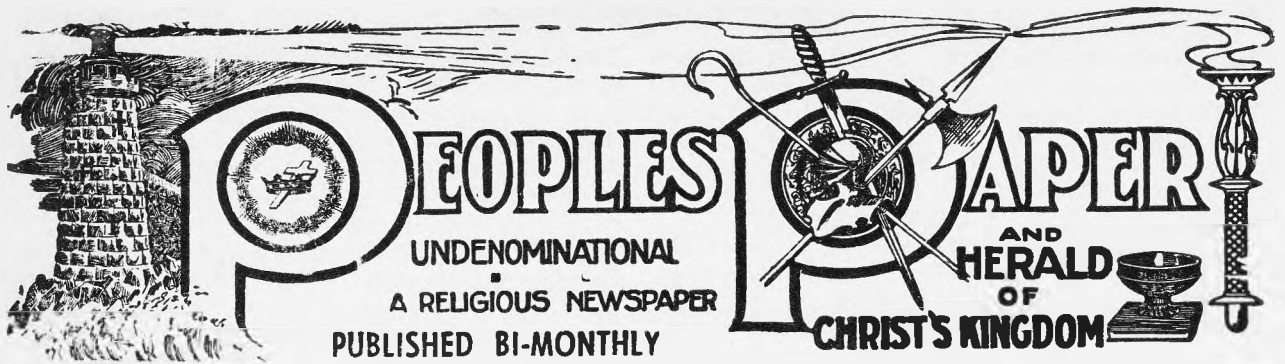
Oxford Reference Bible, with References, India paper, Brevier clear type, Leatherex binding, thumb index, \$21.00, plus postage, according to distance.

Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds an easy entrance to ignoble minds.

John Hervey.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350Kc. — Sundays 11.05 p.m.



Volume LXIII No. 6

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER—JANUARY 1981

Price—20 Cents

The Bible Solution to Present World Unrest

IN considering this subject—"The Bible Solution to Present World Unrest"—we believe that all thinking people will agree that the unrest now existing throughout the world is not really new to humanity. Those who can remember world events over the past half century and more, realise that what is now happening, is however, greatly intensified. We know that certain sections of the world have had their spasms of trouble, back over the centuries, but never before has such serious unrest been world-wide.

However, there are some people today who do not agree with our opinion, and have coined a phrase which expresses their idea of world events in the words—"history repeating itself." We have a statement from the Apostle Peter, telling us about such people, in 2 Pet. 3:3, 4—"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his presence? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Such people either imagine that there is no change in world affairs, or they are wishfully thinking, hoping their desires about history repeating itself will work out in some way unknown at the present time. Again, we know of some people who have used the words "history repeating itself" in the past, who now admit that world conditions are getting out of hand, and there seems no human solution for all the unrest in the world.

Who that is an intelligent thinker today would really wish the present order in the world to continue as it has been from the beginning of creation? Do we become used to the present human existence of declining health and strength as the years pass, and finally death, that we could wish it to continue for all time? In other words, can we really wish that as each generation is born into the world and grows up and passes away in death, this should continue for eternity? How can there be real peace and happiness in the world while loved

ones are passing away to the land of the enemy, death? We never get used to death, for the simple reason that man was never intended to die. Death is the great enemy which takes hold of everyone. Sooner or later, therefore, human life comes to an end, and we pass away to "where the wicked cease from troubling; and where the weary are at rest"—Job 3:17.

Space will not be given to describing conditions in the world, which are so well known, but rather to refer to the Scriptures which clearly outline a solution, or remedy, which will bring honour to God and blessing to all mankind, in due time. When we begin to study the Bible, one of the most encouraging features of God's Plan for the redemption of the fallen human race is the fact that as soon as the just penalty of death was pronounced on our first parents in the Garden of Eden—"dying thou shalt die"—there was also proclaimed the hope of salvation from death in the words—"the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head"—or words to that effect, as recorded in Gen. 3:15. "Dying thou shalt die" was a just sentence. Man could and should have obeyed God. The just sentence had to go into effect, but the promise that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head meant, that in due time there would be born into the human family One who would conquer the sad result of Satan's deception of our first parents, which brought about the death of the whole human family, through Adam.

Most people who agree that the Bible is the Word of God know that the One promised to "bruise the serpent's head" and bring salvation from death for the human family is Jesus Christ. However, very few, comparatively speaking, know how that salvation is to be brought about. Some well-known texts which connect the fulfilment of the promise in Genesis with the birth of Jesus as the human Babe—"the seed of the woman"—are helpful, as follows—Matt. 1:21 referring to Mary, the mother of Jesus—"And she shall bring forth a son, and

thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." We ask, Who were Jesus' people? In John 1:11 we read—"He (Jesus) came unto his own, and his own received him not." So, first of all, His people were the Jewish nation. Then, when we examine the Plan of God, we find that all human beings who ever lived are "His people", and we are thankful about that.

Turning to the incident when the Babe actually arrived, we remember the lovely record of the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem and the angels coming with the important messages, and the thought that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head was established in the lovely message from the heavenly angel to the shepherds at that time.—"And the angel said unto them, Fear not." Undoubtedly they were afraid, with the glory of the Lord revealed from the angel;—"For, 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"—Luke 2:10, 11.

Most people say, How can the promise of a Saviour be possible? It is possible because "Jesus, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man"—Heb. 2:9. Paul, the great Apostle, looking back on the life of Christ, and His sacrifice on Calvary, says—"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." Paul knew that had actually happened—"By the grace of God." This is God's great Plan of the Ages. God sent Jesus; by His favour He provided Jesus, who was so willing to co-operate with the Father in this great plan of salvation for fallen humanity. Jesus gladly "tasted death for every man."

From Gal. 4:4 the Apostle Paul gives us further helpful reference to the "seed of the woman"—"When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." God sent forth His Son—God provided the sacrifice. God is the Saviour of all men, with Christ as the Redeemer used of the Father, so that all mankind ultimately may know of this wonderful Redeemer, and accepting Him, fall into line with the laws of His Kingdom, and gain lasting life on the restored earth.

Another verse which helps to reveal this wonderful Plan of God, because God so loved the world of mankind, is Rom. 6:23—"The wages of sin is death." Yes, the death sentence was a just sentence. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." No one of us merited the gift of life; that is the lovely part of God's Plan. It would have been quite just to allow all mankind to die and remain dead. But God loved His human creation, created in His image—a human image of the Almighty God. God still loves everyone.

That is why the choicest treasure of His heart, Jesus, was sent—"The gift of God is eternal life." When we think about this Gift, are we not humbled and drawn to the Father and to our dear Redeemer, so that we may be as much as possible worthy of that Gift bestowed on us through Jesus Christ.

Some may ask, As the gift of eternal life is possible through Christ Jesus, how is that gift to reach every human being for whom Christ died? How can everyone know about this wonderful Saviour, that they may believe in Him and have life? The answer is found in 1 Tim. 2:4-6. This passage gives us a thrill every time we examine the Plan of God contained in it. "God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Notice how verse 4 is worded—All are to be saved and then come to a knowledge of the Truth. Most people think it should be worded the other way—coming to a knowledge of the Truth and then being saved. But Paul knew what he was talking about; he knew how to present this wonderful Plan of God. All are to be saved from death in Adam, they not knowing about salvation at all, at that time. All who have ever lived are to be raised from the dead, so that they may learn that Jesus died for them.

This is well revealed in the words of Acts 4:12—"There is none other name under heaven given among men (than the name of Jesus), whereby we must be saved." There are more people in the world today who have never heard the name of Jesus than those who have heard His name. So most of mankind will hear His name in the resurrection day, and learn that He tasted death for them. They will then have the privilege of everlasting life when they accept the Saviour and obey the laws of the kingdom. It will not be a dying life like we have today, but a living life for all time, as Adam and all his children would have had had he been obedient in the Garden of Eden. We see from this text in Acts 4:12 that no one is saved by ignorance.

Reference to the Plan of God thus far has been respecting the world of mankind as a whole. God has provided the opportunity for everlasting life to be gained by all mankind, but how does that solve the problem of world unrest? That is only part of the solution revealed in God's Word. Before men come to a knowledge of the truth that Christ died for them, which will be in the resurrection day, the work of God in "taking out a people for his name" between the two Advents, must be completed. The Apostle Paul explains this beautifully in 2 Cor. 5:18-21—"All things are of God"—Yes, this is God's Great Plan; He is the Author. "Who hath reconciled us (Christ-

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

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 year past by our loving Father in Heaven. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights"—James 1:17—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. Now, well over nineteen hundred years ago, He 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"—Tit. 2:14—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"—Phil. 2:15.

Free Booklets

Supplies of the following booklets are available for distribution, where good may be done. These are provided through the General Tract Fund, which many of our brethren support in their desire to co-operate in serving the Lord's truth which has been such a blessing to themselves. All who can use these booklets to advantage should have a supply in hand for opportunities of serving others who are seeking the Lord and His truth. Please order freely.

"The Lord is My Shepherd"
"The Greatest of These is Love"
"The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing"
"Watch Israel—God's Time Clock"
"Earth's New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope!"
"The Mystery of Christ"
"The Christian's Joy"
"Where Are the Dead?"
"God's Best is Yet to Come"

Behold—The Bridegroom

The Purpose and Manner of Our Lord's Return

ALL who studiously read their Bibles know that the second coming of Christ is important in the establishment of the promised Kingdom of God upon earth. It is clear that two advents are referred to—the first advent of Christ was for the purpose of giving His life a ransom for all, to redeem mankind; the second is in order to bless and restore all the redeemed, to bring in the "times of restitution"—Acts 3:21.

Every true Christian today is interested in the Lord's second coming, but too few are instructed how to expect Him. The Bible does not bear out the old expectations that Christ will suddenly appear in the literal clouds of heaven, in a moment as a flash of lightning, and that all will see Him thus arrive. There is no Scripture declaring that Jesus will ever again be seen in a body of flesh.

At Jesus' first advent the religious element queried John the Baptist's authority to preach as he did—that the kingdom was at hand. John, disclaiming any self-importance, declared that "there standeth one among you, whom ye know not."—John 1:26. Strange as it may seem, the religious element never recognised Jesus at His first advent; only those who became His true and close personal disciples were apprised that He was the One, the promised Messiah. See Matt. 16:13-16.

So well concealed was the first advent from all eyes save the faithful few; and so intense had been the searching and watching necessary to discern that He was indeed the Christ, the Son of God come to earth as a perfect man, that the disciples hearing Jesus teach that He was going to leave them, and return again, were anxious that they should not miss out recognising Him at His second advent. "Tell us, what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?"—Matt. 24:3. Any student can confirm that the correct translation of this passage is,—"Tell us, what shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the age?"

There are no Scriptures, properly understood, declaring that anyone will know the actual moment when the Lord returns, but several showing that His watching people will know WHEN He has arrived. No literal human eye will see the Lord's second advent, but a few (all true Christians) will discern when He has come—signs will declare it to them. These signs are with us today, but discerned only by those who "watch." The majority of professing Christians "slumber and sleep" with no oil (holy spirit)—Matt. 25:3-5; and when the announcement is made "Behold, the Bridegroom!" they are not ready to welcome Him. The Revised Version and other translations point out that the word "cometh" has no right-

ful place in the above text in Matthew. The announcement is not made when the Lord is coming or on the way; it proclaims His "presence"—the Bridegroom has come for His Bride.

Revelation 3:20 is portion of a message to the Laodicean church, the last period of the church on earth prior to the establishment of Christ's Kingdom. The one represented as standing at the door knocking is the returned Lord with the "knock" of fulfilling prophecies—signs that tell of His presence. The ones who hear His voice and open the door are the true watchers, the bride class, with oil in their lamps—wonderful truths relative to our time does the Lord reveal to these as they "trim their lamps"; that is, as they examine the Scriptures and investigate the subject. To all others the Lord stands as "one among you whom ye know not."

No other understanding of our Lord's return fits all the Scriptures harmoniously. If every eye were to see Him come like lightning on the literal clouds, then how can 1 Thes. 5:2 be explained—a thief does not expose himself for all to see. Verses 4-6 of this same passage show that our Lord's second presence is discerned by "signs" understood by those who are spiritually alert or awake.

Two other Scriptures require brief mention. Any student with Bible Concordance can verify that the Greek word rendered "lightning" in Matt. 24:27, is more properly translated "bright shining." The only "bright shining" which consistently comes out of the east and shines to the west, is the sun. The discernment of the presence of the Son of Man will be after like manner. Only the awake watchers will discern His secret presence at the "sunrise"; but eventually it will be true as Rev. 1:7 expresses it, "every eye shall discern him" (scholars suggest that "discern" is the sense of "see" in this text).

No student believer in the Bible would disagree that Satan is the prince of this present evil world, but no human literal eye has seen him on his throne; rather, events reveal him to our mental vision; we "discern" his rulership. When Christ's Kingdom is established and fully under way, Satan is to be bound that he deceives mankind no longer; then it will be that Christ will shine forth as the sun (at its zenith)—every eye will discern him, "all shall know him from the least unto the greatest"—Jer. 31:34.

But ere that happy phase of Christ's second advent is fact, His secret presence as a thief in the night foreshadows some trouble—He comes on trouble "clouds." When, as Daniel 12:1 shows, Michael (Christ) stands up to assume control and wrest Satan's kingdom from him, all Satan's deceived agents will oppose—there will be a time of trouble such as never was; men's hearts will fail them for fear as they note events upon the earth.

"But ye brethren (true Bible Christians) are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." When ye see these things come to pass know that the Kingdom of God is near at hand, and beyond the trouble all things are going to be made new—Rev. 21:1-5. Even those in their graves shall hear the voice of Jesus awake them from the sleep of death, offering them opportunity to participate in the New Order—a resurrection to the wonderful judgment day of Christ—John 5:25-29.

The Boy who 'Found' Noah's Ark

UNDER the above heading, the following from Ruth Inglis of the London "Daily Express" appeared recently in the Melbourne "Herald." Permission to reprint has been kindly granted.

The petrified remains of the world's most famous ship, Noah's Ark, are said to be lying on top of a Turkish mountain. Former shepherd George Hagopian says he came across the Ark in 1902, when he was 10. What he saw has remained vividly in his memory.

He recalls: "One day my uncle said, 'Georgie, I'm going to take you to the mountain'—meaning Mt. Ararat. As we climbed, my feet began to get sore and the donkey kept wanting to go in the wrong direction. But we continued until we got about half-way. It took us eight days ... and then we got to the holy Ark.

"An immense stone mass loomed threateningly ahead of me. It was like a wall. My uncle dropped his pack to the ground and together we piled up huge boulders at the side of the ship. Then I stood on the rocks and helped by my uncle, looked over the ship. It was about 1000 ft. (305 metres) long and 40 ft. (12 metres) tall." George looked inside the Ark and saw thick, green moss. "I scraped it away and the grain of the wood was right there", he says.

Hagopian, now 88, tells his amazing story in a new book by archaeologist and writer Rene Noorbergen. Noorbergen has himself been obsessed with the Ark for more than 35 years. He went to Mount Ararat in 1978, but bad weather prevented him from getting to the top. He plans to go again.

"I pray I will get what they call a 'Smooth Year' in Eastern Turkey", Noorbergen told me when I spoke to him at his home on another mountain top, this one near Chattanooga, Tennessee. "This means no snow on the top—the kind Hagopian had in that miraculous year, 1902." Dutch-born Noorbergen, 52, added: "From what I can ascertain, the Ark is colossal—you can place three QE2's inside it."

Hagopian's eyewitness account—coupled with recent U.S. spy satellite pictures of a ship-like object on top of Mount Ararat—confirm his conviction that previous Ark searchers (there have been 70 expeditions in the past century)

have been looking in the wrong place. But why should Noorbergen assume that the "ship-like object" on Mount Ararat is the famous Ark which, according to the Book of Genesis, saved mankind during the Great Flood?

Noorbergen says it has to be Noah's vessel. "Who else built a giant ship which has been reported in so many different Oriental legends—even in Chinese?" he went on. "No one would build a gigantic ship on the top of a mountain and then leave it there", he says in his guttural Dutch accent. "It had to have been conveyed there by water. Of this there is no doubt in my mind. Many mountain tops in the world show traces of tiny fish fossils and preserved water ripple marks pointing to evidence of a global flood."

Noorbergen's contention—shared with a dozen or so "ark-eologists" as he likes to call them—is that the Flood occurred 4400 years ago and that a Noah figure did exist. "My obsession was sparked off when I was a teenager studying in Washington, D.C., and I heard about an American group going to Mount Ararat to look for the Ark" he says. This group led by an American Biblical scholar, Dr. Aaron Smith, made an abortive attempt to scale the mountain in 1949. But Noorbergen and Smith kept up a correspondence for years and in 1960 the old fundamentalist Christian bequeathed him his "Ark File"—"two four-drawer filing cabinets" of research.

However, Noorbergen is less interested in reinforcing Biblical history—and the legend of the animals entering the Ark two by two—than in overturning some geological concepts. He believes global catastrophes have happened in relatively recent history. The geologists speak of world upheavals happening millions of years ago. He thinks they're wrong and that the flat-bottomed barge on top of that forbidding mountain will prove him right.

(Continued from page 3.)

All who have this heavenly hope in their hearts, true followers of the Master, also have **no unrest** in their lives. This is God's progressive Plan for eliminating unrest. It was eliminated from the Patriarchs who died in faith, and all the faithful followers of Christ have no unrest in their lives. They are not resentful of the course of events in their lives; they do not oppose the Lord in any way, like the masses of humanity, who oppose themselves and everyone else. So it is the masses of the world who promote the unrest.

What solution has the Lord in His Plan for the great unrest in most of humanity? God's solution for world unrest is the taking over of all earthly kingdoms. We call to mind that the promise in our Lord's Model Prayer is that His Kingdom shall come, and God's will shall be done on earth, as in heaven. When God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven, there

will be no unrest here. God will not permit it. God has enough power to still the raging masses of humanity in His own time. In the meantime, God allows humanity to experience evil, so that when the blessings of the kingdom come, they will not wish to taste the sour grape again. Each generation has to taste the sour grape, endure the course of death, experience it to the full. When all people of every generation have had their full experience with evil, they will be ready to benefit from the blessings of the wonderful kingdom time. That is God's solution.

The change of rulership of the earthly kingdoms to Christ's Kingdom does create much turmoil at the time. This is what we are experiencing today to an extent, but it must get much worse before earthly governments are overthrown, as our Lord indicated in Luke 21: 25, 26—"... Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring"—that is, the masses of humanity in conflict. "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." In God's heaven? Certainly not! It means the ecclesiastical heavens on earth. They will be shaken so much they will be dissolved. God sees the present ecclesiastical heavens will be of no use to Him in His Kingdom, so they will be swept away. Bible students are aware that the word rendered "perplexity" in the Greek means "a quandary, to have no way out." Mankind will have no way out of their dilemma by their own plans. We should be sympathetic with the rulers of the various nations today, because someone must try and conduct affairs until the Lord's Kingdom commences. The presidents and heads of various countries are trying to do their best; but their best will fail. God has something better in store for humanity, and so we can rejoice. That is why our Lord told us to pray for the Kingdom.

The Lord has a way out by His Plan. Man has no way out. Unrest shall cease. But first of all the present world order must pass away to make way for God's new order. 2 Pet. 3:10 shows this. There is no doubt about the Apostle Peter, along with Paul, being guided and instructed from the God of heaven by His holy spirit. They were able to write and tell us what is happening in our day, and what will follow in the wonderful Kingdom. God's Plan does not leave us in any doubt and timidity. He has given us the spirit of confidence and trust. God sent Jesus, the treasure of His heart to redeem humanity, because He so loved His human family; and surely we can trust Him to bring mankind out of their difficulties in the best way. 2 Pet. 3:10 reads—"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Some elements of the "heavens" are

uniting now; they will be dissolved more quickly when united. God's people are not in any denominations, but are called to the Lord alone—"Come out of her, my people . . . that ye receive not of her plagues"—Rev. 18:4. "The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up"—man-made works shall be burned up. This is symbolic language; and it is going on today in the preparatory stages.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conduct and godliness"—2 Pet. 3:11. This is a solemn warning and exhortation to all the Lord's people. Are we attached to the world, in any organization dishonouring to God? We need to live very closely to the Lord, rejoicing in His Truth, and not be associated with any element of the "heavens" that will be destroyed and pass away with a great noise. With the passing of the present "heavens and earth" what a comforting assurance the Apostle presents in the words—"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"—2 Pet. 3:13. Thus will God's new order be established throughout the whole world, Christ and His Church being the "new heavens", and the "new earth" as the new order of society, with God's will being done on earth, as in heaven.

The closing scenes of the present world order are also vividly shown in Psa. 46. The first 5 verses refer to God's own people—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." We need to realise that, when the unrest about us becomes more intense. "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea"—the kingdoms dissolved, carried into the masses of restless humanity. "God is in the midst of her"—His Church—"God shall help her, at the dawning of her morning." From verse 6 the earthly scene is depicted, with the Lord taking control—"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth . . . Be still (He will command to raging humanity), and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

When the new heavens and new earth are finally established, by the Lord's grace and favour all faithful followers of Christ may look forward to being associated in the grand work of the kingdom, as outlined in Revelation—"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . . and there was no more sea"—no more unrest throughout the world. "And 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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new"—Rev. 21:1, 4.

Our Pillows

THAT commonplace commodity, the pillow, occupies a place in history and in personal life out of all proportion to its size. From the days in childhood when curiosity demands tearing it open to find out what is inside, to the day life ends, this humble piece of bedding makes a valued contribution to human experience.

There is something especially personal about it. Many other bedroom articles we use in common with other people. Sheets, blankets, quilts, bedspreads—even mattresses—we regard as quite impersonal. But since we spend about a third of our life with our heads resting on our pillows, it is natural that we prefer one which conforms best to our physical shape and therefore provides the most comfortable sleep.

As with other things there is no accounting for taste, so with pillows. Some individuals favor the firm, tightly filled variety; others, the soft, yielding kind that caress the neck and head. Some pack their pillows in the car when setting out for nights away from home to help assure sound sleep in a strange bed.

Perhaps this personal relationship with one's pillow is due to other considerations besides physical comfort. While our head rests in silent repose, our subconscious mind which never sleeps, dreams its dreams, thinks some of its brightest thoughts and conceives some of its most inventive ideas.

Most people know the importance of "sleeping on it" when grappling with some puzzling problem. If we fall asleep trying to think of a name we cannot remember, lines of a poem we have forgotten, facts we cannot recall, they often spring to memory when we awake.

The pillow can be a useful adjunct also when considering the pros and cons involved in making an important decision. The matter often appears in clearer light after the mind has sorted things out during sleep. And if pillows could talk, they could tell tales, not only of problems solved, but of words of love exchanged, secrets confided, fears expressed, prayers offered, confessions made.

It is on our pillows that the majority of people utter their last words . . . Benjamin Franklin, asked what were his speculations replied—"I am not speculating. I am not resting my head upon a pillow of guesswork. I know **Whom** I have believed." In view of its importance throughout life, and in life's closing hour, we owe our pillow our deepest respect.

—From the Melbourne "Age."

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 50c.

Extracts from Correspondence

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother—Greetings of love, joy and peace in our dear Lord and Saviour. I am writing earlier this year, and enclosing a cheque for £— to cover cost of "Peoples Paper" and booklets etc., which I enjoy very much. Also I would like to order a dozen copies of "The Voice"—"The Glad Resurrection Day"—if still available. Praying the Lord will continue to bless you in your work and service for His names' sake. Your sister in Christ. P.S. Please send me some of "The Voice"—"Armageddon—Then Eternal Life and Peace on Earth", and if you have others, a copy would be appreciated.

Dear Friends—The booklet—"The Mystery of Christ"—which you sent me with the last issue of "Peoples Paper" was, to my way of thinking, exceptionally good. Thank you very much for it. I am writing for a few more copies of the same, as I would like to give them to friends. I want to send some to England in time for Christmas.

I do not know what the value of the booklets would be. They could be very valuable spiritually, especially if those who read them are given the same knowledge by God as the one who wrote the literature. It pleases me a lot that God gave it to me. The trouble is getting others to show an interest in their own eternal well being. I think it would be hard for anyone to make clearer what it takes Christ to do for us, than the writer has done. Christ was certainly living in him... I'm enclosing a cheque for \$—; if you could send me 8 or 10 copies I should be very grateful. May God richly bless you for providing such help. Yours sincerely.

Dear Sir—Thank you for forwarding to me the literature I asked for on the telephone. I have read some of it already and find it very helpful. Of course, a lot that you say is difficult for me to understand and believe as I was brought up to believe in salvation for the few believers and eternal punishment for the rest. This, however, has made me seek a better understanding of God's plan, as I cannot accept this teaching that all mankind who do not come to believe in this lifetime will have eternal punishment. This teaching I believe has stopped many a person from coming to know Christ... So I have found your interpretation of much comfort to me, as I believe God is a God of love.

I have read your leaflet "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" and take it that you do not believe in the Trinity... To be honest, it has given me much to think about, and I pray that God will help me to sort out things in my mind so that I can truly serve Him... I have enclosed a small donation of \$—, and I hope this will cover the literature that I am requesting. Thanking you.

Dear Sir—Could you please send me a copy each of "The Divine Plan of the Ages", "The Creator's Grand Design" and "The Book of Books." I would also appreciate it if you could send me other literature about such things as the doctrine of the Trinity, the nature of Christ, and the Last Days. I enclose \$— which I hope will cover the cost of the above. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I want to tell you how much I have enjoyed reading "Peoples Paper." I get other papers through the mail, but I think your "Paper" helps in my Christian life the most... I am enclosing \$— to help with expenses. Yours faithfully.

Dear Sir—I have enjoyed reading literature sent to me called—"Where Are the Dead?" I would like also to read—"Resurrection, Versus Immortality of the Soul"; "Why doesn't God Do Something?" and "The Glad Resurrection Day." I would like to add a donation;

I find your work very interesting, as I couldn't understand the Bible, but you always explain each part and the meaning is much clearer. Thank you.

One of our friends in Scotland who lived in Melbourne years ago, kindly sent a Christmas card—Best Wishes from Aberdeen.

Here's warm and tender greetings
From Scotland they have flown,
May this Christmastide and New Year
Be the best you've ever known.

"Peoples Paper" Subscriptions

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper"—\$1.00—are now due for 1981. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.32 per annum (\$1.68 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the "Peoples Paper" to receive it regularly.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

"God's Best is Yet to Come"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

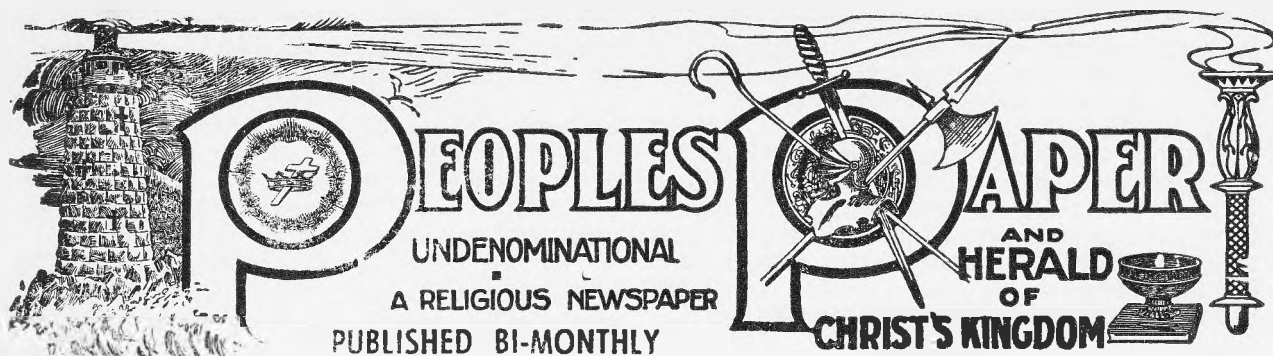
- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.00 to \$3.10, according to distance in Australia).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 80c in Victoria; 90c interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 80c and 90c).
- "The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 80c and 90c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 80c and 90c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna" pocket size—75c (postage 50c).
- "Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 50c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage 80c and 90c).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 80c and 90c).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—50c (Postage 50c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 28c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 28c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS
3GL Geelong, 1350Kc. — Sundays 11.05p.m.



Volume LXIV No 1

MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY—MARCH 1981

Price—20 Cents

How Important the Begetting

(Convention Address)

BY way of preamble, one could consider the Greek source of the New Testament words “born” and “begotten”. There is a Greek word “TIKTO” meaning to produce from seed as a mother, a plant, the earth etc. It is translated as “born” on three occasions but more frequently as “bring forth”, “be delivered”, etc. Most uses of the English “born”, or “begotten” etc., come from the Greek “GENNAO” or related words. Together they are rendered “beget” or similar about 55 times and “born” etc., about 44 times.

The primary meanings of “GENNAO” from Bagster’s Greek-English Lexicon are “spoken of men, to beget, generate; of women, to bring forth, bear, give birth to.” Strong gives the meaning of “GENNAO” as “to procreate (properly of the father but by extension of the mother); figuratively to regenerate.” In English, the word “beget” is associated with the father’s part in procreation, whilst “bear” and “born” apply more correctly to the mother’s part. Accordingly, whenever the New Testament refers to the new life created by God “beget” must be the appropriate rendering of the Greek “GENNAO.”

Our subject is God’s miraculous response to the believer’s consecration. Because this action of God brings about a new creature the Greek “GENNAO” is used. Since it is the Father’s work, “begotten of God” is preferred to “born of God.”

The relationship which results from God’s begetting is very reasonably spoken of as “sonship.” Unfortunately English does not have a convenient word to include both genders so “sonship” is really used as an abbreviation for the relationship of sons and daughters.

The English word “convert” could well apply to a new creature coming out of the old. However, the Greek rendered as “convert” in the New Testament seems more to apply to the change of direction or turning again towards God which is seen rather as preparatory to

consecration. Reconciliation is another word appropriate to describe preparation for justification. It is very important to distinguish between both the preparation and the justification by faith on the one hand, and the sonship resulting from consecration on the other.

John 1:12 makes clear that receiving Jesus is only preparatory to sonship. It states that by receiving Jesus believers are given the power, or right, or privilege to become the sons of God. Obviously actually becoming sons of God must come after being given merely the opportunity. Surely this privilege is exercised by a believer consecrating himself to God. Since the sonship must come from God, it is fitting to describe God’s begetting of the new creature as God’s response to the believer’s consecration. See John 1:11, 12.

What I have said should not be seen to make the receiving of Jesus of minor importance. It is important; it is essential. There is no other Name; there is no other way.

In the same way as justification is not possible until after: CONVICTION—the realisation that one is dead in sins, a sinner with no hope in himself; REPENTANCE—the sincere desire to be free from sin and guilt; FAITH—in the ransom sacrifice of Christ as paying the penalty of ones personal condemnation; ACCEPTANCE—of the free gift of that sacrifice as ones own; ones only hope. So also sonship is not possible until after justification and after that the exercise of the power or right or privilege received when one receives Christ as ones personal Saviour.

We use the word “consecration” to refer to the exercise of that power. The word is not important. The action is the operative thing. However described, the believer must

“Peoples Paper” Subscriptions

Subscriptions to “Peoples Paper”—\$1.00—are now due for 1981. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.32 per annum (\$1.68 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the “Peoples Paper” to receive it regularly.

make a personal commitment or dedication to God for ever. Rom. 12:1 seems to be the best text to describe this commitment, and reads—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Probably, since it is written to those called saints, in Rom. 1:7, this text really refers more to the carrying out of ones consecration—more to the continual yielding than to the original presentation.

Perhaps we can turn to the 6th chapter of Romans. The Greek word rendered "present" in Rom. 12:1 is the same word as that translated as "yield" in Rom. 6:13, 16 and 19. Romans 6 is also the one which sets out, so well, what happens in the believer's consecration and God's response to it. We see the baptism by immersion as a testimony or witness to that which has already taken place in the heart. In verse 4, after immersion into Christ, the believer is said to walk in newness of life. In verse 11 the English word "reckon" falls short of the Greek. Strong gives the meaning as "to take an inventory." So then, when we take stock of ourselves, we are alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In 2 Cor. 5:17 Paul describes the newness of life as a new creature. This verse reads—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The mission or duty entrusted to that new creature is epitomised in verse 20 of the same chapter—"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in God's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

We could profitably spend much time considering just how important the begetting is. Firstly, it is of God, the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the Universe. To ponder the immensity of this fact starts us towards attaching proper value to the begetting. Next, it is part of God's dealing with the Church. This must attach to it the regard we have for all the provision God has made for building us up in our Most Holy Faith.

Each begetting is singular and personal. No man can come to Christ unless the Father draw him. This is a private thing between God and the believer. So, also, is the consecration a happening of great importance as it is personal and exclusive. How much more individual and personal is the phenomenal advent of God's begetting spirit to bless with newness of life.

The belief that the begetting can only happen once multiplies its value. Generally, one could say that that which is scarce is appreciated more than that which is plentiful. This is accentuated when there can only ever be one of anything. I believe that the believer's begetting is singular in this way. One could hardly imagine a second new creature being begot-

ten in a believer, either to live side by side with an earlier new creature or to replace one which has been neglected. For each individual, the miracle of begetting is quite unique. All these things which I have mentioned are important, yet they indicate a magnitude similar to some other aspects of Christian experience. The ransom and prayer are examples.

The feature of the begetting which I think makes it superlative is perhaps best stated in words attributed to one Olshausen, a German theologian—"That which is begotten carries within itself the nature of that which begat it." This is more than creation of a new life. This is more than the fact that a new creature resulting from the begetting is an embryo spirit being. Certainly the parallel is there, to the begetting of an earthly child by an earthly father. New life is begun but that is not all: **THAT WHICH IS BEGOTTEN CARRIES WITHIN ITSELF THE NATURE OF THAT WHICH BEGAT IT."**

The importance of the begetting is not only the beginning of the new creature. It is not only the family relationship to God, it is not only the manifestation of God's love. It is the creation of an embryo spirit being carrying **WITHIN ITSELF** the nature of that which begat it. That means the nature of the Most High, the originator of all things, the source of all love, wisdom, justice and power.

So important is that embryo spirit being that God made extraordinary provision for its nurture; God did provide the abiding or indwelling holy spirit. Indeed, we are blessed with the presence of both God and our Lord Jesus Christ, as stated by Jesus—"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. It seems to me that this residing is completely different to the begetting function.

In Tit. 3:5, I believe that Paul is drawing attention to the two separate roles of the holy spirit. Could there be any better way to cleanse than to regenerate, to start a new creature? The new creature must be clean firstly because it has no past, and then because it is begotten of God. Tit. 3:5 reads—"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy spirit." At school we were thrilled to start a new page, to cover all the smudges and blots that were past. How clean is beginning again? However, the words "renewing of the holy spirit" describe a continuing function. Separate from the momentary regeneration, the holy spirit abides or indwells to nourish and lead. "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God"—Rom. 8:14. It is the continuing residence of God's holy spirit as distinct from its begetting function which makes the believer the temple of the living God.

Understood this way, we would see that God's response to the consecration of the believer includes two distinct actions by the holy spirit. The begetting of the new creature, the embryo spirit being, is a single momentary action but with a result which goes on from the ages unto the ages. This is the action which gives sonship. Included in sonship is the family relationship to the Father, to His Son as the first born among many brethren and to all our brothers and sisters in Christ. Surely such family relationship simply follows from the family being begotten of the same Father. Separate from that momentary action is the entry of the holy spirit to take up its abode in the believer. The latter affords God's continuing care over the fragile new creature, the leading necessary for the sons of God to follow, the continual presence of the Most High.

We cherish the hope in 2 Pet. 1:4 that by great and precious promises we might be partakers of the divine nature. The previous verse 2 Pet. 1:3—states that the source is divine power and the means by which the great and precious promises came to those of like precious faith was the gift of all things which pertain to life and godliness. These in turn were by or through the glorious virtue of Christ. It is noted, here, that the all things which pertain to life and godliness had already been given. Quoting 2 Pet. 1:3, 4—"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: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

Because both the begetting of the new creature and the abiding presence of God's spirit to nourish must be seen to pertain to life and godliness it is reasonable to accept that they were part of the **all things** previously given to Peter's original readers. Returning to the partaking of Verse 4, since that which is begotten carries within itself the nature of that which begat it, it follows that all who have been begotten already have **taken part** of the divine nature. Perhaps there is a play on words here. Some might see "partaking" to mean taking the whole rather than merely a part. Nevertheless the point is to emphasize that in the begetting, part of the divine nature is imparted.

1 John 3:2 makes clear that the part of the divine nature given is not all that there is. This verse reads—"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." If there was nothing more, it would already appear what we shall be—that would be just as the new creature now is.

There is another point to be taken from 1 John 3:2. We use the words "beget" and "embryo" because the closest our language or even our thoughts can come to the reality is pictured by association with human procreation. However, because there is no mother figure, it is hardly apt to continue the picture to birth except to say that whilst in this earthen vessel the new creature is underdeveloped or embryo. What we should observe is that even in the embryo state we are still sons of God. It is consistent with our language picture. More important, the Scripture says so—"Beloved, now are we the sons of God."

Looking to the hereafter, Rom. 8:17, 18 gives an assurance that the unknown of the future will be blessing. These verses read—"And 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. 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." The present is but a foretaste to bind the ties of the glory which is to follow when the earthen vessel is forsaken and the spirit being is mature. Yet, combining all ages, the most important moment in the existence of each child of God must be the moment of begetting.

In conclusion, we might just consider the begetting in relation to the time before the merit of Christ's sacrifice became efficacious. There may well be some similarity between the continuing abiding of God's holy spirit with the believer and the spirit of the Lord coming upon Gideon, David, Simeon and others. However, I do not think that there could have been anything before Christ's sacrifice which could have been in any way similar to the begetting again from above of new creatures. No wonder the prophets and angels were keen to know more about this remarkable glory. We know this from 1 Pet. 1:10-12, which reads—"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 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."

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 17th, 18th and 19th, at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinstead, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Witness Work

THE work of witnessing to the glad tidings of the Kingdom is a very great privilege for all who have been blessed with the understanding of God's Plan for the salvation of humanity from sin and death through the sacrifice of Christ. Not many of mankind are favored with a clear knowledge of the Gospel, despite the fact that we are living in a time of greatly increased knowledge in the world generally. When the invention of broadcasting became well established earlier this century, we were favored in being able to take up this form of presenting the Lord's message of the Kingdom here in Australia, being assisted in this work in the early stages particularly, by our brethren in U.S.A.

In 1942 we were encouraged to investigate the possibility of engaging radio stations in this country by the foresight of the late Brother Main of Adelaide, who also contributed financially to enable this work to be commenced early in 1943 through 3GL Geelong. Tape recorders had not then been invented, but for some years 16 inch discs served quite well to present the messages over the air. Our session being allotted 10 a.m., on Sunday mornings, was an ideal time to reach a great number of people with the Lord's message of truth. We are thankful to the Lord that this privilege of service continued until nearly two years ago on Sunday mornings. "Frank and Ernest" became well known over this period, and the response over the telephone and through the mail was most encouraging. As a result quite a number of friends rejoiced fully in the truths of the Bible, some of whom still attend Class with us here in Melbourne.

Over the years since early 1943, extension of the broadcasts has been carried into all Australian States. In Sydney and Brisbane in particular many earnest people were found over the years when we were granted time on Sunday mornings, some of whom still rejoice fully in the truth. The capital city radio stations in Sydney and Brisbane were the first to transfer our sessions to Sunday nights, when results from our messages greatly decreased. Country stations were also engaged, in all 20 radio stations have carried the "Frank and Ernest" broadcasts throughout Australia in the 38 years this witness has been possible. We are grate-

ful to the Lord that many thousands of people have heard this witness, and the Lord has given the increase in the hearts of quite a number, although comparatively few, but just what we expect, as was the case with our Lord's own ministry, when the perfect Preacher with the perfect message to Israel was accepted only by the few. This feature of God's Plan is not generally understood, when, during this Gospel Age, few find the "narrow way" to life—Matt. 7:14. But the general witness is necessary to find the few, whom the Lord our God shall call for the heavenly kingdom—Acts 2:39.

When we were informed, nearly two years ago, that the management of 3GL Geelong was transferring all Sunday morning religious broadcasts to Sunday nights, and we were allotted the late time of 11.05 p.m., we appealed for an earlier time. The Lord's overruling has been sought in this matter, and as we well know, He could arrange this quite easily had it been His will. As an earlier time is not available our contract with 3GL has not been renewed for this year 1981, the last broadcast being given on 28th December. To all our radio friends who have appreciated the spoken word over the air, we advise that literature is available for their own and general use in the Lord's service.

In more recent times extensive advertising in suitable magazines has been undertaken, offering free booklets on topical subjects, and the response has been very encouraging. This witness work is being very well supported, and so will continue as seems good, as far as funds permit. We ask the Lord to bless all sincere people who are prompted to seek an understanding of His Word, and what the future holds for themselves and for all mankind.

Liberty and Restraint in Christ

(Gal. 5:1; 1 Cor. 8:9; 1 Pet. 2:16.)

(Convention Address)

THE text in Galatians many of us are very fond of quoting, but far too often we use it in a wider sense than is justified. The liberty the apostle was referring to was liberty from the Law—that was the bondage from which the Jewish Christians had been freed, and in which they were exhorted not again to become entangled. We should be careful not to misquote the text. Nevertheless, there is a principle embodied in the text which can be extended to other avenues of the Christian life.

It was a tremendous deliverance for the Jew to be freed from the burdensome yoke of the Law, but in that early stage of the Church's history it was by no means easy to maintain the deliverance afforded them. When people are trained in a belief from childhood, it is not easy to relinquish it, and it must have been most difficult to cut free from a religious system which for so long had enjoyed the benediction

of God—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth"—Amos 3:2.

The deliverance the believing Jew found in Christ, was in those early times under great pressure, and there was great need of the apostle's exhortation for them to "stand fast" in their deliverance, and not become entangled again in the bondage of the Law.

When, after a time, the gospel message was widened to take in the Gentile, it became a great deliverance for the believing Gentile also—deliverance from the world and its spirit. As the Jew found it difficult to maintain his separateness from the Law bondage, so the Gentile found it difficult to overcome the world and its spirit, and to maintain his stance of separateness—1 Pet. 4:3, 4. In both cases customs were engrained and difficult from which to get free, and from which to keep free.

The Apostle Paul's own life, as we have it recorded, was an evidence of just how difficult it was to get free from the Law's bondage. His experiences no doubt stood him in good stead, not only to assist in freeing the Jew from the Law and helping him to maintain his stand, but also in aiding the Gentile to cut adrift from his idol worship and keep free therefrom. Paul knew what it was to have enemies spying out his liberty—Gal. 2:4. The N.E.B. translation refers to them as "sham Christians" trying to bring back true Christians into bondage, of whom Paul said—"not for one moment did I yield to their dictation." Philips, in his translation, refers to these as those—"attempting to tie us up with rules and regulations. We did not give those men an inch, for the truth of the gospel... was at stake." Similarly Gal. 5:13 warns—Be careful you do not assume a liberty that merely becomes opportunity for you to cultivate your lower nature.

Then Peter, in 2 Pet. 2:19, warns again that corrupters of truth would arise dangling the catch cry of liberty before their unsuspecting victims. We offer you liberty they say—yet if they knew it, they themselves are bound by corrupt influences that were leading them to depravity.

We find those thoughts helpful to us now, as the end of the Gospel Age approaches. We find the nominal church systems to have degenerated into mere profession and hypocrisy, so that a position arises similar to that at the end of the Jewish Age. Just as the nominal Jew saw himself as the rightful recipient of God's favors, so nominal Christendom considers likewise. The Jew failed to recognize God's onward step in sending His Son at the first advent, and refused to acknowledge decadence into merely outward profession; so also the professing Gospel Age church, drifting into apostacy, refuses to acknowledge her decadence, and that she has become Babylon by the time of the second presence of the Lord.

What a battle it proves for true Christians in both situations to maintain true liberty in Christ—first, in the beginning of the Gospel Age, for them to cut adrift from the shackles of the Jewish Law and hold fast to Christ; then later in the end of the Gospel Age, for them to forsake Babylon and hold fast to Christ.

Ever since the Church, the Body of Christ, commenced its development it has proven extremely difficult for its members to hold fast to its Head. Factions formed around men and their theologies seem to attract the majority, rather than simple adherence to the provided Word of God given for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

The closer adherence to the Word of God—not merely reading or hearing it, but obeying it in word and deed—the richer is the inflow of the holy spirit of God into the heart and mind, and the humbler and more sincere the recipient becomes and a better representative of the Lord and Master. By contrast, the more allegiance given to leaders the greater the spirit of pride and division creeps in—I am of Paul, I am of Peter—and the spirit of Jesus, seems to become tarnished.

It is not good to become self opinionated to the extent that we demand others to think and do as we do, nor to the extent that we cannot give consideration to another's point of view. A nice thought is brought out by an anonymous writer. He says—"All Truth is calm. The more of Truth, the more of calm. Its calmness is its power. It is the error that is born of strife by rage and pride." How true we find that. We have no need to rage to present or uphold truth. Generally it is those trying to impress and uphold error who rage and storm.

The appreciation of God's character, as revealed to us by Christ, is even of more importance than detailed knowledge of doctrine and prophecy. Let us give due heed to the Word that is profitable for doctrine and the understanding of God's purposes through ages and dispensations, but seek **above all things** to find and maintain the closest personal acquaintance with our Saviour Himself. To know in the words of the poet—

"Lord, let me talk with Thee of all I do,
All that I care for, all that I wish for, too;
Lord, let me prove Thy sympathy, Thy power,
Thy loving oversight from hour to hour!
When I need counsel, let me ask of Thee,
Whatever my perplexity may be.

"Whither I go, do Thou Thyself decide,
And choose the friends and servants by my side;
The books I read, I would submit to Thee,
Let them refresh, instruct and solace me.
I would converse with Thee from day to day,
With heart intent on what Thou hast to say;
And through my pilgrim walk, whate'er befall,
Consult with Thee, O Lord, about it all!"

It is not good to selfishly and confidently pursue a course without regard for the welfare of

others. We should be truly and devoutly thankful that we know the truth expressed in 1 Cor. 8:6—please read. But in this position there is something else we need to remember, as expressed in the next verse—“Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge.” We need to endeavour to sum up the position of all with whom we have to do, in other words—take heed that the liberty you enjoy does not react harmfully upon others who do not enjoy your favored position—please read 1 Cor. 8:9.

Even when we are combating what we are fully assured is false doctrine, we are apt to be too forceful, and leave behind a poor impression—the servant of the Lord must not strive. Words can be gentle and still convey firm truth. Knowledge of truth may allow us to go places and do things with a clear conscience ourselves; but there may well be times when we should consider how others would view our conduct and be persuaded that to refrain would be in their best interests.

Another avenue where we should exercise good care is in the presentation of unclear doctrines or teachings. In Christ Jesus we all enjoy a wonderful liberty to do our own research and thinking into the things of God's Word; but we may need reminding that we are not at liberty to sound out far and wide all the things that we think we see in the Bible. Truths of God's Word harmonize—it is only when we can harmonize them that we should declare them with firmness. If we have thoughts upon a subject that seem reasonable, yet there is a Scripture that is still uncertain and possibly tends to annul or cancel out our viewpoint, it seems a wise procedure to rest the matter and wait for more understanding, rather than to spread our thinking from the housetops.

I have used further 1 Pet. 2:16 in relation to our subject—“As free, and not using your liberty, for a cloke of maliciousness.” It seems from what I can learn from the concordance and translators that “for a cloke of maliciousness” does not convey the real thought of the Greek text. It would seem to be better expressed—“not using liberty as a covering for wrongdoing or speaking.” In meditating upon this verse in relation to our subject, it seems to teach that the liberty we enjoy in Christ does not permit us, or make us free, to always do as we like or to speak or express what we like. We certainly have liberty to think for ourselves and to weigh out matters that are not clear to us, or opinions of others that conflict with ours; but we should do all this well, before we take the liberty of publicly declaring ourselves on any matter.

Phil. 1:10 is a very interesting text; it seems clear that the Authorized Version translation does not convey the full meaning. The word “approve” has the thought of “try or test.” And the word “excellent” has the thought of “things that differ.” One commentator (Vines) ex-

presses thoughts that the passage means—“approving the excellent, after distinguishing and discerning things that differ.” I think it would be a good idea to write that explanation in the margin of our Bibles. There would be less conflict among the Lord's people, if we all followed such advice. By all means give plenty attention to distinguishing and discerning what is true and what is not true of the things presented to us. What we can prove to be “excellent”, to that let us adhere and share with others. What we are assured is not excellent let us discard. If something it seems should not be discarded altogether, yet is not clear enough to fully approve, let us learn to rest it until more light is shed upon it, instead of raising questions on a large scale by broadcasting the doubtful presentation far and wide.

With these thoughts in our minds the words of the Apostle James 1:25, 26 seem appropriate—“Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty (realizes that the law of liberty in Christ Jesus does not commission us to rashly say and do things), and continueth therein (it is not a liberty or a restraint of a moment, but we should always exercise it), he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue . . . this man's religion is vain.” Liberty in Christ is not liberty to speak everything that comes to our mind—if a thing is uncertain it is very necessary to learn to bridle our tongues.

A brother spoke to me after a Convention recently saying that he hoped he had not said anything that might not have been strictly in line with truth. He said, I try very hard always not to do so, because I have been caught many times in the past, and to my sorrow afterwards. With such an attitude such a brother must surely be in the way of—“this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

May God give us all wisdom to know when the liberty we have in Christ commissions us to speak out, and when to hold our tongue. “Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth”—James 3:13, 14.

Passover Memorial 1981

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Friday, 17th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season “in remembrance of Christ.”

Memorial Services

MELBOURNE—Sunday, 12th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew.

ADELAIDE—Sunday, 12th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Convention News

THE 1980 Christmas Convention conducted by the Melbourne Class once again proved to be a very profitable and spiritually refreshing occasion for all able to attend. Grateful thanks to our loving Heavenly Father is expressed for His blessings bestowed throughout the four-day gatherings. The attendance was very good each day, as brethren were gladly welcomed from each of our six Australian States. Also our Australian Polish brethren were well in attendance, and assisted helpfully to make the assemblies profitable.

The Convention sessions consisted of two helpful Bible studies, 15 addresses by the brethren, Fellowship and Testimony Meetings, a Baptism Service, Hymn Session and general informal fellowship all contributing to a most profitable time of refreshing.

Following the appropriate and helpful address of welcome, a Bible study was conducted on the verses in Titus 3:3-7. This passage served very well to impress upon us how favored we are to have been invited into God's family from our former worldly life, as described in verse 3. We were certainly in an undone condition before "the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward us appeared"—verse 4. There was nothing in ourselves to merit any favors on God's part toward us. Indeed it was "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but **according to his mercy** he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy spirit." Much we saw was implied by "the washing of regeneration"—"the washing of water by the word"—Eph. 5:26—the cleansing effect in both mind and heart by obeying the Word of God, when once the blood of Christ was accepted as cleansing from all sin—1 John 1:7.

The "renewing of the holy spirit" was seen to refer not only to the initial quickening of the spirit after full consecration to God on the basis of faith in the merit of Christ, but also the daily bestowment of God's spirit—"which he shed on us abundantly (richly) through Jesus Christ our Lord"—verse 6. The happy condition described in verse 7 of "being justified by his **grace**" impressed again the great favor of the Lord, that we should ultimately be made "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ"—"according to the hope of eternal life"—as we prove faithful unto death by His grace and strength.

The second Bible study in Luke 12:31-38, being on the important words of Jesus also proved most helpful. In the context we saw how necessary it is for followers of the Master to "take no anxious thought for your life"—verses 22-30. Full faith and confidence in God's abiding care of those whom He is calling out of the world to be His sons for the heavenly kingdom is essential throughout the earthly pilgrimage.

To "seek the kingdom of God", knowing "it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" is a wonderful incentive to all members of the "little flock"—verses 31, 32. In thus seeking the kingdom, all else must be considered very secondary; sacrifice of earthly treasures must be gladly undertaken—"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"—verses 33, 34. Only if the heart is fully yielded to the Lord could one expect to have the support and blessing of the Lord along the pilgrim way.

From verses 35-38, it was seen that our Lord's lesson called for complete dedication and alertness in His service on the part of His followers from His day onward. "Let your loins be girded about (ready for service) and your lights burning"—to reflect the light of the gospel to those who have ears to hear. "And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." It was seen that Jesus was here using a parable concerning a lord or nobleman, and the alertness required of his servants when their master returned from the wedding, to illustrate the watchfulness required of all Christians throughout the Gospel Age, to serve their Lord at any moment or opportunity. From verse 41 we read that Peter asked—"Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?" This was a guide to us in our study respecting verse 36. In verses 37, 38 it was seen that the lesson of the parable was carried forward towards the end of the Gospel Age, and the watchfulness required on the part of God's people to be worthy to receive the harvest truths during the presence of our Lord when He would "gird himself and make them to sit down to meat, and come forth and serve them." The important lesson of verse 38 was well impressed by Jesus' words in Mark 13:35-37—"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning. Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

The subjects chosen by the brethren for their addresses were varied and helpful, being as follows—"The Sure Word of Prophecy"; "Where Your Treasure Is"; "I am the True Vine"; "The Wings of a Dove"; "How Important the Begetting"; "High Calling and Invitation of God"; "The Days of Visitation"; "The Sword of the Spirit"; "David—A Man After God's Own Heart"; "Liberty and Restraint in Christ"; "Our Safety in the Last Days"; "Everlasting Life" and "Confident of This Very Thing."

On the afternoon of the third day of Convention a Baptism Service was conducted at which two of our dear visiting brethren symbolized their consecration to God. This brother and sister had been rejoicing in the Lord and

His truth for some time, and it was fitting that they followed Jesus' example when He symbolized His consecration in the River Jordan. We saw that John the Baptist, to whom Jesus came, did not expect the perfect Saviour to come to him for baptism, seeing his immersion was for remission of sins only, for Israel. John was not baptizing for Christians at all, and Jesus did not take his baptism, but was symbolizing His death, He having presented His perfect human life to the Father previously. So with our brethren, they symbolized their consecration to God, they were baptized into Christ's death previously when they presented their lives to God, and the water immersion pictured what had already taken place in their hearts. We rejoice that our two brethren have been invited into God's family of sons, and by His grace they now walk in newness of life in hope of the heavenly reward.

Many kindly messages with greetings, Christian love and assurance of prayers on our behalf were received and appreciated from Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas. To all these dear friends who remembered us in this thoughtful way, and to brethren everywhere, the message from the Convention with Christian love from all assembled is expressed in Luke 12:31, 32.

Thankfulness to the Lord for all His blessings past and present were expressed by various brethren at the Praise and Testimony Meetings. Much enjoyed also was the Hymns We Love session at which the personally selected hymns were sung to the Lord's praise. The usual labor of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was also greatly appreciated, this being gladly undertaken as to the Lord.

The Love Feast at which everyone present bids each other farewell was the closing feature of the Convention. The familiar hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds" and "God Be With You"—were heartily sung, and the closing prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for all His mercies and requesting His guidance and blessing upon all His people in every place, concluded a very profitable Melbourne Convention.

Extracts from Correspondence

My Dear Brethren—Enclosed is \$—— for a subscription to "Peoples Paper" for my niece. She is very much interested in the Truth and I'm sure she would enjoy your wonderful little "Paper." So please send her the "Peoples Paper" for a year, also renew my subscription. I thank you so much for sending me the "Paper" and booklets.

These are terrible times in which we are living, but I remember the verse—"The Lord will never leave, nor forsake us."—which is very reassuring to me. I thank you again for all you do. May the dear Lord bless you all there in Australia... Christian love.

Dear Brother—Hearty Greetings for the Festive Season, with added peace, joy and the Lord's rich blessing in your labour of love for His name's sake. Thank you for the public lecture tape—"God's Best is Yet to Come." I have

sent it to Brother—— so he can take some copies. It's good to have a public lecture tape to play for friends not acquainted with the truth. I also enjoyed it very much.

During 1980 I've been reading the 6 Volumes, and feel they are more in keeping with our times than when written. We are surely living in a whirlwind of revolution and in the storm of anarchy and trouble, the earth being corrupt and filled with violence—"the salt is being removed" as it were. The Dec.-Jan "Paper" with booklets has just come to hand; many thanks again.

Dear Brother—Loving greetings in the Lord! Thank you very much for the mailings received thus far and please continue sending them. Also would appreciate you sending the "Peoples Paper" to this elderly sister for one year——. Please use the enclosed where need be. May God grant you many blessings while the holidays are here and may He bless and guide you all through the coming year. Warmest Christian love.

Dear Sir—Kindly send me a copy of your free booklet—"The Lord is My Shepherd." My only son aged 21 years died in a motor cycle accident on 20th October, and for his funeral service I had chosen Psalm 23. I would like to read and understand this Psalm much better. Thank you. Yours faithfully.

Dear Sir—I here enclose money for the "Peoples Paper." Also as I am a hospital visitor to the sick, and any who would like a visit, I would like the booklets you advertise—"The Lord is My Shepherd"; "The Greatest of These is Love"; "Earth's New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope"; "The Mystery of Christ"; "The Christian's Joy"; "God's Best is Yet to Come." Please send me as many as would be covered by money enclosed.

Dear Brother—I like to thank you for having sent me all this past year the "Peoples Paper" and all the other extra booklets. As usual they have been most welcome for they speak the truth and their messages are divinely inspired. For this I pray God to bless you and to reward you with eternal life.

I am enclosing a cheque for \$—— for my subscription for 1981, also please send me one more copy of each—"Where are the Dead?" and "Resurrection, Versus Immortality of the Soul." As the festive season is at the door I take this opportunity to send you and all the Class in Melbourne my greetings of love for Christmas and a prosperous new year. Yours in Christ.

"Armageddon—Then Peace on Earth"

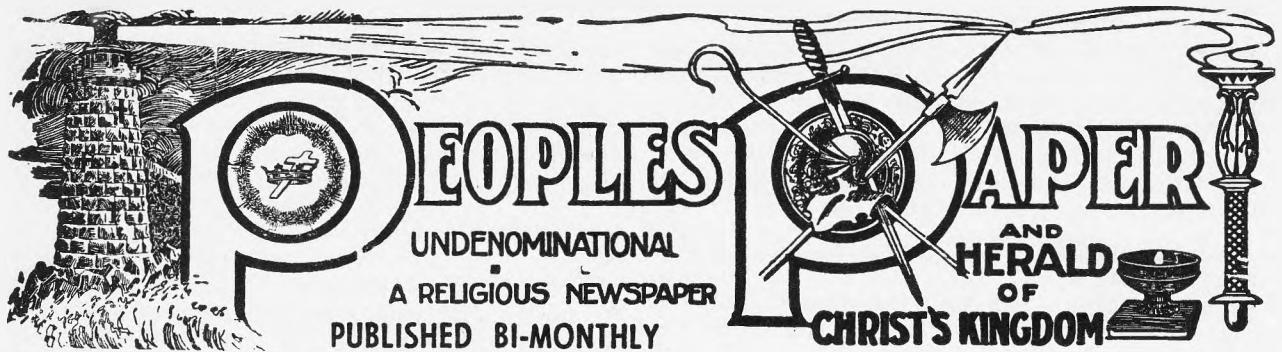
A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 50c.

God is most intimately related to His people. They are His temple. He dwells in them. Therefore they are bound to keep themselves unspotted from the world. Their being God's temple, His presence in them, and His regarding them as His people, depends upon their separation from the world.

Charles Hodge.



Volume LXIV No 2

MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY 1981

Price—20 Cents

The River of Waters of Life

(Contributed Address)

THIS is what you might call a two-finger discourse—one for Revelation 22, and the other for Ezekiel 47. In both of these chapters we have a similar picture, a picture by God of the river of waters of life. Please read Rev. 22:1-4, and Ezek. 47:1-12.

In these two accounts we recognize that we have a picture of how the blessings of God will flow out of the New Jerusalem, and eventually provide life for all mankind. That is the general lesson brought forth here. We shall look at various specific lessons within the general.

We would like to notice first the one difference between these two visions. They are almost identical. In both of them we see a river of water of life. The function of its proceeding is to bring health, peace and life. But we see a different source. In Revelation the river proceeds out from the throne of God. In Ezekiel the river proceeds from the Temple of God. From one we have the river starting from a ruler, from a kingly palace throne. In the other, it proceeds from a sacerdotal, priestly function. But the two are well combined in a third picture, brought up in Zechariah 6:12, 13—"Speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD; even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Notice in these verses we have combined the two separate functions that operated through most of Israel's Old Testament history, the function of the priest and the function of the king. Here he says this One whose name is The BRANCH, out of the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, is both a priest and a king. He is a priest upon the throne. In Zechariah the throne is not in the palace, but the temple. The river of waters of life flow out from the enthroned

position of the great King who bought that kingdom by the gift of His life for your sins and mine, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The origin of this river is given in Ezekiel. It originates from the temple which Ezekiel saw in vision, which stood on Mount Moriah, where Abraham offered Isaac, where Solomon built his temple, where Zerubbabel built his temple, where Herod built his temple. Ezekiel says in this temple the river comes out as from the ground itself, waters ever-present at that mount.

We have other Scriptures connected with waters from Mount Moriah, such as Psa. 46:4. Here in one of the prophetic Psalms of the days of trouble to come, we find—"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." We like to think of this river as an ever-flowing water of truth, flowing forth to give truth to the people of God. We think that is the interpretation of Psalm 46. However, when he was writing that Psalm, David was writing also for his own time, and recognising in his own time there was a river that made glad the city of God. To David, the city of God was nothing else than the literal city of Jerusalem. David was instrumental in finding the river which made the city unique on the earth. In olden days when they fought battles, they would use seige warfare. They would encircle the city until they starved the people so they would have to surrender. They would cut the people off from water and vegetable crops. It was easy to do, because a city was usually built on a hill; but you did not find a water source on a hill, but in the valley. So with a city built on a hill, the people would have to come outside the city to get the water. But Jerusalem had an underground river running right through Mount Moriah. Traces of it are still there today. As the river became less accessible in the days of Hezekiah, he drove a tunnel to bring the water into the city. This tunnel went from the spring Gihon to the pool of Siloam. "There is a river, the streams

whereof shall make glad the city of God" because this river could never be cut off; it was internal. What a beautiful picture of truth! Truth is not dependant on external sources. It is based upon our individual relationship with our Creator. There is a river, safe against all besetments, that makes glad the city of God.

Again, in Psa. 87:7, David speaks of this river. When he brought the Ark up to Jerusalem, he says—"As well the singers and the players on instruments shall be there: all my springs are in thee." It was a mountain full of springs. If you happen to go to the convent of Ecce Homo, they will show you the water system. It is one giant system. Symbolically he is saying that which Mount Zion pictures, Jesus Christ and His Bride, are all of those water springs. In John 7:38 we read—"He that believeth on me . . . out of his innermost being shall flow living water." There would be eternal water coming forth because all of the life-giving sources of the New Jerusalem would be found in what is pictured as the mount of Zion, the Church of Christ.

In Ezekiel we have the Mount of Zion, Mount Moriah, as the picture of Jesus Christ and His Church. Now we will trace the river as it begins to flow out from these. This is the city set on a hill. In that hill we see the place of sacrifice. We see particularly the sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth, and that through His sacrifice access to the spring of water comes. Because He died, there is now a place for the water to spring forth to mankind. So even literally, that is true. That area of the temple mount considered to have probably been the place of the great altar is now the site of the Mosque of Omar. Enshrined in the mosque is what they consider to be traditionally the stone on which Abraham offered Isaac. In that stone today you can see a hole, and that goes down to Gihon, the very spring we are speaking of. Because of the blood of the sacrifices they offered by the scores and hundreds, the blood was poured into this hole to be washed away by the streams below. So on the south side of the hole today there is still literally this symbol where the blood of Jesus Christ makes available to mankind the blessings of life.

He tells us how this water gets from here to there, from the south side of the altar to the place where the people are. I looked, and saw it was going east. I could not go east so I went out and walked around the mount, and saw the water come out through the eastern gate, and it flowed down into what today we would call the Kidron Valley. Here again is a beautiful picture, because we learn about this east gate in Ezek. 43:1-5—"Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the noise of many waters: and

the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court: and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house." Here at this stage we notice that whatever this glory of the Lord is, it comes into the temple, the first thing that enters in, and by way of the east gate, and fills the entire temple with the holiness and glory of God. The same thing happened in the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple; as they were being dedicated they were filled with smoke to show God accepted them, and His glory was there. "The glory of the Lord" is one of the terms used for those who will share with His Son Jesus Christ the privileges of the heavenly, divine nature, to bring back mankind from the dead. The Church is the glory of the Lord, and it comes into the Temple by the east gate.

In Ezek. 44:1 we read—"Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut." Once the glory of the Lord came in, the door was shut. There was no more going in to the temple through the eastern gate. Once the Church of Christ has entered into its relationship of sharing with Jesus His throne and home and the glories of the divine nature, that offer will never again be made.

But we know more about these gates. He says, Even though we are closing the gate, it will still have a function. In Ezek. 44:2, 3—"Then said the Lord unto me: This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it: because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same." So although no one can enter through this gate into the temple, one class of people, the princes, can come into the gate itself. If you measured the gate you would find it is probably 20 ft. wide; there is quite a gate area. The princes can come in and sit and meditate; they can come in for communion, and go out again. These princes are described in Psa. 45:16—"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth"—a beautiful picture of those prophets of olden times who had been the fathers of Israel. These shall become the children of this kingdom, and be sent out as ambassadors to all the earth. How more beautiful to describe it than the princes going in for communion, then going out and communicating! It is from this eastern gate, this spiritual class that is complete, that issues forth these glories of the Lord.

In Ezekiel 47 the next feature is different from most rivers. It has one source. As far as rivers go, it is different. Generally if you have only one source, the further the river goes the smaller it becomes. Our rivers become greater the further they go, but they have tributaries. But here we have a single source. In the short space of four thousand cubits, perhaps just over a mile, that river has grown from a trickle to a river you have to swim in. He tells us how deep that river is by an unusual system of measurements. Generally in the Bible if we are to measure something we get out a yardstick or footrule or whatever. This man had a reed in his hand. He would go a thousand cubits, but would not use the reed to measure the river's depth. The depth of that river was measured by the measuring stick of a man's body. He would go along the length of the river with the reed and measure a thousand cubits, and go in and see how deep it was on the man's body. It was ankle deep, then knee deep, loin deep, too deep, so he had to swim. Why? Why does he use a man's body as a measuring stick? Why not the normal way? Why does he give us these intimate details of how quickly the river rose?

Coming back to another thing God is doing today, doing with you and with me—God hopefully is developing in you and me a character that will be pleasing to Him, that is moulded and shaped after the likeness of His Son. That new name is the exact counterpart of the name He has, the character He is writing in us is the exact counterpart of His character. That is what He is developing in us. But he does not do it all at once. He does it a little bit at a time, one feature, then another. I am sure you have heard the illustration of the racecourse. It is as if you were running a race, developing these characteristics. You know how far you have gone by quarter marks. So in a Christian racecourse there are quarter marks. These quarter marks are marks of love. As we first develop our relationship with God, we have a duty love. I know God is greater than me, and therefore I respect Him. I realize I owe Him this respect and the love that goes with it. That is fine. It is not the end of the Christian course, but a good place to start. Then another quarter mark, we are loving God not because He is so great, but because we can appreciate His goodness and we have a heartfelt response, our goodness to His goodness, and we go from knowledge to knowledge, and grow in love. So it is an appreciation love. Then He says—"Do you really love Me? If you really love Me, you will love those who are mine." So the next test is love of the brethren. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends"—for his brethren. We come to that point when we are willing to express ourselves in sacrificial love one for another. That is not only for those we feel fully drawn to. Our love for them must start before

they are our brethren. It will prompt us to witness to what the Lord has done for us, a confession of Jesus Christ, so that others, hearing this confession, may make a similar confession. That is part of brotherly love. But do not even the Pharisees love those that love them? But the next step is to love our enemies. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. So there are these quarter marks from obligatory love to appreciative love, love that brings in those who are God's, love that brings in all mankind.

This is true today. This will be true tomorrow. It will be equally true for mankind in their future development. That is what this river is showing. It is showing a gradual development of their relationship to God. They go out and walk in this river, ankle deep. They must have enough love for God to walk in His ways. It is the beginning stage; it is only a duty response. Everybody must follow. It must be done; it is the law of that kingdom. Some places of employment have a motto—"You will like working here. It is one of the rules." So mankind will walk in this kingdom way; it is one of the rules.

He goes another thousand cubits, and the water comes to his knees. At that time every knee shall bow to Jesus Christ. That is the next measurement of love. Do they go beyond walking in His ways; do they come to the place where they willingly bow the knee to Him? That is wonderful! And every knee will do it. That is why no man will need to say to his neighbour, Know the Lord; for all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest of them.

However, that is not enough. Go another thousand cubits. This time the water comes to the loins. The loins are associated with the reproductive organs. Mankind, as they progress in that kingdom, will have to develop a love that is not only bowing the knee, but reproducing, witnessing and confessing to Christ so others can become children of God. They become children in the same sense as Paul said—My son Timothy. They have to come to the reproductive stage of being confessors of truth.

Now, go another thousand cubits, and the water submerges them. They love not only those to whom they have taught the truth, but gain a full, total, submissive, baptismal love, completely submerging all of self to God.

The river goes out and grows. If it goes further to the east country it gets to the sea. There are various physical correspondencies today described here. But now we come to a problem. If you look from the Mount of Olives and on to Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives is broad; it covers the eastern edge of Jerusalem. No matter how much water comes forth from the temple mount, it cannot flow east, it will

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Our Lord's Memorial

AS we approach another anniversary of our Lord's great sacrifice, all the Lord's dear people surely esteem it a privilege to keep the Memorial of His death in spirit and in truth, in response to His request that we do this—"In remembrance of me."

It is of note that the Scriptures contain no request by our Lord that His followers should observe His birthday each time an anniversary comes round, but He made a **special request** that all who would be His consecrated disciples should truly celebrate His death. As our Lord's sacrifice as "the Lamb of God" took the place of the annual Jewish Passover ceremony, it is most reasonable that the observance of the Memorial of Christ's death be celebrated yearly also, on the anniversary of the institution of this observance which Jesus gave to His little band of apostles "on the night in which he was betrayed."

The Apostle Peter presents the matter of our Lord's sacrifice as our Redeemer so beautifully in 1 Pet. 1:18-20—"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 fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." The perfection of Christ, as the Man Christ Jesus is clearly indicated in this passage, and it is just as clear that the Passover lamb which the people of Israel were instructed to sacrifice each year was a type of Christ, our Passover Lamb.

Our readers generally are well acquainted with the fact that the sprinkled blood of the Passover lamb was the means of saving Israel's firstborns from death in Egypt, as well as being the means of delivering all Israel out of Egyptian bondage on that special Passover night so long ago. That was a wonderful deliverance! What shall we think and say, however, about the saving of the spiritual firstborns unto God of this Gospel Age, and the ultimate deliverance of all the human race from the bondage of sin and death, because of the sacrifice of the antitypical Lamb of God, even Jesus Christ? Truly this wonderful prospect fills us with joy and thankfulness beyond description!

The Apostle John assists us to see the procedure required so that we may become members of God's house of sons, when he states in John 1:12—"As many as received him (Jesus), to them gave he power (the right, or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." We see from John 6:44 that we could not "receive" or believe on Jesus "except the Father draw us." What a great favor, then, God bestows upon those whom He draws to Jesus—that believing in Jesus as their personal Saviour, they then have the opportunity of consecrating their lives to God, and by so doing, become the sons of God, in hope of the heavenly inheritance. It will be seen that believing in Jesus does not automatically make one a son of God, but does give a standing before God, enabling all such to present their bodies a living sacrifice, to walk in the steps of Christ, thus becoming sons in God's heavenly family. This is explained by the Apostle Paul—"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake"—Phil. 1:29. And this is also the explanation of the meaning of the Memorial of our Lord's death.

From Matthew's account of our Lord's Memorial we read in chapter 26:26—"And as they were eating"—finishing the Jewish Passover supper—"Jesus took bread"—the unleavened bread of the Jewish supper, picturing His own perfect humanity—"and blessed it"—gave thanks to God for this fitting symbol—"and brake it"—picturing the breaking of His own body—"and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body." In other words, appropriate His perfect humanity, thus gaining justification by faith in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus. As expressed by Paul in Rom. 5:1—"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The following verse, in Matt. 26:27, reads—"And he took the cup"—the cup of the fruit of the vine—"and gave thanks"—thanked God for this symbol of His own blood—"and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it." Again, Jesus was saying, appropriate my blood, my life, my perfect humanity, thus also gaining justification by faith in the sight of God. And it is the justified human life that true believers in Christ have the privilege of laying down in the steps of the Master.

This secondary and deeper meaning of our Lord's Memorial the Apostle Paul was used of God to explain so beautifully in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17—"The cup of blessing which we bless (for which we thank God), is it not the communion (common participation, or partnership) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (common participation, or partnership) of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers (sharers) of that one bread." In this explanation from the apostle

we see the oneness of Christ and His members beautifully revealed. So, in observing our Lord's Memorial we not only do so "in remembrance of Christ", but we also signify our own willingness to be broken with Him, and have our life poured out in sacrifice with Him.

The Apostle Paul has left us a wonderful example of devotion to Christ in his letter to the Philippians, as follows—"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. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"—Phil. 3:10-14.

As we meet again this year at the Memorial of our Lord's death, we realize that it is required that we do so with pure hearts, having sought forgiveness for all shortcomings through the merit of Christ, and thus be acceptable in the sight of God. As Paul admonished the Corinthians, we too can take the lesson from his exhortation in 1 Cor. 5:7, 8—"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

*"Saviour, Thy dying love
Thou gavest 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."*

Passover Memorial 1981

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Friday, 17th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

MELBOURNE—Sunday, 12th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew.

ADELAIDE—Sunday, 12th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 17th, 18th and 19th, at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinsted, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

The Claims of Love and Justice

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him"—1 John 4:16.

THERE is nothing more necessary to the peace and prosperity of the church of God than that its members should have a clear understanding and appreciation of moral principles, with a full determination to be controlled by them. Even among Christians there are often differences of opinion, with reference to principles of action, which greatly interfere with spiritual growth and prosperity. Such difficulties most frequently arise through a failure to rightly distinguish between the relative claims of love and justice. Therefore we deem it profitable briefly to consider these principles and their operation among the children of God.

Justice is sometimes represented by a pair of evenly poised balances, and sometimes by the square and compass, both of which are fitting emblems of its character. Justice knows no compromise and no deviation from its fixed rule of action. It is mathematically precise. It gives nothing over for "good weight" or "good measure:" there is no grace in it, no heart, no love, no sympathy, no favor of any kind. It is the cold, calculating, exact measure of truth and righteousness. When justice is done, there is no thanks due to the one who metes it out; such a one has only done a **duty**, the neglect of which would have been culpable, and the doing of which merits no favor or praise. And yet, cold, firm and relentless as this principle is, it is declared to be the very foundation of God's throne. It is the principle which underlies all His dealings with all His creatures; it is His **unchangeable business principle**. And how firmly He adheres to it is manifest to every one acquainted with the plan of salvation, the first step of which was to satisfy the claims of justice against our race. Though it cost the life of His only begotten and well beloved Son to do this, so important was this principle that He freely gave Him up for us all—to satisfy its legal claims against us.

The principle of love, unlike that of justice, overflows with tenderness and longs to bless. It is full of grace, and delights in the bestowment of favor. It is manifest, however, that no action can be regarded as a favor or a manifestation of love, which has not underneath it the substantial foundation of justice. Thus, for instance, if one comes to you with a gift, and at the same time disregards a just debt to you, the gift falls far short of appreciation as an expression of love; and you say, We should be just before we attempt to be generous.

And this is right: if justice is the foundation principle in all of God's dealings, it should be in ours also; and none the less so among brethren in Christ than among those of the world.

(Continued from page 3.)

go to the south or the north. Right now there is a barrier. We need to get rid of this barrier if the water is to flow east. Zech. 14:4 shows how God gets rid of this barrier.—“And his 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.” Verse 8—“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.” Here is our third picture of this river. In this picture He tells us what He does to the barrier in the way. He will split the mountain. He is not primarily talking of literal earthquakes. That might happen. But this is a prophecy, and in the prophecy He is talking of symbols. That which is symbolized by this mountain will be divided in two. That mountain is the same mountain as in Isaiah 2, the great kingdom that Christ sets up on the earth. This kingdom will be in two parts, so He will split this great mountain, half toward the north country, the throne of God—“Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south”, but from the north, where God dwells. Half of it goes to the spiritual phase of this kingdom; those who follow Christ into death—“If ye suffer with him, ye shall also reign with him”—those who form the heavenly phase of the kingdom. Half goes to the south, the ones on earth, the ancient ones coming back from the grave, the princes who minister these great tidings of good to all mankind. Here we have the symbolic splitting of the mountain into two phases, so the water has access eastward to accomplish its purpose. The water has provision made to serve the area toward the east country.

In Ezek. 47:10 we read—“And it shall come to pass that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-ge-di even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.” Here we have two place names given. If we can imagine a map of the Dead Sea area, the waters are going out from Jerusalem, and they split into two channels to flow to the Dead Sea. Right at the southern end even today, is the area called En-ge-di. It is famous. David camped by En-ge-di. En-ge-di today is a beautiful waterfall in the midst of a barren land, and there are refreshing waters in the hottest of deserts.

Today there is a spring called Empashpa. That is a recent name. It is the ancient En-eglaim. The waters sweeten the Dead Sea. There are two things we want to mention in connection with this. If you were to take an

airplane over the Jordan Hills today, and take a mapping camera, you would find there are two wadi systems that go, one from En-ge-di and one from Empashpa, to the back side of the Mount of Olives. It is interesting. We are not emphasizing the literal, but it is interesting to note the correspondency. Literally, they are there. About ten years ago the National Geographic Magazine published a map of the floor of the Indian Ocean. They showed a fault line; that is where the earthquakes happen, and levels drop. They showed a fault line that came up the Indian Ocean, up the Gulf of Elat, through the Dead Sea and ended at the Mount of Olives. It may not be anything more than an interesting fault line—but it is interesting.

These waters come in at En-eglaim and En-ge-di. Why these two? Why two branches of the river? We suggest that because in God's plan there are two parts that share in bringing these blessings to mankind.

Jesus Christ and His Church are shown so beautifully in the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement in the Tabernacle. The sin offering for Israel was first a bullock for Aaron and his house, picturing Jesus Christ, and secondly a goat, picturing His Church. The Apostle Paul speaks of this in Hebrews 13:13—“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.” There are these two parts in the one sin offering, Jesus Christ and His Church, one offering for mankind. Here we find one stream broken into two parts, one coming into the Dead Sea at En-eglaim and the other at En-ge-di. En-eglaim means The Fountain of the Bullock, and En-ge-di means The Fountain of the Goat, the same two things we have in Leviticus 16. From the Fountain of the Bullock to the Fountain of the Goat. From these sources will the sweetening come. When it comes, everything in that sea which is dead will become sweeter because the water will be of such a quality that it will sweeten it. It will have an outlet. The water will not become stagnant and let the salt build up and take away life. Fish shall live there. I went swimming in a little stream there, and saw hundreds of fish, living fish, in the Dead Sea. They swam in the stream. They were swimming for one or two minutes, then they died. As soon as they came out of the fresh water in the stream and partook of the salt water, life was gone. The Dead Sea pictures death. But it will be totally sweetened, and mankind will live where now mankind dies, because this water of life comes from the New Jerusalem, because the Gate has shut and the Church has entered, and the streams flow out, and revitalize the sea from both ends.

In Ezekiel 47 it says something you do not see today. It mentions trees such as you do not see in Israel—trees on both sides of the river, many trees all along the river. These trees are identified for us in Psalm 1:3—“And

he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." These are those who do not sit in the seat of the scornful, or stand in the way of sinners, and who walk not in the counsel of the ungodly. There were too many to count. There might have been 144,000 of them. Revelation tells us something about these trees that we do not find in Ezekiel. Rev. 22:2—"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Their leaves are medicinal. Mankind will be able to live for ever. Each of these trees has twelve different kinds of fruit, and each produces fruit every month. They do this throughout the kingdom arrangement. How many fruit do they produce? Twelve kinds of fruit, twelve times a year, for a thousand years. 144,000 fruit from each of these trees. You have a beautiful number there, a number you find in Rev. 14, the number of the Church of Christ.

The last thing we want to mention is in Ezekiel 47. Sweet as those waters were, it was not all beautiful. Verse 11—"But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt." There were places where the waters did not flow through, and they would just turn to salt, and remain that way. The same thing is true in God's plan. God has a plan, a plan for all mankind, for the wicked as well as the good, a plan in which Jesus said—"All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth"—John 5:28, 29—but that does not guarantee that all will live forever. There will still be some salty and marshy places where a man's heart will not hear and accept the truth. It will turn to salt. There is universal opportunity in God's plan for mankind, but because of man's own wickedness, there is no universal salvation. You find that in Rev. 20:8-10. There is a little season when Satan shall be loosed, and those who follow him will be cast with him into the lake of fire, symbolizing everlasting destruction. However, Revelation 22 tells us one thing that is true of all the "fish" that live in that sea, but is not true of the miry places—"They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads"—Rev. 22:4.

It is also the same symbol used in speaking of the Church of Christ, in Revelation 7. It says the winds of trouble would not be allowed to blow until the servants of God were all sealed in their foreheads. Again, in Revelation 14:1 we read—"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads", or more literally, having His name and the Father's name

in their foreheads. They develop that complete name and complete character, the complete correspondence to the other half of the white stone—Rev. 2:17.

I am glad the Heavenly Father has provided for a river to flow to all mankind, the waters of truth and salvation, living waters, life-giving waters, life to all the obedient in that glad resurrection day. What a great truth He gives us in Revelation and Ezekiel! "The New Testament is in the Old concealed, and the Old is in the New revealed."

Free Booklets

Supplies of the following booklets are available for distribution, where good may be done. These are provided through the General Tract Fund, which many of our brethren support in their desire to co-operate in serving the Lord's truth which has been such a blessing to themselves. All who can use these booklets to advantage should have a supply in hand for opportunities of serving others who are seeking the Lord and His truth. Please order freely.

"The Lord is My Shepherd"
 "The Greatest of These is Love"
 "The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing"
 "Watch Israel—God's Time Clock"
 "Earth's New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope!"
 "The Mystery of Christ"
 "The Christian's Joy"
 "Where Are the Dead?"
 "God's Best is Yet to Come"

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 50c.

Books Available

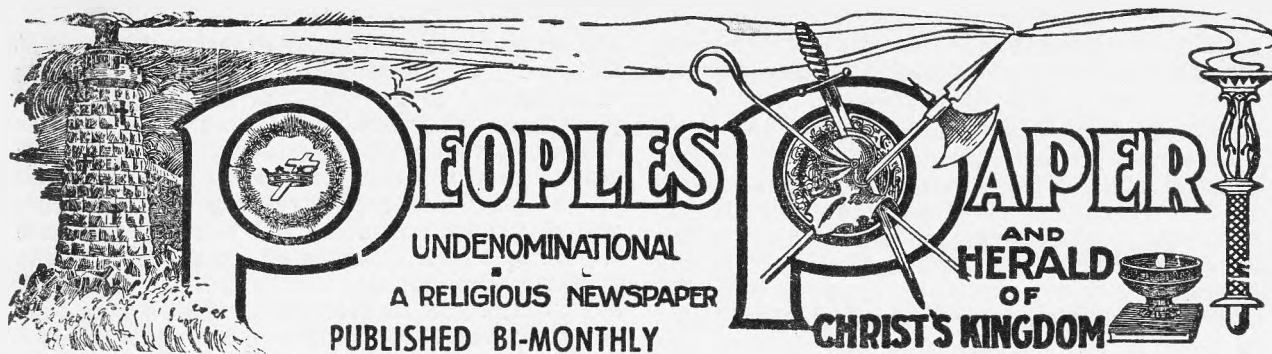
In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.00 to \$3.10, according to distance in Australia).
 "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 80c in Victoria; 90c interstate).
 "The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 80c and 90c).
 "The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 80c and 90c).
 "Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 80c and 90c).
 "Daily Heavenly Manna" pocket size—75c (postage 50c).
 "Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 50c).
 "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage 80c and 90c).
 "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 80c and 90c).
 "Tabernacle Shadows"—50c (Postage 50c).
 "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 28c).
 "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 28c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



"This Thing is from Me"

(This helpful article from "The Dawn" in U.S.A., of a few years ago, is reproduced for the benefit of our readers.)

THESE are the words of the Lord to King Rehoboam, and they express a viewpoint pertaining to God's dealings with His people which we should endeavour always to keep in mind. Rehoboam was a new king in Israel, having succeeded his father, Solomon, to the throne. Representatives of ten of the tribes interviewed the new king and demanded that burdens imposed upon them by Solomon now be lifted; but after due consideration Rehoboam decided not to yield to their demands. Then the ten tribes rebelled and asked Jeroboam to reign over them.

Acting hastily, Rehoboam assembled an army of 180,000 soldiers, with which he was determined to put down the rebellion and by force of arms compel the revolting tribes to be subject to his rulership. But the Lord intervened to prevent the carrying out of this plan, sending instructions to the king to this effect with the explanation—"This thing is from me"—1 Kings 12:24.

Probably Rehoboam never understood just why the Lord had permitted this breach in the solidarity of the nation; nor is it essential that we understand it now in order to derive the important implications of this message which the Lord sent to this ruler over His typical people. What had happened seemed all wrong to Rehoboam and so much out of keeping with his judgment of the Lord's will that he was confident he would be divinely blessed in his plan forcibly to reunite the nation. But he was wrong—"This thing is from me"—said the Lord.

Statements such as this, made by the Lord to His people, should bring home to us with blessed reality the fact that everything which concerns us is of even greater concern to the Lord—that He is just as interested in our personal welfare as we, and eminently more qualified to know what is best for us. This,

too, is the reassuring lesson which Jesus gives us, saying—"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows"—Luke 12:6, 7.

The Apostle Paul expresses the same reassuring thought when he tells us that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and who are called in keeping with the divine purpose—Rom 8:28. The apostle knew this because of the many promises of God indicating His love and care for His people. He knew it also because, by the eye of faith, he was able to discern that even his greatest trials had often resulted in the richest of blessings from the Lord—blessings which could never have been enjoyed had it not been for the trying circumstances which conveyed them to him.

Our faith in God and in His overruling providences in our lives as Christians should enable us all to realize that nothing can come to us except by divine permission, and that many times our most painful experiences are actually by His appointment. If we can but have confidence that this is so, our every joy will be a deeper joy, and our burdens and sorrows will be borne with greater fortitude; for we will know that our all-wise Heavenly Father sees exactly what we need for our training in order that we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

With reference to the Lord's feelings toward His typical people, Israel, the prophet declared—"For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye"—and surely our Heavenly Father is equally concerned over spiritual Israel and therefore enters into and shares our every experience, whether of joy or of sorrow—Zech: 2:8. Of His ancient people the Lord also said—"Thou wast precious in my sight"—Isa. 43:4. Can we doubt that the same is true of us? Is not the Lord, through His word, whispering these same reassurances of His love to us, and

should not this enhance the value of our every experience, as daily we seek to carry out our covenant with Him by sacrifice?

Do we have temptations? Well, the Lord knows about them. He does not lead us into temptations, for God tempteth no man—James 1:13. Nevertheless, He knows about our temptations and permits them; and we have the assurance that when they become too great He will provide a way of escape—perhaps not our way, but a way which will be much better suited to our eternal welfare than any of our own choosing could possibly be—1 Cor. 10:13. So, at such times, the Lord might very well be saying to us: "I want you to know that, when the enemy comes in like a flood, this thing is from Me and that I have permitted it in order that you might realize more fully your own weaknesses and learn to depend more confidently upon My grace to help in every time of need—Heb. 4:16. I want you to learn that your safety as a new creature in Christ depends upon your looking to Me for strength; for while I want you to do the best you can to fight off all the enemies which assail you as a new creature, I want you to realize also that the battle is not won by those who think they are strong apart from Me but by those who look to Me to do their fighting for them."

To have faith that God's hand is in all our affairs, it is essential to keep in mind that He is training us for the great work of the future and for that high position of joint-heirship with His Son, King Jesus. One of the necessary lessons to learn in order to be qualified for this exalted office is that of humility, and it may be that the Lord will use very commonplace experiences to teach us humility. To those of us who need such an experience, the Lord may be saying: "Are your surroundings in life such as are humiliating to bear? Has your lot been cast with people who do not appreciate you or understand you, people who never consider your preferences or your tastes, and who are always putting you in the background and themselves in front? Do not blame your associations; this thing is from Me. I am with you in all your humiliations, helping you to bear them and, from them, to learn the needed lessons. I am training you to be a ruler, to exercise tremendous responsibility; but I want you to do it for My glory, not for your own. So, first of all, it will be necessary for you to come to the place where you will be glad to say from the heart—'O! to be nothing, nothing.' So remember, dear child of Mine, you are not in your present environment by accident; it is from Me, for I knew that only under such circumstances can you be properly trained for kingdom glory."

Again, to some of us the Lord may be saying: "Are you in financial difficulties? Are you finding it more and more difficult to 'make both ends meet'? This thing, too, is from Me, for I want you to put your trust more fully in Me

and to realize that I know exactly what is best for you. I realize that it may be embarrassing at times not to have all the money you think you need. You would like to make a better showing among your friends, perhaps even among the brethren; but has it ever occurred to you that under My training and direction, and if you keep close to Me, you may get into the kingdom before some who are able to make a better showing in the flesh? Of course, I don't want you to feel superior to others just because you are poor; for then you would not be learning the lesson I am endeavouring to teach you, which is that of trust in Me and in My ability to provide all your needs, and a joyful acquiescence in your lot in life which I am permitting; for this thing is from Me."

Are we passing through a nighttime of sorrow, due to the loss of some beloved one, or to circumstances which seemingly no one can understand? Again we hear the Lord saying: "This thing is from Me. I have permitted earthly comforters to fail you in order that you might learn to look to Me for consolation. Perhaps you have not realized—but I have—that as long as you had all your dear ones with you and your trusted friends were always able to console you in your trials, you didn't think of Me very often. But at one time you made a covenant with Me, and I accepted you into My family. You have been very dear to Me. I have wanted to do more for you, to bless you more richly; but you were getting along so well, your life was so filled with your friends, and you were so satisfied with your successes that I was largely shut out of your thoughts and ways. You didn't realize your need of Me. I do not rejoice in your trials; but I know, and you will learn, that in turning to Me you will find comfort and solace beyond anything your earthly friends could possibly furnish. I want you to know that I am your everlasting portion, and I want you to draw nigh to Me in order that I might draw nigh unto you"—James 4:8.

Has someone circulated falsehoods about us, belittling our abilities, perhaps, or even misrepresenting our characters? The Lord permits these experiences also, for they are among the all things which, by His overruling, are working together for our good. From this standpoint, therefore, He might very well be saying: "Leave those who misrepresent you to Me. I will deal with them according to their responsibility in the matter. There is a lesson in this experience, a lesson which I want you to learn. It is another way in which you can learn the much needed lesson of humility—Christlike humility. In this experience 'Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds'—Heb. 12:3. When Jesus was contradicted, yes, even when He was reviled while hanging on the cross, He reviled not again, committing Himself rather into My care and keeping; and this is what I want you to do."

Even though we have covenanted to do the Heavenly Father's will, we sometimes go along from day to day making our own plans, and neglecting to take into consideration whether or not our plans are in harmony with His will. Of course we want Him to bless the plans we make, and if He does not, then we wonder why. Again let us hear the voice of the Lord, for He may be saying to us: "Have your plans been all upset? This thing is from Me. It was well that you asked me to bless your plans, but in your consecration to Me you expressed your determination to do My will, to follow the plans that I would make for you. I have been ready at all times to direct your steps, but often you have not given Me an opportunity to do so, and now that your own arrangements are not working out so well, I want you to know the reason and to try to do the better way; that is, to consult Me with respect to every detail of your life. I can assure you that when you do this, My blessing will make you rich—rich in peace and joy, and in the realization that I am ever by your side and that I will withhold no good thing from you as long as you walk up-rightly"—Psa. 84:11.

All of the Lord's people are, at one time or another, burdened with responsibility and loaded down with care. We are prone to worry about the outcome of this experience or the result of that effort. Under this burden of care, we are apt to wonder why we do not have the joy and peace in the Lord that once enriched our lives. And then, despite all our care and worry, something goes wrong, and we are crushed in spirit. In our distress we turn to the Lord and through His Word hear Him say: "This thing is from Me. I have been telling you right along that you should cast all your care upon Me, for I am abundantly able to take the responsibility for the successful outcome of every service I ask you to render for Me—1 Pet. 5:7. Not only do I want you to ascertain My will with respect to all the affairs of your consecrated life but, doing this, also to let Me be responsible for the outcome. Then you will have peace and joy in the holy spirit, for you will know that on account of My almighty power and infinite wisdom there will be no situation too difficult for Me to handle. Even so, the outcome of your every experience and the result of your every effort to serve Me may not be as you would desire; but you can be confident that, under the overruling of My providence, all things will work together for your good and for My glory."

Every truly consecrated child of God is alert to serve Him and His people in any and every way possible. Those who do not desire to be active in His service may very well doubt the genuineness of their consecration. However, for many the opportunities of service often seem quite limited. We long to do more for the Lord than we are doing or have the opportunity to do. It may be through lack of physical strength;

or it may be due to obligations toward those for whom the Lord expects us to care; it may be financial inability, or other handicaps. Do we, then, wonder why it is that, although our hearts long to do much in the Lord's service, we are deprived of the opportunity? In this experience also, the Lord may very well be saying to us: "This thing is from Me. I know of your desire to do some great work for Me, and yet I have permitted you to be laid aside on a bed of weakness and pain, for there is a lesson in this which is most essential for you to learn. Deep down in your heart, why are you so anxious to be busy in My service? Is your motive entirely that of love for Me, for the brethren, and for all who may be blessed at your hands through the ministry of the truth? It is well that you examine yourself very carefully along this line. And there is no better time to do this than while you are laid aside from active service. If there is the slightest trace in your heart of a motive that is not unselfish and pure, prosperity in My service would be very injurious to you; and I love you too much to permit you to be injured.

"And then, in order for Me to bless you in My service, it is essential that you lean upon Me for strength and look to Me for guidance. This experience of waiting which you are now having will help you to realize your own weakness and your great need of Me. My strength will be made perfect in your weakness, but only if you realize your weakness—2 Cor. 12:9. When you come to the point where you tremble when you think of self and realize how very little you can do for Me in your own strength, then I will be able to use you for doing great things for Me—if not this side of the veil, then surely when I have exalted you to glory to live and reign with My beloved Son.

"And if, in My providence, it takes all your time and strength and means to meet your responsibilities toward those depending upon you, this thing is from Me, too. If you discharge your responsibilities as unto Me, I will accept your service as though it were done directly in My vineyard. I know that in your heart you want to render direct service to Me, and that is proper. I delight in that attitude and will be very near to you and bless you. But keep alert; it may be that the time will come when I will open the way for you to serve Me in more direct ways. Watch and pray lest you settle down into a life of worldly indifference simply because at present you are deprived of the privilege of working directly for Me.

"If, in your case, it is a matter of wishing that you had large sums of money you could devote to My service, well, I appreciate that; but what are you doing with that little bit you do have? I have been saying over and over again to My people that those who are faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven

"He (Jesus) spake many things unto them in parables... And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given"—Matt. 13:3, 10, 11.

THE disciples were surprised that Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables, and there seemed no real benefit being gained. Reading our Lord's further words in verses 12 to 17 in this 13th chapter of Matthew explains why Jesus knew the multitudes as a whole were not worthy of being taught the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"—their minds and hearts were earth-bound. They were not suitable material, so to speak, to be instructed in heavenly truths. How different were those whom the Father drew to Jesus—"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear"—verse 16.

The Greek word translated "mysteries" or "mystery" in the New Testament is well translated, for it carries the thought of "a secret or mystery gained by the initiated." So when we read in Matt. 13:36—"Then Jesus sent the multitude away... and his disciples came unto him saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field"—no doubt the Lord was very pleased with their desire to learn what that particular parable was intended to teach. They were then being initiated into the beginning of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, though it was mainly after Pentecost when their understanding was really enlightened, much like our Lord Himself when, after taking the symbol of water immersion, it is recorded—"the heavens were opened unto him"—Matt. 3:16.

Passing to the Apostle Paul's explanation of our subject in Eph. 3, we see from verse 3 that God by revelation made known the mystery to the apostle respecting the calling of the Church, to comprise not only those selected from the Jews but also from the Gentile nations. In verse 4 Paul continues—"When ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." His knowledge not only of the mystery, but IN the mystery shows that this

was possible only with the enlightenment of the holy spirit after Pentecost, as indicated in verse 5—"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." The "holy apostles and prophets" here being blessed with the mystery respecting the calling of the Church were in contrast with God's servants of Old Testament days. In verses 6 to 9 in this chapter the Apostle in beautiful language shows how privileged he felt in being used of the Lord to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ", that they may enjoy "the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God."

Further, how beautifully does Paul expound his knowledge IN the mystery of Christ in Col. 1:24-27, when he says—"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." Because God determined to select a Church to reign with Christ, it was required that all members comprising that select Body must be proved worthy of such honour by gladly suffering in the steps of Christ. Filling up the afflictions of the Christ company is indeed a great mystery to many who love the Lord and feel they are Christians. Paul had previously persecuted Jesus through His true followers; when he wrote his epistles he was sacrificing his life as a part of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake. Elsewhere Paul said he was "baptized for the dead"—a mystery indeed to most people.

In Col. 1:26, 27 the apostle repeats what we saw in Eph. 3—"The mystery hid from ages and from generations—'so great salvation'—but now 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." This is what Paul means when he said—"his knowledge IN the mystery"—the Christ life in him, by the Lord's grace. Expressed in other words, the apostle wrote similarly in Gal. 2:20—"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

In writing to the Romans, in chapter 5, the same apostle beautifully leads progressively to the Christ life within the Lord's true followers in verses 8 to 10—"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 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." How are we saved by Christ's life? By the Christ life being in us—"Christ in you, the hope of glory"—this

being the essential means of salvation for His Church, for the heavenly calling. This is a mystery indeed, even to many believers in the Lord.

In Heb. 10, the same apostle shows how Christ's true followers are sanctified by being offered in sacrifice during this Gospel Age. In verse 4 the typical offerings are mentioned—"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Then Christ's own sacrifice is shown in verse 5—"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Our Lord gladly became flesh—"a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death"—"a body hast thou prepared me." God had no real pleasure in the sacrifice of animals over the centuries; they were used only to typify the real sacrifice for sins outlined in verses 9 and 10—"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first (the typical offerings), that he may establish the second (the real offerings). By the which will (by God's will) we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ." In other words, the offering of the Church, the Body of Christ, on the altar of sacrifice brings about their full sanctification in the steps of Christ, as they prove faithful unto death. Paul expressed his own position similarly to the Philipians—"Yea, and if I be offered (poured forth) upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all"—Phil. 2:17.

When explaining God's plan for the selection and completion of Christ's Church, mainly from the Gentiles in Romans II, the Apostle Paul again shows this is a mystery, from verse 25—"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." All this Gospel Age the fulness of the Gentiles for the Body of Christ has been coming in. This does not mean that Jews have been excluded, but "as many as the Lord our God shall call"—Acts 2:39—has been largely from the Gentile nations. When the Body of Christ is complete, the apostle shows the further important part of God's plan in Romans 11, from verse 26—"And so all Israel shall be saved (for the earthly kingdom): as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant (the New Covenant) unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel (the heavenly calling), they are enemies for your sakes (you Gentiles): but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God (for either the heavenly or earthly inheritance) are without repentance."

In the outworking of God's wonderful resurrection of the Church of Christ, in the first

resurrection, Paul reveals another mystery in 1 Cor. 15:49-52—"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Some translations are very misleading in verse 51, such as Moffatt, Phillips, and New English Bible, when they quote—"We shall not all die." Rotherham, one of the best translations, agrees that the King James translation is correct in this verse, stating—"We shall not all sleep." The apostle is saying, that not all true followers of Christ will sleep in death, when they finish their course. After the "dead in Christ rise first"—1 Thes. 4:16—then all others will not need to sleep, on proving faithful unto death, but will be changed to be with the Lord. Rotherham also adds another helpful thought in 1 Cor. 15:52—"During the last trump"—indicating a period of time for the completion of the first resurrection of the Church.

The Apostle Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians is surely most appropriate for us all today—"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"—1 Cor. 4:1, 2. Only by the Lord's grace is this possible, as the apostle again assures us—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"—Phil. 4:13.

Convention News

A very joyous time of Christian fellowship and spiritual uplifting was experienced this year at the ninth Nambour Convention, for which we tender grateful thanks to our loving Heavenly Father, from whom all blessings flow.

We were delighted to welcome brethren from Brisbane, Toowoomba, the Gympie area, and for the first time from South Australia; also from Victoria, the Melbourne Class being well represented this year, also we were very pleased to have a visiting brother from England attend. We realize the effort required by many traveling such long distances to be with us, and we would like them to know how much we appreciated their presence.

Two very beneficial Bible Studies were held in Col. 3:12-17 and Psalm 130, which proved to be spiritually stimulating. Eleven addresses were given, the topics of which were—"Who are my Brethren"; "The Qualities of Eternal Life"; "Things We Ought to Consider"; "The Throne of Christ"—Rev. 3:21; "One Man's Act"—Rom. 5:18, 19; "Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear"; "Mirrors of God's Glory"; "Prepare

You Victuals"—Joshua 1:11; "The Gospel Age Harvest"; "Young People's Address"; and "On the Right Hand of Power"—Matt. 26:64.

Two question meetings were held, and we considered the questions submitted this year to be especially good and of interest to all. It was very helpful to hear a number of lovely testimonies given by the brethren at the usual Testimony meeting. A number of encouraging messages were received from Classes and brethren, and it was good to know that those who could not be present in person were with us in spirit, and that we had their well-wishes and prayers on our behalf. To all those who sent messages to us and to the followers of the Master everywhere, the Convention message with warm Christian love was the lovely passage of Scripture contained in our Convention study—Col. 3:12-17, also Acts 20:32.

To have a successful Convention many hours of labour are undertaken by those attending in preparing addresses, studies and comments. We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who spent time and effort in this way. It will be a great joy to their hearts to know that their work has brought spiritual blessings to their brothers and sisters in Christ. Our thanks also go out to the sisters who so lovingly prepared the meals and refreshments, as unto the Lord.

A Love Feast, with all joining in the singing of the hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds" and "God be with you" was also enjoyed. The Convention closed with a prayer of thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for all the blessings received over the two days and at all times, and asking for His guidance and watch-care over us and all His dear people in all the days ahead.

Witnesses for Jesus

"He that receiveth you receiveth me"—Matt. 10:40.

THE following thoughts are from an article written many years ago, and which are as timely and important for us today, as in the past.

"What in fact, should we do if Jesus appeared in our society without any claim to anything but the right to console us, to heal our personal ills, and to make us all comfortable again? I wonder. As a revealer of the art of actual living, as the Master of the craft of life—for that is what He is and was—should we recognise Him, or would Church and State combine against Him as a dangerous fellow, one to be dealt with in the old Judean way, to be bullied, to be betrayed, to be crucified? I wonder.

"I suggest that for many of us who are here, there is, after all, one thing above others that actually makes known the Gospel, and that is

the goodness of the individual. If only when we got home tonight they knew at home, because we were rather different, that we had been trying to draw near to our Lord; if only they could see that we were a little more thoughtful, courteous, kindly and understanding, then, 'Oh, my!' they would say, 'there is something in this more than we thought there was.'

"I think it might well be the ambition of all our lives that one day, possibly, most lovely of all, wife, or brother, or sister, or mother, or grannie, might say after we had left. 'It seems as if Jesus of Nazareth had passed by.' So when we talk, as we often do, about the Bible and its Plan of the Ages, let us please remember that this message will count in an amazing way if we can take Jesus Christ back to our homes or to our places of business."

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.

"Do You Know?"

Good supplies of the "Do You Know?" slips are available for more general witness of the truths of God's Word. These are inexpensive, but quite sufficient to prompt earnest people to seek further information on the Bible. Supplied through the General Tract Fund, friends are invited to use these freely.

Happiness

Dr. James Hamilton, in his fine wisdom, asked: "Are you not surprised to find how independent of money peace of conscience is, and how much happiness can be condensed in the humblest home? A cottage will not hold the bulky furniture and sumptuous accommodations of a mansion; but, if God be there, a cottage will hold as much happiness as might stock a palace."

There are persons so independent that you cannot depend upon them.

— C. H. Spurgeon

(Continued from page 3.)

that which is much—Luke 16:10. After all, dear child of Mine, My most important consideration for you is that you prove faithful; and you can do that with a few pennies just as well as though you possessed a large fortune which could be devoted to My service. You doubtless have read what My beloved Son said about the widow who cast her only two mites into the treasury of the temple. Well, the fact that you have only mites to use in My service is My providence for you. This thing is from Me! I am watching to see if you will be like that widow"—Mark 12:42-44; Luke 21:1-4.

The Lord's providences over His people are truly marvellous. Frequently those who have had little or no opportunity for service, suddenly find that glorious privileges in the harvest open up before them. Those who have had small opportunities may be granted larger ones. Those incapacitated by illness may recover. Family responsibilities may lessen. Some who possess little of this world's goods may acquire more which they can use for the Lord. These changes of circumstances should also be accepted as coming from the Lord; so again we hear Him saying to us: "This thing is from Me. You have profited as a new creature by your past position in life, and now I have answered your prayers for greater opportunities of service. But it is well to remember that you will need My help now more than ever before; for, in the use of these larger privileges of service, there may be a tendency for you to develop a feeling of self-sufficiency.

"When you were weak and ill, you felt your need of Me, but now that you are strong and well, you need Me more than ever; so do not now neglect to acknowledge Me in all your ways, and look to Me to direct your path and give you the strength to walk in it. The service which you rendered to those dependent upon you was important, but now that you are serving me directly you will need My guidance and blessing even more than before, for the simple reason that you will be handling the holy things of My Word and plan. And if you may now have more money to spend for Me, take heed lest you come to feel that your money should buy you special privileges of honor and authority among My people. Watch also lest you rest in the thought that your money is all I want. Above everything else, from you—as from all My children—I want the affection of your heart. I want you to keep close to Me and to be very attentive to all of My instructions. I want you to tremble at My Word, not in fear of what I might do to you, but because you are anxious lest a promise being left you of entering into a full rest of faith in the doing of My will, you should even seem to come short of it—Heb. 4:1.

"So, dear consecrated child of Mine, since you have agreed to acknowledge Me in all your ways

—Prov. 3:6—just remember that I am directing you in all things and that there isn't a single experience that comes into your life of which I am not aware but have either permitted it or ordered it because I knew that it would be for your good as a child and heir of Mine and a joint-heir with My beloved Son, Jesus—Rom. 8:16, 17. Never doubt My interest in you, nor My ability to care for you. As each new blessing comes to you, as trials weigh down upon you, keep your ears attuned for My reassuring message. This thing is from Me. Yes, from Me, the God of your salvation, the God of mercy and abundant grace, who daily lifts up His countenance upon thee to give thee peace—Num. 6:24-26.

"I am your Father, too, your Heavenly Father, and everything that concerns you, My child, concerns Me. My love is yours for your comfort and joy. My infinite wisdom is yours to direct all your steps. My almighty power is pledged to your support, to help you over all the rough places in your heavenly journey, to defend you against all your foes, and to strengthen you in all your weaknesses. And just remember, dear child of Mine, that I will withhold no good thing from you, and that I always give My very best to those who leave the choice with Me—Psa. 84:11. Blessed are all they who put their trust in Me"—Psa. 2:12; 34:8.

Reassuring indeed are the Lord's words, as He talks to us out of the Scriptures. Perhaps one of the important lessons we should learn from His messages is that when we fellowship with Him, it is best that we have little to say ourselves. If it is important that all the world keep silent before Him—Zech. 2:13—it is even more so for us, His children. Our Heavenly Father is, however, pleased for us to express our devotion to, and love for, Him, to reiterate our longing desire to please Him and to keep near to Him. How appropriate that we should say:

"Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when Thou are near.
O! may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

"Shield of my soul, tho' tempests rage,
And 'gainst me hosts of foes engage,
My refuge and my fortress Thou,
Before Thee every foe must bow."

"A Little While"

"A little while" for patient vigil keeping,
To face the stern, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while" to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.
"A little while" to keep the oil from failing,
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom's coming footsteps hailing
We'll haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.
And He who is Himself the Gift and Giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad "forever,"
Will light the shadows of the "little while."

Jane Fox Crewdson.

"A friend loveth at all times"—Prov. 17:17.

Well has the wise man said that a friend loveth at all times. He who merely loves at a time when he thinks it will be to his own advantage to love, knows not love. He who loves and is a brother in prosperity merely, and whose love and friendship wither under the heat of persecution, and adversity, has never known love in its true sense, but merely a certain brand of selfishness—the love of the world. As God commendeth His love toward us and showed us that not through selfishness, but generosity, at a great cost to Himself, He provided us release from our prison, and gave us privileges of sonship, so true love will be willing to sacrifice. Let us judge, then, of our love for others, for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families, for our neighbours, for our enemies, even, by our willingness to sacrifice in their interest and for their highest welfare.—Z '08-249.

"Hope"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." This edition of "Hope" booklet has been produced from an original edition of the same by Dawn Publications of U.S.A. The uncertain delivery by mail from overseas of late has prompted the production of this very helpful booklet here. Used in the past as a message of comfort for the bereaved, it is also appropriate for general use. Good supplies are available free, provided through the General Tract Fund, for wise use where good may be done.

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.15 to \$3.50, according to distance in Australia).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 90c in Victoria; \$1.00 interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna" pocket size—75c (postage 55c).
- "Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 55c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—50c (Postage 55c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 30c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101

Extracts from Correspondence

Dear Brother—Thank you for your letter. Have noted your remarks re "The Voice" publications which I had concluded were not really for general house to house letter-box distribution. As you say, the "Do You Know?" should be suitable for any first contacts in letter boxes. I am out of these, and could do with another batch, up to 1000. I have plenty of the other publications which are all very good.

The booklet "God's Remedy for World in Distress" is a real good one, though they are all good and cover much the same plan of redemption. "The Best is Yet to Come" is also real good besides "The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing." . . . You will receive a cheque for \$— from our Class as a donation, to be allocated to the General Tract Fund. We appreciate your work. With our Christian regards.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Would you please place on your mailing list the name and address listed below. Could you please forward your current "Peoples Paper", August—September, and the booklet—"God's Remedy for World in Distress." I thank you for your Bible Studies and "Papers" as I find them very interesting, helpful and thought provoking. Enclosed find \$3.00. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Today I received my copy of "Armageddon—Then Peace on Earth" and the "Peoples Paper." I found both articles very enlightening and was wondering whether you could send me a price list of other books or booklets you have that may be of interest to me. Enclosed is \$1.50 for "The Ten Camels." Thanking you.

Dear Brother—Greetings in the fellowship of our Lord. As always, we are enjoying the "P.P." and also the little booklets—"Christian Baptism" especially recently. Time gets away and age helps us forget. At any rate the enclosed is for subscription and to help with your work where useful.

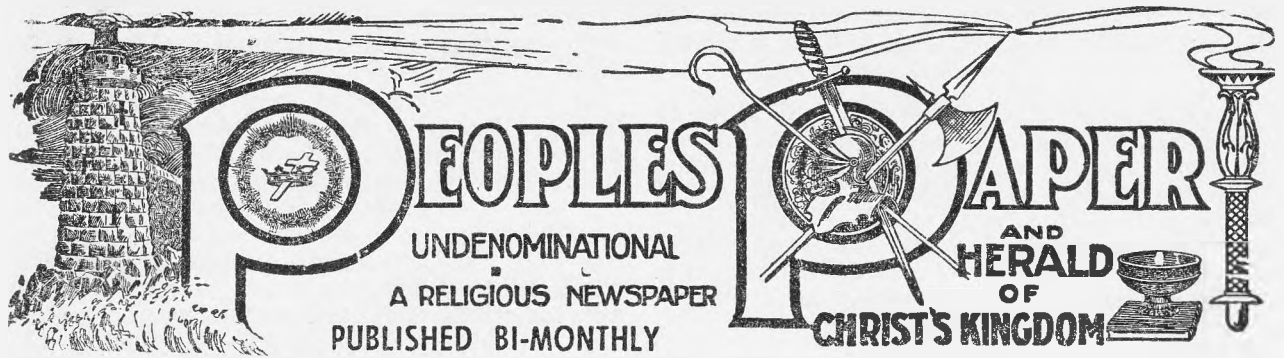
Our April Convention (at Boise, U.S.A.) was another special blessing of spiritual uplift and fellowship. Our prayer always is "Thy Kingdom Come"—when we will have gathered for that "general assembly." Everything in that new Kingdom will be beyond anything we can imagine now. We pray God's rich blessing on your work and all the brethren there. Your brethren in the one hope.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends—I have been receiving "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" which I appreciate very much and which is passed around to others. Please use the enclosed in payment for copies and postage. In the Redeemer's Name.

Dear Brother—Thank you so much for continuing to send the literature, which gives me everlasting gratitude to our Father, and also encouragement in my feeble walk. I especially enjoy articles which are able to focus so clearly those things which are vague shapes and shadows in my head. May God bless you.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.



Volume LXV No. 1

MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY—MARCH, 1932

Price—20 Cents

“My Grace is Sufficient for Thee”

(Convention Address)

“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. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong”—2 Cor. 12:7-10.

THIS passage is well known and loved. Nevertheless since it contains one of the greatest demands upon the Christian, as well as one of the greatest encouragements it is worthy of frequent review. It certainly merits our time here.

In verse 7 we are told that Paul had some “thorn in the flesh.” It could not have been a literal thorn, for that doubtless would have been dealt with by a human agency. However, it is consistent with our lesson to make little of problems we encounter, just as Paul did by describing his problem as a “thorn.”

From the fact that the inspired Word does not tell us the nature of Paul’s ailment, we can conclude that we do not need to know. One can see Divine wisdom in this. If we were told that it was an eye problem, we might associate the message in our passage with eye problems. Surely the “thorn in the flesh” is used to describe Paul’s ailment with a symbol which can stand for any difficulty or painful condition a Christian may encounter.

Verse 7 also tells us that Paul was blessed with knowledge as to the purpose of his thorn. Often we have to seek diligently to come to that position. Often, too, we find that the purpose is exactly as it was with Paul—to keep us humble. Divine guidance of this type is often referred to as the “chastening of the Lord.”

This aspect of our text in 2 Cor., enlarges on Hebrews chapter 12 in several ways.

The passage Heb. 12:1-15 is all profitable, but verse 11 will serve to remind us of its general message, and reads—“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” The need to be exercised by the chastening is the climax of the instruction. Relating this to our passage in 2 Cor., we can note that Paul was exercised by his thorn.

Note, however, the importance of linking 2 Cor. 12 with Heb. 12. Chastening is corrective but it does not necessarily require a fault. The Scripture does not say that Paul had been exalted above measure but that the corrective or chastening was provided lest that should happen. These days we hear much of preventive medicine. Paul’s thorn was preventive medicine for the inner man.

It can be seen that our text expounds the chastening of the Lord in two particular features: (1) Paul’s attitude provides an example of the proper manner in which the guidance should be received—accepted with all readiness of mind. (2) By indicating that the treatment may be preventive, the Lord’s dealing with the Christian is shown to be better described as discipline than either chastening or correction. Discipline includes both corrective and preventive correction.

Looking ahead, there is also a link between the positive nature of our Lord’s reply and the subject of discipline or the chastening of the Lord. The positive way in which our Lord refused Paul implies that one should not wilt nor cringe under the Lord’s dealings. God’s will is to encourage. Divine strength is a positive power at the very least to overcome the fault or danger encountered. Paul’s life demonstrates proper submission to God’s will. He also explained it in 2 Tim. 1:7, which reads—“God hath not given us the spirit of fear;

but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

The purpose of the thorn, stated twice in verse 7, amounts to character building or edification. This is a good gift and from James 1:17 we know that God is the only source of good gifts. This verse reads—"Every good gift and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Yet, our verse 7 also states that the thorn was the messenger of Satan. Clearly the purpose of character building is not at all compatible with the nature of Satan portrayed in the Bible. Any difficulty here, is only on the surface. The verse is consistent with God's use of His complete power. Firstly, God is all powerful and all that happens must be in accord either with God's deliberate will or His permissive will. Secondly, God is able to make all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.

It would seem that Satan is ever ready to buffet or hurt those who are against him or if he thinks it will promote his interests. Providentially, God usually restrains Satan but where it will work together for good—for higher good—God permits Satan to have his evil way. Whilst this understanding is by implication from the opposing purposes of our verse, the limited permission was actually recorded in Job's case. Job 1:12 reads—"The LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand." So in our verse Satan's intent in his messenger of pain was to buffet Paul. God permitted Satan's evil because it furthered His intention to ensure humility in Paul.

If this understanding is accepted and taken to heart it gives a wonderful assurance. How good it is to know that nothing can happen to one unless it be permitted by the benevolent God who loves His creatures and who allows or disallows only for the creature's ultimate good.

Paul sought the removal of the thorn thrice. This indicates that asking for the same thing more than once is not a lack of faith nor a vain repetition. In Matt. 6:7 our Lord instructed that vain repetitions should not be used. He said—"When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do." From Paul's example, it can be seen that simply praying again for an unfulfilled request could not be the error to which Christ referred. Paul loved God and always tried to please Him. Surely, the expression "vain repetitions" must refer to shallow and insincere prayers repeated as the "done thing" or perhaps chanted. On the contrary, Paul's attitude encourages persistence in prayer. This is the lesson Christ drew from the incident

with the Syrophenician woman in Mark 7:26-30.

It is also noted that Paul did not demand healing. He knew that he had no province to do so. He wanted God's will to be done, rather than his own. Instead of demanding, he gave the perfect example of the proper attitude to a malady the Lord did not see fit to remove. Not only did Paul accept and co-operate with the Lord's will but rejoiced in that will and in any afflictions the Lord permitted.

Paul's prayer of verse 8 was to the Lord. Whenever one ponders whether an expression refers to the Father or the Son it is good to be mindful of 1 Cor. 8:6—all things are of or out from the Father and all things are of or through the Son. Usually one prays to the Father using the special access possible through the Son. However, it seems likely, here, that Paul was addressing Christ. The Word tells us that on various occasions Paul had discourse with the raised Saviour. Examples are, on the road to Damascus in Acts chapter 9, the instruction on the Memorial in 1 Cor. 11, and the observation that it is more blessed to give than to receive in Acts 20:35. Because of the oneness between the Father and Son, one need not be too concerned to whom Paul refers. When the Father is named and when the Son is named, prayers ascend to the Father by way of the Son just as the strength is out of the Father by means of the Son.

The highlight of our passage is the reply made by our Lord. The request was denied. The words used to express the refusal show the wisdom that is from above defined in James 3:17. Instead of saying "No", our Lord stated in positive terms that which was best for Paul and which he was receiving. The words—"My grace is sufficient for thee" amount to—"You could not wish for more than you have by having My favour."

Some commentators limit the sufficiency of grace. They read our Lord's reply as saying—"You have asked for a painful thing to be removed. It is not to be removed but instead you will be given sufficient grace to overcome the problem and in particular to enable your desired work for the gospel." Certainly overcoming power is part of the grace. It would also be true that Paul's chief desire would be the furtherance of God's plan and the spread of the Gospel. However, the pleasure noticeable in Paul's zealous response indicates that he understood much more to be included in the profound "My grace is sufficient for thee." Consider for a moment just some of the things included in God's unmerited favour. Please read Eph. 2:4-7, and Rom. 8:16-19.

Can any Christian doubt the sufficiency of God's grace. Our very existence is by grace. Psalm 30:5 tells us—"In his favour is life." Paul told the Athenians in Acts 17:28—"In him we live, and move and have our being."

Almost every creature values and holds fast to life upon this earth. Of much greater value is the life of the New Creature begotten again from above. Along with the higher plane of life is the opportunity which attends it, by God's grace, of satisfying love by helping others find fullness of life.

Before moving on from the things included as part of the undeserved favour of God through Christ, one could return to the 8th chapter of Romans. It is full of these blessings—sonship, guidance, character development, hope, justification and even divine love. Verse 32 not only culminates thoughts of blessing but logically verifies God's inflexibility in that direction. It is as certain as the fact that Christ died, and reads—"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?"

The expression—"My strength is made perfect in weakness" is intriguing. A typical commentator paraphrases it as—"My strength has its most perfect manifestation in weakness." Does not this imply that the Lord wants weakness to manifest His strength? That would be like a mother wanting her child to remain an infant always in order that she could continue to shower it with the type of love and care suitable for babes.

The problem is also illustrated by the Living Bible. It gives our Lord's reply as—"No. But I am with you; that is all you need. My power shows up best in weak people." This can hardly be the real meaning. It implies that Paul was weak. It would follow that Paul rejoiced in that weakness and determined to continue in it. Instinctively, we know that Christ does not want us to be weak just to emphasize His own strength by contrast. The contrast is there and it does enhance Christ's strength but that meaning would not explain the refusal of Paul's prayer. Granting the plea would more obviously demonstrate the perfectness of Christ's strength.

There was adequate demonstration or manifestation of divine strength by contrast with the weakness of mankind long before Christ became a man. The weakness which best enables divine strength to prosper is along the lines of meekness, lacking in worldly wisdom, as outlined in 1 Cor. 1:21-29.

The Greek word rendered "made perfect" is said by Strong to mean "to complete, i.e., (lit.) accomplish, or (fig.) consummate (in character)." It is used elsewhere in the sense of finishing by making complete. Perhaps the occasion best known is Heb. 2:10, which reads—"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." For the words "made perfect" to have a similar meaning in our text "weakness" would have to point to something culminating Christ's work. God

through Christ created all things. A weak creature would not bring as much credit to the Creator as a strong creature. It is suggested that the answer to the problem is the creative process. Removal of the thorn would show only sufficient strength to remove it. Overcoming strength would be more but still less than the reality.

Paul had a physical weakness. It was to remain so that Paul would grow and develop, by God's grace, through the nurture of Christ, to be conformed to the image of his Master. The parable of the vine and the branches well pictures this growth. The reason that the thorn was not removed was quite simply the reason it was allowed in the first place—lest Paul should be exalted above measure and his spiritual growth be stunted thereby. It is the process of creating the New Creature out of weakness which finishes by completion the strength of Christ. Please read Eph. 4:14, 15, 13.

Just as our Lord's reply to Paul provides incentive and encouragement, so also Paul's response provides example even to this day. The nature of the infirmities, reproaches, etc., have changed, but in God there is no variable-ness. The process of developing the New Creature still involves its discipline. Pride and self-confidence are still prime dangers.

Paul's willingness to endure suffering and, even more, to take pleasure in infirmities must have resulted from his appreciation of the Lord's favour. Loving God as he did, Paul would have regarded the favour as incentive in itself. Paul knew, too, of the High Calling and the part which the New Creature was to play in the blessing of all the families of the earth. Could there be any greater incentive? His words—"When I am weak, then am I strong"—indicate his awareness of the need to be emptied of self. He knew that it was only to the extent that he suppressed self that the power of Christ could rest upon him. The role of the High Calling will demand the highest character. This is the reason for the heavy emphasis in the New Testament upon all the discipline which must accompany its edification.

Important to that development is humility. The thorn was allowed lest Paul be exalted above measure. At the same time a physical ailment might help him centre his thoughts away from things of this world. This growth requires a sense of values related to eternity rather than the fleeting time of this life. Character is the eventual outcome of this life for the New Creature. Its creation consists of begetting followed by development. It is only those who co-operate in this creative work who may, like Paul, rejoice that the very weaknesses of the old creature redound to the glory of God.

(Continued on page 8.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

Convention News

THE Christmas Convention 1981, arranged by the Melbourne Class and held over the four days of the Christmas period, proved to be another profitable occasion of spiritual refreshing. Thankfulness to our Heavenly Father is gratefully expressed for His blessings bestowed throughout the assemblies. The attendance was very good throughout, as visiting brethren were gladly welcomed from South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, and a Brother attending from U.S.A. Our Australian Polish brethren were also well in attendance and contributed helpfully during the gatherings. Special mention is called for, that four Sisters and two Brothers of the Bateson family attended, whose ages are 97, 92, 89, 87, 83 and 81. This is probably a world record for the members of one family to be blessed of the Lord with His truth, and we rejoice with them that they are thus favoured of God.

The Convention gatherings consisted of two Bible Studies, 17 addresses by the brethren, Fellowship and Testimony Meetings, a Hymn Session and general informal fellowship all contributing to the helpfulness of the gatherings.

Following the opening praise, prayer and address of welcome, the first Bible Study was conducted on the Scriptural passage in Eph. 4:1-6. This very inspiring exhortation from the Apostle Paul to the Ephesian Christians was most helpful, as each verse contained so much vital truth respecting the heavenly calling for Christians of this Gospel Age. In addition to the important doctrinal truths brought out during the study, the development of the fruits of the spirit was also equally impressed, as each of the Lord's people must "endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace", by the Lord's grace and strength.

The second Bible Study in 2 Cor. 5:14-21 was also most profitable. The thought of the love of God and Christ "constraining" all true followers of the Master in their Christian privileges was predominant throughout this passage. Indeed, this Scripture from the Apostle Paul revealing "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" is one of the most inspiring to discipleship for all who are drawn of God to the Saviour in the present life. God reconciled a few worthy ones of humanity to Himself during the 4,000 years before Christ, that they may be "princes in all the earth" in the Kingdom Age—Psa.

45:16. The Bride of Christ has been in process of reconciliation to God during the 2,000 years of the Gospel Age, these being the "little flock" to whom it is "the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom"—Luke 12:32. Then, in the Millennial Age, all the willing and obedient of the masses of mankind will be reconciled to God through Christ in that resurrection day, to inherit the earthly kingdom, "prepared from the foundation of the world"—Matt. 25:34.

The importance of the Apostle's words in the closing verses of our study was well impressed. What a privilege it is for Christians already reconciled to God through the merit of the Saviour to be "ambassadors for Christ" to assist others to be "reconciled to God" even now while the heavenly calling is still available, "For he (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin (to take the sinner's place) for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The subjects selected by the brethren for their addresses were varied and helpful, as follows—"Freedom of Speech"; "God's Ways"; "Be Strong in the Lord"; "Trusting and Obeying"; "Loving Kindness"; "Job's Perplexity"; "My Grace is Sufficient for Thee"; "JESUS—He shall save His people from their Sins"; "Watching the Signs of Time"; "God's Promises to Abraham"; "The Third Day"; "Growing in Christ"; "Secret Things and Promises of God"; "Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, Today and Forever"; "Development of the New Creation" and "God's Glory Declared."

Kindly greetings and Christian love with the assurance of prayers, were received in the numerous messages from Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas, all of which were warmly appreciated. To all who thus remembered us and to our brethren in every place, the Scripture message from the Convention is found in Eph. 4:1-3, and along with Christian love is sent to all.

The Praise and Testimony Meetings also provided opportunities for expressions of thankfulness to the Lord for all His goodness and mercies received throughout the year past and day by day. The Hymns We Love session was enjoyed again as the selected hymns were sung in praise to the Lord. The labour of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was also greatly appreciated, this being undertaken as a glad service to the Lord.

The number attending the closing session was the greatest we have had for years, as in addition to the brethren many well-wishers were gladly welcomed for the closing address and the Love Feast. The singing of the two well known hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds" and "God be with you till we meet again"—and the prayer of thanksgiving to God with request for His blessing and keeping upon all His people, concluded our very helpful Melbourne Convention for 1981.

Man—"A Little Lower Than Angels"

FAILING to see that the plan of God for mankind in general contemplates a restitution to their former estate—the human perfection lost in Eden—and that the Christian Church, as an exception to this general plan, is to have a change of nature from human to spiritual, Christian people generally have supposed that none will be saved except those who reach the spiritual nature. The Scriptures, however, while holding out promises of life and blessing and restitution to all the families of the earth, offer and promise the change to spiritual nature only to the Church selected during the Gospel Age; and not a single passage can be found which sustains such hopes for any others.

If the masses of mankind are saved from all the degradation, weakness, pain, misery, and death which result from sin, and are restored to the condition of human perfection enjoyed before the fall, they are as really and completely saved from that fall as those who, under the special "high-calling" of the Gospel Age, become "partakers of the divine nature."

The failure to understand rightly what constitutes a perfect man, the misapprehension of the terms mortal and immortal, and wrong ideas of justice, have together tended to this error, and mystified many Scriptures otherwise easily understood. It is a common view, though unsupported by a single text of Scripture, that a perfect man has never been on earth; that all that is seen of man on earth is only the partially developed man, and that to reach perfection he must become spiritual. This view makes confusion of the Scriptures instead of developing that harmony and beauty which result from "rightly dividing the Word of truth."

The Scriptures teach that there have been two, and only two, perfect men—Adam and Jesus. Adam was created in the image of God: that is, with the similar mental powers of reason, memory, judgment, and will, and the moral qualities of justice, benevolence, love, etc. "Of the earth, earthy", he was an earthly image of a spiritual being, possessing qualities of the same kind, though differing widely in degree, range, and scope. To such an extent is man an image of God that God can say even to the fallen man—"Come, let us reason together."

As Jehovah is ruler over all things, so man was made a ruler over all earthly things—After our likeness, let him have dominion over the beasts, fowl, fish, etc.—Gen. 1:26. Moses tells us—Gen. 1:31—that God recognized the man whom He had made—not merely commenced to make, but completed—and God considered His creature "very good", that is,

perfect; for in God's sight nothing short of perfection is **very good**, in His intelligent creatures.

The perfection of man, as created, is expressed in Psa. 8:5-8—"Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea." It has been suggested by some who would make the Bible conform to a theory of evolution, that the statement, "a little" in Heb. 2:7, might be understood to mean a little **while** lower, and not a little **degree** lower than the angels. (*) There is, however, neither authority nor reason for such an interpretation. This is a quotation from Psa. 8:5, and a critical comparison of the Hebrew and Greek texts can leave no doubt as to the import. The idea, clearly expressed is a little lower in degree than angels.

David, in the Psalm, refers to man in his original estate, and prophetically intimates that God has not abandoned His original plan, to have man in His own image and the king of earth, and that he will **remember** him, redeem him and restore him to the same again. The Apostle (Heb. 2:7-9) calls attention to the same fact—that God's original purpose has not been abandoned; that man, originally grand and perfect, the king of earth, is to be remembered, and visited, and restored. He then adds, We see not this promised restitution yet, but we do see the first step God is taking toward its accomplishment. We see Jesus crowned with this glory and honour of perfect manhood, that He, as a fitting ransom or substitute might by God's favor taste death for every man, and thus prepare the way for the restitution of man **to all that was lost**. Rotherham, one of the most scrupulous translators, renders this passage as follows:

"What is man, that thou rememberest him;
Or man's son, that thou visitest him?
Thou madest him **less some little** than
messengers:
With glory and honour thou crownedst
him,
And didst appoint him over the works of
thy hands."

From—"Divine Plan of the Ages."

(*) The Revised Standard Version, Moffatt, Companion Bible (footnote), and others give this misleading rendering.

"God's Great Plan of Salvation"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Thoughts on Isaiah 65:20

THERE is a very general impresson that Isa. 65:20 limits the time of trial to one hundred years in the early part of the Millennial Age. It is suggested that those who have made no progress towards perfection during that period will be cut off in eternal death without further opportunity. The idea rests solely upon this particular text; nowhere else is there any similar word given, and standing as it does, the text is in contradiction to those Scriptures that give one thousand years as the duration of mankind's "day of grace" in the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

First of all, then, let the words of the text be examined. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." There is nothing said here about the death of the sinner, either at a hundred years or at any other time. The "child" is said to die at a hundred years—for what reason is not stated—and then the sinner who attains to a hundred years is apparently to be counted "accursed." Whether or no that involves death the prophet does not say.

Suppose, however, that the interpretation above referred to is the true one; that the sinner has one hundred years only to make a start in the way of righteousness. How does this accord with the fundamental principles of the Divine Plan?

In the Millennial Age, as in this present Age, repentance, conversion, and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be the essential first steps in coming to God. There will be no "progressing towards perfection" until those steps have been taken. Until then the sinner remains a sinner. After that time, he is a sinner no longer. He will have become justified by faith and enjoy peace with God. Thenceforward, progress towards human perfection, physical, mental and moral, will continue until the repentant one is ushered into his everlasting inheritance. This is a truth that has not been stressed in the past as much as it should. It has been customary to speak of man's progress towards perfection in the next Age as though it were a kind of mechanical process, based upon nothing much more than an intellectual acceptance of the Divine rule "Do right and live." There has been a distinct loss in this failure to recognize that repentance and conversion will be very important factors in the work of that Age. Now if the old idea of Isa. 65:20 were the correct one it would of necessity imply that the time allowed for repentance and conversion is limited to one hundred years, the first hundred years of life. None who have not taken at least that first step by the end of the first century of their awakening from death would survive. That in turn obviously limits the day

of grace, the day of salvation, for each man, to one hundred years. Yet "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained"—Acts 17:31—and that day is one thousand years long! God has set apart such a day to give all men a full, fair opportunity of life. He waits for their repentance; like the father in the story of the Prodigal Son, He is anxious to receive them even at the eleventh hour, if so be that at so late a time they will lift up their eyes to heaven and say "I have sinned against heaven and before thee." It is entirely foreign to our knowledge of the Divine character to think that, if a man should remain obstinate and unrepentant for 900 years out of the thousand, and should then repent, the Father would refuse to have him. We hold firmly to the principle that God has ordained a time which is sufficient to give full opportunity for repentance to all who are capable of repentance—and must then conclude that the full benefits of that glorious Age will be available to all men.

Now let the text be examined critically. It is part of a passage—Isa. 65:11-25—that describes Divine judgment on the evil doers of the Millennial Age, and the ultimate victory of the righteous of that Age, culminating in the eternity of the Kingdom. Emphasis is laid upon the long duration of the Age compared with the brevity of human life now, and the blessedness of that Age compared with the miseries of the present. "The former troubles are forgotten"—verse 16—and God creates new heavens and a new earth in which there is peace and security, "and my chosen ones shall long enjoy the work of their hands"—verse 22. The key thought therefore is the longevity of Kingdom conditions—long life for all with freedom from fear and poverty. Verse 20 must fit into this key thought because it is part of the prophet's train of reasoning and intended to assist in the description of Millennial conditions which he is trying to draw.

Now let the verse itself be divided into its various parts. There is to be no longer an "infant of days"—"infant" is "ad", a baby—"Infant of few days" "a child that dies untimely" say other translators. That means there will be no short-lived babies—logical enough in an Age in which the Adamic death sentence has been abolished."... Nor an old man that hath not filled his days"; "shall not complete his time", "shall not have the full length of his days" say others. No man need expect premature death—he will have his full expectation of long life. Logical enough also! "For the child shall die an hundred years old." "Child" here is "naar", a lad or youth, anything from 14 to 24 or so. Taking the statement just like that it contradicts the previous one. If the young men, without any reason stated are to die at one hundred years old, how then are there to be any "old men" enjoying the full length

of their days? "But the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." The conjunction "but" appears to indicate that the "accursed" condition of the hundred years old sinner is something less desirable than the affliction of death upon the one hundred-year-old youth who is not even said to be a sinner which appears to create an absurdity.

The first half of the verse, then, is understandable and the second half is not. Let the least understandable part be examined more closely.

In the Hebrew Bible the connecting word "for" in "for the child" etc., is explained by Gesenius, the most authoritative grammarian, to have the general meaning of "that". He devotes over three pages of his lexicon to explaining the usage of this word. In the text under consideration, the correct rendering into English is, "There shall be no more a short-lived babe... that the lad should die an hundred years old, and that the sinner, being an hundred years old, should be accursed." In other words, the days will not be so restricted that anyone will die at so early an age as one hundred years, or the patience of God so short that any sinner will be pronounced accursed at so brief a time as one hundred years of trial.

The literal word-for-word Hebrew rendering of these two phrases runs "...that the boy, son-of-a-hundred years, he-would-die, and-the-sinner, son-of-a-hundred years, he-would-be-accursed."

Thus seen, the text is in full accord with the Book of Revelation and the prophetic writings which speak of a long period of time, defined six times in Revelation as a thousand years in duration, set apart by God for the missionary work of the glorified Church, in this world, to effect the reconciliation to God, through repentance and acceptance of Christ, of "whosoever will." The door of hope does not close until the end of the Age. The General Resurrection takes place at its beginning, and thereafter throughout the entirety of that age there will be no death and no passing of final judgment. During its whole course none need fear that life will be cut short, or sentence be executed, either in so short a time as one hundred years, or in any other period short of the full time. There will be no short-lived children and no premature ageing, that men may die or sinners be condemned too soon. Only at the end will the King make the final apportionment and God's long Day of Grace come to its close. (From "Bible Study Monthly", England.)

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 9th, 10th and 11th, at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinsted, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

Pilgrim Way Ended

ON the 18th November last our dear Brother Routley of Geelong, Victoria, finished the pilgrim way after nearly 40 years of appreciation of God's loving plan of salvation for humanity. Hearing the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts on 3GL Geelong prompted his interest in the Bible truth that Christ's sacrifice redeemed not only Christians for the heavenly kingdom, but also all mankind who shall believe in the Saviour for the earthly kingdom, when they shall have the opportunity in the Kingdom Age.—1 John 2:2.

After yielding his own life to the Lord, he joined with other truth loving brethren to form a small Bible Class in Geelong, which for a number of years enjoyed the Lord's blessing. Our Brother Routley also visited the Melbourne Class, and Melbourne Conventions, from time to time, being well-known and loved by many of the Australian brethren. His quiet and gentle nature reflected the sanctifying character of his Master to a marked degree. His addresses to the brethren were always of a deeply spiritual nature, indicating his own well developed spiritual life.

Being rather frail physically for some years, this condition increased after an operation from which he did not regain strength, but his faith and trust in the Lord remained steadfast to the end of his earthly pilgrimage. Sincere sympathy is extended to his wife and three children in their loss of a loving Christian husband and father. We feel confident that our dear Brother has gained an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom, by the Lord's grace. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels"—Mal. 3:17.

"Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body"—1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

At the opening of the new year, what lesson could be more important to us than this one, that we are not our own, but belong to another; that we are not, therefore, to seek to please ourselves, but to please Him; nor to seek to serve self, but to serve Him; nor to seek to obey self-will, but on the contrary His will? This means holiness in the most absolute and comprehensive sense of the word (not only separation from sin to righteousness, but separation from self to the will of God in Christ). Z. '97-35.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 50c.

Continued from page 3

While instruction for this life must be the purpose of our passage, it is now suggested that the same words can give comfort and a beautiful picture of great hope for the ages to come. In the absolute sense, our Lord's strength will not be made perfect or complete or fully exercised until the Plan is complete. The resurrection itself, will show to all the strength which the Father has given to His Christ. Surely the ultimate weakness is death. Restoration to life will itself manifest great strength. How much more will this strength be demonstrated when all the weaknesses which have come upon mankind due to the fall are seen to have been rectified by Christ.

Sin has to be blamed for all man's frailties. But Christ's strength will be shown to be perfect when all the lame are healed. How glorious will be the day when imperfections are removed. Think of all those torn apart by war or accident, all the blind, those with physical handicaps, the mentally handicapped also. John 9:1-3 is seen to support the suggestion that our passage in 2 Cor. 12 can quite properly be applied to the new age. Please read John 9:1-3. The important part is that the works of God should be made manifest in the blind man. No doubt the same could be said of each person healed by Jesus during His earthly ministry. There were a number of them. Yet, all those healings of the first advent were a token only of the healing accomplished on the Cross. Just as original sin is the root cause of all infirmities and imperfections in this world, so the great sacrifice established the foundation for perfection in Christ's Kingdom.

When all are made perfect and dwell together in love, how they will delight to bow every knee to Jesus, acknowledging His strength made perfect. "My grace is sufficient for thee." That is a masterful understatement. The Lord's grace is abundant—and abundant for all.

God Bless Thee

God grant you grace, this coming year,
For ev'ry time of need;
And strength to follow day by day
Where'er your path may lead.

God give you peace and quietness,
Through storm or sunshine bright,
And clear your sky of ev'ry cloud,
And guide you with His light.

God send you blessings on your way,
And joy, and hope serene,
That you by faith may see His face,
And all that's now unseen.

God show'r upon you blessings rich,
To cheer you hour by hour,
And fill your heart and keep you through
His holy spirit's pow'r.

Extracts from Correspondence

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother—Greetings in our dear Redeemer's Name. I have just received the Dec.-Jan., issue of "Peoples Paper" with booklet. I continue to enjoy all your publications and pray our heavenly Father to bless you richly in all your work and labour of love for His name's sake. I'm enclosing cheque for £—— to use in the work. Your sister in Christ.

Dear Brethren—Loving greetings with a prayer for your welfare, in Jesus' Name, from Sister——and from me. It has been a long time since we have sent you a contribution, yet you faithfully continue to send the "Peoples Paper." We appreciate your love for the Lord and His truth, and your fellowship in the proclamation of the Gospel. How thankful we are for the manifested love of our Father and our Lord Jesus, revealed to us through the Scriptures, so we may have the glorious hope for both Church and world. God bless you. Greet the brethren for us. Much love in Christ.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends—Thank you for continuing to send me the "Peoples Paper" and other literature. The enclosed is for subscription and to help in your work where useful. I would appreciate, however, a copy of "Tabernacle Shadows" and "God's Plan." Thanking you as His servants, and in our Redeemer's Name.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—In with the little book that I requested, you enclosed a "Peoples Paper". I would be pleased to have it for one year at least: enclosed find \$1.00 and a stamp for the one you enclosed. Thanking you and wishing you a happy 1982. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Please find enclosed cheque for \$3.00 to subscribe to the "Peoples Paper" for 1982 and any change a donation to you. Thank you for the fine reading matter in the "Peoples Paper." Yours truly.

Dear Brother,—Loving greetings in Christ! Thank you for sending the "Peoples Paper" and the booklets, much appreciated. We send our Christian love and greetings to all the brethren at the Christmas Holiday Convention. May the Lord richly bless all able to attend. We greet all with 1 Pet. 5:10, 11. Your brethren by God's loving grace. P.S. Enclosed \$—— toward the "Peoples Paper" and booklets.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brothers in Christ—Thanks very much for all the literature which you have forwarded to me last year. "Daily Heavenly Manna" is a wonderful book; it makes me feel so uplifted in Christ as I read each daily text and the explanation which follows it. I thoroughly recommend it to other readers. Am enclosing \$5.00 to cover the cost of the "Papers" and the remainder is a donation towards God's work. Yours sincerely. Your sister in Christ.

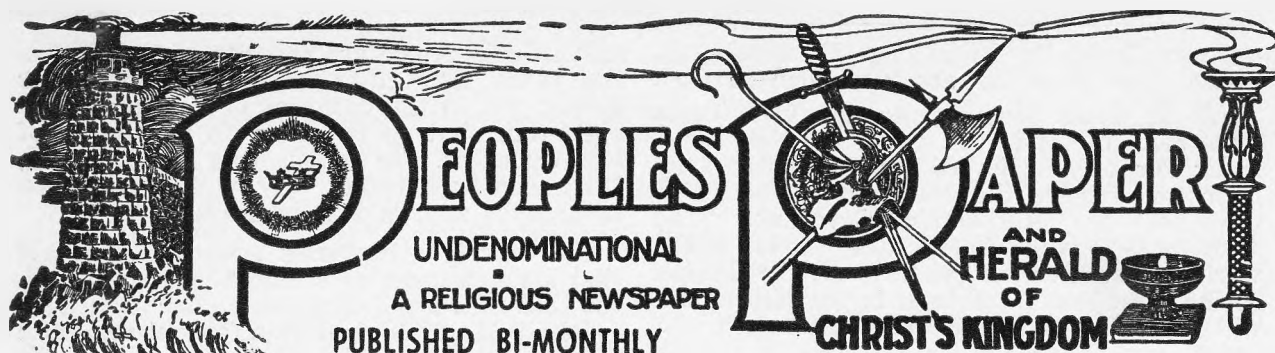
Passover Memorial, 1982

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 6th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 4th April, at 6 p.m., at Auxiliary Room, City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew.

Adelaide—Sunday, 4th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.



Volume LXV No 2

MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY, 1982

Price—20 Cents

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, 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 antitype of this was distinctly pointed out by the Apostle Paul; namely, that the elect Church of this Gospel Age is "the Church of the First-borns, which are written in heaven." These are to be the "able ministers of the New (Law) Covenant"—Heb. 12:23; 2 Cor. 3:6.

These first-borns alone 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.

Jesus, the Passover Lamb

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 defense 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 First-borns 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—I 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 them. 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.

"In That Night"

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 Day dawn 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, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven."

Over nineteen 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 recognize 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.

Blood on the Doorposts all Night

The Israelites were instructed that the blood of the lamb must be sprinkled on the doorposts and 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 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 Jesus 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 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. 12:1-13. The

injunction that those under the door sprinkled with blood should not go out during the night had special application and force with respect to the first-borns. Antitypically 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.

Eating the Lamb

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 through 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 appropriation 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.

The Blood of the New Covenant

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 14th 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 antitypical 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 believers might partake of the bread, might realize 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 bloodguiltiness, 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 defense 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.

"As Ye are Unleavened"

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.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

God's Inheritance in the Saints

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his (God's) inheritance in the saints"—Eph. 1:18.

WHEN we read and think about the subject of inheritance as presented in the Bible, our minds generally dwell upon the reward that the followers of the Lord will receive upon their proving faithful unto death. This we have stated in the latter part of Revelation 2:10—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

This is quite understandable, for the majority of New Testament passages referring to an inheritance do apply to the heavenly reward of the saints of this Gospel Age. We believe that our text in Ephesians 1:18 is one of the few in the New Testament which refers so directly to the thought, not of the saints' inheritance, but to **God's inheritance in the saints**. Some people may ask, Is there really any difference in the two thoughts? A careful examination will show that the Lord and the Apostles revealed quite a difference, even though it is not apparent on the surface.

To illustrate, let us examine two texts of Scripture applying to the next age. Firstly in Psa. 2:6-8, we have the record of God saying to Christ—"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for **thine inheritance**, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Christ has purchased the whole human race, and He is going to ask for them to be His inheritance in God's due time. Secondly, in Matthew 25:34 we have the reward for the world of mankind at the end of the Millennial Age revealed. "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." Here we have the Lord assuring those who are of the "sheep" class that they will inherit this wonderful kingdom on the restored earth, whereas in the Psalm we see mankind is to be given to Christ for an inheritance.

In another comparison of texts which apply to the saints of this Gospel Age we have Daniel 7:22 and Mal. 3:17. In Daniel 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**." In other words, they are shown as entering into their inheritance, the wonderful heavenly reward; whereas in Malachi it is stated—"They shall be **mine**, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Does this mean that the saints become the possession of God only when they are "made up" as the Bride of Christ? No, indeed, they are prospectively His inheritance, His possession, from the beginning of the Christian way, but as there is a possibility of coming short or falling away, they are not fully His until proved faithful unto death.

Let us note some texts which help us to see that we really become the possession or inheritance of our Heavenly Father right from the beginning of the first impulses of the Christian life. In John 6:44 our Lord says—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." We see here the Father's drawing influence upon those in a right heart condition, those who are yearning for something better than the present life. The Father acts upon their hearts and minds, drawing them towards the One whom He has sent to be the Saviour of the world. So accepting Christ, they become justified by faith.

We read further in Romans 12:1 "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." God has drawn these to Jesus. In presenting their bodies now, they are acceptable to God. He is the One who is vitally and overall interested in them because they have accepted the sacrifice of His Son, the means of approach to Him and they really become God's possession when they present their lives to Him.

In 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." When we grasp the meaning of the word "sealed" we begin to realize what a relationship is implied in being a member of God's inheritance. It means to stamp with a signet or private mark, for security or preservation. This of course implies a marking as of ownership, and the same Greek word is used with reference to our Lord Jesus, as is used for the saints. In John 6:27 we have a reference to our Lord's own sealing—"For him hath God the Father sealed." We may ask, But did not Jesus always belong to the Father, even as the Logos? If so, what is implied by the Father sealing Him?

This undoubtedly refers to the begetting of our Lord Jesus when He was 30 years of age for the highest inheritance of all, the divine nature. And in being begotten for that heaven-

ly inheritance. He also became God's inheritance or possession of the highest order; and this is the same sealing for possession or inheritance upon every member of the saints who is walking in the steps of Christ.

Let us note Eph. 1:13, 14 in this connection. "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." This refers to a foretaste or prepayment of our inheritance "until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Of our Lord Jesus we read in Heb. 1:9, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Of course, our Lord Jesus was anointed above all others, but we notice that these "fellows" are also anointed with the same "oil of gladness." Just to realize that to the full! And we do well to ask ourselves, How is the "oil of gladness" working in our lives? Is it provoking us unto love and to good works amongst our "fellows" who are also members of God's inheritance? We know it is possible for the work of the "oil of gladness" to be somewhat hindered by our own will, by self getting in the way, restricting the lubrication, so to speak, of our hearts and minds. A blockage in the lubrication system of any machinery is serious, and especially is this so in the hearts and minds of those called to be members of God's inheritance.

The Apostle exhorts us along this line in Eph. 4:29, 30. This helps us to co-operate with God in appreciation of the holy spirit dwelling in our hearts. Reading from verse 29— "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

2 Cor. 6:16, 18 helps us to see the favour of the Lord to those so blessed as to be invited into this wonderful inheritance of God, by the indwelling of the holy spirit. "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And I will be a Father unto them, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

I want to be marked for Thine own;
Thy seal on my forehead to wear;
To receive that "new name" on the mystic white stone,
Which only Thyself canst declare.

I want Thine own hand to unbind
Each tie to terrestrial things,
Too tenderly cherished, too closely entwined,
Where my heart too tenaciously clings.

I want, by mine aspect serene,
Mine actions and words, to declare
That my treasure is placed in a country unseen,
That my heart and affections are there.

I want, as a traveller, to haste
Straight onward, nor pause on my way,
No forethought or anxious contrivance to waste
On my tent, only pitched for a day.

"Seasons of Refreshing"

"Reform, therefore, and turn, that your sins may be blotted out; so that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord"—Acts 3:19, Diaglott.

THE opening verses of the third chapter of Acts give us a lovely record of the healing of a man lame from birth by the Apostles Peter and John. This miracle made such an outstanding impression upon the people when they saw this man walking and leaping and praising God, for they knew he had been lame previously all his life. In the words of verse 10, "they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him."

From verse 12 we have the words of Peter explaining how this miracle came about, and the logical procedure for those to follow who had brought about the death of Jesus, whose resurrection to the Father's right hand had been the means of manifesting God's power in such a remarkable manner as to cure this lame man instantly. The passage reads: "And when Peter saw it he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." As in our text, verse 19 reads from the Diaglott—"Reform, therefore, and turn, that your sins may be blotted out; so that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." The meaning of the Greek translated "blotted out" is—"to smear out, that is, obliterate." And the words "from the presence of the Lord", carry the thought of—"out from the face of, as a mark of favour"—that is from Jehovah, whose favour is indicated by the figure of His face turned towards us.

The question may be asked, When did the Apostles Peter and John expect those to whom they spoke to truly repent and become converted on the basis of faith in the sacrifice of Christ and then be worthy to receive seasons of refreshing from the presence of Jehovah? Would it not be there and then? Would not those who truly repented have the opportunity and privilege to become Christians right away? And by walking faithfully in the steps of Christ, have the hope of the heavenly reward? Is not that why the Apostle exhorted them to repent, and has not that been the object of the Gospel being preached all the Gospel Age, to take out a people for God's name from the world of mankind? It seems obvious that the preaching of the Apostles was to convert those to whom they spoke there and then—Repent and be converted, turn again and have seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. That seems to be the point in the teaching of Peter and John, and the reason for the miracle, to impress upon the people that here were God's true witnesses.

In the truth literature for many years past it has been usual to link verse 19 of our chapter with verses 20 and 21, making the three verses apply to our Lord's second advent and "times of restitution of all things" throughout the Millennial Age. Understood that way, the "seasons of refreshing" and "times of restitution" would be the same period, and both would apply to the Kingdom Age. Wouldn't it be strange if Peter were implying that after true repentance and conversion on the basis of faith in Christ's sacrifice, those to whom he spoke must wait about 2,000 years to receive seasons of refreshing in the day of the general resurrection, when the times of restitution for the earthly kingdom were operating? It surely would be strange if that were true.

On the other hand, it may be asked why Peter followed verse 19 with the promise that God would send Jesus Christ at His second advent, and there would then be times of restitution of all things. Peter no doubt was following through with the wonderful plan of God. In addition to bestowing seasons of refreshing there and then to those worthy of His blessing, God had a Plan which would ultimately embrace all mankind. It is a well known fact, too, that when people are feeling after and learning the Truth as we know it, to read of God's plan of times of restitution for all mankind very often is the means of convincing such people that God really loves all the human family. They say, If God has such a gracious plan for the restitution or restoration of mankind from death through the sacrifice of Jesus, we wish to serve God now. We wish to use our lives in the service of such a God. Very often the understanding of restitution clinches in the minds of people that they really wish to serve God now—they are willing to sacrifice for God who so loved the world as to redeem all human-

ity and give them an opportunity of everlasting life in due time.

Very likely some who heard Peter speak thought the same way about God, and yielded their lives in sacrifice after repentance and conversion, and had their sins forgiven and received seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord for the remainder of their lives on earth, and had good hopes of attaining the heavenly reward by proving faithful unto death.

We believe there is a similar meaning to the passage in Acts 2:36-39. Here Peter, speaking previously to our text in the third chapter, says—"Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Doesn't it seem that the same exhortation of chapter 2 is applicable in chapter 3? Repent and be converted, acknowledge the Lord as the true Saviour, consecrate your life to His service, and seasons of refreshing shall come out from the presence, from the face, of Jehovah.

We ourselves have had refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We have not had to wait for the times of restitution, and why should those to whom Peter spoke be required to wait 2,000 years for the kingdom age? Those who really repented even though they crucified the Lord of Glory, would be forgiven. And the Apostle declared that it was mainly in ignorance that they put the Lord to death; that would count in their favour and help them to repent and be converted, and they could have God's favour there and then.

We are glad that God's plan works that way. We have received much refreshing since we repented and had forgiveness for our sins through faith in the Redeemer, and yielded our lives in His service. Most of us have had similar experiences to that described in Eph. 2:1, 2, 4-6—"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. 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 are ye saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." What a lovely privilege and favour is indicated here for those who really yield their lives to

the Lord; and He is merciful to accept them on the basis of faith in Christ, and raise them up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The same Greek word for "presence" in Acts 3:19 is found also in Heb. 9:24. This is a lovely verse telling us about our Lord's resurrection and ascension to heaven. "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." God had given His Son to be the Saviour; He had been faithful unto death, and had ascended into heaven to appear in the presence of God for the Lord's true people. This is the same word "presence" which indicated "from the presence of the Lord" seasons of refreshing would come to those whom Peter exhorted to repent and be converted.

Aren't we glad that Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, for the "us" class of the Gospel Age! He has not yet appeared for the world of mankind in general. He will appear the second time for all mankind, but now, during the Gospel Age, for us, the children of God. This is the great Plan of God, that He is taking out a people for His name, those who delight to represent the Name above every name, and by proving faithful unto death they may, by the Lord's grace, inherit the heavenly kingdom with Him. Surely we thank God because He has invited us into His family, and our Lord has appeared in the presence of God on our behalf. May we, by the Lord's grace, continue "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." (Heb. 12:2.)

Question Box

Question—I would like to ask through the Question Box what is the true meaning of "In my Father's house are many mansions"—John 14:2, 3?

Answer—The Scripture citation referred to reads—"In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself." All creation is the heavenly Father's house, and upon different planes of being He has in it creatures made in His own likeness, called sons; and for each of these a provision has been made suited to their conditions, nature, etc. (1) The angelic sons of God have heavenly conditions provided for them. (2) When Adam was created an earthly son of God provision was made for him and his family of human sons. The fact that these human sons of God fell into sin and under sentence of death will not hinder the ultimate outworking of the divine plan, to have a house-

hold of human sons, for God has provided a ransom for all, and ultimately will grant eternal life to "all those who obey Him" when "they hear His voice." The provision for these is the human nature in an earthly paradise.

Our Lord was not speaking to nor of the natural man when He used the words of this text; He was speaking to the new creatures, begotten through the Word of Truth to heavenly promises. Thus far no provision existed for a family of sons on the divine plane; our Lord Jesus was the first born to this condition, and it is only through His merit and by His assisting grace that His Church can become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Our Lord's departure was to this end—that He might not only present the ransom sacrifice on our behalf, but also that He might, as our Head, succour and help us to the eternal city, and might correct and discipline us, and thus prepare us for the new conditions, as well as by His sacrifice make possible our attainment to those new conditions.

Question—Shall we know each other there?

Answer—Yes; the restored world will know each other, for the blessing is to come to them through restitution, and each will begin his new life on practically the same plane of thought, experience, etc., that he quitted at death. As for the elect Church, the Apostle informs us—"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him"—1 John 3:2. To be like Him will mean to be partakers of His spirit nature, as described by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15:43,44, in glory, in power, a spiritual body. Earthly beings will not see these spiritual beings with their natural eyes, for the same reason that we cannot see angels now. They will know of them, however, in the same way that we know of our Lord and of the Heavenly Father, and this knowledge will be as satisfactory to them as our knowledge of the Lord now is satisfactory to us. "We see Jesus" and are "looking unto Jesus" etc., the eyes of our understanding being opened. But these glorious spirit beings will see and recognize each other, as it is written—"We shall know even as we are known"—and they will be able to see their earthly friends, though then unseen by them. The glorified class will be able to care for and bless their earthly friends more particularly than they could do if they were with them in the flesh. The Scriptures exhort us to lay aside every weight and to run with patience to obtain this great spiritual blessing, and while we see many of its advantages we may rest assured of others which we cannot now so fully realize, because "Now we know in part" and "see through a glass obscurely."

Question—Will you please explain the passage in which our Lord says "Let the dead bury their dead"—Matthew 8:21, 22.?

Answer—We do not understand that the dis-

ciple concerned meant that his father was lying dead and all he wished to do was to go and have him interred. Our Lord had explained to another, a Scribe, who had said he would follow Him, that it was a way of sacrifice and privation. "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have their nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Then this man who had evidently been following the Lord and observing His gracious words and acts declared that he wished to be one of His followers, only he would like just to wait until his aged father should pass away, then he would be free and would take up the cross and follow Him. Probably the Lord knew that there was really no reason for the delay, that there were others who were well able to look after the aged parent quite well. Maybe the real reason was that the son thought that if he did not stay by and pay attention to the father he might not participate in any legacy. It may have been this earthly consideration which was in the way. Our Lord's answer seems to favour such a view. "Let the dead bury their dead." The whole world is dead in trespasses and sins. It was only the few who were alive towards God and able, then, to appreciate the work of Christ and become true followers of the Lamb. Then leave those relatives who are not at present attracted by the living Word, but are just good naturally minded people and well able to look after the aged father, to do so. Never mind troubling about any legacy, whether anything or nothing may come to you; seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. "Follow Me let the dead bury their dead."

Passover Memorial, 1982

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 6th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 4th April, at 6 p.m., at Auxiliary Room, City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew.

Adelaide—Sunday, 4th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 9th, 10th and 11th, at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinstead, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 50c.

ARNALL & JACKSON PTY. LTD. — PRINT

"The Kingdom of God"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

"Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."—Acts 24:16.

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 time-keeper 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. Z. '00-360.

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.15 to \$3.50, according to distance in Australia).

"The Divine Plan of Ages"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c in Victoria; \$1.00 interstate).

"The Creator's Grand Design"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).

"The Book of Books"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).

"Daily Heavenly Manna"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).

"Song in the Night"—\$1.00 (Postage 55c).

"Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).

"Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).

"Tabernacle Shadows"—\$1.00 (Postage 55c).

"God and Reason"—10c (Postage 30c).

"God's Plan"—10c (Postage 30c).

"Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 30c).

"Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 30c).

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 30c).

"Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 30c).

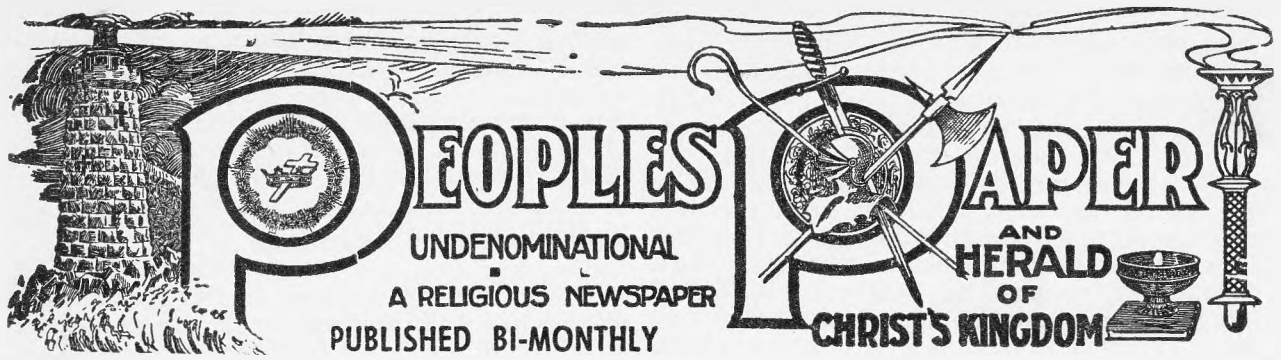
"Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 30c).

"Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 30c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXV No. 3

MELBOURNE, JUNE—JULY, 1982

Price—20 Cents

What Does Easter Sunday Mean to You?

(Easter Public Address)

Before considering the wonderful resurrection of our Lord Jesus, by the power of God, on this Easter Sunday anniversary of this glorious event, we would like to review briefly God's dealings with His covenant people, Israel, long before Jesus came into the world as the "Lamb of God."

When God gave Israel the Law Covenant through Moses, and assured them of His blessing if they would follow the instructions given, they responded in the words of Exod. 19:8 — "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do." This promise was repeated in Exod. 24:3. Israel said they would keep God's laws, and if they could do that, they would not die.

During our Lord's ministry at His first advent, we have the case of the "rich young ruler" quoted in Mark 10:17-23. It is recorded in verse 21 of the 10th chapter of Mark, that "Jesus loved him", even though this young man "went away grieved" when presented with the obligation to use his possessions for the benefit of the poor, and take up his cross and follow Jesus. Then Jesus said to His disciples — "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." This is not impossible, but "how hardly" — not many being willing to sacrifice their worldly goods and walk in the steps of the Master. Connected Scriptures with reference to God's Law read — "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" — James 2:10; Gal. 3:10,11.

Turning to Paul's helpful presentation of our subject in Romans 3, where he discusses the cases of both Jews and Gentiles, he states the matter in verse 9 — "We have before proved

both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." Summing up further in verses 19 and 20 the Apostle declares — "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Continuing, Paul shows that as "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" there remains only one hope of gaining eternal life — "Being justified freely by his (God's) 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 forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" — Rom. 3:24-26.

The offerings to the Lord by Cain and Abel as recorded in Gen. 4 are most helpful in connection with our subject. We read — "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 and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" — Gen. 4:3-7. A footnote in the Amplified Bible reads — "In bringing the offering he did, Cain denied that he was a sinful creature, under the sentence of Divine condemnation. He insisted on approaching God on the ground of personal worthiness. Instead of accepting God's way, he offered to God the fruits of the ground which God had cursed. He presented the product of his own toil, the work of his own hands, and God refused to receive it." In Abel's offering of the lamb we have indicated the truth of the Scripture — "without shedding of blood is no remission" —

and pointing forward to the "Lamb of God." See also Lev. 17:11.

Passing on to events in Jesus' ministry with His disciples, we have many helpful records of our Lord's concern and consideration for His little band of followers, especially as He approached the time when His great sacrifice was about to be consummated, and He must leave them in an unfriendly world. In Mark 9:31,32 we read — "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 was too painful a thought that their Master would be killed, so they avoided the subject. See also Mark 10:32-34. Jesus tried to soften the words that He would be killed, with the assurance repeatedly — "the third day he shall rise again." Then we have Peter's outburst at the thought of his Master being killed, in Matt. 16:21-23. That was too much for Peter — "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." How understandable for Peter to speak as he did! But Jesus corrected him, and showed that not only must He die in sacrifice, but true followers must also die with Him — in His service, verse 24. This truth of **full sacrifice**, our Lord was gradually impressing upon His true disciples, preparing them for His **death**, and then their **death** in His steps, as they were inspired by His resurrection.

First of all, however, He must impress **how necessary** it was for Him to leave them in such a humiliating manner. See John 16:5-7 — "... It is expedient for you that I go away — **absolutely essential** — for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you." If no Comforter, no holy spirit, there could be no Pentecost! If no Pentecost there could be no Church, no Bride of Christ! Reading on in John 16:16-22 — "...ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice." Did Jesus see them again? He surely did in His resurrection, and their hearts rejoiced! See also John 14:18-20, then verses 26-28 — "...If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I." **"IF YE LOVED ME!"** How could they love their Master to the extent that they could still rejoice when He was leaving them? But He was going back to God — He was returning Home! If they could grasp what that meant to Him, they would rejoice with Him.

Before passing on to the wonderful morning of our Lord's resurrection, a review of some of Jesus' miracles, performed by the power of God, are of special importance, because they pointed forward in an outstanding manner to Christ's glorious work in the Kingdom He promised to establish for the benefit of all mankind. In John 2:1-11, the record is given

of Jesus turning water into wine at the marriage feast. Verse 11 reads — "This beginning of miracles did Jesus . . . and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." This was an illustration of Jesus' glory to be demonstrated in full in His Kingdom.

Then the raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days, as outlined in John 11, was one of our Lord's greatest demonstrations of power which will be used in the resurrection day, when "all that are in the graves (the death condition) shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" — John 5:28,29. Martha knew that her brother would "rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She did not accept the error that many people believe, that their loved ones go immediately to heaven when they die. Jesus presented the truth that He was "the resurrection and the life", and then gave an illustration by restoring Lazarus to life, that "who-soever liveth (in the resurrection) and believeth in me (then) shall never die" — John 11:25,26. Whether people have been dead four days, four years, four hundred or four thousand years, will be no problem when they "hear the voice of the Son of God."

The raising of the son of the widow of Nain is also an inspiring record that gives us a thrill when we realize what this is picturing in Christ's Kingdom. Luke 7:11-16 provides us with this touching incident, when our Lord had compassion on this widowed mother, and restored her son back to life for a few more years. In the resurrection day he will not die again, if obedient to the laws of the Kingdom. The immediate result of this miracle is expressed in verse 16 — "There came a fear (reverence) on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people." God had visited His people indeed!

All the miracles of our Lord well impressed the wonderful power of God at Jesus' disposal, when He recognized God's will at the particular times, to use that power to the glory of His Heavenly Father. We must realize that it was always God's power from above that enabled Jesus to perform His miracles, just as it was with the apostles later.

We now come to the wonderful resurrection morning. In the opening verses of John 20, we have the record of Mary Magdalene going early to the sepulchre, and finding it empty informed Peter and John that Jesus' body had been removed. The two disciples inspected the tomb and then left, and verse 9 reads — "For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." And that, in spite of being told repeatedly by Jesus that He would rise on the third day! Mary stayed on at the sepulchre and had a most thrilling and delightful experience, as related from verse 11 in John 20. The risen Lord's

words to Mary — “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” — are most revealing to all students of God’s Word. What an amazing experience for Mary! What a lasting revelation for all disciples then, and for all of us down the Gospel Age to our day.

Then, in Luke 24, we have another wonderful record of our Lord’s resurrection, when the women encountered two angels at the tomb with the vital information from verse 6 — “He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spoke unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. . . . And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.” Verse 12, Peter inspected the sepulchre — “and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.” It was all so mysterious at that time! From verse 13 we have the thrilling record of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. Shall we try to picture ourselves there with them as Jesus meets them on their journey and converses with them, as though He were a stranger? The sadness of the disciples at the death of their Lord was very apparent — “But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since all these things were done” — verse 21. Being constrained to abide with them for the evening meal at the village — “It came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them” — just as He used to do in the days of His ministry — “And their eyes were opened, and **they knew him**; and he vanished out of their sight” — verses 30,31. In vanishing from the home at Emmaus Jesus demonstrated the power He then had to materialize in human form and return to spirit form, just as angels could do. The two disciples hurried back to Jerusalem and related to the eleven — “how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they spoke, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you” — verses 35,36. What a memorable day that had been!

The minds of Jesus’ particular disciples were well illustrated when the time drew near for the risen Lord to ascend to the Father, from the record given in Act 1:3-8. “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” — verse 6. How clearly were the disciples still expecting an earthly kingdom only. How sad and unsatisfactory it would be to have a risen Lord with everlasting life, reigning over a kingdom of dying subjects! Our Lord’s great mission in coming to earth was of course to give earthly life to the dying human

family, and special spiritual life to His selected disciples. Note our risen Lord’s words in Acts 1:8. After Jesus’ ascension to the Father, and the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost, Acts 1:8 began to be fulfilled. From that time God has been “taking out a people for his name” from the world — “even as many as the Lord our God shall call” — and only as many as He shall call — Acts 15:14; 2:39.

We now come to the Apostle Paul’s masterly presentation of the subject of the resurrection in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. Please read verses 12 to 23, where we have one of the most wonderful truths of the Bible expressed so beautifully. When rightly understood this passage contains the “good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people”, as proclaimed by the angel at the birth of Jesus — Luke 2:10. Verses 35-38 in this chapter 15 of 1st Corinthians explain both the spiritual and earthly resurrections, and in both cases show that God has in His keeping the “gift of life” of every human being to unite with a body fitting for each individual, in the wonderful “first resurrection” and the “general resurrection.” What a glorious prospect for every member of the Lord’s human creation!

How beautifully in agreement are the Apostle John’s words in 1 John 2:1,2 — “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” The we class of the Gospel Age are especially favoured, as they now experience the **power** of the resurrection during the Christian pilgrimage, as indicated in Phil. 3:10, being “raised up, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” — Eph. 2:6.

There is hardly need to ask what Easter Sunday means to Christians, to God’s true sons, in their present life. The Apostle expresses for us what it truly means when he said — “When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” — Col. 3:4. Yes, **Christ who is our life**, well expresses what Christ’s resurrection means to all true followers of the Master. And again “Christ in you, the hope of glory” — Col. 1:27. See also Rom. 8:14-18.

We also have the question — What will Easter Sunday mean to all the world of mankind? Looking back upon the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus, the Apostle Paul gives us a decisive and most hopeful and encouraging answer when he declared — “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour (a perfect, human corresponding price for Adam); that he by the grace of God should **taste death for every man**” — Heb. 2:9. That being absolutely true, every human being

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Institute's Work

With the close of April, another year's work for the Berean Bible Institute has been completed. It is with sincere thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for all His blessings in connection with the efforts undertaken that this brief review of the work is now presented.

Many of our Australian and overseas brethren have co-operated again very well over the past year. This is most encouraging, and sincere thanks are offered to all who have assisted so well. Some extension in the work has been possible throughout the year, by the Lord's overruling providence, and all opportunities for service are esteemed as so many privileges, by the Lord's grace.

Our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" continues to provide a means of helpful contact with our Australian and overseas brethren and friends. Appreciation of the messages in our "Paper" has been received again throughout the year. This is encouraging, and to all who have contributed to the pages of our journal, in the service of the Lord, sincere thanks for this good assistance is gladly expressed. The main object of our "Paper" is to build up all readers in spiritual truths.

Some increase in printing costs has been met over the past year, but the greatest increase is in the postage expense with the recent higher rates. Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper" continue at \$1.00 per annum, and the postage of \$1.62 per annum throughout Australia, and up to \$2.10 for overseas despatch will now apply. This high postage expense is covered by the General Tract Fund which is supported by many of our brethren. Also quite a number of subscribers, realizing the high postage rates, cover this cost as well as their subscriptions, and this help is much appreciated.

The publication of the "Peoples Paper" is possible only by a deficiency in cost being covered from the General Tract Fund, but this is largely compensated by the "Paper" being

supplied free to many new friends over various periods, to encourage their interest in the truths of the Bible. Some of our Melbourne friends continue to give willing and valuable assistance with typing of addresses, checking and proof reading for the "Peoples Paper", also with shorthand for articles and booklets etc., all of which is warmly appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

The production of six new booklets has been possible throughout the year, and these have been supplied free to all readers of the "Peoples Paper", and appreciated generally. Extra supplies are provided for wise distribution by all who desire to witness to Christians and others who are feeling after the Lord's message of the Kingdom. Some Public Lectures have also been given in Melbourne in co-operation with the Melbourne Class.

Continued advertising of suitable booklets has been increased in popular magazines with encouraging responses from all Australian States and areas outside Australia. Amongst the many who have responded some very earnest friends have been found, and we ask the Lord's blessing upon all sincere seekers of His truth, whom God is pleased to draw to the Saviour. The "Peoples Papers" are gladly supplied to all who respond, and especially to those who show definite interest, to encourage their appreciation of God's truth at this time. Many people will also benefit from what they read now "in the day of visitation" — 1 Pet. 2:12.

The balance sheet presented reveals the financial position of the work of the Institute. The voluntary contributions of our brethren and friends throughout Australia and overseas have enabled an increase in the work to be undertaken over the past year, in the Lord's providence. Sincere thanks is expressed to all who have gladly sacrificed earthly good things to assist the work so well, realizing that all has been rendered as to the Lord Himself. Arrangements are in hand to continue the work into another year, in harmony with what may be the Lord's will in this matter.

Viewing world conditions today there has been marked deterioration over the past twelve months, in harmony with Bible prophecy — what we are to expect in this end of the Gospel Age. The passing of the present world order is expected, according to the Lord's timetable, in preparation for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom — "the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" — 2 Pet. 3:13. In the meantime it is our privilege to be engaged in the service of our Lord — "holding forth the word of life" — to the Lord's people, and to all who have ears to hear. A request is made for the prayers of our dear brethren that the guidance and blessing of our Lord may attend His work in our hearts, and that undertaken in His name, to the praise of God.

"Watch Israel — God's Time Clock"

The first edition of the above booklet is exhausted, and as it was well appreciated another edition has been printed. Copies are being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available to all who can use them to advantage.

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/81	\$785.03
" Donations, Legacies, Bank Interest	22,072.70
	<hr/>
	\$22,857.73
By Deficiency "Peoples Paper" and Free	
Tracts	\$1,001.57
" Advertising "Reader's Digest"	4,310.00
" Advertising "New Idea"	3,888.00
" Advertising "Women's Weekly"	2,245.00
" Advertising "The Bulletin"	851.00
" Advertising "Woman's Day"	648.00
" Advertising "Weekly Times"	600.00
" Other Advertising	70.00
" Free Booklets with "Peoples Paper" and	
Advertising	3,073.00
" General Expenses ('Phone, Office, etc.)	601.72
" Postage	1,481.80
" Assistance to Brethren	1,209.00
" Service to Brethren	573.00
" Travel and Sundries	254.30
" Credit Balance 1/5/82	2,051.34
	<hr/>
	\$22,857.73

Convention News

The gathering of the 1982 Adelaide Easter Convention expressed appreciation to our Heavenly Father for the richness of the spiritual blessings He bestowed. Brothers and Sisters from Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland journeyed long distances to participate in the three days of worship and building up.

Attendance at the Convention was less than previous years but this permitted greater closeness. Some small Classes have learned how God gives smaller groups blessings compensating for less contributors. Similarly with the Convention, it was possible to spend more time with each other in the fellowship which is a highlight of all Conventions.

Time permitted two Bible Studies. On Good Friday, we looked into Romans 13:10-14 with its message of urgency in development of the Christ-like character, particularly in love. The words — "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" — were seen as a beautiful exhortation in the direction of the conformity required by Rom. 8:29. On Easter Saturday, the study in Colossians 3:12-17 gave some detailed instructions towards the same objective, adding the aspect of fellowship of Body members.

Topics of the helpful addresses were "The Power of Praise" — Isa. 61:3; "Things New and Old"; "Prayers for the Brethren"; "Being Fashioned and Changed" — Phil. 3:21; "Basis for our Praise to God" — Deut. 33:29; "Coming to Know God"; "Ashamed and not Ashamed"; "What Does Easter (Resurrection) Sunday Mean to You?" and "Joseph."

The Convention responded to messages received by sending warm Christian love to Brothers and Sisters in every place, coupled with the text Rom. 15:13.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

The Memorial of our Lord's great sacrifice was gladly observed by the brethren in Melbourne. Visiting brethren also joined us on this occasion thus making a very nice assembly for this annual observance, and the Lord's blessing was evident throughout.

Previous studies in Matthew's Gospel 26:6-30 were helpful in refreshing our minds and hearts on the events leading up to the death of our Lord Jesus as "the Lamb of God." It is very evident that when our Lord arranged the Memorial of His death immediately after partaking of the Jewish Passover He intended this new service to take the place of the annual Jewish celebration. His atoning sacrifice for our sins, and for the sins of the world was truly the antitype of all the Jewish animal sacrifices of the past.

Our Service of prayers, appropriate hymns, Scripture readings and a helpful address based on Psalm 22 was blessed of the Lord. As we partook of the emblems we remembered in thankfulness first of all our dear Master's great sacrifice on our account, and then our glad and willing submission to walk in His steps of sacrifice, by His grace and strength, to the end of our earthly pilgrimage.

Adelaide

In the Adelaide Class, preparation for the Memorial this year included three studies into Isa. 52:13 — 53:12. As this prophecy from hundreds of years before the event concentrated on the COST by which God's righteous servant justified many, when we gathered for the remembrancer we pondered the NEED thereby placing the blame for our Saviour's death where it belongs — on sin. How we must hate sin.

We saw the principle stated in broad terms in Ezek. 18:4 — "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Mankind earned the death sentence — Gen. 3:19 — by violation of the most simple and direct of instructions from its Maker — Gen. 2:17. Some might argue that it was unjust for Adam's progeny to be condemned for Adam's sin. In truth, however, we have come to appreciate just how merciful it was of our God to join us in Adam's guilt. Whilst all have sinned in their own ways — Rom. 3:23 — God, regarding this as part of our heritage enabled a single Saviour to pay the penalty for the sins of the whole world — 1 John 2:2. There would be no way a different sinless Saviour could die in the stead of each man who has ever lived. All would be without hope were it not for this merciful provision of our God.

"Do this in remembrance of me" changed the retrospective object of the annual reminder instituted in the Passover. However, the funda-

mental message in the lamb's blood on the doorway remains in the Memorial. 1. Without shedding of blood is no remission; 2. Faith in God is man's only hope.

Each year, the loaf reminds us of the many members of the Body partaking of that one bread — 1 Cor. 10:17. This year in Adelaide, we were particularly mindful of that lesson because two of our number, who had been with us at the Memorial for year after year were unable to attend but instead were keeping the remembrancer, together, at the same time as the Class.

Perth

At our Lord's request we gladly and reverentially remembered His death, as He symbolized it at the "Last Supper" when He invited His disciples to eat of the Bread of Life, and drink of His blood of sacrifice.

**"Precious Saviour, Thou hast saved me;
Thine, and only Thine, I am;
O! the cleansing blood has reached me,
Glory, glory to the Lamb!"**

Many texts were referred to in the address preceding the Memorial. These verses brought our minds through from the Passover in Egypt to Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us. What a gracious Heavenly Father we have in providing our redemption through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who in turn, for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God — Heb. 12:2. Spontaneously we accept His saving grace and now endeavour to follow our Lord to the best of our ability.

Brisbane

In Brisbane we gladly observed the Memorial of our Lord's death, as revealed in the Scriptures, and by our Lord's words — "This do in remembrance of me." Starting with hymn 2 from the "B. S. Hymnal" we then had prayer to our Heavenly Father asking His blessing upon our service and all who were also observing this sacred Memorial. The meaning of the observance was explained in some detail, even in Polish, from the Passover of the Old Testament with many Scripture references, to our Lord's explanation, when His Memorial took the place of the annual Jewish Passover.

Before partaking of the bread we sang hymn 166, and a prayer was offered in thankfulness for the "Living Bread" from heaven. Likewise with "The Cup"; after prayer this was partaken of with gratefulness for our Lord's sacrifice of His blood, His life, for us, and also for all the world, in due time. Our service was closed with hymn 437.

Nambour

The small group of the Nambour Class gathered again this year to remember the sacrificial death of our dear Lord and Master, so willingly

given on our behalf. As He said — "This do in remembrance of me." Our service opened with the singing of hymn 148, and prayer was offered that we might have the Lord's spirit and guidance throughout the meeting. His blessing was asked also on all brethren everywhere.

Then followed an address — "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" — Rev. 13:8, revealing God's gracious provision for our redemption and of all humanity, in His plan at that early time. A study was then taken on various questions connected with the Memorial — "How and why do we remember Him?" — 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Mark 14:22-24.

We then partook of the emblems with grateful and humble hearts in full appreciation of their deep meaning, that they represented the provision made for our redemption by our Lord's broken body and shed blood. It brought joy to our hearts to remember that He is not the propitiation for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world — 1 John 2:2.

What a privilege has been granted to us to be broken with Him, to present our bodies a living sacrifice. Unto us it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. Our service closed by singing the lovely words of hymn 437, in "B. S. Hymnal."

"And Ruth said, Intreat 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" — Ruth 1:16.

One thought here is worthy of note; namely, the positiveness with which Ruth made her decision. It was not a proposal to try for a time how it would be to live in Judea. It was a decision unto death. In this respect all true conversions are alike. The Christian, for instance, did not really become a Christian until he made just such a definite, positive consecration of himself to leave the world, its affairs, its loves, its hopes and ambitions, and to spend and be spent even unto death, in the service of the Lord. The value of positive decision in respect of life we can hardly over-estimate. Thousands of lives are blighted because of lack of decision. Positiveness for God is the only condition in which we can hope to "make our calling and election sure." — Z' 15-24.

Nambour Convention

The Nambour Convention is to be held (D.V.) on July 24th and 25th, in the Staff Room, State School, Coronation Drive, Nambour, to which interested friends are invited. Further information from — Mr. G. Tosh, Paynters Creek Rd., M.S.I. 1102, Nambour, Queensland, 4560.

(Continued from page 3.)

is to be resurrected, and by obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom **will not die again**, but will gain eternal life on the restored earth, to the praise of God.

The prophet Isaiah was used of God to give us one of the most convincing assurances of the resurrection of mankind in chapter 9:6,7. There is no mistaking of whom the prophet wrote in this passage, which reads — "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." We note the title — "**The everlasting Father**" — and this definitely means Christ will be the **father of the world of mankind**, but not the father of the Church, for Christ's followers are sons of God. Some people have difficulty in understanding that Christ will be the father of mankind, and even Bible students at times fail to grasp that such servants as the prophet Isaiah were used of God to teach us the truth on this and other important subjects, for they "spake as they were moved by the holy spirit" — 2 Pet. 1:21. To rightly divide the Word of Truth, we as Christians must be ready to learn from God's prophets, as well as from our Lord and the Apostles.

Our Lord Jesus, at the time of raising Lazarus from the dead, gave us the same assurance that He would be the father or life-giver of mankind, when He declared — "**I am the resurrection and the life**; he that believeth in me, though he were dead (though he die), yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me (then) shall never die" — John 11:25,26. It was the Father's power that raised Lazarus from the dead, but in the resurrection day it will be Christ's own power that will give life to mankind, for at His ascension He said — "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" — Matt. 28:18. The Psalmist also was used of God to present the same truth in Psalms 45:10-16. In this Psalm we have the lovely picture of the King and His Bride outlined, and in verse 16 we have the helpful explanation respecting the former fathers of Israel — "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children (the children of Christ and His Bride), whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." What a glorious prospect, indeed, when our risen Lord with His Church is "**The everlasting Father**" to all the families of the earth!

The Psalmist was used further to proclaim the resurrection hope for humanity in Psalm 90:1-3, as follows — "LORD, thou hast been our

dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction: and savest, **Return, ye children of men.**" It would have been quite just for God to have allowed humanity to remain in the death condition for all time, after the sentence of death was imposed in the Garden of Eden upon Adam and Eve, but God **so loved** His human creation that He sent Jesus to be the Redeemer, who also delighted to do the Father's will and suffer the cruel death on the cross, and thus taste death for every man.

An additional assurance of the resurrection of all mankind is given by the Psalmist, when he writes of God in Psalm 102:19,20 — "For he hath 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." Because of our Lord's faithfulness unto death, and His resurrection to the Father's right hand, all mankind groaning under the death sentence, are truly prisoners of hope, for they shall "come again from the land of the enemy", and by obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom shall progress up the "highway of holiness" to perfect, lasting life on the restored earth. Of that time the prophet Isaiah again declared of our loving Saviour — "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" — Isa. 53:11. He shall be satisfied indeed to have carried out the Father's loving Plan, and restored the hundreds of millions of humanity back to happy, lasting fellowship with God, in addition to redeeming His own Bride also, who will be associates with Him in the great restoration of the world, to the praise of God.

A very helpful quotation from "The Divine Plan of the Ages" provides a fitting assurance that Easter Sunday, Christ's resurrection day, means **life from the dead** for the whole world of mankind. The quotation reads — "Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay — not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones

will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete" — Rev. 21:4.

(The study — "The Divine Plan of the Ages" — is highly recommended, being a "key" to the understanding of the Bible, and is priced at \$1.00 per copy, plus \$1.00 postage.)

Extracts from Correspondence

Dear Brother, Greetings in the precious name of our dear Redeemer — At the quarterly business meeting of the Class, consideration was given to the effect of the further increase in postal charges, and its effect on the costs of the Lord's work in your hands. This is reflected in the increase to \$..... in the Class contribution to that work.

At this time each year you review the work of the Institute and it is fitting to remind you of our appreciation of what is done as unto the Lord. For ourselves, we are thankful that this channel is open that we may participate to this small extent in the Lord's work. Each one in the Class sends warm Christian love to you and all the dear ones in Melbourne. Your brother in Christ, by God's kind favour.

Dear Brother, Greetings in the precious name of Jesus — Enclosed please find our check for \$..... (U.S.) to help provide the postage for the "Peoples Paper" which you continue to send in duplicate so faithfully.

I would like to comment on the recent article in "Peoples Paper" about Acts 3:19-21, with which I heartily agree. There are many here in the U.S., that think the same way about the fact that this refers to the Jews of Peter's day and that he was "inviting" them to receive God's blessing "out from the face of Jehovah" as an immediate blessing and not something that would occur at Jesus' second advent. . . .

God be with you. Please extend our Christian love to the brethren there. We think of you all often and especially did we remember all the "Body" at our Memorial observance. In Christ.

"Peoples Paper" — I would like please to subscribe to the "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom." I read the article on "The Lord's Jewels" dated February — March of 1980. In the back page was listed "Watch Israel — God's Time Clock." Should you have an extra copy would you please send me one, as I would appreciate it very much. I enjoyed reading the "Peoples Paper." God richly bless you all in your labours of love. Enclosed is \$5.00. Sincerely.

Dear Brother — Thank you for continuing to send our "P.P." and the enclosed little booklets; they are such little gems of truth. I love to read and think about the wonderful truth and good news for this strife-torn old world of ours, knowing that in the fulness of His time our deliverance draws near. Kindest Christian regards; Yours in Christ.

Dear Brother — Special wishes for Easter, and may God continue to bless you, and everyone who works to bring the Word of God to many more homes. Especially I thank you for your care of my spiritual growth and well being. Please use the enclosed cheque where its most needed. Yours in Christ.

The Secretary, Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir — Thank you very much for the sample copies of "Peoples Paper" and the booklet "Hope." I have enclosed a bank cheque for \$..... to cover the following: — One year's subscription to the "Peoples Paper"; "The Divine Plan of the Ages"; "The Creator's Grand Design"; "The Book of Books"; "The Emphatic Diaglott" and as many of the 10 cent booklets that can be sent for the amount enclosed. Thank you for your helpful interest. Yours sincerely.

Dear Sirs — Some time ago you sent me a small booklet entitled — "The Lord is My Shepherd." I shall be so much obliged if you can send me at least twelve copies of this booklet. I am enclosing \$2.00 for the postage; please let me know if there is more to pay. Thanking you; Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute — Thank you so much for sending me the little booklet "Hope." I enjoyed reading it and it gives me fresh hope, but I would like you to answer one or two Bible statements which still puzzle me somewhat. I have always understood Jesus to mean that when He comes only the righteous are raised from death, and the ones living then would be caught up with them, and all others would not rise to life but be in their graves for 1000 years. I understand this from — "The rest of the dead lived not again till the 1000 years were ended" — Rev. 20:5 . . . I would like your free copy of "The Lord is My Shepherd" also free samples of "Peoples Paper." Thanking you again; in Christ's service.

(The main part of Rev. 20:5 — "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" — is not found in the oldest and best manuscripts of the Bible, so is spurious. Also the words do not make sense when connected with the 4th verse of this chapter. The latter part of verse 4, and the latter part of verse 5 are connected, when the spurious words are omitted, and refer to Christ's true followers — "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection." The booklet — "Our Bible Translated" — contains a list of spurious words and phrases not found in the best manuscripts of the Bible, and is available free to all interested. — B. B. Institute.)

Books Available

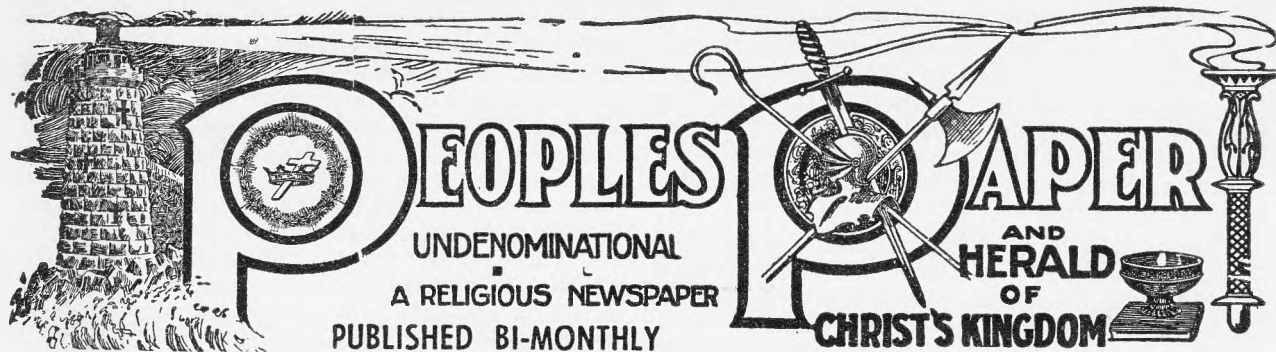
In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.15 to \$3.50, according to distance in Australia).
- "The Divine Plan of Ages"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c in Victoria; \$1.00 interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "The Book of Books"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—\$1.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Song in the Night"—\$1.00 (Postage 55c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 90c and \$1.00).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—\$1.00 (Postage 55c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 30c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 30c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXV No. 4

MELBOURNE, AUGUST—SEPTEMBER, 1982

Price—20 Cents

“Able Ministers of the New Covenant”

“Our sufficiency is of God: who also hath made us able ministers (servants) of the new testament (New Covenant); not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” — 2 Cor. 3:5,6.

How could the Apostle Paul and the other apostles be servants of a New Covenant, if no such New Covenant is yet in existence? A similar question might be raised respecting our Lord’s statement that His memorial cup represented the blood of the New Testament, the New Covenant. The answer to these queries is: There will be no blood of or from the New Covenant after it has been completed. The blood of the New Covenant is the blood prepared in advance of the covenant, wherewith to seal it and make it obligatory — make it a covenant. Our Lord’s words respecting the cup were uttered before He died. The cup was symbolical and pointed forward to His own death. It was offered only to His followers, and not to the world. It was shed for them, and was the basis for their reconciliation to the Father; but it was to be in due time the blood of the New Covenant — the blood with which the New Covenant would be sprinkled, sealed, made efficacious. It was offered to the Church more than nineteen centuries before the time for the sealing of the New Covenant, to grant the Church, the overcomers, the privilege of participating with Christ in His sacrifice, not only in the sense of justification, but also in the sense of sanctification, or death with Him.

This the apostle most distinctly asserts in 1 Cor. 10:16, saying — “The cup of blessing, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” The drinking of that cup symbolizes our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, our common union in all of the afflictions that came upon Him — our death with Him. By the time all of the members of the body of Christ shall have taken part in this cup, the time will have come for the application of the merit of that communion cup, that united sacrifice of the body, with and under the Head to seal the New

(Law) Covenant with Israel, and, through Israel, for the benefit of mankind. When the disciples asked if they might not sit in His throne, the one on the right hand and the other on His left, He asked — “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of?” — Mark 10:38. All who would sit in the throne must drink of the cup. All who will faithfully drink of the cup shall sit in the throne as members of the body of Christ — “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

Take an illustration: Suppose the Declaration of Independence or some important document were about to be signed and sealed. The document itself might be printed and while in the process of being signed might be spoken of as the covenant, agreement or declaration, although it would not be such a document, even after being printed until duly signed and sealed. Similarly the ink might by law be specified to be of a certain kind, and the person having charge of it might speak of it as the ink used, in the sense that it was the ink designed to be used in the signing of that covenant, when the proper time should come. Similarly the person designated to be the mediator of that covenant might be so spoken of in advance of the signing. Similarly those of his suite, who would accompany him as assistants and who would need certain preparation before they would engage in this service, might be spoken of as the ministers or servants of that covenant, even though it had not yet been signed and really made a covenant.

Thus the Apostle speaks of himself and others as able servants of the New Covenant. He does not mean that the New Covenant is in effect, in operation, but that in view of this New Covenant which God has promised shall ultimately be signed and sealed and made effective, he and others, the entire royal priesthood, are servants of that covenant, ministering, or serving its interests and fully qualified of the Lord to do so. Of ourselves we have no righteousness, no merit, that could be made effective for the

sealing of that New Covenant with Israel. But, being justified by faith in the blood of Christ, we are made able or competent to serve the interests of the New Covenant. We serve it by laying down our lives as Joint-heirs with our Redeemer for its sealing, and subsequently putting it into operation.

Our position is that of ambassadors for God, explaining to men His mercy and His provision of the New Covenant, through which all may be blessed and recovered if they will. So many as receive our message with joy and turn from sin to follow our Lord may be invited to become members of the body of Christ, the body of Messiah, the body of the Mediator, the body of the great Prophet, the body of the great Priest, the body of the great King of the Millennial Age. So, then, we are ministers of the New Covenant in that we are laying down our lives in its service, in its interest, although it is not yet a covenant, but merely a promise. We are not only laying down our lives, but seeking out fellow-members of the body of the Anointed One and assisting them in the laying down of their lives, under the assurance that these better sacrifices will soon be finished and their application be made by our glorious Head, and we with Him in glory.

Not of the Letter, but of the Spirit

Even with our dealing with the world we can serve them to some extent, as servants of the New Covenant, for we can make known to them something of its terms, which some of them may grasp by faith and others may not. We can explain to them that this New Covenant which will go into effect evidences divine mercy and sympathy for mankind. We cannot minister to them the letter of the New Covenant, because it has not been sealed. We can merely tell them of its spirit and endeavour to show to them the import, as respects the future, that justice and mercy will be tempered together for all. If the New Covenant were sealed now, the conditions are not such as would make it a blessing, for Satan is still the Prince of this world, sin abounds, and the kingdom which is to bring deliverance has not yet been set up. The New Covenant is a covenant of law and of works made possible — the same exactly as the Law Covenant, except with a better Mediator. If, therefore, the letter of the New (Law) Covenant could be enforced now, it would be a great disadvantage to all coming under it, and, as the Apostle states, it would be unto death. Hence it is much better for the world that it is not sealed and operative and that we who are connected with it as prospective members of its Mediator merely explain to the opposing world the spirit of that covenant, which can profit and enlighten and encourage only those who are feeling after God, and who have no heart rebellion against Him.

Thus a believer in the Lord Jesus would have the right to look forward to the Millennial Age

and the blessed privileges of the New Covenant then to be inaugurated. And to the extent that he would live in accord with the conditions of that New Covenant, he would be the better prepared for the blessed privileges which will then be brought to the world. But he could not come under the letter of the New Covenant if he chose, for it has not yet been sealed. He could merely by faith come under its spirit.

But the special work of these ministers or servants of the New (Law) Covenant is to make known to such as are interested in a looking forward to the New Covenant and its blessing by faith, that God has some better thing for us — for the called and chosen and faithful, namely, that by consecration unto death, by drinking of His "cup", we may be counted in as members of the Mediator, under the higher, the Abrahamic Covenant. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" — Gal. 3:29.

Wrap Thy Face in Thy Mantle

(Contributed Address)

I would like to refer to portion of the story of Elijah, one of the faithful servants of God in the days of the kings of Israel and Judah. Many of the kings did evil in the sight of the Lord, instituting the worship of Baal and causing the people to sin grievously. At the Lord's direction Elijah informed King Ahab that there would be a drought in the land because of this situation, and Elijah was instructed to hide by the brook Cherith, and the Lord caused the ravens to feed him there.

A little later the Lord instructed Elijah to contact a certain widow, and the prophet and the family were miraculously kept alive by the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil which did not need replenishing by human hands. During this period the widow's son died, and Elijah raised him from the dead.

Three years passed without rain, and the whole country was in sore straits. Elijah arranged a sign to make the people realize who was the true God, worthy of their adoration and service. He told prophets of Baal to arrange a sacrifice to their god, but not to kindle a fire. He himself prepared a sacrifice to Jehovah. The prophets of Baal called on their god all day to send fire to consume the sacrifice, but received no answer. Eventually Elijah, at the time when the evening sacrifice should have been presented, besought the Lord to vindicate His name. We read in 1 Kings 18:38,39 — "Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Perhaps Elijah should have been greatly strengthened by all these experiences. However,

when wicked Queen Jezebel threatened his life, he fled. The Lord still continued to provide for his temporal needs, and eventually he lodged in a cave on Horeb, the mount of God. Just here I would like to read from 1 Kings 19:9-13 — "And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave."

Elijah was looking for big things. It was only when he realized that God works in quiet ways as well that he hid his face in his mantle. He realized that he had no righteousness of his own to give him a standing before the Lord.

The Lord chose this way to rebuke Elijah for his lack of faith, even although he had previously stood valiantly on the Lord's side. Then he gave Elijah encouragement by revealing that, unknown to Elijah, there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal. And He gave Elijah a further commission to fulfil.

Moffat translates the "still small voice" as "the breath of a light whisper". This reminds us of the creation of Adam, and the fact that the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. The "breath of a light whisper" also reminds us of our own begetting to a new nature, and the working of God's holy spirit in each Christian — "the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you". It is not easy to accept this promise in its entirety, and always. But "He is faithful who promised", and will guide us into all truth. We read in Titus 3:5 — "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy spirit."

In this "breath of a light whisper" Elijah at once recognized the presence of the Lord, and in deep humility he wrapped his face in his mantle before putting himself in a position to hear what the Lord had to say to him at that time. He learned that his faith need not have wavered; although the forces of evil were seemingly very great, the Lord was in complete control of the situation. Elijah immediately set

out to fulfil the further commission which the Lord gave to him, assured that the presence of his God would continually be with him. The mantle in which he wrapped his face became an instrument of power, and after his work was done he used it, under the Lord's hand, to smite the waters of Jordan, that he and Elisha might pass over dry-shod.

We read in Isaiah 61:10 — "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." We Christians have a mantle — the robe of Christ's righteousness, covering our imperfections and allowing us to be dealt with by the Lord. We also do well to wrap our face in our mantle; to listen to the Lord in deep humility when He would make known His plans for us. At times, like Elijah, we become disheartened, disappointed and dejected, imagining that we are forsaken, that we alone have tried to uphold the ways of righteousness but the forces of evil have been too much for us and we feel the pangs of defeat. With the Psalmist in Psalm 42:11 we ask — "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me?" The Psalmist had the answer — "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

It may be that the Lord will kindly rebuke us for our lack of faith; but we may be sure this will always be done in love. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God", we may say; "when shall I come and appear before God?" and we find the answer in this same Psalm — "Yet the Lord will command His loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life."

We sometimes feel dismayed at our small numbers, and feel so weak in ourselves that there is nothing we can achieve. But only the Lord knows the actual numbers of His true people at any time. He is well able to give us the encouragement we need to perform whatever service He requires of us. Our difficulties often stem from a lack of understanding of the way in which the Lord operates. He does not send storm, earthquake and fire to persuade us of His power, but the breath of a light whisper to assure us of His tender love for us. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit". — 1 John 4:13.

What a wondrous gift this is — His "free gift" — bringing with it all that we need for our enlightenment and our spiritual progress; help and support, strength in times of weakness, upholding power when we would fall, protection from the clamouring voices without which would distract us from our pathway. It includes encouragement when we seem so alone, comfort

(Continued on page 8.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Priestcraft Opposed to Liberty

The recent visit of the Pope to England, and the apparent favorable reception given to him by the Anglican leaders there, impresses the fulfilling of the prophetic words of Rev. 6:14, which 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, and cast into the sea" — Rev. 18:21.

In view of the world-wide interest shown in the Pope's visit, the following article, written many years ago, is presented at this time.

Some of the friends write us that their friends, ministers, etc., upon learning that it is the custom amongst 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 as sacrilegious — declaring that only the "clergy" have the right to administer to themselves and 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 — 1 Cor. 11:28. It was not the "clergy" that 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 people 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 to Christ the Head, constitute together God's royal priesthood, God's holy nation, God's peculiar people — 1 Pet. 2:9.

As 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 are authorized to teach, preach, baptize, bury the dead, read the Scriptures, or arrange for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The evident design was to fasten with the cords of priesthood and superstition the infant of 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 consciousness 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 priestridden fathers of the dark ages feared the priests and regarded them as beings of a different nature from themselves?

One of the strongest of these superstitious cords was the one associated 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 recreated by the priest, and then killed or sacrificed afresh each time the Mass is celebrated for those special persons or sins for whom 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 them), he must, if Christ be God the Father, be considered able to create the great Creator of the universe by virtue of special power and authority of office conferred upon him. No wonder the

people, the "laity", worshipped the "clergy", and revered and obeyed them as though they were God. But the people were not thereby 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 that they had been freed had been only partially released. Some of the cords were snapped asunder at once, but others were replaced by smaller and 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 give the inference that none but the "clergy" are commissioned to preach, but they rarely express themselves plainly upon the subject, knowing that the Bible recognized no such special "rights" as they would 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 thoughts that Christ is recreated by the officiating minister or priest, so as to be sacrificed afresh, yet they carry with them a portion of the shadow of the error. They have a feeling that in some way which they cannot explain, and for some reason not given in the Bible, it would be sacrilege for any one not of the "clergy" class to pass the emblems of the Redeemer's body and blood. Well, priestcraft is surely in danger wherever the Word of God is clearly understood; and the truth literature is published for no other purpose than to help God's benighted children out of the blindness and bondage put upon them by Satan, and to assist them into the light and liberty wherewith the Son makes free.

When the above article was written years ago, the statement — "While Protestants wholly reject the Papal doctrine of the Mass" — was largely true, especially amongst those who understood just what the Mass signified. However, today, the majority of Protestants are not true to name, for they know and care little about the meaning of the Mass, which our Lord declared was an "abomination" to Him — Matt. 24:15.

Armageddon, How Does it Affect the Christian Today?— Rev. 16:16

(Contributed Address)

There are few people in the world, probably none, who have not heard of Armageddon, and yet it is a word that appears only once in the whole Bible. Even then it is not a proper name in the English language, but is a word so called in the Hebrew tongue.

When writing the Apocalypse, the book of Revelation, John expressed ideas by Hebrew terms. A notable example is the word "Jew"; it is used unquestionably in a spiritual sense. Natural Jews were people of God in Old Testament times — "You only have I known of all the peoples of the earth"; they were the nation that confessed and praised and sought to worship the true God.

So when John in Revelation 3:9 writing of the Christian church in his message to Philadelphia said, "I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie," he was using a Hebrew term of O.T. times in a spiritual sense to refer to hypocritical Christians during the Gospel Age.

Another interesting verse is Revelation 9:11 (please read). According to scholars the meaning of the Hebrew word Abaddon is "perdition", and the meaning of the Greek word Apollyon is "destroyer". In our English language we can feel sure it is Satan who is referred to.

These examples serve to suggest that in our text those gathered into a place called in the Hebrew tongue "Armageddon" might in our language also refer to something further. A certain Anglican minister writing in 1848 (before the separating time — Rev. 3:14-16) as well as some other writers, believe that it does.

Armageddon in fact seems to be referred to in several places in the Bible in different terms. The word Armageddon is formed of two Hebrew words, one signifying a mountain, the other a cutting to pieces, therefore it stands for a mountain of slaughter against God's enemies.

In O.T. times there was a city or area in Israel called Megiddo, mentioned 12 times we find by aid of Concordance. However, we do not know a great deal about this city, but one significant feature stands out. The city or area was noted as a place where enemies or opposers of God were destroyed; and though it is somewhat veiled it would seem that what happened at Megiddo pictured what happens at Armageddon.

Zechariah chapter 12 has certainly to do with the day when natural Israel is finally and forever delivered from her enemies. Verse 9

reads in the Amplified Version — “And it shall be in that day, that I will make it my aim to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem”, and verse 11 that the mourning in Jerusalem will be like that in ancient time in the valley of Megiddo.

It would seem that considerable weight might be given here to a paragraph in the writing of the Anglican minister referred to — “It must be observed that King Josiah was defeated and mortally wounded at Megiddo; and though Josiah was a pious king, yet it must be remembered that, when at Megiddo, he was disobeying a divine command, given him by the prophet Jeremiah. Josiah was endeavouring to repel the Pharaoh (Necho) who was marching to besiege Babylon, and so Josiah was actually acting as an ally of the king of Babylon.”

This suggests to my mind that perhaps we should be careful that we do not get in the Lord's way when He sends emissaries out to destroy modern Babylon. We should be very desirous of knowing what the will of the Lord is in any situation and not be misguided like the good king Josiah.

I further quote this writer — “Thus Megiddo was a name made ready to denote the scene of a sudden and mysterious defeat and slaughter of God's foes and the allies of Babylon.” Reflection upon these things suggest to mind that Armageddon and Megiddo could refer to synonymous or the same happenings.

Looking at the third chapter of Joel we find some further interesting points to reflect upon — all nations are brought down to the valley of Jehoshaphat — verse 2. In verses 9 and 10 war cries are heard, ploughshares beaten into swords and scythes (margin) into spears and the “heathen” (opposers of God) are “wakened” (stirred up) to participate in a great battle in this “valley”. Verse 14 describes the scene as “multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision” (determination — Young) and that it is the day when the Lord is near, and that He will roar out of Zion and speak from Jerusalem; and shake heaven and earth by darkening the sun, moon and stars etc. (verses 14-16). It develops into a battle of decision — here will be determined for all time righteousness and wrong doing. What Joel has to say about this battle seems to be based upon an ancient battle recorded in 2 Chronicles chapter 20.

A powerful army descended upon king Jehoshaphat and he sought the Lord about it. The Lord heard and sent His messenger to Jehoshaphat telling him he had no need to fight — the battle was His. They were simply to go forth exercising faith and praising the Lord. The Lord caused things to happen that confused the enemy and instead of destroying Jehoshaphat's army they began fighting amongst themselves and were completely routed.

It certainly seems probable that Joel's mention of this great battle in a valley of decision is a further reference to the same battle referred to in other places as the battle of Armageddon and the destruction of Megiddo. As to the locality of the “Valley of Jehoshaphat” a commentator states “There is not, and never has been, any such valley in reality. The valley so marked on some maps near Jerusalem has no authority. The valley where the battle was fought was near Engedi near Zig in the wilderness of Jeruel. Israel watched the battle from the heights of Tekoa. This valley was christened the ‘valley of Jehoshaphat’ because of the great thing that happened there in his time.”

The best conclusion to these observations is to quote a paragraph from the writer of 1848. “In the word ‘Jehoshaphat’ there is an historical reference to a signal and miraculous slaughter of God's enemies in king Jehoshaphat's time, just as in the word ‘Megiddo’ there is an historical reference of the same kind. All nations cannot be gathered together in one valley, or to one mountain, on earth. Hence it is rightly concluded that the valley of Jehoshaphat here mentioned, is a general term for a signal execution of God's judgment on all His enemies throughout the world. In a word, the gathering together of the nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat is the same as the gathering together to Armageddon . . . I will gather all nations and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat . . . Let the heathen be weakened (bestir themselves R.S.V.) and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.”

Briefly now, let us look at Rev. 14:14-20. Here we have portrayed the second Advent of Christ and His wielding of the sickle of truth to destroy the wickedness of the nations of earth “for the time is ripe.”

No longer does God forbear with the forces of evil, but gathers them together as “the vine of the earth” (they had no “heavenly” connection of any kind, despite the oft repeated claims that they ruled under divine decree) and cast them into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Who can dispute that the casting of the “vine of the earth” into the winepress of God's wrath is the same as the nations being gathered to the “valley of Jehoshaphat” and to the “mount of Megiddo”, and to the “battle of Armageddon.”

Thus again do the words of the writer in 1848 bear reflection — “These prophecies should not be understood literally. The valley of Jehoshaphat, the mount of Megiddo and Armageddon, are not to be regarded as any one place on earth; nor do they represent any one event; but a general uprising of the enemies of God; a marshalling together of rulers and nations against the Lord and His anointed . . . an unholy union of Christian psalms with shouts

of blasphemy, a profane junction of the cross of Christ with the symbols of Anti-Christ.... This gathering is said to be a mountain; for they who thus associate themselves are swollen with pride and elated with confidence.... but this their mountain will sink into a valley, an abyss of shame, even a Gehenna, a valley of Hinnom, a gathering of Armageddon, multitudes in the valley of decision" (or determination, or judgment).

"We are thus brought to the conclusion, that the Apocalyptic Armageddon is not any spot in Judea (as some have thought) or in Italy (as others have imagined) but it is the world at large; wherever men associate themselves in a league of ungodly polity and corrupt religion...."

Reflection upon this man's comments cause one to wonder if the battle of Armageddon has not been in progress for many years — possibly maybe even from about the time of the first world war. Great wars consist of intermediate battles until at last a decisive battle ends the conflict. It could well be that the first world war and the second world war and the smaller wars and revolutions in between and since, are all part of the battle of Armageddon still proceeding in a figurative valley of Jehoshaphat and Mount Megiddo. For a long time God has been gathering the nations into the winepress of His wrath.

I would like to quote another man, a Chinese Christian by the name of Nee-To-Sheng — "We tend to think of some nations as good and some bad, but Scripture tells us the 'prince of this world' is behind them all. World governments are at heart united in one thing: they are against the reign of Christ. However violent the hostility between them, none of them want the sanctions imposed by the law of Christ — love, humility and truth. Let us break their bands asunder, they cry, and cast away their cords from us."

Maybe our connecting up of events in and near the Holy Land as the scene of the battle of Armageddon has been too restrictive. What might well happen there in the future will be only the final phase of Armageddon — the last decisive battle that will end the conflict forever, and clearly reveal the victor and the vanquished.

The writer of 1848, several times already referred to, had further helpful remarks about the fallacy of attaching literal significance to the symbols of Revelation. He pointed out how futile must be the hopes of some, that the River Euphrates will some day miraculously dry up and allow deliverers, "kings of the east" to enter and deliver God's people in the Holy Land. From this writer's remarks on this issue, I take up a series of quotations from his writings to end this address and I trust that you will appreciate them as I did when I read them. I concluded they were worth communicating,

passing on, to others of the Lord's people living now some 133 years later than when they were written.

"Those who interpret literally will deny that the river Euphrates is even now (1848) being dried up for the 'kings of the east' to pass over. The literal river flows and will forever flow on.... By the great river Euphrates we must understand the mighty flood of the mystical Babylon — the supremacy of Rome. We ask, Is there not a strange movement on its waters.... Are they not parting asunder like the waves of Jordan smitten before Joshua.... Do we not, even now, behold some traces of a 'way for the kings of the east' over them? The high road is appearing.... for the army of the true Joshua — the Everlasting King...."

"What then is the lesson for us? Christ is the light of the world, we must therefore be children of light. We must be 'kings of the east'.... The weakening of the Papal power and its alliance with new elements, will prove an occasion for the wider spread of the true Gospel, and also, in other cases, for the greater growth of infidelity. Some who are freed from the thralldom of Rome will embrace the Truth, but many, on the other hand will be in great danger of falling from superstition (which Rome really is) into total unbelief. (How indeed have we seen this happen since 1848).

"You, my brethren in Christ, are solemnly charged to prepare the way of the Lord by sound learning, pure doctrine and holiness of life.... you are eminently privileged to be kings of the east.... Let us show by example, that the truth, as taught by Christ and His Apostles, still exists in the world.... We must promote the religion of Christ.... who declared that All kings should bow before Him, and All nations do Him service.... Instead the nations' principles of national law of which they vaunt and glory are that all religions are equal.... Christendom appears ready, almost eager, to erase the cross of Christ, and to make itself a Pantheon, i.e. a temple dedicated to all deities...."

"Finally, why were these awful truths revealed? Not to indulge a vain and prying curiosity. Not to raise in us any proud conceits of Pharisaic self-righteousness. Not to provoke in us a spirit of wrath or hatred against those whose errors we ought to deplore with tears, and whose union with ourselves, in Christian truth and holiness, we ought to desire with prayers of devout affection. No. But to teach us our duty. To make us more thankful for our blessings, to communicate them.... to make us fear lest more zealous to preserve them, more desirous we lose them. To instruct us all that our only safety, both public and private, consists in following Christ.... We are entering a time when our Christian faith and fortitude will be severely tried.... a time of peril awaits us.... we must therefore arm ourselves with the whole armour of God...."

"Let us take with us the divine book of the Apocalypse given us through the beloved apostle John. It will teach us not to be seduced by the alluring arts or led captive by corrupt doctrines, or deceived by the lying wonders of false Christs, and false prophets.... He will teach us not to follow a multitude to do evil, but to promote God's glory at any sacrifice, by reverence of His name, by belief in His Word and by obedience to His Will.... The King of kings and Lord of lords will fight for us. He will lead us with His victorious army to the glorious mansions of the heavenly Jerusalem, and will give us a crown of glory which fadeth not away."

(Continued from page 3.)

and cheer when we are cast down by our faults and failures. Like Elijah when he cast himself under the juniper tree, we feel inclined to say "Lord, it is enough, I can go no further; I have failed utterly, I cannot go on." It is then that we may hear the breath of a light whisper, the voice of the holy spirit bringing us refreshment and strength, and food for the journey, until, as Elijah did, we can go in the strength of that food to Horeb, the Mount of God.

All this, and much more, is ours in the gift of the holy spirit, until we come to rejoice continually in the unspeakable blessings we have received, and say, morning, noon and night — "Praise be to thee for thine unspeakable gift."

It may be that the Lord will give us a special commission, some service for the glory of His name, after a period of disappointment and despair. But as it was in Elijah's case, the Lord gives us such a commission only while our face is wrapped in our mantle; only when we realize that of ourselves we are nothing, that all we have and all we may be able to do is only by His grace because of the robe of Christ's righteousness, so graciously provided for us. Whenever we trust in our own strength we are useless to the Lord. But when we are in an attitude of deep humility, as was Elijah, the Lord may well use us to perform some service for Him or His people. It behoves us to keep our hearts with all diligence, remembering that we have nothing which we did not receive from the Lord, and that every moment of every day we are dependent on Him for this covering robe.

The story of Elijah was written for our admonition. Let us take to heart the lessons we may find there. Maybe in our own experiences we will also recognize the "breath of a light whisper", the quiet presence of the Lord. Maybe we will hear His kindly rebuke, His words of encouragement and His commission. "Wrap thy face in thy mantle."

Pilgrimage Ended

On the 18th June, our dear Brother Marshall of Melbourne finished the pilgrim way after over 50 years as a devoted follower of the Master. Being a Tasmanian and a local preacher there, in 1931 he responded to one of our advertisements for free literature, from which time he greatly rejoiced in God's Plan for the salvation of humanity.

After a few years Brother Marshall came to Victoria, later settling in Melbourne, and attended the Melbourne Class from that time to the close of his earthly course, being much loved by all the brethren here and others throughout Australia whom he met at Conventions etc. Our dear Brother's help at the Melbourne Class, where he served as an Elder for over 40 years, was greatly appreciated. Also when the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts commenced in Australia he served as "Ernest" for 29 years, rejoicing in the privilege of extending God's truths to many people throughout this land.

In recent years our Brother's health was failing, though this was unknown to most of the brethren, as he was always uncomplaining, with his faith and confidence in the Lord always evident, and as a shining light he sought to serve the Lord and the brethren at every opportunity. Our warmest sympathy is extended to Sister Marshall and children in their loss of a devoted Christian husband and father whom we feel sure has received the Lord's commendation — "Well done, thou good and faithful servant.... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" — Matt. 25:21.

"God Has a Plan — You Are In It"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Morning Prayer

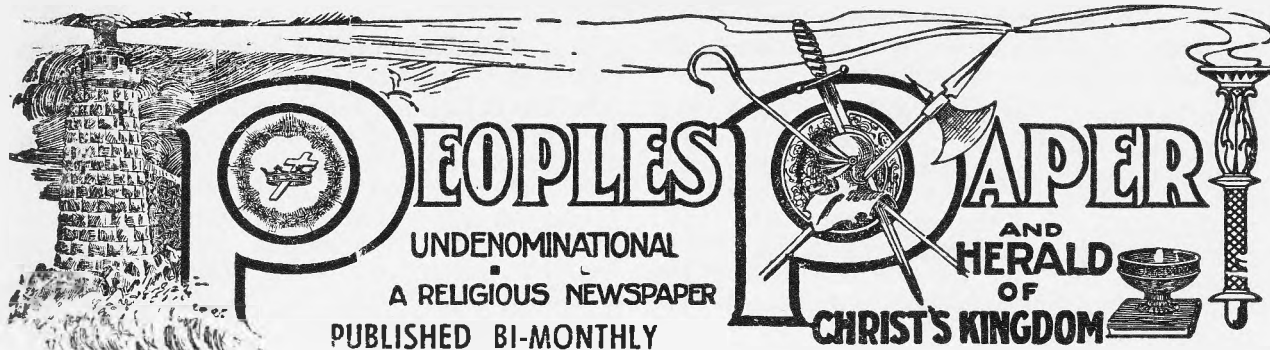
Lord, in the quiet of this morning hour
I come to Thee for peace, for wisdom, power
To view the world today through love-filled eyes;
Be patient, understanding, gentle, wise;
To see beyond what seems to be, and know
Thy children as Thou knowest them, and so
Naught but the good in anyone behold;
Make deaf my ears to slander that is told;
Silence my tongue to aught that is unkind,
Let only thoughts that bless dwell in my mind;
Let me so kindly be, so full of cheer,
That all I meet may feel Thy presence near,
O clothe me in Thy beauty, this I pray,
Let me reveal Thee, Lord, through all the day.

Ella S. Schenck.

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees" — 1sa. 35:3.

If there be but a thorn in the foot, the back boweth, the head stoops down, the eyes look, the hands reach to it, and endeavour its help and ease. The members are useful and serviceable one to another.

Leighton.



Volume LXV No. 5

MELBOURNE, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1982

Price—20 Cents

Refrain Thy Voice from Weeping

THE Lord through the prophet Jeremiah sends a message of consolation for the heart of every bereaved parent trusting in Him. We read—"A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from 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 31:15,16.

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's 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 not 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"—John 11:35. 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 realized that for this purpose He had come into the world, that He might give His life as a 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 realized 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 rendered 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 of a resurrection—that the dear ones who went down into death are not annihilated, as our text declares—"They 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 with him"—1 Thes. 4:14-18. Referring to the matter on one occasion the Apostle remarked—"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed"—1 Cor. 15:51. 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 rise again." He does not say thy brother is living now. He did not say, as some erroneously teach today, 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 rise 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 the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth"—John 5:28,29.

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 to be taken to 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 with 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 fore-manifestation of His coming glory and power, an illustration 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 to 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 the Lord speaks through the Apostle of those years of the Millennial Age as "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.

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—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus . . . and manifested forth his glory"—John 2:11. 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 detail, 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 promised 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"?—1 Cor. 15:26. 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"—"His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them" because "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest"—Job 14:21; Eccles. 9:5,10. 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. 3:4.

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—Acts 24:15. "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 under-

stand 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 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 a thousand years"—Rev. 20:6. Nevertheless that will be but a little flock, as the Scriptures declare, including—"not many wise, not many mighty, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Kingdom"—1 Cor. 1:26,27; James 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 of 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 earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea"—Hab. 2:14—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"—Jer. 31:34. 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"—Jer. 31:16. The Scriptures do not go into detail 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.

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

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 baptized 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.

(3) 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 preparatory—"I indeed baptize you with water, but, . . . he shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire"—Luke 3:16. It is very manifest that all of the multitudes who were baptized with water were not baptized 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.

(4) 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 of which to repent. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"—Heb.

7:26. With the accustomed view of baptism, John declined to baptize 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—Exod. 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 baptized again. See the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ and His Body, the Church, contrasted in Acts 19:3-5.

Athanasia and Aphtharsia Distinguished

A Word Study

IN the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle has shown that the Gentiles, apart from "his" gospel of a "faith-righteousness" are without hope. In this his Jewish readers would readily concur; but they could not believe that the same was true of themselves. They "had Abraham as their father", etc. To convince them that their case was just as hopeless as that of the Gentiles, the Apostle presents, in a most tactful way, a very simple argument—an argument simple enough to a mind open to truth—one which could be revealed even to "babes"—Matt. 11:25—but which was very difficult for the Jews to grasp, because of the prejudice which they held. Briefly stated, the position of the Apostle is this; God's judgment will be absolutely impartial. Questions of birth or other privileges can never enter into His decisions—Rom. 2:2. He will render to every man according to his deeds, including, as the word translated "deeds" suggests, the motives actuating those deeds. Nothing else will be considered—Rom. 2:6. No questions will be asked as to whether an individual is a Jew or a Gentile—the only

matter of moment will be as to his aim and course in life. Patient continuance in well doing will be rewarded with eternal life; the opposite aim and course will be suitably punished—Rom. 2:7-9. Clinching his argument, the Apostle maintains that no matter whether the individual be Jew or Gentile, strict, impartial judgment according to character qualifications must obtain in that day—"for there is no respect of persons with God"—Rom. 2:11.

The whole purpose of his argument, it seems to us, is to prepare their minds for "his" gospel of faith-righteousness (justification by faith). If they can but be brought to realize that God's judgment will be according to "deeds" and that in themselves they are incapable of "well-doing" in the Scriptural sense of that word, they will have reached the frame of mind capable of responding to the well-nigh irresistible appeal of the Gospel—a state of mind in which the Gospel will be able to prove itself "the power of God" unto **their** salvation.

Such a line of reasoning on the Apostle's part is so elementary to students of the Bible that it would be unnecessary to elaborate the matter further if it were not for the word "immortality."

Immortality Appears in only Three Scriptures

The difficulty which stands in the way of the English reader to hinder a proper understanding of the Apostle's meaning lies in the fact that frequently the words "immortality" and "incorruption" are not properly distinguished, but are thought of as synonymous terms. This, however, is not true of the English words, and scholars have observed that it is also untrue of the Greek words from which they are translated. These two Greek words are "Athanasia" and "Aphtharsia."

Athanasia signifies "deathlessness." It appears only three times in the New Testament and in those places is properly translated "immortality." The three passages in which Athanasia appears are as follows:

"This mortal must put on **immortality**"—1 Cor. 15:53.

"When this mortal shall have put on **immortality**"—1 Cor. 15:54.

"Who only hath **immortality**"—1 Tim. 6:16.

We understand that the first two of these Scriptures relate to the individual members of the glorified Church, and the third to our glorified Lord Jesus, the Father here, as elsewhere in the Scriptures, being excepted from comparison.

The other Greek word "Aphtharsia" (and "Aphthartos", an adjective from the same root as the noun Aphtharsia) are rendered **immortality** twice, **immortal** once, **sincerity** twice, but would more properly be rendered **incorruption** and **incorruptible**, and are generally so

rendered by lexicographers. Aphtharsia signifies "incapable of decay." The following represent all the passages in the Bible in which it (or aphthartos) occurs:

"The glory of the uncorruptible (aphthartos—incorruptible) God"—Rom. 1:23.

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality (aphtharsia—incorruption)"—Rom. 2:7.

"They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible (aphthartos)"—1 Cor. 9:25.

"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption (aphtharsia)"—1 Cor. 15:42.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (aphtharsia)"—1 Cor. 15:50.

"The dead shall be raised incorruptible (aphthartos)"—1 Cor. 15:52.

"This corruptible must put on incorruption (aphtharsia)"—1 Cor. 15:53.

"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption (aphtharsia)"—1 Cor. 15:54.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity (aphtharsia—incorruptness)"—Eph. 6:24.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal (aphthartos—incorruptible), invisible, the only wise God"—1 Tim. 1:17.

"Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality (aphtharsia—incorruption) to light through the Gospel"—2 Tim. 1:10.

"In doctrine showing uncorruptness (adiaphthoria), gravity, sincerity (aphtharsia—incorruption)"—Tit. 2:7.

In Tit. 2:7 aphtharsia is omitted by the best authorities—adiaphthoria, (aphthoria according to Westcott and Hort) is very similar in derivation and meaning.

"To an inheritance incorruptible (aphthartos), and undefiled, and that fadeth not away"—1 Pet. 1:4.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible (aphthartos)"—1 Pet. 1:23.

"That which is not corruptible (aphthartos), even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit"—1 Pet. 3:4.

Incorruption may Refer to Character

From the above Scriptural usage of these two words, athanasia and aphtharsia (and its objective aphthartos) the following distinctions will be noted:

(1) Athanasia (immortality) in each of the three passages in which it occurs, refers to sentient beings, whereas this is not always the case with Aphtharsia (incorruption).

(2) Athanasia not only refers only to sentient beings, but in each instance refers to the **life principle** by which their organisms are animated.

Aphtharsia, on the contrary, in those instances in which it is applied to sentient beings, does not refer to the life principle, but to either their organisms or characters. For example, in Rom. 1:23, the Apostle may be referring to the fact that the organism or body of Jehovah is incapable of decay, or he may be referring (and it is our thought that he is referring) to the fact that the moral worth (the character) of Jehovah is of such excellent quality as to be impossible to corrupt. In any case the Apostle is not referring to God's deathlessness; had he desired to do so, he would have used the word Athanasia.

(3) Aphtharsia while sometimes referring to sentient beings, does not always do so, but in several instances refers to inanimate things such as the Christian's crown—1 Cor. 9:25—his inheritance—1 Pet. 1:4—the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit—1 Pet. 3:4—the quality of love possessed by believers still in the flesh—Eph. 6:24—etc. It is possible, for believers, here and now to love our Lord Jesus (yes, and each other too), with incorruptness, but all can see that the word immortality would be quite out of place in this connection.

Our Lord's Flesh Incorruptible but not Immortal

Perhaps it may further assist us to a proper distinction between these two words if we call to mind what the Scriptures say with respect to our Lord's flesh. They declare that it should not see corruption—Acts 2:27,31; 13:35—yet nowhere do they speak of it as immortal. Students of the Bible well know that it would be a denial of the doctrine of the Ransom to intelligently hold that it is now animated by any principle of life whatever, inherent or sustained, yet none the less it is or was incorruptible. It was not permitted to undergo the loathsome process of decay. What became of it we do not know, except that it did not decay. Many readers will remember the observation in "Scripture Studies"—"Whether it was dissolved into gases or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows;—nor is such knowledge necessary. That God did miraculously hide the body of Moses, we are assured—Deut. 34:6; Jude 9—and that as a memorial God did miraculously preserve from corruption the manna in the golden bowl, which was placed in the Ark under the Mercy Seat in the Tabernacle, and that it was a symbol of our Lord's flesh, the bread from heaven, we also know—Exod. 16:20,33; Heb. 9:4; John 6:51-58"—"Scripture Studies", Vol. 2; pages 129, 130.

The Church to be both Incorruptible and Immortal

In one celebrated passage the Apostle uses both words—"For this corruptible must put on

incorruption (aphtharsia), and this mortal must put on immortality (athanasia). So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption (aphtharsia), and this mortal shall have put on immortality (athanasia), then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written—'Death is swallowed up in victory'"—1 Cor. 15:53,54. If the word "incorruption" meant precisely the same as the word "immortality", the Apostle would be multiplying words to no purpose. On the contrary we understand him to be distinguishing between them. It is as though he were to say: When this organism which is capable of decay gives place to one that is not, and when this life-principle which is one that is sustained gives place to one that is inherent, then shall be brought to pass, etc.

Let us by Patient Continuance in Well-doing Seek a Character Incorruptible

With these distinctions in mind and giving consideration also to the context, we are led to the following conclusions with regard to Rom. 2:7:

(1) The word immortality in the Authorized Version is more properly translated "incorruption" or "Incorruptibility." See Emphatic Diaglott, American Revised Version, Strong's Concordance, etc.

(2) Since Aphtharsia is the word used (not Athanasia) the Apostle cannot be referring to the **life principle** which animates the organisms of Divine beings.

(3) While Aphtharsia never refers to a life principle inherent or sustained, but sometimes refers to the organism of living beings, yet it does not always do even this, but in several instances refers to inanimate things. In a recent "Herald" we quoted an eminent writer to the effect that the context in which this verse appears would seem to require that the word be regarded as an adjective employed to qualify the nouns, glory and honor. This suggestion seems not unreasonable to us especially as a paraphrase, although the fact that it is the noun (aphtharsia) not the adjective (aphthartos) that is used is not in its favor as a literal translation. However, the essential thought would not be very different if, as we have seen is permissible, we regard the incorruptibility sought by patient continuance in well doing to be an incorruptibility of character. It is certainly true that some men seek glory and honour from each other—John 5:44. Such glory and honor is capable of and soon experiences decay. Other men by patient continuance in well doing may be said to seek the glory and honor that is incorruptible, incapable of decay, or if the other view be taken, they may be said to seek glory and honor and a third thing, namely a crystallized character incapable of corruption. Surely such a character will be the possession of all, on whatever plane of existence, who are counted worthy of eternal life.

Ultimately, if they persist in such seeking, they will either in this life or the next, meet with the Gospel and receive the grace necessary to embrace it. By embracing the gracious provisions of the Gospel they will secure the incorruptible glory and honor they sought (or if we take the other view, they will secure the glory and honor and the incorruptible character they sought). They will also receive eternal life. It is true that some of these (the faithful overcomers of the Gospel Age, the Little Flock, the Church) will receive eternal life on the highest plane of existence, namely the Divine plane. Such will indeed be possessors of immortality. This, however, is in our opinion, entirely outside the scope of the first two chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. (Reprinted from "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom.")

Convention News

A VERY helpful season of spiritual refreshing was again experienced this year at the tenth Nambour Convention, in Queensland. The attendance was not as large as on some previous occasions, but we remembered the words of our Master when He said—"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"—Matt. 18:20.

How good it is to meet together with fellow travellers on the narrow way and discuss the precious truths of God's Word. We are grateful to our loving Heavenly Father, the Giver of every good gift, for the blessings received, and the privilege of service. It was a pleasure to welcome friends from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

A helpful study was taken in 2 Cor. 3:5-8; 4:1,6,7. A number of interesting questions were submitted and two Question Meetings proved helpful. The topics of the addresses by the brethren were as follows—"Entering Into God's Rest"; "Consider the Lilies of the Field"; "Bond Slave of Christ, Yet Free Man"; "The Wheat Harvest"; "The Firstborn and the Firstfruits"; "God's Power"; "Armageddon—the Battle"; "Learning"—a Young People's Address.

It was a pleasure to receive many messages and greetings from various Classes and individual brethren. Christian love is sent from the Convention to all who thus remembered us, and to brethren everywhere, together with the Scriptural message in 1 Pet. 5:7-9. We would like to express our appreciation to all those who served the Convention in any way—those who prepared addresses, studies, questions, comments, etc. Our thanks also go out to the Sisters who catered so well for our temporal needs.

Many lovely hymns were sung throughout the Convention, which closed with the singing

of "God be with you till we meet again." Prayers of gratitude were offered to our Heavenly Father for the blessings received, and a request for His continued guidance in the days ahead, for ourselves and for His people everywhere.

Continued from page 3

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 back 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 will realize 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 was 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 giv-

ing 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. 15:3,4.

"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 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 fruits 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 or 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 realize 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 made 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!

"Mankind Coming Back from Hell"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

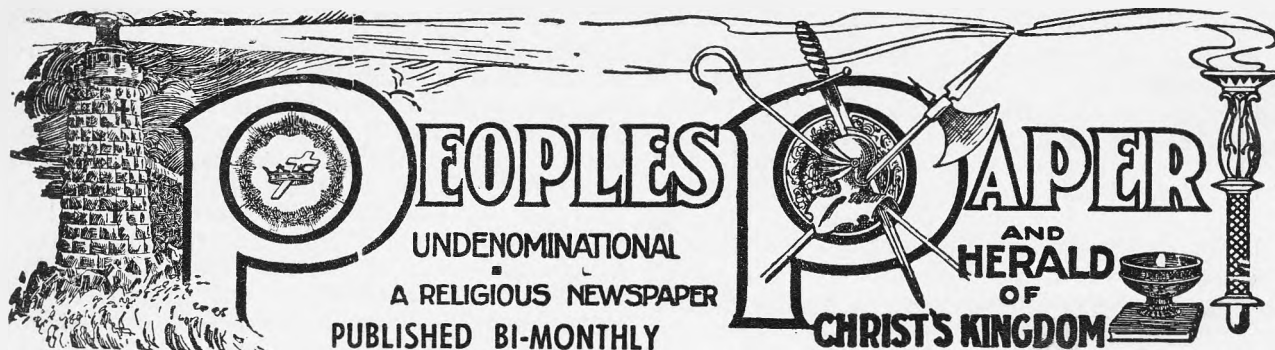
The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00. plus postage 50c.

A desert way,
A burning sun,
And ——— Saul.

A sudden light,
A heavenly voice,
And ——— Paul.



Volume LXV No. 6

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER-JANUARY, 1982-3

Price—20 Cents

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 3½ 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 tenderness 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 of the most value 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 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

"Peoples Paper" Subscriptions

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper"—\$1.00—are now due for 1983. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.62 per annum (\$2.10 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the "Peoples Paper" to receive it regularly.

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 3½ 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 realize 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, and encouraging fellow members, also proclaiming the glad tidings to others who have ears to hear, and generally "redeeming the time, because the days are evil"—Eph. 5:16.

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.

Free Booklets

Supplies of the following booklets are available for distribution, where good may be done. These are provided through the General Tract Fund, which many of our brethren support in their desire to co-operate in serving the Lord's truth which has been such a blessing to themselves. All who can use these booklets to advantage should have a supply in hand for opportunities of serving others who are seeking the Lord and His truth. Please order freely.

"The Lord is My Shepherd"
"The Greatest of These is Love"
"The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing"
"Earth's New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope"
"The Mystery of Christ"
"The Christian's Joy"
"Where Are the Dead?"
"Armageddon—Then Peace on Earth"
"Christian Baptism"
"God's Remedy for a World in Distress"
"Hope"
"God Dwells Not in Temples Made With Hands"
"God's Great Plan of Salvation"
"The Kingdom of God"
"Watch Israel—God's Time Clock"
"God Has a Plan—You Are In It"
"Mankind Coming Back from Hell"

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Search for Atoning Blood

THE following will prove interesting to our readers. It is a report of remarks made by an old Hebrew at a "mission" meeting. We note that God has so overturned natural Israel that though they have possession of the holy places where sacrifices were appointed to be offered, they have no priest qualified to make the offerings. No Jew living in the world today could prove his right to the priest's office by showing his pedigree back to Aaron. Jews named Levy and Cohen are supposed to be of the Levitical tribe, but could not prove it so as to qualify for the office according to their law. With the true Priest and the offering of the "better sacrifices", the types were obliterated most effectually by the Lord. By and by fleshly Israel will realize the truth—they will "look upon him whom they pierced"—they will recognize Him as the great Priest who "offered up himself." Thank God for the assurances of His Word on this subject in Rom. 11:25-33.

The testimony follows:—

"This is Passover week among you, my Jewish brethren, and as I sat here I was thinking how you will be observing it. You will have put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat the motsah—unleavened wafers—and the roasted lamb. You will attend the synagogue services and carry out the ritual and directions of the Talmud; but you forget, my brethren, that you have everything but that which Jehovah required first of all. He did not say 'When I see you eat the motsah or the lamb, or go to the synagogue'; but His word was 'When I see the blood I will pass over you.' Ah, my brethren, you cannot substitute anything for this. You must have **blood, Blood, BLOOD!**"

As he reiterated this word with ever increasing emphasis, his black eyes flashed warningly, and his Jewish hearers quailed before him. "Blood!" It is an awful word, that, for one who reveres the ancient oracles and yet has no sacrifice. Turn where he will in the Book, the blood meets him, but let him seek as he may, he cannot find it in the Judaism of the present. After a few minutes' pause the patriarchal old man went on somewhat as follows:

"I was born in Palestine nearly seventy years ago. As a child I was taught to read the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets. I early attended

the synagogue and learned Hebrew from the rabbis. At first I believed what I was told, that ours was the true and only religion, but as I grew older and studied the Law more intently I was struck with the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there, and equally struck by its utter absence in the ritual to which I was brought up. Again and again I read Exodus 12 and Leviticus 16 and 17, and the latter chapters especially made me tremble, as I thought of the great Day of Atonement and the place the blood had there. Day and night one verse would ring in my ears—'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.' I knew I had broken the law. I **needed atonement**. Year after year, on that day, I beat my breast as I confessed my need of it; but it was to be made by blood, and there was **no blood!**

"In my distress I at last opened my heart to a learned and venerable rabbi. He told me that God was angry with His people. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Gentiles, the temple was destroyed, and a Mohammedan mosque was reared up in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare shed the blood of sacrifice, in accordance with Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17, was desecrated and the nation scattered. That was why there was no blood. God had Himself closed the way to carry out the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now we must turn to the Talmud, and the rest of its instructions, and trust in the mercy of God and the merits of the fathers.

"I tried to be satisfied, but could not. Something seemed to say that the Law was unaltered, even though our temple was destroyed. Nothing else but blood could atone for the soul. We dared not shed blood for atonement elsewhere than in the place the Lord has chosen. Then we were left without atonement at all. This thought filled me with horror. In my distress I consulted many other rabbis. I had but one great question—'Where can I find the blood of atonement?'

"I was over thirty years of age when I left Palestine and came to Constantinople, with my still unanswered question ever before my mind, and my soul exceedingly troubled about my sins. One night I was walking down one of the narrow streets of that city, when I saw a sign telling of a meeting for Jews. Curiosity led me to open the door and go in. Just as I took a seat I heard a man say: 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' It was my first introduction to Christianity, but I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God had declared that 'Without shedding of blood is no remission', but that He had given His only begotten Son, the Lamb of God, to die, and all who trusted in His blood were forgiven all their iniquities. This was the Messiah of the 53rd of Isaiah; this was the suffering of Psalm 22. Ah, my brethren, I had found the blood of atonement at last! I trusted it, and now I love to read the New Testament and see how all the

shadows of the Law are fulfilled in Jesus. His blood has been shed for sinners. It has satisfied Justice, and is the only means of salvation for either Jew or Gentile." (From "Reprints.")

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. 15:22; 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 Thes. 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" to which we look forward, but His presence.

(12) 2 Thes. 2:1; (13) 2 Thes. 2:8; (14) 2 Thes. 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 light-

ning 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.

The Mind—Man's Automatic Steering Mechanism

(Contributed Address)

THERE is much we do not know about the functions of the human mind. However, much has been discovered in this day of increased enlightenment, and since we are living in a very eventful period of the history of the human race, when so many minds are being subjected to so much propaganda or brain washing, so often of a subtle nature, which has such far-reaching effects in its influence on the minds of men, women and children of all ages, I thought it may be helpful to take a brief look at some important things which are known about the human mind. Then we can consider a few texts of Scripture which will help us to nurture and to cultivate our renewed minds, "the mind of Christ" which is in all those who have fully consecrated their lives to the service of God, and who have been begotten by the holy spirit to the new nature, the spiritual nature.

Our dictionary defines "mind" as "the seat of consciousness, thought, volition and emotional, intellectual powers; memory; opinion." Take one of the many texts in the New Testament in which reference is made to the mind. Rom. 12:2—"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Greek "nous." Dr. Strong gives the meaning as "the intellect, i.e. mind (divine or human; in thought, feeling, or will). Considering another helpful text, Phil. 2:5, Paul says—"Let this **mind** be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Dr. Strong defines the word here as from the Greek "phroneo" meaning "to exercise the mind, i.e. entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by implication to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intensively to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience)."

Having in our thoughts, then, these definitions of the word "mind", which must be renewed by the mind of Christ, which all of His followers must seek to have, it may be of some profit to analyze, by question and answer, some further details in this connection; namely, Why must this human mind be renewed? First of all let us think of the mind as that **something** which man has above all others of the animal creation—the capacity to think, to reason, to plan. The power to translate thoughts into actions. The scope for reaching out after new horizons, and the power to visualize the thinking and planning of today, put into actual effect tomorrow. That something, if in tune with the

Master Mind of the universe, can be capable of the greatest good, and rise to the greatest heights, even on the human plane of being. After all do we not understand that man was created in the image of God—Gen. 1:26, 27—in His moral likeness, a reasoning sentient being? Even today when so much evil is in the world, there are many noble examples which show up the finer qualities in man's make-up as being of divine origin.

Yet, if the mind of man is given over to the influences of the Adversary, the Satanic forces of evil, spiritual wickedness in high places, this same mind can be capable of the most diabolical evil and cruelty, and the greatest power for the destruction of things good and pure, almost beyond words to describe. So, then, as human beings, we all have this "something" called the mind. Before we come to Christ it is the natural mind, and before going on to answer our question, Why must this mind be renewed in the followers of Christ? let us pursue this analysis of the "automatic steering mechanism" a little further.

This **thing** called the mind is that which directs man's every-day thoughts and actions and has some influence for good, bad, or indifference upon not only himself, but also upon all those with whom he associates each day. Should not we then, as Christians, seek to know something of not only what man has learned, but more importantly what God's Word has to say in respect of such an important part of every one of God's creatures, and more especially in respect of those who are His New Creation, His peculiar people—1 Pet. 2:9—those whom He has drawn by the holy spirit to Jesus Christ—John 6:44.

Volumes have been written by men who have studied the human mind and its behaviour. A knowledge of some of the basic findings in this connection is helpful in enabling us to appreciate what a remarkable piece of electronic mechanism is the human mind. It has been called "man's automatic steering mechanism" and when we expand this thought a little further and then relate it to what God's Word has to say on the same subject, we begin to see how very important it is that our minds are stayed upon our Heavenly Father and His righteousness—Isa. 26:3.

It is said that **one tenth part** of every human mind is conscious and nine tenths sub-conscious; that is, outside the range of attention. It is through this very remarkable arrangement that our Creator has built into the human brain what can be called a **subconscious homing device**, and which is in its effect really a sub-conscious feed back cycle. It works on this principle. We all know that man is endowed with five senses—sight, hearing, feeling or touch, smell and taste. So each day humanity judges its affairs by the exercise of these five senses. Every day, every hour, every minute, every second of our wakeful or conscious time,

through these senses, mental impressions of situations that continually develop and pass around us in the daily course of our lives are **fed back** through the one tenth or conscious part of our mind to the larger or subconscious part, the nine tenths. Examples are the constant barrages of advertising, radio, TV., hoarding or by whatever means. Thus any repeated impression or thought fed back in this manner builds up a tremendous bank of subconscious energy.

These thoughts and impressions are received by the subconscious as the operational "data" on "the way things are", just in the same manner in which a programme is fed into a computer. The subconscious then goes to work to suppress or expand our performance to conform exactly to this set pattern. Can we see then why Solomon said—"As a man thinketh in his heart, or mind, so is he"?—Prov. 23:7. This, then, is how man's daily performance is controlled.

If a man takes a daily "failure" or "life is difficult" or "no progress" attitude; in other words, a constant negative thinking programme, and builds up thereby a self image of this kind he can be sure that his subconscious will use all the forces or resources of the human body to limit his energy—his creative ability, analytical skill and perception, so that he conforms exactly to the "operating formula" of this image. He literally **cannot do better** than his self image, which has come from his thoughts and mental perception. Observations of results of his performance must not lead to negative "can't do any better" frame of mind. Reactions of others to thing he has done must not lead to constant thoughts of "I cannot seem to please anyone" attitude. His visualization of things he fears might happen or hopes will happen must not make him give up trying to think and act and hope positively.

Let us see, then, how some of these thoughts can be applied to our Christian lives and also how they apply in answer to our question as to why the human mind needs to be changed and renewed by the transforming power of Christ in us, and working through us by the power of the holy spirit. Rom. 12:2, which has been quoted, goes on to give a reason why the human mind needs renewing—"so that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Yes, indeed, how very true. The veil of **human mindedness** in the natural man hangs between him and the sacred spiritual truths of God. The only way to set it aside is to make a full consecration to do God's will which is to sacrifice the flesh and its interests. It is in the glorious and privileged condition typified by the Holy of the Tabernacle that the consecrated children of God enjoy their inner life and walk with God. Yes, this is quite beyond the sight of the world and the worldly. What a precious thought!

In the "Holy" we are experiencing the transforming and it is during this process that we

are learning more and more, that we may **prove** what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth"—1 Thes. 5:23; 4:3; John 17:17. What a privilege is this proving experience. The Greek word here translated "prove" was used in olden times in connection with testing or proving of metals and means to investigate, examine and discern. By careful tests under close examination and observation the metal was proved. So it is we **prove** the will of God.

How do we do this? One way is surely through the study of God's Word individually and with others, and by prayer and faith. We all know the joyful experiences of gathering around God's Holy Word collectively. On such occasions we meditate upon the Scriptures, we endeavour to rightly divide the word of truth—2 Tim. 2:15. With sentiments of praise and worship in our hearts we wait upon the Lord and He speaks to us through His Word. How important this is—assembling ourselves together in the right attitude of heart and mind.

So, then, as we come to see less and less of ourselves, and more and more of Christ and His spirit of love in our hearts, cannot we see how the subconscious feed back cycle works out in our Christian lives? As an instance, if we come to the meeting for the Bible Study and we feed into our one tenth conscious mind critical thoughts that are not positive or constructive, or not in harmony with God's love of what this Brother or that Sister has to say, instead of endeavouring to see Christ and His words, these negative impressions feed into the nine tenths or subconscious part, and build up to become the force which directs our daily living. If we continually dwell on the weaknesses, real or imagined, of our Brothers and Sisters, see always their faults instead of their Christlike qualities, then just as surely as we are feeding these impressions into the subconscious mind, to that extent then we will be the poorer in our own spiritual lives.

Oh, if we would only follow our Lord's example of positive action when tempted to criticise, condemn or judge our brethren. When tempted to listen to something which is in the nature of gossip or evil speaking, and instead, resolve to think and speak as would our Lord and Master were He in our position, how greatly we would enrich our Christian living. How much more influence for good would our daily lives become if we see to it that each day and hour and minute, through our conscious mind we are feeding into our computer (as it were) the right programme for daily Christian living. Is this, then, how the mind is renewed?

This may mean a complete change of ideals and a new attitude toward our whole way of living—"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full

in His wonderful face." Our Heavenly Father asks from us a full surrender, full consecration, nonconformity to this world and a transforming to the kingdom requirements. Then, and only then, can God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness fully shine into our hearts and minds by the gospel to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. This knowledge cannot be comprehended by the natural mind—1 Cor. 2:14.

What is the result of this transforming work? Development of the character-likeness of Christ. Growth in the fruits of the spirit—Gal. 5:22, 23. Daily development? Yes! A desire to please Him in all things and a love in our hearts which comes from God the Father. How do we continue in this way against the powers of Satan aligned with all the forces of evil to thwart God's plan? We can gird up the loins of our mind—1 Pet. 1:13. We can think on all those virtues of Phil. 4:8 (please read).

Can we develop or cultivate our five earthly senses to a greater appreciation of our daily needs as New Creatures in Christ Jesus? Or would we say, we also have what can be called five spiritual senses corresponding to the five natural senses? Can these be cultivated? Yes, indeed, as we come more and more into Christ, the "eyes" of our understanding open wider and wider to things not seen by the natural eye. By degrees, the "hearing" of faith increases until every good promise of the divine Word is forceful and meaningful. In time we come into closer "touch" with the Lord and His invisible powers (the power of prayer and praise). After a time and little by little we "taste" that the Lord is gracious and precious. As we progress, we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense prayers which are of a sweet odour to the Lord.

Can the Christian, then, be described as having a sixth or spiritual sense which enables him even though still in the earthly body to understand things quite beyond the perception of those around him, who are not begotten of the holy spirit? Yes, indeed—1 Cor. 2:9, 10, 14 (please read). How grand, how glorious, how rich is the daily experience of all those, who, by the grace of God, are finding that the things of this earth are growing dim, as the "deep things of God" revealed to us by His spirit, come more and more into focus, as the "mind of Christ" which is in us—1 Cor. 2:16—enables us to appreciate the transforming work which has given us this renewal of mind.

What exaltation, what thanks are due to our Heavenly Father as we experience with Paul the joy of understanding even 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"—Col. 1:26, 27. May God bless to our hearts and minds the few thoughts presented

here, that we may see the daily need, the constant need of feeding through our one tenth conscious part of our mind the thoughts and impressions which are godly and pure, so that the force which is built up in the subconscious will direct our daily performance in ways which will be well pleasing to our Heavenly Father, and edifying to all those with whom we daily associate.

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.

"God Promises Wars Will Cease"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Listening!

Listening attentively can be a valuable form of service. Many people desperately need someone short on talking and long on listening, with whom they may discuss some problem that is bugging them. They are not necessarily seeking advice: simply a sympathetic listening ear. The act of expressing themselves to a patient and understanding listener often gives them emotional relief, and enables them to see the answer to their own problem.

Michel Quoist made this confession:

I have just hung up; why did he telephone?

I don't know. . . . Oh! I get it. . . .

I talked a lot and listened very little.

Forgive me, Lord, it was a monologue and not a dialogue.

I explained my idea and did not get his;

Since I didn't listen, I learned nothing;

Since I didn't listen, I didn't help;

Since I didn't listen, we didn't communicate.

Forgive me, Lord, for we were connected and now we are cut off.

It is a prayer that many of us need to pray.

—Selected.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

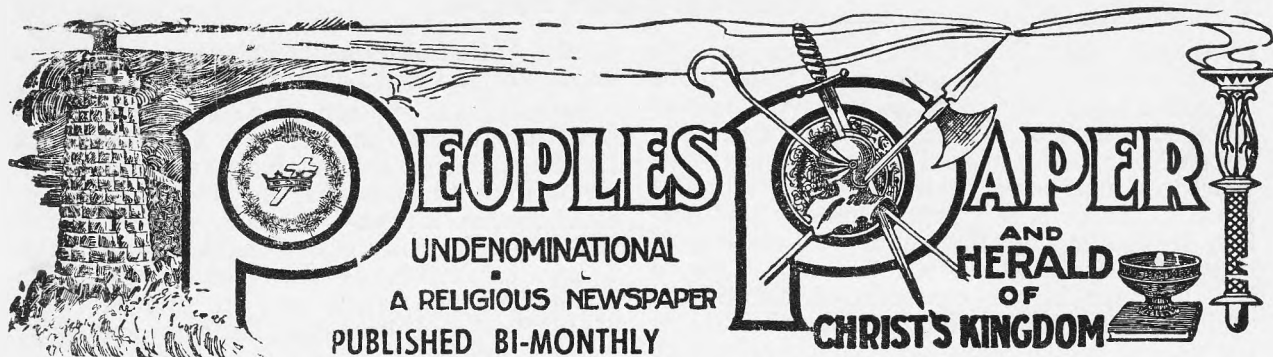
Books Available

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.65 according to distance).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—\$1.00 (Postage \$1.00 in Victoria; \$1.20 Interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—\$1.00 (Postage 60c and 70c).
- "The Book of Books"—\$1.00 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—\$1.00 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Songs in the Night"—\$1.00 (Postage 60c and 70c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—\$1.00 (Postage 60c and 70c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXVI No. 1

MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1983

Price—20 Cents

Memorial of Christ's Death

"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover"—Luke 22:1.

SUCH is the sacred narrative announcing the last Passover Supper of which our Lord partook. 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.

When Jesus sent disciples to inquire of a friend—"Where is the guest chamber where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" we read further—"And they made ready the Passover"—Luke 22:11-13. As 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 not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God"—Luke 22:15, 16.

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 for Israel in the land of Egypt on the evening of the 14th day of the first month, namely, how can God exempt from judgment, and receive into His favour, those whom His holiness condemns? To this solemn question there was but one answer that would satisfy the demands of a 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"—Exod. 12:13. This settled the all-important question. It was one of life and death, of deliverance or judgment. The blood-sprinkled doorpost 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 the throne unto the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle"—Exod. 12:29. "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 doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel"—Exod. 11:7.

Redemption being now accomplished, and Israel divinely prepared, they commence their journey. But observe, in passing, how they start. Before taking one step, every question between the conscience and God is divinely settled. They are forgiven, justified and accepted in His sight. Hence, it is written—"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt"—Hosea 11:1. Blessed type of the real condition in which every true believer begins his Christian course. He may not see this blessed truth, or he may have a very feeble appreciation of it, as Israel had, but that does not alter the fact. God acts according to His own knowledge of the relationship, and the affections which belong to it. We see this, in the glorious deliverance of His people at the Red Sea, in the manna from heaven, the water from the rock, and in the pillar of His presence, which accompanied them in all their wanderings. He ever acts according to the purpose of His love, and the value of the blood of Jesus.

Observing in the type the slain lamb, its blood sprinkled upon the doorposts and lintels of the house, 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 experiences and trials which the Lord provides for us, and which helps to wean our affections from earthly things and increases the appetite and encourages us to partake more and more abundantly of the Lamb.

From experience we realize that it is much more impressive and inspiring to celebrate an important matter on its anniversary—to recall the deeds and words and looks, and place ourselves with the chief actors of that greatest of all dramas which over 19 centuries ago ended at Calvary. It is always an inspiration to the devout follower of the Lord to bring before his vision the general picture of that first solemn Supper instituted by the Saviour. As one has written concerning that sacred evening:

"It was towards the evening, probably when the gathering dusk would prevent all needless observation that Jesus and His disciples walked from Bethany, by that old familiar road over the Mount of Olives, which His sacred feet were never again destined to traverse until after death. How much attention they attracted, or how it was that He, whose person was known to so many—and who, as the great central figure of such great counter-agitations, had, four days before, been accompanied with shouts of triumph, as He would be, on the following day, with yells of insult—could now enter Jerusalem unnoticed with His followers, we cannot tell. We catch no glimpse of the little company till we find them assembled in that "large upper room"—perhaps the very room where three days afterwards the sorrow-stricken Apostles first saw their risen Saviour—perhaps the very room where, amid the sound of a rushing mighty wind, each received power from on high with Pentecostal blessing."

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"—Luke 22:15, 16. Doubtless He longed to have them understand how it would begin to be fulfilled

filled 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 gave thanks, and said, Take, eat, 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. The bread and the 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 His 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."

How beautiful is the lesson from our Lord's words. 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 (that will seal the New Covenant in due time) 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,

thus 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 bread which we break, is it not the communion (common union) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread (Christ)"—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

After the institution of the Memorial Jesus went out into the Mount of Olives in company with the eleven. It is believed that at midnight they crossed the Kedron and went up the slopes of Olivet into the Garden of Gethsemane. It seems that the Saviour realized 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 therein 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 realized 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.

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.

Everyone realizes 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. The best sympathy is not that which is talkative. 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.

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. It was here 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, for though the cup might not pass from Him, His prayer was heard and a special ministry from God strengthened Him. He had now passed beyond the need for 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 14:42.

Let the curtain go down on Calvary, on the darkness of the reeling crosses, on the death of God's dear Son, the great antitypical pass-over 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"—Luke 24:5, 6.

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 2,000 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 to our own day.

Saviour, Thy dying love
Thou gavest 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.

All that I am and have—
Thy gifts so free—
All of my ransomed life,
Dear Lord, for Thee!
And when Thy face I see,
Thy sweet "Well done" shall be,
Through all eternity,
Enough for me.

"Jehovah's Witnesses—Who Are They?"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,*

Convention News

THE Melbourne Convention, held over the four days of the Christmas period, 1982, was a very helpful and refreshing occasion for all able to attend. We are very thankful to our Heavenly Father for His blessings bestowed throughout the gatherings. Each day the attendance was very good, with visiting brethren being gladly welcomed from South Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, and Papua, as well as two friends from North America. Our Australian Polish brethren also attended well, some serving helpfully on the program.

Throughout the gatherings two Bible Studies were conducted, 17 addresses were delivered by the brethren, also Fellowship and Testimony Meetings, a Hymn Session and informal fellowship all contributed helpfully throughout.

After the opening praise, prayer and a helpful address of welcome, the first Bible Study was conducted on the Scripture, 1 Thes. 5:1-8. This prophetic message from the Apostle Paul to the Church at Thessalonica was seen also as a most helpful exhortation to Christians today. The opening verses showed how well the Apostle had been instructed of the Lord to reveal that while the "day of Jehovah" would come as a "thief in the night" to the world of mankind, it was known to God's people as being a necessary part of His Plan during which the symbolic "heavens and earth" must be dissolved to prepare a clean foundation for the "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness"—2 Pet. 3:10-13. The Lord's own people today as "children of light and children of the (new-age) day" are expected to show all diligence in living up to their privileges of service for the Lord, as they look by faith beyond the "sudden (unexpected) destruction" upon the world, "being sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

On the third day of Convention, the Scripture passage in Col. 1:9-15 was studied, and proved very helpful indeed as the Apostle Paul's message of commendation to the Church at Colosse revealed the same blessed privileges being enjoyed by the followers of Christ today. The Apostle's prayers and exhortation to "walk worthy of the Lord . . . being fruitful in every good work" applies equally to us today. His further thanksgiving to God "who hath made us (true Christians)

meet to be partakers (sharers) of the inheritance of the saints in light" showed how wonderful is the heavenly calling to all fully consecrated followers of the Master. Many helpful expressions were given respecting the present spiritual life of those who are now "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son"—prospective members of the Bride of Christ. This heavenly hope is possible only through faith in the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and full consecration to God, to be dead with Christ, the one who was raised to the express image of the Father, being the firstborn of the New Creation.

The selected subjects for the addresses by the brethren proved helpful, and were as follows — "Righteous and Unrighteous Anger"; "Judging"; "The Word of God"; "An Introduction to the Song of Solomon"; "Spiritual Nutrition"; "Resurrection — Raising Up Again"; "Christmas Joys in This World in Distress"; "The Foundation of Our Faith"; "The Sacrifice of Praise"; "Where Your Treasure is, There will Your Heart be Also"; "Moses' Three Signs"; "Joy"; "A New Creature"; "The Coming of the Lord"; "Steadfast in the Lord" and "Owned and Loved of God."

Many kindly greetings with Christian love and assurance of prayers upon the Convention were received and greatly appreciated from Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas. To all who thus remembered us, and to brethren everywhere, the Christian love from the Convention brethren with the Scripture message in 1 Thes. 5:5-8 is sent along to all.

Meetings for Praise and Testimony also enabled a number of brethren to express thankfulness to God for His blessings for the past and present, revealing how favoured they felt for all God's goodness and mercy through difficult and happy times, day by day along the Christian way. The Hymns We Love session was also much enjoyed again, and an added help this year for some of the hymns was the playing of the violin and 'cello in addition to the piano; the efforts of the Sisters contributing in this way being much appreciated. The labours of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was greatly appreciated also, being a service as unto the Lord.

The closing session was especially well attended, when many well-wishers joined the brethren for the final address and Love Feast. The two well-known and loved hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" and "God be with you till we meet again" were sung, and the concluding prayer of thankfulness to God for all His blessings and requesting His oversight and care of all His dear people everywhere, brought to a close the helpful Melbourne Convention for 1982.

Convention Address of Welcome

IT is my privilege and pleasure to extend a welcome to all attending this Convention. We delight to see not only those from Melbourne, but those who have travelled some distance to be with us. We will enjoy your fellowship. Many brethren by the will of God have gathered here, and we trust that together we may be refreshed. We hope for refreshment and rest together, strengthening one another to go on our way. We all have another year about to begin, and we do not know just what it may hold for us. It is our desire that this will be a special time of refreshing, restoring, renewing. So, welcome to all the brethren who have travelled from other States and overseas. The Lord has overruled our affairs, and will continue to do so.

World conditions have not improved particularly in the last twelve months, and in fact we live in most uncertain times, when world problems are getting beyond the capability of world rulers to grapple with. The only thing they do not seem to be able to do is to admit defeat. It is hard for them to arrest the problems. We are thankful we have the more sure Word of prophecy, to which we can take heed as unto a light. We know the end will be glorious. It is time, in accordance with God's Word, that we look up and lift up our heads, knowing our deliverance draws nigh and the glorious time for all mankind draws ever closer. It is a hope that grows and expands like God's love for all mankind.

It seems to me this is a time for reviewing past experiences and the dedication of our own lives to the Lord, looking back over the past year to see evidences of Christian growth and progress. We should be conscious of the Lord working in us; we should work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We think of the text in Psalm 65:11—"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness." This is a looking-back verse. The Psalmist seems particularly to be talking about God's overruling in the arrangement of the seasons and productivity of the land for the nation of Israel, but we believe the message is quite a general one and appropriate to ourselves. God does crown our years with His goodness. He girds them around, like a crown, with His goodness. We can testify that this is so. When we look back at the joys and sorrows, we can see the Lord's hand in them. As we look back we can see the Lord has crowned the year with His goodness. There are two other things with which the Lord crowns and girds us, His lovingkindness and tender mercies. The Lord has indeed dealt with us in great lovingkindness and with tender mercies. Also, He will encompass us with His favour and grace like a shield. God is round about us. This is God's side of the

protection. If we reflect on how God's hand has been in every feature of our lives, we will all say, Amen, to that. (Psa. 103:4 and 5:12).

I am sure, too, as our Convention goes on, that our testimonies will endorse how God has overruled our lives. So we might ask ourselves as we look at the year past, has it not been true that no chastisement for the time being is joyous but grievous, but afterwards it does bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. We cannot always see things in perspective at the time, but God will show us in due time what the lesson was that He sought to teach us. Why should we doubt His future care? He who led us last will lead us still. His compassions fail not, they are new every morning.

We have a good text also in Psalm 90:12—"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This is our part of the deal, and it is the looking forward part of the arrangement. A comment on this verse says we do not need to number our days with fear and trembling or dread, but as opportunities for service to the Lord and to the brethren and to others as we have opportunity. We must make the best and wisest use of time and talents in the Lord's service. There must be a balanced service to the Lord, attention being paid to all those things good and pleasing in His sight. We cannot neglect those human responsibilities rightly ours, but make the best use of our talents.

In Eph. 5:15, 16 we are told we should walk circumspectly. This is good advice. We should walk with our eyes wide open round about us. We should make sure we are walking wisely, and redeem the time because the days are evil. We would not doubt the second part of the text. Make the best use of opportunities and talents God has provided us with. A similar verse in Colossians says to walk in wisdom towards those without. We by our Christian walk are giving a witness to those without, outside the actual Church. They are judging not only us, but the name of Jesus and our Heavenly Father's call and promises and people by the way in which we walk. So it is important we walk circumspectly, redeeming the time and not wasting opportunities. Special opportunities for witness do not always seem to be so plentiful, but we are witnessing all the time, wherever we are.

So in our little gatherings for refreshment at this season, the first thing we need to remember is the Lord's promise, where two or three are gathered together in His name, He is in their midst. We have the Saviour's presence with us. Not just a promise, but a presence to bless and overrule and guide our thoughts and activities. We have in our Convention gatherings both opportunities and

privileges. We are privileged to come together to sing God's praises. We will talk and sing His praises. We will have the opportunity to testify to His goodness, to exhort one another, to enjoy our studies and our personal fellowship. I am sure this is in many ways one of the delights of our Convention, when we have the chance to talk privately as well as in the meetings generally, to find out how the Lord has been leading and guiding each one. We can help one another in all these ways. Not only the speakers, but we all can bless one another in many ways; we have a special opportunity for sharing in the studies. Be slow to speak, swift to listen, is the advice of the Apostle James—1:19. Sometimes we are so eager to put forward something ourselves that we do not hear what the other person says. We may be surprised how many good things we can hear, if we listen. Our Heavenly Father is able to speak to us through His Word and by His spirit, but also through the brethren, and we can help one another. So we need to speak carefully and listen attentively.

When we have enjoyed this season of fellowship together, we must not go home and forget all about it. We must live out what we talk about here at our Convention. This is the purpose of getting together. What is the purpose of study? We must make some real progress out of it. There needs to be real Christian living and witnessing for our Saviour. We have to go again into the world to live and witness for the Lord, in our homes, our places of work and wherever we may be. The man and woman next door are reading us—are they reading us as being the Lord's people? Sometimes Satan can get in there too. So we must be careful how we live and speak, wherever we are; that is our privilege.

At this season when a few people are remembering the Christmas story, we can rejoice even more, not only in the Christmas story but in the whole plan of God as shown in His Word. The message given out, it seems to me, is even a little more diluted this year with things that have nothing to do with the Christmas story. But we do not need to pay attention to such things, for we have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. We will have our time of refreshing. So I am pleased to declare our Convention open for 1982, with the prayer that this may truly be a season of refreshing to us all from our Heavenly Father's hand.

Troubles

If you tell your troubles to God, you put them into the grave; they will never rise again when you have committed them to Him. If you roll your burden anywhere else it will roll back again, like the stone of Sisyphus.

My Answer—By Billy Graham

ONE of our brethren in visiting Geelong, Victoria, recently, has sent along a cutting from the "Geelong Advertiser" entitled "My Answer" by Billy Graham, the well-known international evangelist. To the question—"I think about death a lot, and worry about what might happen to me when I die. Do you think this is abnormal to think about such things?" Dr. Graham replied:

"I know there are many people who try to shut out any thoughts about death and life after death. . . . Death is universal, and I would suggest there would be something abnormal and wrong if we did not think about it.

"The Bible tells us that death is not the end for each of us—it is only the beginning. Every person will continue after death, because God has given each of us an eternal soul that will never die. However, the Bible also warns that many will be separated from God and spend eternity in hell.

"The Bible makes it clear that hell is a place of great agony, far deeper than anything we can fully imagine—'darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth'—Matthew 25:30."

What a terrible opinion Billy Graham must have of God, who—"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. No doubt Dr. Graham quotes this text very often in his preaching. Why, then, the contradiction in his statement above? Because the various texts in the Bible have not been correctly studied and harmonized. How can a God of love be also a God of torment? The Scriptures are plain to sincere and earnest students that the hell of the Bible is the condition of death, to which all mankind, both good and bad, go at death. Because Jesus Christ "tasted death for every man"—Heb. 2:9—when He died on the cross, He also went to the Bible hell, to redeem all mankind from death—from hell. He said so after His resurrection, in Revelation 1:18—"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." See also the prophetic words of Psalm 16:10 with reference to our Lord Jesus, and the Apostle Peter's confirmation of the same in Acts 2:29-32.

What about the "darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" in Matt. 25:30? This verse explains what happens to the servant who hid his talent, in the parable of "The Talents" in Matt. 25:14-30, and of course does not refer to the hell of the Bible at all. An explanation from the booklet—"Some of the Parables"—reads—"The man

who hid his talent illustrates those who, having received the opportunity of running the Christian way, did 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 realizing how great reward he has missed." (The booklets—"Mankind Coming Back from Hell" and "The Truth About Hell"—are available with full explanation of the subject of Hell.)

Commentator on Hebrews

THE general design and purpose of the Epistle to the Hebrews is, to preserve those to whom it was sent from the danger of apostasy. Their danger on this subject did not arise so much from persecution, as from the circumstances which were fitted to attract them again to the Jewish religion. The temple was still standing. The morning and evening sacrifice was still being offered. The splendid rites of that imposing religion were yet observed. The authority of the law was undisputed. Moses was a lawgiver, sent from God, and no one doubted that the Jewish form of religion had been instituted by their fathers in conformity with the divine direction. Their religion had been founded amidst remarkable manifestations of the Deity—in flames, and smoke, and thunder; it had been communicated by the ministration of angels; it had on its side and in its favour all the venerableness and sanction of a remote antiquity; it commended itself by the pomp of its ritual, and by the splendour of its ceremonies. On the other hand, the new form of religion had little or nothing of this to commend it. It was of recent origin. It was founded by the Man of Nazareth, who had been trained up in their own land, who had been a carpenter, and who had no extraordinary advantages of education. Its rites were few and simple: It had no splendid temple service; it had none of the pomp and pageantry, the music and the magnificence of the ancient religion. It had no splendid array of priests in gorgeous vestments, and it had not been imparted by the ministry of angels. Fishermen were its ministers; and by the body of the nation it was regarded as a

schism, or heresy, that enlisted in its favour only the most humble and lowly of the people.

In these circumstances, how natural was it for the enemies of the gospel in Judea to contrast the two forms of religion, and how keenly would Christians there feel it! All that was said of the antiquity and the divine origin of the Jewish religion, they knew and admitted; all that was said of its splendour and magnificence they saw, and all that was said of the humble origin of their own religion they were constrained to admit also. Their danger was not mainly that which arises from persecution. It was that of being affected by considerations like these, of relapsing again into the religion of their fathers, and of apostatizing from the gospel; and it was a danger which beset no other part of the Christian world.

To meet and counteract this danger was the design of this epistle. Accordingly the writer contrasts the two religions in all the great points on which the minds of the Christians in Judea would be likely to be affected, and shows the superiority of the Christian religion over the Jewish in every respect, and especially in the points that had so much attracted their attention, and affected their hearts.

He begins by showing that the Author of the Christian religion was superior in rank to any and all who had ever delivered the Word of God to man. He was superior to the prophets, and even to the angels. He was over all things, and all things were subject to Him. There was, therefore, a special reason why they should listen to Him, and obey His commands, chapters 1 and 2. He was superior to Moses, the great Jewish lawgiver, whom they venerated so much, and on whom they so much prided themselves, chapter 3. Having shown that the Great Founder of the Christian religion was superior to the prophets, to Moses, and to the angels, the writer proceeds to show that the Christian religion was characterized by having a High Priest superior to that of the Jews, and of whom the Jewish high priest was but a type and emblem. He shows that all the rites of the ancient religion, splendid as they were, were also but types, and were to vanish away—for they had had their fulfilment in the realities of the Christian faith. He shows that the Christian's High Priest derived His origin and His rank from a more venerable antiquity than the Jewish high priest did—He was typified by Melchisedec, who lived long before Aaron; and that He had far superior dignity, from the fact that He had entered into the Holy of Holies in heaven. The Jewish high priest entered once a year into the most holy place in the temple; the Great High Priest of the Christian faith had entered into the Most Holy place—of which the former was but the type and

emblem — into heaven. In short, whatever there was of dignity and honour in the Jewish faith had more than its counterpart in the Christian religion; and while the Christian religion was permanent, that was fading. The rites of the Jewish system, magnificent as they were, were designed to be temporary. They were mere types and shadows of things to come. They had their fulfilment in Christianity. Christianity was the substance of what in the temple service was type and shadow. By considerations such as these the author of this epistle endeavours to preserve them from apostasy. Why should they go back? Why go back from the substance to the shadow? Why turn away from the true sacrifice to the type and emblem? Why linger around the earthly tabernacle, and contemplate the high priest there, while they had a more perfect and glorious High Priest, who had entered into the heavens? And why should they turn away from the only perfect sacrifice—the great offering made for transgression—and go back to the typical sacrifices of animals which were to be renewed day by day? And why forsake the system that was to endure for ever—for that which was soon to vanish away? The author of this epistle is very careful to assure them that if they now rejected the sacrifice of the Son of God, there was no other sacrifice for sin. It was God's great provision for the satisfaction and cancellation of the guilt of mankind. It was not to be repeated. If that were rejected there was no other. The Jewish rites were soon to pass away; they could not cleanse the conscience from sin. Persecuted, then, though they might be—reviled, ridiculed, opposed—yet they should not abandon their Christian hope, for it was their all; they should not neglect Him who spake from heaven, for in dignity, rank, and authority He far surpassed all who in former times had made known the will of God to man.

Passover Memorial, 1983

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 27th March. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

MELBOURNE—Sunday, 27th March, at 6 p.m., at Auxiliary Room, City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew.

ADELAIDE—Sunday, 27th March, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Advertising Booklets

Friends interested in the advertising of booklets for the public are advised that the magazine "New Idea" is to be used for the dates February 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th, and the "Reader's Digest" for March.

ARNALL & JACKSON PTY. LTD. — PRINT

Pilgrim Way Ended

OUR dear Sister Johns of Mildura, Victoria, finished her earthly pilgrimage on the 15th December last, after nearly 50 years as a devoted follower of the Lord. Having lived a very busy life with her family in the Mallee and Northern areas of Victoria most of her long life of 88 years, the truth of God's Word was introduced to her by her parents and sisters who had also been blessed of the Lord with a clear understanding of His Plan.

Of a most loveable disposition our dear Sister endured much opposition in her acceptance of the truths of God's Word which differ considerably from the generally accepted church teachings. Having proved the Bible truths for herself, her faith and trust in the Lord enabled her to overcome all the trials over many years, which, by the Lord's spirit, had such a mellowing and sanctifying effect on her character which was so evident to all who knew her.

It was always a great pleasure to have our Sister Johns attend the Melbourne Class whenever possible, for the Memorials and Conventions, etc., at which times she endeared herself to all the brethren. Warmest sympathy is extended to our Sister's immediate family of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, as well as to her Brothers and Sisters in the Truth, in the loss of such a devoted Christian mother and grandmother, and dear Sister in the Lord. We have every confidence in our Sister having gained an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom, by the Lord's grace. "They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels"—Malachi 3:17.

Carob in History

The cultivation of the Carob Tree, an evergreen native to the Eastern Mediterranean, began in historic times. It was used throughout Greece and Italy, and was carried as far west as Spain and Morocco by Arabs.

In all these Countries, the large pods of the Carob Tree, which are rich in Protein and Natural Sugar, still form an important forage crop for stock.

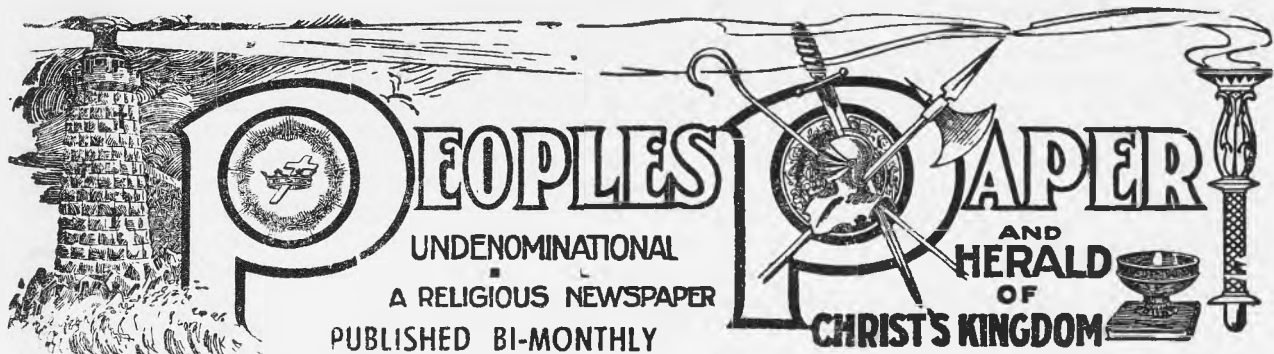
The Bible tells us John the Baptist ate 'locusts', which many think were probably Carob Pods, as they are still known by this name. They are also called 'St. John's Bread' in many Countries. There is reference to Carob in the ancient Jewish book, the Talmud, and from an Egyptian Temple at Edfu, on the Nile, comes an ancient prescription which includes essence of the Carob Bean. Many recent records note that Carob Pods were the main food for Wellington's cavalry in the Peninsula Campaign.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00. plus postage 50c

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXVI No. 2

MELBOURNE, APRIL-MAY, 1983

Price—20 Cents

Streams of Living Waters

"A river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God"—Psa. 46:4.

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation"—Isa. 12:3.

NEXT to the breath of life we breathe, pure water is the chief essential of our existence. Foods are also necessary to sustain our lives but we can live quite a while as human beings, if able to drink pure water.

Thirst is a terrible thing, which perhaps only those fully know, who have traversed the hot parched lands of blazing sunshine with water all gone and no shelter. Unless relief soon comes death quickly results and the poor body falls to the hot earth. Sometimes such tragedies have occurred even when the needed water was close at hand, but was unknown. Such persons died because they "knew not."

The poor world today is perishing for lack of the water of life—yet there is a mighty Rock in this weary land and there are wells of water; but they know not—"My people perish for lack of knowledge." "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. "Yet there is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God." "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness (the joy of the truth) for the upright in heart." "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou leadest me beside the still waters." See also Isa. 55:1.

The streams that gladden the hearts of the people of God had their commencement even in the utterance of the curse on Satan by whom our first parents had been decoyed into sin, with its consequence that "death passed upon all." It was only the beginning of a stream, the small spring which ultimately gained such wideness and fulness, such soul reviving power. However, it was a beginning—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

It gave hope to such as sought righteousness, and there was doubtless some good understanding as to what Justice required in order that reconciliation with God might be achieved. Abel evidently had the correct thought in bringing the sacrificed lamb—a type of the Lamb of God that should take away the sins of the world—"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"—the promised Redeemer. Cain failed to perceive the principle of Justice involved in the sentence of death, as though God could be appeased by the pleasantness of the beautiful production of the earth—his own works. He failed to drink of the stream of truth and promise, but Abel drank of it and so is reckoned among the justified—"Righteous Abel"—said Jesus—Matt. 23:35. See also Heb. 11:4.

Throughout that age the stream of hope was such as to sustain faith and out of that corrupt time a few names are recorded of those who "walked with God" and looked forward to a day when right would triumph over evil and when "the Lord would descend with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment and to convince the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds"—Jude 14, 15.

The stream grew clearer and deeper when God dealt with Abraham and made a great covenant with him, promising that all the families of the earth would be blessed and that this should be through his seed. Abraham drank of that good promise against all odds, and was sustained by its refreshing draught and so proved his faith in God and His

Advertising Booklets

The response to the advertising of booklets in February and March has been most encouraging. Hundreds of people have sent for the booklets and some have followed on in appreciation. All these new friends will be supplied with this issue of "Peoples Paper" and the booklet—"The Fig Tree (Israel) and All the Trees." We hope to hear further from all who are really interested in God's Plan of the Ages.

promise, that he ever stands out as "the father of the faithful." So with Isaac and particularly with Jacob, who counted everything else as secondary that he might inherit the promise, and God emphasized the promise to him.

That Abrahamic promise has sustained and refreshed God's people ever since and is the "anchor of our souls" says Paul. As we read through the Bible we find all along the way reference to this river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. Joseph drank of that stream and was strengthened to maintain his faith and loyalty to God under the most trying circumstances of slavery, false accusation and unjust imprisonment.

The children of Israel were sustained by the same stream, in those two hundred years of oppression and slavery; they were still looking for the promised deliverer—Messiah. Moses had been taught of his parents and drank deeply of the same stream and grew strong in faith so that he "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ (Messiah) greater riches than the treasures in Egypt"—Heb. 11:25, 26.

With the deliverance from Egypt by such miraculous means, the plagues of Egypt, the slaying of the firstborn, the Passover of Israel's firstborn and crossing the Red Sea, the stream of hope seemed to run deeper and fresher. All through the days of the Law and the prophets it was that same refreshing stream that gave hope. How often is the fountain referred to. In times of trial or calamity, prayer is addressed to the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob and claim made upon that promise to them. Also when God spoke to them, as to Moses, it was—"I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob."

How the stream clarified and widened and deepened as new messages came through the prophets. While some messages were so deep as to be hidden, like "the mystery hid from ages" there was much that plainly spoke of happy days to come when the great covenant with Abraham would have fulfilment. For instance Isa. 61, and Jer. 31, and so many portions full of promise of Divine providence and blessing.

Time would fail to speak of the faithful in all ages who drank deeply of this stream. How David rejoiced in it and loved to dwell in the courts of the Lord's house. The 110th Psalm is full of the hope of the fulfilment of the promise of Messiah—the Melchisedec King and Priest—"He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head." It is at the brook we get the refreshment and it is the place to find the pebbles for the sling

to slay the giants that oppose the people of God. How Psal. 119 abounds in appreciation of the stream of truth, the Lord's words of promise, of the Law and of testimonies—"O how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day", etc—verses 97-103. Also Psal. 42:1—"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, son panteth my soul after thee, O God."

So it was that David was sustained all through those days of trial, chased as an outcast by Saul seeking his life. So much did David drink of the stream of God's good promises not only to Abraham, but also the personal promises—"the sure mercies of David"—that he would not lift up his hand against Saul. He simply used his diligence to keep safely out of Saul's way, in beautiful confidence sparing Saul's life when he could have slain him, although tempted by his faithful adherents, who argued that surely it was the Lord who had put his enemy into his hands on two occasions. See 1 Sam. 26:8-10.

Drinking of the stream that makes glad the city of God gives confidence and trust in God and sustains faith in the hour of need. This stream of truth and Divine promises continued to flow, always fresh with truths appropriate for each day, present truth for every age, as also a fountain of living water for every one who like a "hart panting for the water brooks" longs for God and the knowledge of His way and will, and to understand His purposes. It was this stream that supported those of whom Paul speaks in Heb. 11—"Of whom the world was not worthy." See verses 36-38.

How good were the expressions of Psalmists and prophets declaring God's good providences, protection and blessing upon Israel and those who put their trust in the Lord. While there is the deeper and wider meaning to many of these prophetic expressions, they undoubtedly were intended to be an encouragement to the Lord's suffering people in the days of old. "The Word of the Lord endureth forever" and is ever fresh—present truth in every age.

How the songs of the Psalmists and words of the prophets would cheer and support the faithful in their days, and yet those same songs and messages contain for us deeper truths and are "meat in due season" to the household of faith all along the way, even to us at the present time.

Paul tells us that Israel drank of the water of the rock which was a symbol of Christ. The faithful then drank of that spiritual rock, which rock was Messiah—that was their hope. We drink of that same spiritual rock in a deeper, fuller sense, for our hope is to be members of that Messianic company—members in Christ.

That privilege was reserved for Israel but as a nation they had failed to drink deep

enough of that Messianic stream; they saw human glory, national exaltation and thought God was bound to protect them and give them such prominence and establish His Kingdom through them. There were others, however, who were better able to perceive the Divine promises and provisions and like old Simeon and Anna could rejoice in the Babe of Bethlehem who was "set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel"—Luke 2:34.

For some four hundred years or more from Malachi to John the Baptist, the stream of Divine light and truth and promise was not increased. There was however sufficient to sustain the faithful through those trying years of Gentile oppression and to make strong the brave Maccabeans who by their faith were able to overcome their enemies.

Then came John the Baptist preparing the way for Christ and many were refreshed and made ready for the further development of truth by Him who spoke as never man spake. That was the time of the harvest of the Jewish Age; the Lord of the harvest was present and the "present truth" was the sickle used to find the "Israelites indeed", the true wheat that had to be separated from the chaff and garnered into the Kingdom of Heaven.

How the stream flowed in splendour as the Gospel sun began to shine in the place of the Law age moon. As the moon gives only reflected light from the sun, so the Law and its types and ceremonies were but shadows of better things. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." "God who . . . spake in time past . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son"—John 1:17; Heb. 1:1, 2.

No wonder Mary loved to listen to the gracious words of Jesus; no wonder the common people heard Him gladly. The Law was a yoke on them which they were unable to bear, but Jesus cried—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—Matt. 11:28. Yes, a new and living way was opening up. The stream began to flow into deep waters bringing refreshment, joy and peace to those who had ears to hear. How beautiful is the incident of Jesus and the woman of Samaria at the well. See John 4:10-14; also John 7:37, 38.

Certainly there were trials and testings and many went back when they could not understand some of the deep truths which Jesus uttered, but the faithful were helped and strengthened and said—"To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life"—John 6:68. Then, after the great trial of the crucifixion, how their hearts "burned within them" when He talked with them by the way and opened to them the Scriptures—"Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concern-

ing himself"—Luke 24:27. Then, later they began to see that just what they had deemed the great defeat of the Gospel movement was the greatest victory ever won and that Jesus was crowned as conqueror over sin and death; and that the great Divine Plan was not hindered but progressed a most important step.

Then, after the ascension came the promise of the Father—the holy spirit—in fulfilment of the Lord's words—"When the spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth: . . . and will show you things to come"—John 16:13—things which Jesus could not tell them, while He was with them, for they had only natural minds and could not comprehend heavenly truths. Then the purpose was revealed—the choosing of a "little flock" that should share the throne with Jesus and be the Abrahamic seed that would bless all the families of the earth. See Peter's words in Acts 15:14-17.

How wonderful are the truths that opened up at that time and they are handed down to us in Paul's beautiful letters, and the writings of Peter and John. The Church, as the flock of the good Shepherd has been led "beside the still waters"—deep and refreshing. Well did the Master say—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the holy spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified"—John 4:14; 7:37-39.

But oh, how that stream of truth has been polluted. It was so foretold by the Lord in His parables that this would be the case, particularly the parable of the three measures of meal into which a woman placed the leaven. See Matt. 13:33. So the apostate church, the wicked shepherds, bishops and clergy introduced so much error and polluted the stream. What a severe indictment of these "shepherds" we find in Ezek. 34:2, 3, 18, 19. So in Revelation the Word of God is represented as being clothed in sackcloth, as lying in the street—neglected. It has revived and the purifying of the stream of truth has been going on since the Reformation. Various movements under one reformer or another have been instrumental in removing the errors of the dark ages—pagan-papal doctrines that beclouded the truths of God's Word.

Then came the great movement of later years first under Miller, stirring the whole Christian Church to expectation of Christ's return and then about 100 years ago came the glad message revealing the Divine Plan, not

(Continued on page 8.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,*

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 Lord is Risen Indeed"

"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread"—Luke 24:34, 35.

ALTHOUGH the disciples had been informed concerning our Lord's resurrection, they seem to have but imperfectly comprehended His words. At all events, they evidently were not expecting Him to rise from the dead, and hence, when He appeared in their midst, they were greatly affrighted and troubled. Our Lord foreknew how they would regard the matter, and had chosen the most favourable manner for manifesting Himself, and communicating to them the wonderful fact of His resurrection. He could have appeared to them as the angel appeared to Moses in the burning bush. They would then have seen a flame, as Moses did, and could have heard His voice, and could have been impressed with the dignity of His presence by being commanded, as Moses was commanded, to take off their shoes because the ground was holy. This would have made a deep impression upon their minds, but it would not have made the kind of impression the Lord desired to make. It would not have convinced them that their Master, whom they had seen crucified and buried three days before, was no longer dead, but risen and alive.

Our Lord could have chosen another method. He could have appeared as a glorious angel and have manifested something of His spiritual glory, as He did later to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos—Rev. 1:13-18—and as He did to Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus. He was just as truly a glorious spirit being all this time as He was afterward, and as He will be to all eternity. He had been put to death in the flesh, but, as the Apostle assures us He had been quickened (made alive) in spirit—1 Pet. 3:18. This change had come to Him in His resurrection, just as it is promised that a similar change will come to His faithful church—"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. But had He appeared to the disciples a glorious, shining being, as He appeared to Saul, the effect upon them no doubt would have been similar to the

effect upon Saul. They would have fallen before Him, and perhaps also have lost their sight as Saul lost his. This might have impressed them powerfully, but it would not have led their inexperienced judgments to accurately connect this glorious being with the man Christ Jesus whom they had followed for three years.

The manner chosen by our Lord for revealing Himself was much more favourable for the disciples. He wished to gain their attention, and to avoid anything that would unnecessarily excite them, and hinder them from learning the lessons which He wished to impart. Hence He appeared as a man on several occasions—once as a gardener to Mary, again as a stranger to the two who went to Emmaus, and on another occasion; and in each case, He revealed His identity by His conversation or by His manner so that they recognized Him as their crucified Master—Jesus. But on the occasion mentioned in our text He appeared in a body of flesh and bones, similar to that which had been crucified. The body which they saw was a materialized body, for He had been "changed" in His resurrection and was now a spirit being with a glorious body such as John and Saul saw. But He appeared to them in a body of flesh and in ordinary garments specially prepared for the occasion, just as angels (using the same power) had appeared as men previously. He appeared as a **man** because this was the best means of communicating to the disciples the grand truths which He wished to communicate. Hence also He assured them, to allay their fears, that **what they saw** was not a spirit. He at that time was a spirit—1 Cor. 15:45; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17—but they did not see **Him**, but merely the body of flesh which veiled yet represented Him; and which, as He intended, helped their imperfect faith and knowledge to grasp the important lesson that He was no longer dead but alive for evermore.

Then He reminded them of His own previous utterances on the subject of His resurrection; He quoted to them and expounded the prophecies which bore the same testimony, and showed them the necessity for the great transaction which He had accomplished, saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day." All of this discourse probably is not given, but we may presume reasonably, that He explained to them particularly the necessity for the ransom-sacrifice, and something concerning the wonderful results which must yet flow therefrom to all the families of the earth.

He was present with them for forty days before His ascension, yet was **invisible** to the "brethren," except during the few times of His manifestation; and these manifestations were

brief; during all this period of forty days none except the "brethren" saw Him, and, as we have seen, they saw Him only by reason of the miracle which He performed, appearing in their sight **as a man**; because human beings cannot see spirit beings. In this our Lord fulfilled His statement made before His death—"Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more."

Those who hold the view that the flesh of our dear Redeemer **given** for us—John 6:51—was resumed by Him, and constitutes His resurrection body, miss the real lesson taught the disciples during those forty days preceding His ascension. The lesson of the occasional appearances, and then in different forms or bodily appearances, and of His **vanishing** after each manifestation was (1) that He was no longer dead but risen; (2) that His resurrection conditions were **totally** different from those of the **man** Christ Jesus.

To imagine the care-worn, thorn-marked features and the wounded hands and feet, of "flesh and bone," to be Christ's resurrection body would be thoroughly inconsistent every way. If His marred, fleshly body is His resurrection body, why did the Apostle so carefully explain that "there is an animal body and there is a spiritual body"?—1 Cor. 15:44. And why tell the saints that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be" in the resurrection?—1 John 3:2. If we shall be like we are now, with all of our present blemishes and scars, then it doth appear and surely would be very disappointing to those who have believed the Lord's word that flesh and blood (human nature) cannot inherit or enter the kingdom of God, and that therefore we, who are alive and remain unto the second coming of our Lord, must be "changed"—that we may "be like him and see him **as he is**." Originally a spirit being, our Lord humbled Himself and was **changed** to our nature and was "made flesh" "for the suffering of death" as our ransom price. He then was "made like unto his brethren;" but now, having redeemed us, He has been glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was created, and now His promise is that the "brethren" shall be "changed" and made **like unto Him** and share His glory—1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:41.

Eleven Appearances at Most

For forty days our Lord was with His disciples before His ascension, yet He revealed Himself to them, according to the records, not more than eleven times in all—and some of these instances are probably duplications. His interviews with the disciples lasted but for a few moments each, and were surrounded by circumstances and conditions which said to them very clearly that a great change had occurred to Him—that He was no longer the same being, although He evidently had the

same loving interest in them as before. He was still their Lord and Master, this same Jesus, although no longer Jesus in the flesh. He was "the Lord, that spirit," a "quickening spirit." To bring the matter more clearly before our minds let us note the records covering these manifestations or appearances, as follows:

On the Day of Resurrection

(1) Sunday morning early—to Mary Magdalene—near the sepulchre at Jerusalem—Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18.

(2) Sunday morning—to the women returning from the sepulchre—near Jerusalem—Matt. 28:9, 10.

(3) Sunday—to Simon Peter alone—near Jerusalem—Luke 24:34.

(4) Sunday afternoon—to the two disciples going to Emmaus—between Jerusalem and Emmaus—Luke 24:13-21.

(5) Sunday evening—to the apostles excepting Thomas—at Jerusalem—John 20:19-25.

All five of these were on the first day, the resurrection day, the remaining six appearances being scattered through the remaining thirty-nine days of our Lord's presence, as follows:

The Next Sunday—the Eighth Day

(6) Sunday evening, a week after the resurrection—to the apostles, Thomas being present—at Jerusalem—John 20:26-29.

Following this was a long interval apparently in which there was no appearance whatever, and the disciples, discouraged, perplexed, resolved to go back to their homes in Galilee and there to re-engage in the fishing business, considering that the Lord and His mission had been a failure. Our Lord evidently expected just such a process of reasoning on their part, and His delay was undoubtedly to help them over the difficulty and to start them afresh as servants of the kingdom of God on a higher and still grander plane than their previous ministries had been—under the ministration of the holy spirit.

Appearances in Galilee

Quite probably three weeks intervened without the slightest communication. Meantime the apostles had re-engaged in the fishing business, when our Lord appeared to them on the shores of Galilee.

(7) As a stranger on the shore Jesus called to seven of His disciples who were fishing—John 21:1-13.

(8) Shortly after the manifestation on the shores of Galilee Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee—Matt. 28:16-20.

(9) Very shortly after this He again appeared to a general company of His followers

gathered together by previous appointment, "above 500 brethren at once"—in Galilee—1 Cor. 15:6.

Last Appearances in Jerusalem

(10) At the close of the forty days our Lord appeared to the Apostle James only, probably at Jerusalem—1 Cor. 15:7.

(11) At the end of the forty days our Lord appeared to all of the apostles at the time of His ascension. This was at the Mount of Olives—Luke 24:50, 51; Acts 1:6-9.

It was years after this that Paul wrote, "Last of all he was seen by me also, as of one born before the time." He was seen of the other apostles as the gardener, as a stranger, as the Crucified One, etc., but when Paul, the last of the apostles, saw Him it was not so, but as we shall see Him by and by when we are changed to His likeness—he saw Him as one of premature birth. The church of the first-born are at the resurrection changed to be like their Lord and see Him as He is. Any special revelation of the Lord might have been withheld from the Apostle Paul until the same time except that it was necessary that the apostles should be "witnesses," testifiers to the fact that Christ had not only died but had also risen from the dead; and in order that Paul as an Apostle might thus testify he was granted the vision of the glorified One. He saw Him as we shall see Him in that he saw Him in the brightness of His excellent glory and not as the others, veiled in the flesh. Thank God that the time is not far distant when, those who sleep in Jesus having been changed to His image, we who are alive and remain shall also be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to be made like Him, to see Him as He is, to share His glory. Not all in the same moment, but each of his own moment, changed instantly—until gradually, thus being changed by passing from death to life, the full number of the very elect shall be completed and the reign of glory shall begin.

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 expecta-

tion 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 as 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 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."

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."

Continued from page 3

only of selecting a "little flock" but of using that little company—the completed Church—to assist our Lord, as His joint-heirs of the Abrahamic promise in blessing all the families of the earth. More than this, prophecies were understood and seen in fulfilment in events of our day, and all the signs of the presence of Christ were observed and it was seen that we were actually living in "the days of the Son of Man"—the second presence of Christ.

Now we realize the fulfilment of Luke 12:37—"The feast is spread." The blessing promised at the end of the 1335 days of Daniel is realized—Dan. 12:12. The invitation of our present Lord—Rev. 3:20—is heard and accepted by those "whose lamps are trimmed and burning." Truths are revealed showing that we are at the end of the age, the harvest time is well advanced, soon all the wheat will be garnered and the tares are being bound in bundles. Soon the burning up in the great time of trouble will take place—"The sea and waves roaring; mountains are being cast into the sea", and this river "the streams whereof make glad the city of God" is refreshing, gladdening and strengthening the hearts of God's people, the City of God—the city of God's people—the holy of the Tabernacle of the Most High; yes, "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her right early"—Psa. 46:2-5.

Surely the Lord has "descended from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God." "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound." Soon now the City of God—this "New Jerusalem"—will be complete and then will come the new government of earth—the great antitypical temple as figured in Ezek. 47:1-12, where the waters are seen to flow from under the threshold of the door, flowing deeper and deeper. Then verses 7-9—"Behold at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other . . . These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh."

During the Gospel Age there have been a few only who have tasted of this living water. Only a net full of fish taken in the Gospel

Age and then "some taken, and some cast again into the sea"—the world. But then (in the next age) will be fulfilled Isa. 6:5—"The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee"—unto Israel which will then be God's favoured nation to pass on the Kingdom blessings to all other people.

It has been by the "wells of water" that the Bride class has been found and chosen; soon now that class will be complete and then "the spirit and the Bride shall say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely"—Rev. 22:17. See also Rev. 22:1-5.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard; but their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words"—Psa. 19:1-4. Leeser.

The magnificent pageantry of the heavens daily and nightly should elicit our praise and adoration, and should inspire in our hearts holy and reverent devotion. Let the noiseless activity, the perfect obedience to divine law, and the blessed shining of the heavenly hosts, impress their wholesome lessons upon us—of zealous activity without commotion or ostentation; of perfect obedience to the will of Him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and of letting the glory of the Lord which has illuminated us shine from us in turn upon every beholder. Z. '95-121.

"The Fig Tree (Israel) and All the Trees"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Revelation Volumes

Should any of our friends have a set of the two volumes—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ"—by R. E. Streeter not being used would they kindly make it available for an earnest Christian. The set will be purchased at full value.

"The Ten Camels"

A supply of these helpful well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00. plus postage 50c.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101

APNALL & JACKSON PTY. LTD. — PRINT



Volume LXVI No. 5

MELBOURNE, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1983

Price — 20 Cents

Beheaded for the Witness of Jesus

“And 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” — Rev. 20:4.

REVELATION is a beautiful, symbolic book picturing truth. The chapter from which this text is taken contains in itself several pictures in a few words covering the entire Messianic Age. Satan’s binding at the beginning of the Age is first shown; then the judgment of those who are sitting upon the thrones of the earth; then the exaltation of the true Church to reign with Christ. The governments of the world, while capable, perhaps, of giving some blessing, are not satisfactory, and must soon give place to the new Government under God’s dear Son, which will bring blessing to all the families of the earth.

A brief mention is made respecting what shall occur at the close of the thousand years of Christ’s Reign. After men have been made perfect, they must be tested, while Satan shall be “loosed for a little season”, prior to his destruction. Then the Revelator depicts the Great White Throne, before which all the world, the living and the dead, are to be brought for judgment, for trial, having received the wonderful opportunities of the glorious Kingdom of Christ.

How These Souls are “Beheaded”

Our subject relates to a part of verse 4. The word “soul” signifies person. Through erroneous doctrines this word has come to have attached to it a wrong meaning, as being something that people possess rather than something that they are. St. John the Revelator was given a vision of the persons who would be beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God. He was given a preview of what would be their portion — first of suffering, then of glory and reward. Their reward would be to live and reign with Christ. These were a special class, who had been behead-

ed for a certain reason. The word “beheaded” here is symbolic. All the true Church were to be beheaded. We know that Christ and the majority of the Apostles were not literally beheaded, but few of Jesus’ followers have been beheaded literally.

The Bible shows that God has appointed that those who come into Christ shall renounce their own headship, their own will, and receive instead the Will of Him whom God has chosen to be their Head — Jesus Christ. They are to be members of Christ’s Body. “God hath given Him (Jesus) to be the Head over the Church, which is His body.” — Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; 1 Cor. 12:27. During this Gospel Age, God has been preparing a Church class, who are to be the members of His Body, and to be associated with Him in His great future work for mankind. The first members of this Body were the Apostles. These freely gave up their lives in the cause of Christ. They gave up their wills, submitting themselves to the will of God — they were beheaded.

Down through this present Age, members have been added to Christ, first from the Jews, then from the Gentiles — from every nation, kindred, and tongue. The only way that anyone can become a member of this anointed Body of Christ is to present himself a sacrifice to God, first trusting in the sacrificial merit of Jesus. He is our great Substitute, who has redeemed us from the death penalty resting upon Adam’s race. Accepting Him thus, and presenting ourselves to God through Christ, His merit is imputed to us, and we are accepted as joint sacrificers with Jesus, who then becomes our Head. We are thus beheaded. Our own will is dead. So during the Age there has been a little company of people who have taken a course different from that of the remainder of the world, different from that of the apostate systems. These become sons of God.

They are dead with Jesus as human beings, and are begotten to a new, a spiritual nature. — Col. 3:3.

What This Beheading Signifies

It is important that all those who make a consecration of themselves to God understand clearly that they are thus renouncing all the hopes and ambitions of the world for the far grander and heavenly hopes now held out to those who become disciples of Christ, who deny themselves to take up their cross and follow Him. The question for each one who has made this choice is: Am I faithfully following in the footsteps of Jesus? Jesus gave up His will wholly to the Father. He said, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." We are to follow His example, to walk in His steps. We are to lay down our lives for the brethren, as He laid down His life.

The losing of our heads, our wills, does not mean that we actually have no will, but that our wills are fully submitted to God's will. Whatever we see to be contrary to His will for us is to be wholly relinquished. We may be sure that our Saviour, when on earth, being a perfect man, had a will, a strong will; but that will was entirely submitted to the will of His Heavenly Father. "Not my will, but thine, be done," was His expression. "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" He said.

Because our Lord Jesus fully gave up His will to God, and was obedient even unto the ignominious death of the cross, the Father highly exalted Him, giving Him a name "far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named" — Eph.1:20-23. And we, His Church, if faithful to our heavenly calling, are to be exalted with Him and under Him, as our Head. The Bible presents a beautiful picture: God, the Father of all; our Lord Jesus Christ next to the Father; the Church, the Body, or Bride of Christ next; then the lower spiritual orders of being; lastly, will be the restored world, when God's great Plan is complete. How wonderful it seems! How much more wonderful than anything we could possibly conceive of ourselves! What a great and good God we have!

How great have been the misconceptions of God's character which have for so many centuries beclouded men's minds. These nations calling themselves Christian have made God out as worse even than heathen nations represent their gods. While we declared, "God is Love," we pictured Him in our creeds as the vilest Demon — taking pleasure in carrying out a programme which would mean an eternity of torture to thousands of millions of our race. But while we were long blinded by the Adversary to thus think of our

gracious God, we have great cause for thankfulness that our eyes are now open more and more widely, and we can see something of the lengths, and breadths, and heights, and depths of God's love.

When we see how the Father has exalted our Saviour for His faithfulness, we who are following in Jesus' footsteps have sure grounds for faith that God will also exalt us with Him. Otherwise we might be inclined to say, "Oh, it is too wonderful! The thought that we have been invited to be sons of God and to share the Divine Nature with Jesus seems too marvellous for belief." But when we see how the Father fulfilled His promises to our Lord and Head, and realize that we have been called to share His glory and throne as His bride, surely we can believe. Jesus verifies the Father's promise to us, saying — "To him that overcometh I will 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.

There is still opportunity for some to gain this "High Calling." The "door" to this great favour is not yet closed. There is a little time remaining. If any could gain the whole world and yet lose this great prize, they would be losing much — oh, so much! Nothing that earth can offer can compare with it. All the wealth of a multi-millionaire would be as nothing.

When we give up our wills to the Lord this is not all. We are then to take up our cross and follow Jesus. We are to carry out our consecration vows. Our time, our influence, our money, our property, our all, now belong to God. The Lord does not mislead us into thinking that fulfilling our consecration is something easy. It does not mean merely going to church. It means living as Christ lived. It means walking the way of the cross even unto death. The world will consider such a course very foolish. They will say, "Don't do it! Have some pleasure in life. Don't give up your will to anybody!" This would be sound advice if our will were to be given up to any other than God Himself. The Adversary would like to make us think that giving our will to God is a most foolish thing, and then he will endeavour to entrap us so that we are completely in bondage to his will, which is a wholly evil will.

Satan also seeks to ensnare and destroy the individual will through hypnotism, mesmerism, etc. These are dangerous things. Were it not that God has implanted a strong will in mankind, we cannot doubt that Satan and his evil angels would long ago have led the entire world into complete captivity to sin. He puts light for darkness and darkness for light. We are to be on guard against the machinations of these evil spirits through spiritism. All these are methods by which the

Adversary seeks to seize and capture the will. When our will is given to the Lord, however, it means the turning of it in a direction that will bring our own highest blessing and welfare. Our will is not captured, but guided and strengthened in the right way. We have found by experience how unsatisfactory has been the result of trying to guide ourselves, of following our own will, without the leading of the Lord. Our very best endeavours, unaided by Divine Grace, are very defective, and the results disappointing. How glad we are, then, to have the Lord take charge of us, and guide our wills and our efforts. We know that thus we are safe.

If anyone is afraid to trust the Lord for fear that He will require something that would be harmful, he must wait until he comes to see how fully he can trust the Almighty. If He were the God we once supposed Him to be we might well be afraid to place ourselves in His hands. But since we have learned of His love for us; of His wonderful provision for us notwithstanding our fallen condition; of His provision of Restitution for the world, and of the High Calling for the Church, we can well acclaim "Oh this is the very personification of Justice and Love!" We rejoice in this great loving God, and are so glad to give ourselves to Him and call Him our Father.

That is a very beautiful hymn of consecration by Frances Ridley Havergal: "Take my life and let it be, Lord, acceptable to Thee." Yes, we are acceptable to God through Christ. Thus only can we come. We give Him our whole life. "Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love." Yes, but our hands are imperfect, and it is only through Jesus that our work is acceptable to God, that our hands may glorify Him. "Take my feet, and let them be swift on errands, Lord, for Thee." Yes, we wish Him to use our feet in His dear service. Gladly will we hasten on errands of love for Him. "Take my voice, and let it bring honour always to my King." Yes, we wish Him to take our voice. But our words are very imperfect. Our brain and our tongue are faulty. But the Father says, "I will cover you with the merit of Jesus. He was perfect, and I will credit His perfection to you. Your voice may have sometimes been used to slander another; the tongue has great power for evil as well as good. But now you have submitted that voice, that tongue, to Me, I will make it a power for good."

"Take my lips, and let them be moved with messages from Thee." Yes, that is the thought. Let the blessed message of salvation and grace overflow our lips to God's praise, and to the blessing of others. "Take my silver and my gold; nothing, Lord, would I withhold." The Lord answers, "Yes, dear child, I will take this which

you give to Me. I do not need your gold and silver; for 'all the silver and gold are Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.' But I will receive it as a mark of your love, as an indication of your devotion to Me."

"Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise." We often fear that our moments may not always praise the Lord as they ought, and our days are not always just what we would like them to be. But our Lord lovingly answers our troubled hearts and says, "I know even better than you do how imperfect you are in word and deed. But through Christ I receive you, and accept your imperfect works and endeavours. He will make up for your unavoidable deficiencies." So we take courage and strive that our days and hours and moments may indeed bring glory to our King who so loves us and whom we so love. His arrangement for us in Christ is so wonderful.

"Take my will and make it Thine." Ah, yes! That is the very first thing to be done. "It shall be no longer mine." We wish our will to be the Lord's and His alone. If we have any self-will God cannot use us. "Take my heart, it is Thine own." Yes, we have consecrated our heart with all its impulses and affections to the Lord. "Thus in me Thyself enthrone." Our heart shall be His royal throne for evermore.

**"Take my love, my God, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself — I wish to be
Ever, only, all for Thee!"**

This is indeed our sentiment. The doing of all this is a life-work. While our consecration was the work of a moment, yet the fulfilling of it is the work of our entire lives. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." So while in one sense our beheading, our decapitation, is an instantaneous matter, yet we must continue to keep ourselves beheaded even unto death. Then we shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, and be His associates in all His glory and honour for evermore. Glory, honour, immortality! Wonderful, wonderful! If such a prize does not appeal to our hearts, what would? When we see the loyalty and courage manifested by the soldiers of the nations, how they are willing to go down to death for their nations, often not knowing even for what they are fighting, how loyal should we be to our heavenly King — we who have hopes so glorious held out to us, who have a King so infinitely worthy of our zeal and loyalty? Our King does not say, "Go," He says, "Come." Gladly will we be beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God.

Beware of a half truth; you may have got hold of the wrong half.

PEOPLES PAPER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Encouragement for Hebrews

WHEN studying the Epistle to the Hebrews the earnest student is greatly impressed by the Apostle's kindly consideration for the natural feelings of those to whom he was writing, who had become followers of Christ, by his repeated assurances that God had not forgotten their forefathers when formulating His plan for the salvation of His human creation.

Most Hebrew Christians would be well informed regarding the deliverance of their forefathers from Egyptian bondage, and of God having chosen to establish a covenant with Israel, called the Law Covenant, with Moses as mediator. They would also know that while the keeping of that Law Covenant would have meant lasting life for Israel, it was not possible for anyone, not even Moses, to attain unto the Law's requirements.

After learning that "the law was their schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ, that they might be justified by faith" — Gal. 3:24 — the Hebrews had accepted Christ as their Saviour and consecrated their lives to God by faith in His sacrifice. They were further greatly encouraged throughout this Epistle by being informed that God had arranged in His Plan to establish a New Covenant with their departed forefathers, which would accomplish for them when raised in the resurrection day, what the previous Law Covenant failed to do — provide lasting life — at that time on the restored earth. These Hebrew Christians would realize that the promised New Covenant would not directly benefit themselves. They had already received much higher spiritual blessings anyway; they were then spiritual sons of God, prospective members for the heavenly kingdom, but to know that their departed forefathers would be blessed under the promised New Covenant, when raised from the dead, would prompt and inspire them to be faithful in their Christian calling.

How clearly and helpfully does the Apostle explain in Hebrews 8:8-12 God's Plan for establishing the New Covenant, as he quotes from the prophet Jeremiah. He writes — "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with

the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord." After what days? After the days of Israel's rejection, after the days when the Lord "regarded them not" — verse 9, just quoted. The days of Israel's disfavor extend over the long period of Gentile Times, 2520 years. If the New Covenant is to go into effect "after those days", that means it is to be established with Israel after the Gospel Age has ended, that is, with the commencement of the Millennial Age.

Continuing the same explanation in chapter 9 of Hebrews, the Apostle impresses in verses 12 to 14 how the sacrifice of Christ purges the conscience of all truly consecrated Christians "from dead works to serve the living God." Also, in addition to providing the heavenly salvation for His true followers of this Gospel Age, Christ qualified by His sacrifice at Calvary to be the mediator of the New Covenant. This is well expressed in verse 15 of this chapter in the Revised Standard Version, as follows — "Therefore (or "on this account" — Diaglott) he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred which redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant." Earnest students are well aware that those who transgressed under the first (or Law) covenant, were the Israelites under Moses, so the New Covenant is God's gracious provision of salvation for them in the Kingdom Age, with Christ as mediator. It is well to remember in this connection that the nation of Israel was called to be God's special people under the first or Law Covenant. By so doing, there is no confusing of them with the called of God during the Gospel Age.

The same Apostle Paul who wrote so helpfully to the Hebrews, also instructed the Galatians when he explained the Abrahamic and Law Covenants in chapter 3, verse 17 — "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God (the Abrahamic), the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." In verse 19 of this same chapter, the Apostle explains that "the law was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." Thus it is evident that the "seed" is developed under the Abrahamic Covenant throughout the Gospel Age — "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" — Gal. 3:29.

The Ministry of Comfort

"The Lord hath anointed . . . to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified" — 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 realize themselves as sinners; they do not realize 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 realized 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 through 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 before that 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, dis-"ease". 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 upbuild 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 the 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, and 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.

"Our Bible Translated"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary — Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

Prayer — Vain Repetition

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 recognize 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 cried 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 obtain. 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. The same lesson is taught in Luke 11:5-8.

This is all very different, however, from the "vain repetitions" which our Lord condemned. 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.

But the repetitions which our Lord had in mind and which are specially reprehensible in the Lord's sight are formal prayers merely. To illustrate: the Chinese are said to have a praying wheel, which enables them to make many "vain repetitions" without the trouble of speaking a word.

It would seem that our Catholic friends also are given to a great deal of repetition in prayer. They repeat, "Hail Mary!" and believe that God will save them from suffering in purgatory for their repetitions. Some of the poor creatures say, "Hail Mary!" as often and as fast as they can.

So with the Mohammedans. They say, "Great is Allah! Mohammed is His Prophet! Great is Allah! Mohammed is His Prophet!" again and again. We do not know what good they are doing, for they are surely wasting a great deal of valuable time to no purpose. We do not wish to make light of these people nor of their conduct, but we are bound to think that with those who are intelligent such prayers are only form. With those who are not intelligent it is different. We believe that they are sincere; and so our course is to think sympathetically of them, but not to do as they do, not to pray as they pray. Prayer in private, in our own room, may be as long as we please; but prayer in public should be short and **to the point**. (Reprinted from Question Book.)

The advice given above that prayer in public should be short and to the point would seem most appropriate. This could well be observed at our Conventions and regular Class gatherings, and indeed, in our homes where perhaps only two or three may pray together as the Lord's people. When public prayer is lengthy an amount of repetition seems unavoidable, and this our Lord would encourage us to avoid.

It would seem that long prayers in some classes have developed over the years, perhaps because an elderly member had set this example, and younger members coming in have felt that the same long prayers at the meetings were expected of them. There can be no doubt that our Lord's model prayer sets an excellent pattern, not only in its composition, but in its length, as a guide to our prayers in public. While we are to seek the guidance of the Lord's spirit in our prayers, we are to avoid being carried away in our earnestness, and so lose all sense of time, remembering that prayers in public are on behalf of an assembly, or the one or two with whom we pray, and not our own private prayers to the Lord.

Convention News

WE are very thankful to our Heavenly Father that a most blessed time was again experienced at the Nambour Convention held on the 30th and 31st July. This year was a milestone in the progress of our Conventions, as it was the tenth anniversary, the first Convention gathering being held in July 1973.

The attendance was very good this year. It was such a pleasure to welcome brethren from as far afield as Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. A larger than usual contingent was present this year from the Melbourne Class who contributed in no small measure to the success of the gatherings. Three Sisters from one family attended whose combined ages amounted to 281 years, the youngest being 90, the eldest 99. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to all who attended, those from near by and those who travelled such long distances to be with us on our very special two days in the year.

Two Bible Studies were enjoyed in Hebrews 10:19-25 and 1 Peter 2:7-12. Question Time was held as usual, and a number of very interesting questions submitted by the brethren were considered.

There were ten addresses delivered by the brethren on the following subjects:— "I have Graven Thee upon the Palms of My Hands"; "The Law of Life and the Law of Sin and Death"; "Battle for Man's Mind"; "The Church's Last Hour"; "Much More"; "Atonement and Reconciliation"; "Lessons from 2 Timothy 4:6-13"; "God's Purpose in Trials"; "The Place of God's Feet Glorious"; and "The Final Forty Years."

A Praise and Testimony session gave an opportunity to the brethren to express their gratitude for the presence of our dear Master, and the everlasting arms of a loving Heavenly Father in every time of need. Appreciation was expressed for the many blessings along the pilgrim way, and also for the more sombre moments that do not seem so joyous at the time, for we know that all things work together for our good. Both the joys and the chastenings help to bring us nearer to the pattern set before us, portrayed by the life of Jesus.

Many messages were received from Classes and brethren throughout Australia, assuring us of their presence in spirit and their prayers on our behalf; these were all very much appreciated. Christian love and greetings from the Convention to all who remembered us, and to all brethren everywhere is sent, together with the Scripture — Hebrews 10:22-24.

We wish to thank all the Brethren for their labour in preparing addresses, studies and comments, and also the Sisters for their work in preparation and serving the temporal food. We know that all services are rendered as unto the Lord, to whom we give all the praise, honour and glory.

Witnesses for Jesus

"He that receiveth you receiveth me." — Matt. 10:40.

THE following thoughts are from an article written many years ago, and which are as timely and important for us today, as in the past.

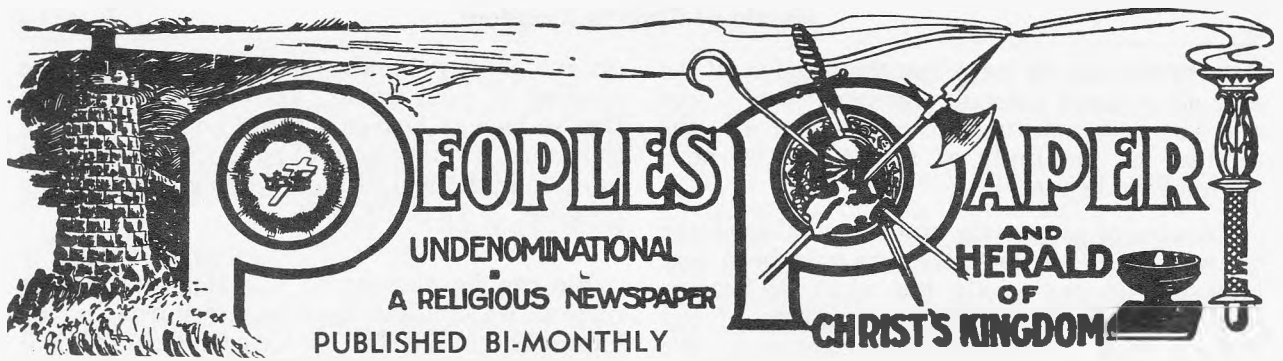
"What in fact, should we do if Jesus appeared in our society with any claim to anything but the right to console us, to heal our personal ills, and to make us all comfortable again? I wonder. As a revealer of the art of actual living, as the Master of the craft of life — for that is what He is and was — should we recognize Him, or would Church and State combine against Him as a dangerous fellow, one to be dealt with in the old Judean way, to be bullied, to be betrayed, to be crucified? I wonder.

"I suggest that for many of us who are here, there is, after all, one thing above others that actually makes known the Gospel, and that is the goodness of the individual. If only when we got home tonight they knew at home, because we were rather different, that we had been trying to draw near to our Lord; if only they could see that we were a little more thoughtful, courteous, kindly and understanding, then, 'Oh, my!' they would say, 'there is something in this more than we thought there was.'

"I think it might well be the ambition of all our lives that one day, possibly, most lovely of all, wife, or brother, or sister, or mother, or grannie, might say after we had left, 'It seems as if Jesus of Nazareth had passed by.' So when we talk, as we often do, about the Bible and its Plan of the Ages, let us please remember that this message will count in an amazing way if we can take Jesus Christ back to our homes or to our places of business."

"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."



Volume LXVI No. 6

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER, 1983 - JANUARY, 1984

Price — 20 cents

A Christmas Meditation.

“Fear not: for, 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”—Luke 2:10,11.

The account of the birth of Jesus is always most appealing to us in its simplicity and grandeur. We have in these 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 33½ 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 complete submission to God, now to be sacrificed (as the antitypical bullock) for the salvation of the world. We have it recorded in Matt. 3:16—“Jesus, when he was baptized, 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.”

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 sacrifices for sin thou hast 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

“Peoples Paper” Subscriptions

Subscriptions to “Peoples Paper”—\$1.00—are now due for 1984. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.80 per annum (\$2.40 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the “Peoples Paper” to receive it regularly.

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 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 recompence 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.

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 sympathize 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 children 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 behoves 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 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.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary — Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Half Hour's Silence

"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour"—Rev. 8:1.

In view of all the facts and circumstances, the logical conclusion is that the breaking of this seventh seal by Christ, signified that He had disclosed to Him at that time all the various features of the Divine plans and purposes. The fulfilment of this scene in which the Lamb breaks the seventh seal must have occurred at or soon after His resurrection. The fact that on the occasion of His last conference with His disciples on the mountain in Galilee, just before His ascension, He told them that all authority and power was given to Him—Matt. 28:18—implies also that a perfect understanding of all matters in connection with which that power was to be exercised, was committed to Him.

His resurrection from the dead proved that His great sacrifice was acceptable to the Father—Acts 17:31—although the merit of it was not applied in behalf of any until His appearance in the presence of God in heaven—Heb. 9:24. The very fact of His resurrection by the Father proved conclusively that He was then worthy to understand and carry out the Divine will and purpose. It did not require the application of that merit in behalf of the Church to make Him worthy to understand and worthy to execute all the Father's purposes. The acceptability of His sacrifice, therefore, made possible the giving of this wonderful power and knowledge to Him prior to His ascension. However, before St. John himself saw the symbolical transactions of the seventh seal, before he saw or heard anything more, he informs us that a period of "silence" followed, lasting "about a half hour."

Up to this time the Apostle had been continuously hearing voices and witnessing symbolical occurrences either before the throne or upon the earth, etc.; but when the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there came a cessation of activities, both in the scene of the throne vision and on the earth. Concerning the symbolical significance of this "silence" there are two very important things that must not be overlooked in our investigation:

1 The very fact that a half hour is mentioned implies that symbolic time is referred to.

2 That while the expression, **half an hour**, would of itself refer to an exact definite period of time, yet the fact that the word "**about**" is used, meaning a little more or a little less, changes the complexion of the matter somewhat and leaves us to look for something that would be either a little more or a little less than a half hour of symbolic time. When symbolic time is employed in the Scriptures, a year of 360 days invariably is represented as a "day": an hour being one twenty-fourth part of a day would, therefore, represent fifteen days; a half hour would be seven and a half days; and "about" a half hour would be either a little more or a little less than seven and a half days.

Expositors of the Revelation have searched in vain for a period in history in which there was a cessation of activities in connection with the work of carrying forward the Divine purposes. Whenever an application has been attempted, the time feature has been ignored. One eminent expositor has explained the symbolic "silence" to be a brief but indefinite period when no new agents were to go forth to work important changes in the world. This interpretation is founded upon the fact that as this "silence" precedes the sounding of all seven of the trumpets, the fulfilment of it must also precede the events symbolized by all the trumpets. We believe that this is the only logical conclusion to be reached in locating the "silence".

Let the fact be borne in mind that all the seals of the scroll were opened by Christ, including the seventh (in the sense that He was given to know the entire significance of the scroll) before His ascension, which evidently teaches that He was given to understand **then** all the Father's plans and purposes; but that St. John himself did not have disclosed to him the symbolic occurrences of this **seventh** seal until the "silence" ended; this enables us to locate the symbolic "silence" as the period beginning at Christ's ascension, and ending with the descent of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost. This period was, as is stated in the Scriptures, ten days in length, which would fulfil the requirements of the symbol, "about the space of half an hour"—seven and one-half days. Immediately preceding His ascension to heaven, Christ commanded the disciples, that before beginning their work they tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on High—Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4. Thus we see that according to a Divine command all activities on the part of the disciples were to cease during this period—they were to wait and tarry in silence. The reason for this command is very apparent:

first, they needed to be endued with Divine power and illumination from on High and thus be qualified to execute the Divine commission; second, He must appear in the presence of God and there arrange for the imputation of the merit of His sacrifice in behalf of His followers, before this illumination and Divine power to enter upon this work could be given them. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come," the Gospel Age was fully opened and the Divine commission began to be carried out. Then the symbolic "silence" ended. (From "The Revelation of Jesus Christ").

What Does God Require?

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart." "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Prov.3:3; Micah 6:8.

Mercy and truth are great principles of righteousness. Truth and righteousness are, we may say, synonymous. That which is right is true, and that which is true—firm, faithful, steady, genuine—is usually right. The record does not say that we shall bind justice about our neck. Justice is a quality which we are not permitted to exalt too highly, except in our hearts and minds, as a principle of the divine standard. We are to remember that there is none righteous, no, not one—none perfect. Hence our course in respect of justice cannot be the same as that of our heavenly Father. He recognizes no lower standard than justice, up to which everything must measure.

If we are acceptable to the Father, it can be only by righteousness. If we have not righteousness, it must be obtained from Christ; for God receives nothing short of perfection. Though imperfect in ourselves, we are to come up to the standard of justice as nearly as possible in our own personal conduct, but we are not to exact full justice from mankind. Since they have no one to make good for them, it is our duty to be benevolent toward them, and thus emulate the character of God, who is merciful. While He keeps the two qualities, justice and mercy, distinctly separate in His dealings, it is not for us to do so.

For one to keep the principles of truth and of righteousness before his own mind, is to be a thoroughly upright man or woman, one in whom truth, purity, goodness, will be in control. But a person who has merely these principles in control should cultivate more and more the quality of mercy. We should bind these about our neck. The thought is that of a necklace, ornamental band.

As a man puts around his neck a cravat, with a jewel in it, as an ornament, placed where it will be displayed, so these qualities of character are jewels. Give them a prominent place; for they will help to make you better, help to make you more acceptable to the Lord.

The preferable place for the display of a jewel is the neck. There a jewel is especially conspicuous and ornamental. So we should fasten these noble qualities of character where they will be manifest in all the affairs of life. Whether we buy or sell, or whatever we do, we should wear these ornaments. They will show what is the character of the man or woman—right on the outside, in the very front. They should be seen as we meet others. There should be nothing mean, nothing contemptible, nothing niggardly about us.

More than this, we are to write mercy and truth in our hearts. We are to remember that originally God wrote the divine law in Adam's heart. We know that in the divine heart, the divine character, are the qualities of truth and mercy. God is merciful, kind and loving. And as God has these traits of character, so when He made man in His own image, His own likeness, man was created with these qualities in his character. Man was not created an unrighteous, an untruthful being.

However, man fell from his original perfection. With the centuries of falling and imperfection of mind and body, and with every interest pressing for self-gratification at the expense of others, these principles of mercy and truth have become largely effaced from our hearts, just as the constant dropping of water, and the general wear and tear of the weather would tend to efface the original inscription on a stone. In time one could scarcely discern the characters. So we see in mankind that some have apparently lost all sense of justice, all sense of mercy, nearly all sense of patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness and love. All these qualities that belong to the heart, as originally placed there by God, have been more or less effaced—in some more than in others.

Purpose of God's Providences

Under the terms of the New Covenant and through the ministrations of Christ's kingdom, God purposes to re-write upon the heart of man the original character which was in his heart, and which has been effaced by selfishness. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts"—Jer.31:31-33. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you:

and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh"—Ezek.36:26.

God's law is the law of truth and mercy. Truth would include everything righteous, toward God and toward man. Mercy includes all the graces of character. The Millennium will be the time for the re-writing of these qualities in the character. This work of re-writing the divine character in the heart, which will progress in the world by and by, for a thousand years, is already begun in the Church. We write these qualities within our own hearts. Entering the school of Christ is voluntary, not compulsory. In the next age mankind must write these qualities in their hearts, through the assistance of the Mediator. There will be stripes to bring mankind to righteousness. And if they are intentionally unwilling to obey the laws of righteousness, they will be destroyed.

But now obedience is a voluntary matter. We declare that we desire to have these lessons written in our hearts; and to attain this end, we enter the school and submit ourselves to the Great Teacher. Then, by the various providences of our lives, He shows us where we have not yet engraved these qualities within our hearts. As we pray for patience, He gives us lessons of experience that will engender this quality in our hearts, and that will strengthen it more and more. As we pray for love, He gives us tests of love. As we pray that we may develop mercy, we find more opposition, which will develop mercy. Thus God gives us opportunities for the writing of truth and mercy in our hearts.

We must attain to that condition of heart where we shall love truth and righteousness, and where we shall hate iniquity and unrighteousness. As the people of God, we have the first opportunity now to develop these traits. And the Lord tells us that if we prove faithful in learning our lessons, it is His intention to use us during the Millennial reign, His intention to make us judges of the world—its rulers, teachers.

Jewish Law Helpful to Christians

The words of our second text were addressed to the Hebrew people and not to Christians; for there were no Christians at that time, of course. The words do not seem to be prophetic, but an exhortation to the people. Apparently the Jews thought that the Lord was asking too much of them; and since this was so, they felt that they should not take the law too seriously. The Lord seems to bring the matter down to a specific statement: What is required of thee but three things; namely, to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? This would seem to be the sum total of the law.

The Lord was looking to see Israel live as nearly up to the requirements of the law as possible. And He purposed to bring them, in due time, the promised New Covenant, which would take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, thus making them tender-hearted. But if now they would walk as nearly as possible in harmony with the requirements of this law, doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with their God, they would be blessed accordingly.

While this law was given to the Hebrews alone, nevertheless the principles inculcated therein are applicable to the whole world. Everybody who would have any standing with the Lord, is required to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. Therefore every statement of the law, in that it gives the Christian a conception of God's standards, is helpful to the Christian; it shows him the standards of perfection. But the standard of a Christian goes higher than that of the law. The law is merely an amplification of the Golden Rule—Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Deal justly with others, if you would expect them to deal justly with you; and be merciful to others, if you would expect them to be merciful toward you.

In thinking of these qualities and considering which should be put first, we decide that in our conduct toward another, we could not think for a moment of giving anything less than justice. Additionally we might be as merciful as the circumstances would permit. But nothing less than justice should be thought of. In our requirements of others, however, we are — as before stated — not to expect full justice. Remember that the whole human family is imperfect. If by the grace of God we are able to be more just or more merciful than the average, it is through God's spirit.

God's Standard of Righteous Conduct

To walk humbly with the Lord would imply that we were in that condition of mind in which we could be taught of Him, could appreciate His goodness and our own insignificance; that we were receiving whatever instructions He was sending. While God made our race in His image, we have largely lost that image. Therefore we should be very humble and teachable in all things.

Comparing God's requirements of Israel, as given in the text, with His requirements of the Church, we would say that God requires nothing more than this from the Church. This is as much as justice would require from any creature. The peculiarity of the position of the Church is that it is not one of requirement, but of privilege. But we see operating in the Church a still higher prin-

ciple than that of Law; namely, that of sacrifice. As Jesus loved the Father and loved righteousness, and sacrificed His earthly will and earthly ambitions and privileges, so He set us an example that we should walk in His steps. It was not required of Him that He should do more than justice, but He was permitted to do more. And so with the Church. We are not required to do more than justice, but are permitted to do more. If we present our bodies living sacrifices, and are faithful to the end, the Lord will count us among those to whom He will be pleased to give, very soon, the glorious kingdom, the kingdom for which we pray.

Various Degrees of Love

After we came voluntarily into this condition of sacrifice, it became a bondage to us in that we had taken vows to this effect, and we are bound by our own vows. We vowed that we would lay down our lives in harmony with the invitation—"Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Still the Lord is not requiring more of us than justice. But He is waiting and watching to see to what extent we will be faithful to the agreement of our covenant. If we are joint-sacrificers with Jesus, then we shall become joint-heirs with Him. At our consecration, we took His yoke upon us. Could we go back and take up the privilege of restitution? No; this we gave up entirely! The only thing for us is to fulfil our covenant of sacrifice, for rebellion against that covenant would mean the second death, everlasting destruction.

There are various degrees of love. That degree to which we have consecrated ourselves is the sacrificing love, which goes beyond what would be just to a brother, a neighbour or an enemy. This is the love of God, which is an all-absorbing, an all-comprehensive love.

That the requirements of the texts are very reasonable will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident, and yet all of these qualities specified through the prophet are comprehended in the one word—Love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbours, with our brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others—their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. But additionally, love leads us to have the spirit of sacrifice that gladly lays down life itself for the brethren.

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 today 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.

"Good Tidings of Great Joy"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Pilgrim Way Ended

Word is to hand respecting the passing of our dear Sister Driesener of Gawler, South Australia. We have very happy memories of fellowship with Sister Driesener and her parents, the late Brother and Sister Kennewell, her sisters and other brethren in Gawler and Adelaide over many years past. Having received the Truth message about 1918, our Sister Driesener had developed the lovely fruits of the spirit in large measure. By the Lord's grace we feel she has been faithful in hope of the heavenly inheritance. "They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels" — Mal.3:17.

The following is to hand from Adelaide: On September 22nd last our dear Sister Driesener of Gawler, South Australia, finished her earthly walk. Our Sister had been seeking to follow the footsteps of her Master for upwards of 65 years. At first, with her parents, sisters and others, she rejoiced with the Class meeting at Gawler. When meetings were no longer available at Gawler, Sister Driesener journeyed to the Adelaide Class almost every Sunday and each day at Easter Conventions for many years.

Since about 1976, frailties of age prevented our Sister from coming to Class, but her steadfast faith supported her in trying circumstances. Sister Driesener was quick to acknowledge the source of her help and her complete dependence on the Lord. Passages like 1 Cor.1:26-29; Phil.4:4-9; Gal.6:10 and hymn 13 still remind the Class of Sister Driesener and the many times she related them to a passage being studied. Our warmest sympathy is extended to her three children, grand children and family generally.

The Witness Work

There has been encouraging response to the advertising of booklets in suitable magazines again recently. Also the last booklet advertised and sent out with the current "Peoples Paper" — "Our Bible Translated" — has been well appreciated. Requests for further copies have been received, one new friend asking for 100 copies.

Also booklets advertised in past months continue to bring responses from near and far. One friend whose home address is Geneva, Switzerland, and who works on a ship stationed in Turkey, writes "I'm enjoy reading magazine when I came across your subscription card of free booklet for 'Wars Will Cease'. You know I'm fond of reading God's Word and also pertaining to God.

"As I introduce myself, I'm a Filipino citizen, 27 years of age, and a chief officer on board MV '— —'.

We are 20 Filipino on board with 2 Turkish, and contracted here for 11 months, and now we are 4 months already. For my life here on board, I'm not exposed of going ashore; I prepare to read good magazine and God news and words. I hope it will not disturb the silence of anyone. Have more power on your Institute and staff. May Almighty God bless you all. Truly yours."

It is certainly a privilege to be able to supply the message of the Lord's Kingdom to all who are seeking after God, if haply they may find Him, as the Apostle declared — Acts.17:27. We ask the blessing of the Lord upon all sincere people who receive His Truth message, and have confidence that He will give the increase as He sees good, at the present time, or in the later time of visitation — 1 Pet.2:12.

GROWTH

Let me then be always growing,
Never, never standing still,
Listening, learning, better knowing
Thee, and Thy most blessed will;
That the Master's eye may trace
Day by day my growth in grace

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"God's Promises Come True" — \$2.50 (Postage from \$1.85).

"The Divine Plan of the Ages" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 in Victoria, \$1.35 interstate).

"The Creator's Grand Design" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"The Book of Books" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"Daily Heavenly Manna" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"Songs in the Night" — \$1.20 (Postage 70c and 80c).

"Emphatic Diaglott" New Testament — \$3.50 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"Tabernacle Shadows" — \$1.20 (Postage 70c and 80c).

"God and Reason" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"God's Plan" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Hope Beyond the Grave" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Israel in History and Prophecy" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Manner of Christ's Return" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

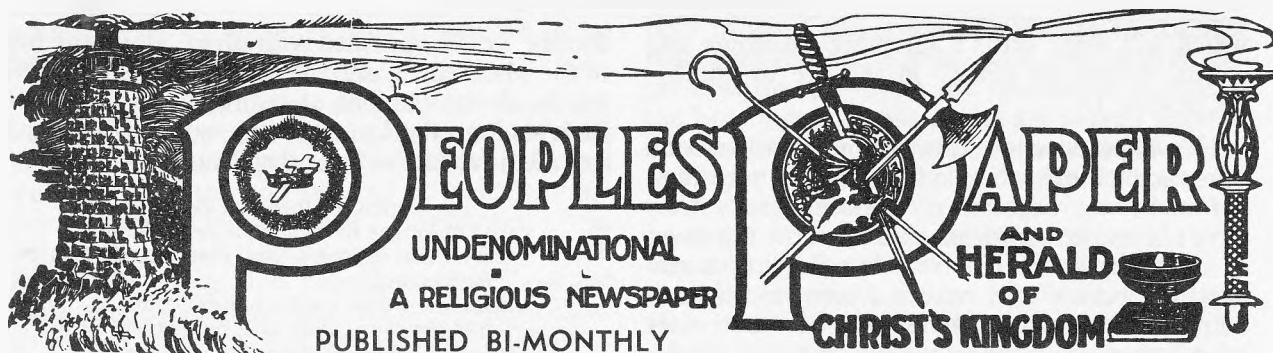
"Christ's Return" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Some of the Parables" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

Numerous other small booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXVII No. 1

MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY—MARCH, 1984

Price — 20 cents

Crowning the Year with Goodness

“Thou crownest the year with thy goodness”—Psa. 65:11.

What an appropriate Scripture to meditate upon as we look back upon the year just closed! It is fitting that the Lord's people should continually keep trace of 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 observations 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—who hear His voice and to whom the rod and staff, His chastenings and guidance, are continually a comfort and joy.

It is appropriate, too, that we take weekly reviews, looking at the same mercies and blessings from a still broader standpoint of observation, 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 the steps which hindered progress, and which have been proper steps in the footprints of Jesus, bringing us nearer to the goal—the “mark” to which we must surely attain if we would be accounted worthy of a share in the promised kingdom.

A year may seem a longer or a shorter period, according to the circumstances. To the mind of childhood it is a very long period, while to more developed minds, filled with the activities of life, it seems much shorter—speeding all too rapidly to permit the accomplishment of all the things desired to be achieved. Then again, the year will seem proportionately long as it has contained draughts of bitter experiences or sufferings, mental or physical—proportionately short, as it has contained joys and pleasures which seem to slip away all too quickly. To a certain extent such experiences are common to all mankind; yet the Christian, especially if he has been for some time in the school of Christ and is somewhat developed both in knowledge and in grace, has a larger capacity than others for grasping and appreciating life; because, no matter how unsound his natural mind may have been, he has now “the mind of Christ”, “the spirit of a sound mind”, which is far better able than the natural mind to estimate matters at their true worth.

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 (but who, instead, have a vague fear and dread of the future, both of present life and that which is to come). His troubles have been divested of their fearful features, and minimized by the spirit of a sound mind, and the instructions 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 rejoicings in iniquity, but rejoicings 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 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 every man, surely, for alas! 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. Surely but 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, realizing that God has crowned the year with His goodness! Many who cannot rejoice in the goodness which we have enumerated foregoing, will nevertheless return thanks for temporal good things and mercies, and strive to peer into the darkness with which an insufficient knowledge and an insufficient faith enshrouds the trials and difficulties of life, which to them are incomprehensible and sources of no joy, and generally of little advantage. 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, they are not pleasing either, and not receiving satisfactory blessing 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 described by the Prophet in preceding verses of this Psalm. 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."—Hear the Prophet:—

"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion:
And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all
flesh come!
Iniquities prevail against me: as for my
transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.
Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and
causest to approach unto thee.
That he may dwell in thy courts.
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy
house,
The holy place of thy temple."

Here we have a description of the elect Church, of which Christ is the Head, and all the faithful royal priests 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 will choose 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 lovingkindness of our God." Is it any wonder that these 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 favour toward them? These can say with faithful Joshua—"Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake"—Joshua 23:14.

These are assured by their Lord that in the Father's house are many mansions, many conditions, suitable to the many kinds of His intelligent creatures; nevertheless there was no mansion for them, because they were to be a new creation, "partakers of the divine nature", and hence it would be necessary for Him to go away and **"prepare a place for them"**—a heavenly condition. These, knowing they must be prepared for the place, as well as the place be prepared for them, are enabled to rejoice under every blow of the hammer of discipline, because they realize that it is a part of the Master's work in their preparation to fill the place to which they have been called in the Father's house—which will be the

place of God's temple, in which they are to be living stones—1 Pet. 2:5.

And if the experiences and sentiments of this "little flock" are beyond the understanding of the natural man, his neighbours and friends, is it any wonder? Despised and rejected of men, they are nevertheless God's royal priesthood; "as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold they live"—a life more abundant. In all these things they have cause to rejoice, realizing that the path in which they tread has in it the footprints of Him who redeemed them and became the leader and forerunner of this priesthood. The world knows us not, even as it knew Him not.

As we thus review the leadings of divine providence during the year that is past, let God's goodness and mercy stimulate our faith and confidence in Him as respects the New Year now with us. A proper retrospect on the part of a proper child of God will enable him not only to render thanks for the past, but to look up and lift up his head, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed; and that He that began a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it, if we will but continue to submit our wills, our lives, our all, to His wisdom and loving care—Rom. 13:11; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

Daily Service

The Lord's business is His people's vocation.

"Vocation" is the term that describes the special business of any person, while the word "avocation" describes an occasional business. The Apostle Paul's vocation was that of a minister of the truth, while his avocation or occasional employment, when necessary to provide things honest and decent in the sight of God and men, was tentmaking. Similarly all of the Lord's people should consider that their vocation or calling is of God, and relates to the special or spiritual ministry in which He privileges us to engage as fellow-servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. In order to provide the necessities of life it is necessary that we should also have some earthly employment; but this we should always regard, not as our vocation, not as our chief business in life, but merely as our avocation or temporary engagement incidentally necessary to our chief or principal business.

The question should now properly be in the minds of all who realize themselves as consecrated to the Lord, members of the Royal Priesthood: To what extent am I fulfilling my present priestly office and performing daily as I have opportunity my appointed work of sacrifice?

Too many, under the false teachings of Babylon,

both in word and custom have come to consider that worldly gain, honour, ease and general self-preservation constitute the reasonable service of the Lord's people. Sacrificers are looked upon as deluded fanatics, especially in proportion as the sacrificing is done for the truth's sake, in the interest of spiritual things. We are, however, not to be taught of the world, nor by a cold worldly-wise churchianity; but we are to hearken to the voice of the good Shepherd, to hear His Word, to learn of Him, if we would be prepared by Him, in the school of Christ, for the glorious things promised us as His joint-heirs in the future. "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

We can see how the Apostle, even though finding it necessary at times to engage in the business of tentmaking, might be considered as a priest, whose time, energy and talents were all sacrificed to the Lord, and given freely in serving His people, in doing good unto all men as he had opportunity, especially unto the household of faith; but how can others who have not the opportunity, not the talents, nor the open door for such special service as his, be sacrificing priests, when as a matter of necessity nearly all of their time must be given to their various employments, which Providence seems to have opened before them as their avocations? When it is necessary to spend nearly all of eight to twelve hours per day in the service of our avocations, how can such consider or serve the interests of their vocations, the priesthood?

The Lord has very graciously made arrangements for this very condition. He assures us in His Word that it is not the amount we shall accomplish in His cause, but the spirit, the desire and the effort which is manifested, that in His estimation would indicate the degree of self-sacrifice. He graciously declares that if our hearts be given to Him, whatsoever we may have need to do, may be done as unto the Lord, and will be accepted by Him. From this standpoint we can see that the work which the Apostle Paul did in his avocation passed to his credit as a part of his vocation, just as much as the other part of his time which he spent in more congenial methods of proclaiming the Gospel. Similarly, we can see that those working at their different occupations, if at heart fully consecrated, would be seeking to do their work as unto the Lord. If they are careful to use all other opportunities for proclaiming the truth, for serving the brethren, for doing good unto all men, the improvement of the few opportunities coming to them and their willingness to sacrifice personal taste and conveniences for the service of the truth and for the brethren, would be counted by the Lord as a full sacrifice, because such a disposition in respect of little things would imply an equal faithfulness in the presence of larger opportunities.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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

With thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for His blessings throughout the four-day Christmas Convention in Melbourne, this brief review of the gatherings is presented at this time. The attendance was very good throughout, with brethren being gladly welcomed from South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. Our Polish Australian brethren also joined in the gatherings, and contributed helpfully during the various sessions.

During the four days two Bible Studies were conducted, 16 addresses were delivered by the brethren, also there were Fellowship and Testimony meetings, a Hymn session and informal fellowship completed a helpful program.

Following the opening praise and prayer, and a brief address of welcome, the first Bible Study on Ephesians 3:17-21 provided a very helpful presentation of the Apostle Paul's prayer of exhortation to the Ephesian Church, and to all Christians since. The real consecrated Christian life was so very well revealed from this Scriptural passage, made possible to all faithful followers of the Master through the indwelling of the power of God.

On the last day of Convention another Bible Study was conducted on Hebrews 12:1-4. This beautiful passage of Scripture was most helpful to review, as the Apostle presented the examples of the faithful Patriarchs of past ages as a "cloud of witnesses"—martyrs—to encourage the Hebrew Christians, and all God's people since, to "run with patience the race set before them." "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith", not only of Christians, but of all God's people of past, present and future ages, was seen as absolutely essential for true discipleship, and was the main lesson of verses 2 to 4. By Jesus delighting to do His Father's will, to redeem fallen humanity from death, was seen as the main "joy set before him", enabling our Lord to "endure the cross, and despise the shame", resulting in His exaltation "to the right hand of the throne of God." The exhortation to "consider Jesus who endured such contradiction of sinners" was seen as the greatest stimulus to our faith "lest we be wearied and faint

in our minds." It is required that we prove faithful unto death "striving against sin."

During these Bible Studies and for the Testimony and other meetings as required, the use of a roving microphone was of very great help in conveying the thoughts of each contributor to the brethren generally. The supplying of the loud-speaker equipment was also greatly appreciated. The varied subjects chosen for addresses by the brethren proved very helpful, and were as follows—"The Danger of Spiritual Pride"; "God Himself shall be . . . their God—Rev. 21:3"; "The King's Daughter, The Bride"; "Lessons from the Life of Joseph"; "Faith's Foundation"; "Growing into the Lord's Likeness"; "The Presence of the Lord"; "Diligence and Peace—2 Pet. 3:14"; "Israel: To whom (pertaineth)—Rom. 9:4"; "Song of Solomon—Chapter 4"; "Thy Word is Truth—John 17:17"; "Looking Unto Jesus—Heb. 12:2"; "The Walls of Jericho"; "The Glory of God's Will" and "His Burden is Light."

Numerous greetings with assurance of prayers upon the Convention and Christian love were received from Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas, all of which were much appreciated. To all who thus kindly remembered us, and to brethren everywhere, the Christian love from the assembled brethren with the Scriptural message in Eph. 3:17-19, is sent to all.

The Praise and Testimony session provided an opportunity for a number of the brethren to express their thankfulness to the Lord for His overruling in enabling them to attend the Convention, and appreciation for His many blessings throughout the past year, as well as assistance through difficult experiences. The Hymns We Love session was also much enjoyed again this year, as were all the hymns throughout the Convention with the accompaniment of piano, violin and 'cello. The Sisters who contributed with the music added greatly to the enjoyment of praise to the Lord. Likewise, the labours of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was greatly appreciated, this also being a service as unto the Lord.

The closing address was followed by the usual Love Feast during which the brethren bade each other farewell, while singing—"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." "God be with you till we meet again" was sung as a parting hymn, and the concluding prayer of thankfulness to God for all His blessings and with request for His oversight and care of all His dear people everywhere, brought the helpful Melbourne Convention for 1983 to a close.

His Burden is Light

(Convention Address)

“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.

These words of our Saviour are surely among the richest and loveliest of His recorded sayings. What wonderful blessings and promises they hold out to all who hear His gracious invitation—come to me—find rest—learn of me—take my yoke—my yoke is easy and my burden light.

In the first place, they were addressed by Jesus to His Jewish hearers; they were in bondage to the Law and in addition grievously burdened by oppressive religious leaders who bound heavy burdens on their backs in the form of multitudinous man-made rules and ordinances.

But one writer on these verses has well said—“We who are Gentiles by nature were never under the yoke of the Law, yet in another way we have had a great burden which we were unable to bear—the burden of sin and death. Adam first came under this burden which has brought so great a curse upon the world. We have all borne the weight of sin and its evil accompaniments. So our Master’s words of hope and comfort have brought joy and refreshing to our hearts also, and we have found His offered rest—rest in Him, our true Yokefellow. All who are heavy laden, who appreciate the nature and bitterness of sin, and are striving against it—all these are invited to take His yoke upon them and learn of Him. They are assured that His yoke is easy—for the Lord is able to bear for us all that we lack ability to bear. The Master’s burden is light if accepted in sincerity and in truth, and only those who so receive it can become yokefellows with Him.”

This is the blessed invitation of Jesus—to come and find rest from our own heavy burdens, to take His yoke upon us, assured that His yoke is easy and His burden light. But on the face of it, to be called upon to bear any burden, whether heavy or comparatively light seems hardly a cause for joy. Nevertheless, viewed rightly, we shall see that the Master can and does give real rest and peace to all who labour and are heavy laden and who come to Him. To all who are weighed down with life’s burdens, its difficulties, anxieties, weaknesses or losses, He gives sure relief, not necessarily by removal of the burden, but by His supporting strength and by the grace to see our Heavenly Father’s hand in all the experiences of life.

For all those trials and testings which are part and parcel of the cost of Christian discipleship, He has promised His aid, for we are yoked with Him. By our own personal consecration to follow Him, we have undertaken to bear these willingly for His sake, and we have for our reassurance His two-fold promise—“my yoke is easy and my burden is light”. The yoke immediately assures us that we are not left to bear the burden alone, and so with the ever-present help and strength of our great Yokefellow, the burden—His burden—will surely be light.

The apostle Paul, speaking of his so great and varied experiences for his Lord, could speak of all that he had undergone as a “light affliction”. If we too can rightly accept our own position in His service, if we can accept the burden which He sees is fitting for each one of us, we shall be able to give similar testimony at the end of the way.

And there is also the privilege of helping others of the Lord’s people along the way. “Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ”—Gal. 6:2. It is because our Saviour Himself so loved us that He gave Himself for us, and throughout our lives He ever stands beside us as He promised—“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the Age”—Matt. 28:20. His commandment to His first disciples comes down to us—“Love one another as I have loved you”—John 13:34. It is in such love alone that we have the responsibility, the privilege, to be concerned and to support one another in whatever way we are able.

It is interesting to note in Gal. 6:5, the apostle’s message to each believer is—“Every man shall bear his own burden.” This at first seems to be in contradiction to his earlier exhortation to bear one another’s burdens, but here the apostle is stressing that each one of us alone can attend to and perform his or her allotted call and service. We cannot rely on others, but must each work out our own salvation, mindful of course that it is God who is working in us His good pleasure—Phil. 2:12, 13. In these two verses in Gal. 6, two different words are translated “burden.” “Bear ye one another’s burdens”—these are the heavy weights, the strong pressures, that press down upon and threaten to overwhelm the bearer. With such burdens, we are to help one another, though we need great wisdom, the wisdom from above to determine just how we may best do so. “Every man shall bear his own burden”—this is the appointed loading, the suitably determined portion, placed upon each bearer, which in the Saviour’s strength he will be able to carry cheerfully and trustfully. No one else can bear this for us nor can we bear another’s, but the same loving Saviour stands by to help each one.

First in each believer's experience is the rest from the labouring and heavy laden condition. It was recognition of our need for a Saviour that brought us to Him, and as we came to trust and accept Him personally, then it was that our burden of sin and death was lifted from us. Bunyan pictures this as a great physical burden laid on Christian's shoulders which rolled away as he lifted up his eyes to the cross, and which he saw no more. Still today, the burden of guilt is laid on many a heart, but sorrowfully men and women seek relief elsewhere than in Jesus whose promise to the heavy laden still stands—"I will give you rest." God's Word is very clear—"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—Rom. 3:23—and it is only God's remedy, provided in His Son, which can ease the burden of sin and guilt.

It is possible to recognize that the price of our sins has been fully paid and yet have an abiding sense of guilt. Closely associated with this is the burden of recrimination for past failures and omissions. How important it is that we learn the lessons of such experiences, but it is also vital that they not be stumbling stones to hinder progress. Rather they are to be stepping stones to higher, better things. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us"—Psalm 103:12. So wrote the Psalmist long ago, and if God can do this, surely we should follow the apostle Paul in his stand—"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. 3:13, 14. Paul himself had regrets for his past misguided endeavours, and there are no doubt many things, great or small, that we are all sorry for. But the lesson is clear that they must not impede the onward, upward course. "Let us lay aside every weight" says the apostle in Heb. 12:1, and such burdens as these our Saviour can gently take from us and in their place give His rest.

One of the greatest of life's burdens, and one which Christians can succumb to is the burden of anxiety. A message seen from time to time on way-side pulpits reads—"Why pray when you can worry?" No, the wording is not a mistake, the message is one that we all sometimes need to make us think. "Why pray when you can worry?" The Word of God has the complete answer—"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you"—1 Pet. 5:7. Here the apostle is speaking to us specifically of the anxieties and obsessive cares of life, which if we harbour them, will take over and obstruct Christian growth. All of us, whatever our sphere of activity in personal, business, family or church life, have responsibilities and duties which must be carried out. But our Father knows about these also, and His care over His children does not

cover only some aspects of life. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"—Prov. 3:6. These words of the wise man come down to us in this age also. "In all thy ways"—yes, all our lives are to be lived as in His service and so we can surely trust our Father to overrule in every experience and emergency.

If all these are in His hands, there will be no room for anxious care. The hymn writer asks us—"Why should this anxious load weigh down thy weary mind?"—why indeed! Then he answers—"Haste to thy heavenly Father's throne and sweet refreshment find." The Psalmist long ago also knew this privilege, as we read in Psalm 55:22—"Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Even if every friend should forsake the Christian, he is never alone for the promise still stands—"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"—Heb. 13:5. So we may safely leave the burden of anxious care to Him who loves us, and know the rest our Saviour has promised to replace this heavy burden also.

And there are other burdens—disappointments, bereavements, sorrows, loneliness. Here God's Word speaks lovingly to us if we can only hear and heed. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble"—2 Cor. 1:3, 4. Our Father is the God of **all** comfort and while sorrow and grief are natural human expressions, His loving arms can gently sustain each of His children, not permitting even these burdens to weigh down and overcome them. We note that His comfort is given us not for our own blessing only, but that we may be a blessing to others and help them with their burdens.

We may well rejoice in the assurance that those heavy burdens which might otherwise overwhelm us may safely be left with our Saviour whose promise to the labouring and heavy laden is still—"Come unto me . . . find rest unto your souls." Even in the darkest hour we may "cast our burdens on the Lord and bear a song away." But there still remains those experiences, trials and testings, that come upon God's people in one way or another. These are permitted for their growth in grace and character development, and are to be willingly accepted as part of the terms of discipleship in Christ, who has invited them to take His yoke upon them, and whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light.

As we have already noted, the yoke speaks of a shared load. The yoke links two working together, usually oxen, but in the Christian's case, the yoke-

fellow is Jesus Himself, and further, the yoke is taken on by each disciple voluntarily. The yoke is easy, it does not chafe, but rather fits comfortably, picturing firstly the loving care of Jesus for His own, and secondly the willing acceptance by each one of the conditions of discipleship. None is pressed into His service, each is invited to present his or her body as a living sacrifice, to be used for His glory. Nevertheless, when we consider the intense trials of many down the age, and even in troubled lands today, can we still be sure that His yoke truly is easy and His burden light?

The first and foremost reason for such confidence is the fact that is **His** yoke and **His** burden. His yoke is not imposed on anyone, but rather it is His gracious invitation to us to take His yoke upon us. It is He who loved us and gave Himself for us, who extends this invitation, and assures us that the burden is light. Again, His yoke is willingly taken on, not as an obligation or duty, but as a grand privilege, making the bearing of it a joy. Further, we have His Word that no trial will be too great—"No temptation (test or trial) hath taken you but such as is common to man. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"—1 Cor. 10:13.

Here, we see that the promise is not removal of the test or trial, but rather the way is opened for the Christian to pass through it. Our Master prayed—"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one"—John 17:15. We are not promised to be kept from trial but through trial, and the assurance given to the apostle comes down to us—"my grace is sufficient for thee"—for every part of life's experience. So not only is it Christ's burden, gladly accepted and borne, yoked with Him, but our Father's sufficiency of grace for whatever it may mean by way of trials, testings, worldly disfavour, privations, maybe persecutions for Jesus' sake.

The lightness of the burden is also related by the apostle to the reward of faithfulness—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"—2 Cor. 4:17. And again—"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. We read of Jesus Himself that—"for the joy set before him (He) endured the cross despising the shame"—and so He urges us also to—"run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus"—Heb. 12:1, 2. And what a hope is set before us—"We shall be like him; and see him as he is"—1 John 3:2. Such a hope, such a prospect, cannot but make the burden light.

Each one of us can be sure that Christ's burden will be such as will fit us for His service. For many it has meant severe trial, suffering and persecution, but all have had the assurance of His abiding presence and strength, and the guidance of the holy spirit in every trial. Whatever the future holds for us, His promise still holds good, and we shall know, as did the apostle, that in the darkest hour—"The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me"—2 Tim. 4:17. He is the Friend who sticketh closer than a brother through each and every trial.

It should be our privilege and joy to bear all such expriences for His name, recalling the witness of Peter and John, who after being imprisoned and beaten, were able to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Him name. In such a spirit of submission, those things which would otherwise be burdensome, will also for us be light. For we will bear them conscious of His presence and strength, and as we look to Him, we will know that, whatever tribulations we meet, we can in all these things be "more than conquerors through him who loved us"—Rom. 8:37.

But there is one further part of Jesus' invitation—"learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." The apostle in Phil. 2:5 exhorts us to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." This is the mind of humble, submissive obedience to our heavenly Father. To learn of Jesus, to be His pupil, is to have a gentle and humble-minded Teacher, who is never impatient with those who are slow to learn, and never intolerant with those who stumble. As we learn these lessons of character from Him, and only as we do so, shall we find the real rest to our souls, rest from our own heavy burdens, and rest in Him who is our true Yokefellow.

With such blessings for ourselves, is there anything we can do to help others who may be struggling under heavy burdens, mindful of the apostle's exhortation based on Jesus' own commandment of love for one another? Direct help may sometimes be the immediate need, but this requires great care and circumspection, remembering the apostle's warning elsewhere against interference in other's affairs. The great essential is surely earnest prayer for guidance that God's will be made clear, and that whatever is done or not done, be overruled by Him, who works all things together for good to them that love Him, and are called according to His purpose. The greatest and surest area for help must always be the ministry of prayer, coupled with humble demonstration of Christian love and sympathy, and the encouragement to greater trust in God and His sure Word. Sacrifice may be needed to avoid stumbling another follower of the Master. Above all else, the

key to helping others must remain selfless, compassionate, all-embracing love. This is the great healer of those who are hurt or downcast, and Peter instructs us—"above all things have fervent love among yourselves, for love shall cover a multitude of faults"—1 Peter 4:8.

We are truly a richly blessed people to know and appreciate the promises of God's Word, not only for the future, grand as are all His eternal plans and purposes, but even here and now. His invitation to us is to come to Him and find rest, to take His yoke and learn of Him. How fully have we each responded? Have we allowed Him to lift from our hearts **all** those crippling burdens which would weigh us down? Have we taken to ourselves the invitation to cast **all** our anxious care upon Him who cares for us? Have we gladly taken the Master's yoke upon us, realizing that daily He walks beside us as our great Yokefellow? Are we rejoicing in His blessed assurance to us—"take my yoke upon you—for my yoke is easy and my burden is light?" In faith and in His strength, may we each find this gloriously true in the coming year.

Threescore Years and Ten

How often do we hear people say, on reaching the age of seventy years that they have reached the "allotted span" of life, and that thereafter they are living on "borrowed time." The translation of Psalms 90 from the Amplified Version, with footnote on verse 10 is of much interest, and is worthy of attentive examination. The verses and quotation are as follows:

"**LORD**, You have been our dwelling place and our refuge in all generations (says Moses). Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed and given birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting You are God. You turn man back to dust and corruption, and say, Return O sons of the earthborn (to the earth)! For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night—2 Pet. 3:8. You carry away (these disobedient people, doomed to die within forty years) as with a flood; they are as a sleep (vague and forgotten as soon as gone). In the morning they are like grass which grows up: In the morning it flourishes and springs up; in the evening it is mown down and withers. For we (the Israelites in the wilderness) are consumed by Your anger, and by Your wrath are we troubled, overwhelmed and frightened away. Our iniquities, our secret heart and its sins (which we would so like to conceal even from ourselves) You have set in the (revealing) light of Your countenance. For all our days (out here in this wilderness, says Moses) are passed

away in Your wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told (for we adults know we are doomed to die soon, without reaching Canaan)—Num. 14:26-35. The days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even if by reason of strength fourscore years, yet is their pride (in additional years) only labor and sorrow; for it is soon gone, and we fly away."

The quotation on verse 10 reads—This Psalm is credited to Moses, who is interceding with God to remove the curse which made it necessary for every Israelite over twenty years of age (when they rebelled against God at Kadesh-barnea) to die before reaching the Promised Land—Num. 14:26-35. Moses says most of them are dying at **seventy years**. This number has often been mistaken as a set span of life for all mankind. It was not intended to refer to any one except those Israelites under the curse during that particular forty years. Seventy years never has been the average span of life for humanity. When Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes had reached 130 years—Gen. 47:9, he complained that he had not attained to the years of his immediate ancestors. In fact, Moses himself lived to be 120, Aaron 123, Miriam several years older, and Joshua 110; while in the Millennium a person dying at 100 will still be a child—Isa. 65:20.

"A LITTLE WHILE"

"A little while" for patient vigil keeping,
To face the stern, to wrestle with the strong;
"A little while" to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.
"A little while" to keep the oil from failing,
"A little while" faith's flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom's coming footsteps hailing
We'll haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.
And He who is Himself the Gift and Giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad "forever,"
Will light the shadows of the "little while".
Jane Fox Crewdson.

Passover Memorial, 1984

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 15th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

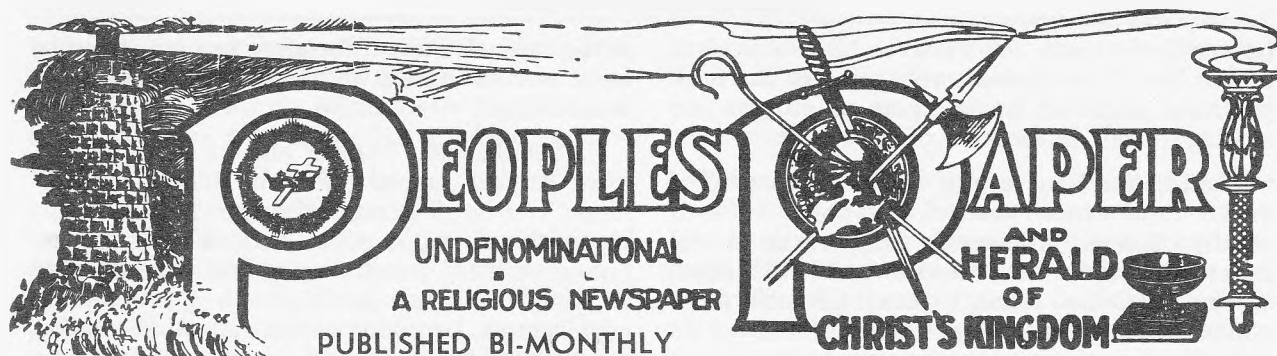
Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 15th April, at 6 p.m., at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn—Wattle Rd. building.

Adelaide—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Melbourne Class New Address

The Melbourne Class now meets at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn, in building near Wattle Rd. Sunday services are at 11.30 a.m., and 2.30 p.m., to which all interested people are invited for Undenominational study of the Bible.



Volume LXVII No. 2

MELBOURNE, APRIL-MAY, 1984

Price — 20 cents

Our Lord's Memorial

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. God had instructed Israel to keep the Passover to effect their release from Egyptian bondage, and then to observe it 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 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 to thy sons for ever" — Exod. 12:26, 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 firstborn 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 Him observing the Passover ceremony with His

disciples on the three anniversaries prior to His sacrifice, as these would not be of special interest. However, 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 remarkable 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." How influential should the Apostle's words have been when we realize 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 that 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 act 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 whom 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” — Psal. 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.

Our lesson continues — “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, a 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 shall 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 of our Lord's Memorial and implies that all true Christians participate in the cup of suffering with Christ, 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 was 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. 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 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 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 the Apostle was not seeking to discourage any sincere ones, but rather sought to encourage all the Lord's called ones to celebrate the Lord's Memorial in spirit and in truth — "discerning the Lord's body" — 1 Cor. 11:29 — 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" — 1 Cor. 5:7,8.

Passover at First Advent

The following short article was published in the "Peoples Paper" previously, and it is thought helpful to reprint it again at this time.

The question as to whether our Lord and His disciples had kept the Jewish Passover on the 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.

Some time ago 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 in the year of our Lord's sacrifice. The quotation is as follows:—

"The Last Supper was taken on the 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 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."

Our Bible Translated

The supply of the above titled booklet is exhausted, so a reprinting has been made and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." While this booklet was supplied to all on the mailing list previously, it has been much appreciated, and a rereading will no doubt prove helpful again. Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Despised and Rejected

(Contributed Address)

Adam's sin of disobedience to his all-wise and all-loving Creator merited punishment of the highest order, and the sentence of death, coupled with all the associated pain and suffering, sickness and sorrow, passed from him to his children generation after generation to the present time. To eradicate the effects of mankind's degradation, and to forever demonstrate the value of a character fixed and unwavering in allegiance to the Creator, required an act of implicit obedience far beyond that required of Adam. As the sin brought mankind to a level of moral unworthiness and debasement of horrible dimensions, the moral worthiness and exalted fibre of being of the Redeemer was shown to be just as much higher at the other end of the scale. If the perfection of Adam in the Garden of Eden be considered the standard, God's minimum requirement of an acceptable character, the innate goodness of our Saviour must be demonstrated by a level of worthiness as far above that standard as the human race sank below it.

We learn how God, in His infinite wisdom, demonstrated this requisite of exalted character when we read of the life of our Saviour on earth. That the details of this demonstration were designed and permitted by God is shown in the fact that all the prophets of old testified beforehand of the suffering and ultimate death of the Saviour, despised and rejected, yet triumphant above measure in loyalty and obedience.

To release Adam and the whole human race sentenced to death with him from the prisonhouse of death required the sacrifice of a perfect human life, an equivalent to that lost in Eden. This sacrificial role was prophesied by Abel in the presentation of his acceptable offering of a slain lamb. The foreshadowing was repeated many times over the centuries by men who trusted in the Lord as they brought their gifts to the altar. The ultimate lesson was given in Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac, child of promise and his heir, showing our Heavenly Father's view of this matter.

King David desired communion with God, but realized his sinful and undone condition. "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean", he said — Psalm 51:7. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults" — Psalm 19:12. And speaking prophetically of our Lord, he said — "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me" — Psalm 139:23,24. This was an accurate prophecy of the thoughts of our dear Lord as He went about His earthly ministry, His chief concern being to please His Heavenly Father and bring honour to His name. David was used extensively to record in advance, in the beautiful Psalms, the thoughts and experiences of the Son of God during His sojourn on earth.

Isaiah was also used very largely to foretell the character of the coming Redeemer. In chapter 53:1-5 he speaks of the arm of the Lord — the One who would act for Jehovah in all that was to be accomplished — yet says of Him — "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed."

To be despised and rejected is a hard experience. It was not required of Adam while in the Garden of Eden; he did not have to do the will of God under such painful conditions. Being despised and rejected did not help to pay the ransom necessary for Adam's release from the death sentence; but it did show the superlative quality of the character of the Son of God, and proved beyond the shadow of a doubt His worthiness of the high exaltation to which He was finally raised. To serve God in a quiet, peaceful way in the absence of adversity is one thing; to continue to serve Him, while the wicked seem to prosper and temptations come thick and fast; to still trust and obey even when despised and rejected, is quite another thing. Our Heavenly Father understood the circumstances which would best bring out the sterling character first of this well-beloved Son, and later on of all those He plans to exalt with Him.

Let us look briefly at the way in which these details of Isaiah's prophecy were fulfilled in the life of our Saviour. The Jews were proud of the fact

that Abraham was their father, and considered themselves heirs of the promises made to him. Throughout the centuries the promised Messiah had figured much in their thoughts; but they gave prominence to the prophecies concerning His glory, and His triumph over His enemies and theirs, without realizing that this was to be thousands of years in the future. Before it could come about the prophecies concerning our Lord's earthly life of sacrifice and eventual death must be fulfilled. All depended on the acceptance of our Lord's sacrifice by His Father, and His resultant resurrection.

At the time of our Lord's ministry the Jews were oppressed under the rule of the Roman Empire, and were looking for a mighty king and warrior to lead them from this captivity, unaware that the captivity God was speaking of was the captivity to sin and death.

So when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the event caused no great stir among the nation. Certainly, the shepherds were honoured with a glimpse of the Saviour, but they soon returned to their flocks. Simeon and Anna recognized their Messiah and rejoiced exceedingly, but they were aged and in a short time left the earthly scene. So the ripples of curiosity and interest subsided very quickly, especially when, after the visit of the Wise Men, the family fled to Egypt. The ready acceptance of their Messiah, which might have been expected had they kept in mind the whole of the prophecies concerning Him, was not forthcoming, and He who was born in a lowly dwelling became a stumblingblock to them. Even in infancy He was despised and rejected.

Our Saviour, born to be king, did not grow up in the palace at Jerusalem, nor in Bethlehem, the honourable city of David where He was born, but in the despised city of Nazareth. Having been called of God out of Egypt, we read in Matthew 2:23 — "He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene." Later on, during His ministry, some said — "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Our Lord's anointing of the holy spirit at His baptism, signifying the beginning of His ministry, did not cause Him to be heralded throughout the land as the Messiah come to save His people. It was a seemingly insignificant event of a man being baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan among those of the Jews who realized their sinful state and were being given the rite of baptism to signify their repentance and bring them back into harmony with God. Only John realized that our Lord had no sin and did not require his baptism. To the onlooker He was simply another sinner. In

accordance with Isaiah's prophecy, He was "numbered with the transgressors."

From an earthly point of view the ministry of Jesus was not a series of triumphs. The common people heard Him gladly, and appreciated His kindness and wise teachings. However, the leaders of the people, the Scribes and Pharisees and the priests considered His ministry objectionable, and sought on many occasions to trap Him, but they were no match for His infinite wisdom. He was a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," as Isaiah foretold.

Matthew tells us of our Lord's character, beginning at chapter 14:14 — "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." It must have taxed His strength to perform these many acts of mercy, yet He did not stop there; realizing the multitude were hungry and far from their homes He said — "They need not depart; give ye them to eat" — verse 16. He then performed the miracle of feeding 5,000 men beside women and children, with only five loaves and two small fishes. It was just after this that the people living in Genesaret, hearing about Him, "brought unto him all that were diseased; and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole" — verses 35,36.

Jesus was acquainted with grief also when He performed such miracles as the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, and the raising of Jairus' daughter. He was greatly grieved at the death of His friend Lazarus, so that it is recorded — "Jesus wept" — John 11:35. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," said Isaiah.

Jesus' little band of intimate followers, mostly humble fishermen and even a despised tax collector, were not the type of men an earthly king would have surrounding him. They did not dwell in fine buildings. Jesus said, of Himself — "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" — Matt 8:20.

We read that at the end of His ministry Jesus "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem". In Luke 19 we have the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, riding upon an ass, and the tumultuous welcome of the common people as they shouted — "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest" — Luke 19:38. But still some of the Pharisees tried to stop this display of acceptance. We might note that this riding on an ass, which was in fulfilment of prophecy, was in ancient times a sign of surrender; the ass was certainly not the animal normally chosen by a king.

We see the compassion as well as the continued grief of Jesus for His own people, then about to finally reject Him notwithstanding their cries of Hosanna. As He came closer to the city of Jerusalem, we read — “He 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” — Luke 19:41,42. And in Matthew 23:37,38 we read His words of disappointment — “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.”

It remained for the Lord's cup of sorrow to overflow as the events of His last hours followed in quick succession — the pain He must have felt at the pettiness of His own followers, vying with one another for the place of chief favour, and neglecting the opportunities of service such as washing one another's feet. Their inability to watch with Him, deserting Him at His betrayal; the trial, the crucifixion — He suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. He was despised and rejected at His birth, during His ministry, and at His death.

The Apostles had their faith confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus. They understood what He had done for them, and they attested to His grand and glorious character. They exhorted those to whom they ministered, and they still exhort us to consider well this Son of God, taking Him as our Exemplar. He Himself said — “If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross daily, and follow me” — Luke 9:23.

We may be assured of the tender love of our Saviour for all His disciples, including us, as He prayed to the Father on their behalf, just before His own Gethsemane experience. As we read in John 17:24-26 — “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. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

The Apostle John recorded in Revelation 5:11-13 that in vision he heard the voice of many angels, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand — “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 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.”

God is Able

(Contributed Address)

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”; “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”; “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”; “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” — Eph. 3:20; Jude 24; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 9:8.

These Scriptures apply only to the Church of this Gospel Age. Those who are called to be followers of Jesus during this Age are the children of God, and come under His special care.

There are also records in the Old Testament of the faithful ones of past ages and how God was able to keep and guard them under the most trying experiences, when subjected to severe tests of obedience and faith. These accounts of their faith and obedience are recorded for the benefit of the Lord's people during their tests of faith and obedience. In Hebrews 11, the Apostle Paul says they are examples of faith and that they obtained a good report. Their experiences should help us to realize that God is able to fulfil His promises to us also.

One of the most remarkable records of God's power to deliver His people out of the hands of their enemies is found in Daniel, chapter 3. Here we are told how Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stedfastly refused to worship the golden image which the great king, Nebuchadnezzar, had made. The king had commanded that when a certain signal was given all the people should bow down and worship the image. The penalty for disobedience was death by being cast alive into a burning furnace of fire, heated to the hottest temperature possible. These three men were Hebrews and did not wish to violate their consciences by worshipping an idol, and so refused to do so, as they knew their God in heaven was the only God worthy of worship. The law of God specifically said — “I am the LORD thy

God . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me . . . Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them" — Exod. 20:2-5.

When Nebuchadnezzar was informed that these three men did not obey his orders he was very angry to think that anyone would disobey his command, but he offered to give them another chance, as they were men of authority in his kingdom. Their answer showed their faith in God — "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" — Dan. 3:16-18. Nebuchadnezzar commanded that they be cast into the furnace. This was done, but the fire had no power over them. To Nebuchadnezzar's amazement there was a fourth person seen with them in the fire — one like unto the Son of God. He called them out and not even a smell of fire was upon them. God was able to deliver them out of the furnace. Faith and loyalty to God were rewarded. God whom they served was able to deliver them from harm.

Daniel had a similar experience. In Daniel 6 we have the record of how a conspiracy was set up against Daniel. King Darius held Daniel in high esteem because of his integrity in the position he held as a president of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. His fellow presidents had tricked the king into signing a decree that they knew Daniel would not obey. The penalty for disobedience was to be cast into a den of lions. When the king found out that he could not go back on his word and that Daniel would be cast to the lions he was very disturbed about the whole affair. Before Daniel was cast to the lions king Darius called to him and said — "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee" — Dan. 6:16. Next morning the king came to see what had happened to Daniel. He called to Daniel — "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt" — Dan. 6:20-22. God was able to deliver Daniel from the snare of his enemies.

In the New Testament we have the record of the Apostle Peter's release from prison by the

angel of the Lord. We have the details outlined in Acts 12:1-19. Here we read how Herod the king set out to persecute the Apostles because they were leaders of the Christian Church. He killed the Apostle James, and the next in line was the Apostle Peter. He put Peter in prison with the intention of taking his life, but this was held over with the approach of the Passover. Peter was bound with chains, and guarded by 16 soldiers. Peter apparently had faith in God's ability to release him from Herod if it was His will. That night he was asleep between two soldiers and a light shined in the prison, and the angel of the Lord woke Peter up and said — "Arise up quickly" — and his chains fell off from his hands. Then the angel led him out past the first and second guards, and when they came to the iron gate that led into the city it opened to them of its own accord. When the angel led him a short way into the city he departed from Peter. As the Apostle knew his way about the city he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where a number of the brethren were gathered together praying for him. Yes, God was able to deliver Peter from king Herod and from prison. It is helpful to note that the prayers of the brethren were answered, as well as great faith on the part of Peter.

On one occasion our Lord prayed for Peter that his faith fail not, and then declared — "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" — Luke 22:32. So in this deliverance from prison by the angel of the Lord, Peter was reunited with the brethren, to strengthen them in that time of persecution.

The Apostle Paul had many no less remarkable experiences and escapes from death when opposed by those who sought to take his life. Reading through the 11th chapter of 2nd Corinthians we would be amazed if anyone could go through what Paul did and not say, as he did, that God was able to deliver him, as He did others in the past. This should be a great source of comfort to us to know that God is with us in all our ways. "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" — Psalms 34:7.

We, as followers of Jesus, who have committed our all unto the Lord may not have such remarkable deliverances as did those already mentioned, but they could be as equally real, in a different manner. The Scriptures which tell us of our Lord's willingness to deliver His people, as we have seen, should be a source of both inspiration and encouragement to us. Faith, prayer and confidence in the Lord's promises to us are necessary elements of Christian character.

As we look further into God's Word, we find there are many more promises that will reassure us of His watchcare over us. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." It is possible for us not to appreciate the blessings and favours we receive from our Heavenly Father. Lack of faith is very often a great hindrance to our receiving His blessings and favours. God is able and willing but through lack of faith we may fail to receive that which He would bestow.

It was so with the children of Israel. After being miraculously delivered across the Red Sea from the hands of the Egyptians, they doubted God's ability to supply them with the necessities of life when on their wilderness journey. God is the One who bestows all benefits upon His people; He has promised all things for our needs as His new creation in Christ Jesus. Let us have sufficient faith to receive them.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Church at Phillipi, says — "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it (margin says, finish it) until the day of Jesus Christ" — Phil. 1:6. It was God who began the good work of grace in our hearts. He drew us to Christ, and it is through Christ that we are justified. He has inspired us with His exceeding great and precious promises, — "that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature" — 2 Pet. 1:4. These promises encourage us to set our affections on things above. He has also made us His heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. God would not have called us and favoured us as He has if He thought we could not enter into the promised inheritance. But "God is faithful that promised" — Heb. 10:23.

The Apostle Paul informs us that even though God is working in us, we have our own part to play in attaining a place in the Kingdom. He wrote — "Wherefore, my 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 which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" — Phil. 2:12, 13.

Along our Christian way each one of us comes up against many and varied experiences; whether these are happy and joyful, or dark and difficult trials, God permits them for our benefit. With the three Hebrews, God did not prevent them from being cast into the furnace of fire, but He did prevent the fire from scorching them and they came out the better for their experience. Daniel was in a very unenviable situation in the den of lions, and could have been

torn to pieces, but God shut the lions' mouths that they were unable to harm him. Peter was helpless, chained between two soldiers, and from a human standpoint there was nothing to save him from Herod's sword. But God sent His angel, opened the prison gate and set him free. What great faith was exercised by these servants of God who are held up as examples to us.

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. 10:13, states — "No trial has assailed you except what belongs to man; and God is faithful who will not permit you to be tried beyond your ability; but with the trial, will also direct the issue, that you may be able to bear it" — Diaglott translation.

So may we continue to be encouraged by God's wonderful assurances to His people, as expressed in Jude 24, 25 — "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever."

What Shall I Render?

What shall I render, Lord, to Thee,
For all Thy benefits toward me?
The Cup Thy hand of love hath poured,
I'll humbly take, most precious Lord,
And call upon Thy holy name
To help me Thy great Plan proclaim;
I'll spend my days in ceaseless praise,
And tell abroad Thy wondrous ways!

"Salvation's Cup" — of suffering too —
Of suffering with God's chosen few,
Dear Lord, I'll drink of this, Thy Cup,
And smiling through my tears, look up —
A mingled Cup of grief and joy,
Of blessedness without alloy,
Of love and fellowship divine,
A foretaste of the Kingdom-wine.

Passover Memorial, 1984

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 15th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

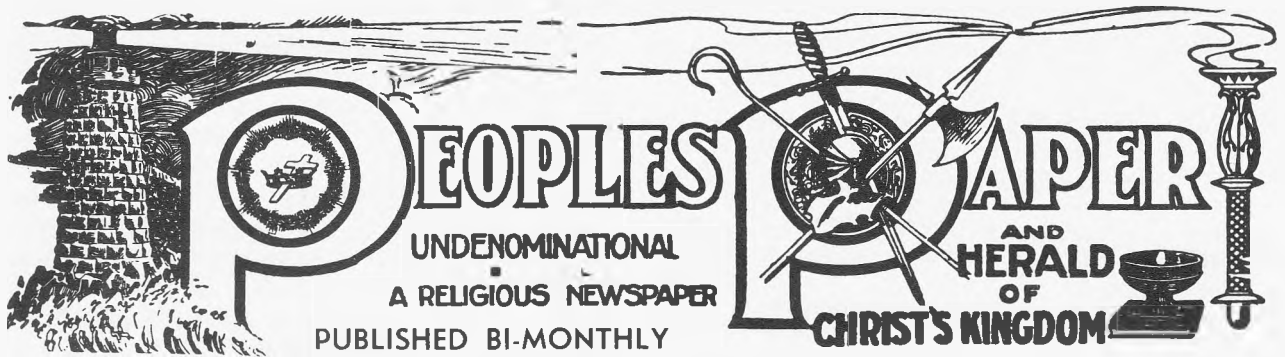
Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 15th April, at 6 p.m., at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn—Wattle Rd. building.

Adelaide—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Melbourne Class New Address

The Melbourne Class now meets at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn, in building near Wattle Rd. Sunday services are at 11.30 a.m., and 2.30 p.m., to which all interested people are invited for Udenominational study of the Bible.



Volume LXVII No. 3

MELBOURNE, JUNE-JULY, 1984

Price — 20 cents

“God Himself shall be Their God”

(Convention Address)

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God” — Rev. 21:3.

EVERYBODY loves a happy ending. It is unfortunate that these are often associated with fairy tales. So many fairy tales finish “and they lived happily ever after.” The association is unfortunate because fairy tales are untrue and ought not to be believed. It would be better if happy endings were seen to relate to God’s plan because both the plan and the happy ending are true, and ought to be believed — “Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing” — Psa. 145:16.

The much loved passage Rev. 21:3-5 adds some detail to the promise in the Psalm. It must refer to the Ages to Come at the end of the Millennial reign of Christ, because of the words “no more death” — “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And 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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

The purpose here is to concentrate on that part of word-picture of the Ages to Come described — “and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” In particular, we will be thinking of God’s role as God, but firstly some thoughts on God being with them could be considered.

There seems to be an implication that God will be present in a way not previously possible. This is to be when the New Jerusalem is on earth, and the tabernacle of God is with men. The R.S.V. uses “dwelling” instead of “tabernacle.”

God’s omnipresence was well known in Old Testament days. In Psalm 139 David went into some detail in describing how God is everywhere at the same time. The New Testament supports this with expressions like — “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” — Heb. 4:13. Indeed, a very special form of presence was mentioned in John 14:23 — “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.”

It may be that God’s special indwelling of the members of the Body of Christ, coupled with the role of that Body in the Ages to Come, is somehow involved in the probably different but yet undisclosed way in which God will dwell with men at that time.

What we do know is that God will not be present in the same manner as human beings are at a place or in a dwelling. Solomon recognized that God’s nature would not permit any containment of God — “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?” — 1 Kings 8:27. The first definition of “contain” in one dictionary is “to hold within a fixed space or fixed limits, to enclose.”

The Bible declares that with God there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning — James 1:17. It follows that His future dwelling with men cannot involve a change of His nature. It is inconceivable that God could be contained or restricted in a place or even a planet or galaxy which He, Himself, caused to be created.

This poses the question — If God does not change, how will His dwelling with man in the Ages to Come, be different from His omnipresence now or in the past?

It is suggested that the difference will be in men. Mankind will know God and be aware of His presence. Heavy emphasis should be put on that awareness. Even those who love God now, cannot be aware of His

presence to the extent which will be possible when men are more than decaying earthen vessels.

The word "aware" seems to be a good one to describe being forward in the active part of the mind. The contrast is not with the sub-conscious, but with the background information stored in our minds, upon which we draw as we have need. Our conscious mind does know and love God, but our current activity takes precedence.

The type of thought which hinders our awareness of God concerns simple everyday things like:

The objects which come into view as we walk along; Concern for the thoughts and well-being of those to whom we are speaking; Reaction to sound, or for that matter, any of the senses; Careful attention to any work we may be performing. There is nothing wrong with any of these things in this present world, but they do cloud our awareness of God's presence.

Have you ever considered the profound effect that a real awareness of God's presence can have on a human being? Boy Scouts are taught to pray "Let the assurance of Thy Presence save us from sinning; strengthen us in life, and comfort us in death" — dying would be a better word.

Might it not be that the different way in which God will be with mankind in the Ages to Come, will be that man will be aware of God's presence. The most active thought in his mind could be that awareness.

Let us move on, then, to God being their God or the role of God as God. Obviously, it is not appropriate for the creature to examine the Creator in any sense of defining God's functions. Equally it would be wrong to endeavour to delineate that which cannot be encompassed.

However, in several places the Bible is emphatic about God being a God to people. It does seem reasonable that we should consider what is entailed in that role as a guide to the proper response. Perhaps the best known occasion is in the promise of the New Covenant in Jer. 31:33 referred to in Heb. 8:10 — "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

Our passage in Rev. 21:3 has much wider application. It seems to refer to all mankind rather than merely to the House of Israel — "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

The study of God's nature in general is always profitable. Properly understood, it would remove most of the errors from Christendom, and with them the fears and greeds of the world. The subject of God's role must pre-suppose sufficient knowledge of God's nature to enable us to concentrate on the interaction between

God and man. That relationship in the texts quoted is still future. For our part, however, we ought now be seeking to make God our God in every sense of the word.

Zech.8:8 establishes ground rules — "And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness." Truth, in that context, implies the utmost sincerity. Elsewhere it is used as an ascertained fact or reliable doctrine. It is also used by our Lord Jesus in John 14:6. However, when associated with righteousness in this way it must mean conforming to fact and reality to the utmost extent that these are discernable by the human mind.

Righteousness must always be seen as God's objective for man. The first step towards God's righteousness is to recognize our state apart from Christ — "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" — Isa. 64:6. God Himself has provided the remedy for that state — "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." So the basis of God being our God in truth and in righteousness is of or out from the Father, by or through the Son. How often do we find 1 Cor. 8:6 puts things in perspective for us — "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

The fact that God will be their God quickly excludes many of the gods which prevail today. Materialism is one of the worst. It includes not only money or wealth, but all the possessions man worships. Sometimes the object of worship has little or no intrinsic value. Perhaps there may be value from the maker's artistic ability received from God. To the extent that it is worshipped, anything is a god and usurps that which belongs to the true God.

Others worship the acclaim of men. this is more subtle than materialism, but equally in error. "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble" — 1 Pet. 5:5. Similarly, power consumes many. A little power, perhaps in the workforce, perhaps social, often political seems to take hold of its possessor. Step by step a little more power or influence is sought.

Anything which claims men's hearts, taking them away from God, is stealing that which belongs to God. The Bible says — "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" — Prov. 23:26. Our Lord Jesus said — "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God, the things that are God's."

These problems will not exist in the Ages to Come. Our text tells us that God will be their God. Praise the Lord. His plan will have succeeded. Mankind will know the folly of pseudo gods and turn from them. On

the positive side this means that every person will worship God as He ought to be worshipped.

As a consequence, those characteristics and attributes seen praiseworthy in God will be emulated. Every action will be designed, not toward some personal craving, but in proper altruism toward that which God wants. God's Will will be done on earth as it is in heaven. God is love. Accordingly, love will be the attitude which will pervade all activities of mankind.

Early in the Bible we have very clear instruction on the relationship between God and man. It is the relationship between Creator and creature. God himself stated that it should be taught to Israel — "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD; And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" — Deut. 6:4,5. This will always be the case. There can only ever be one God. Our Lord Jesus has been given a name which is above every name — "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" — Phil. 2:9. Yet He did not seek to be equal with God. Indeed the Bible tells us that even Jesus will be subject to God — "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" — 1 Cor. 15:28.

Mind you, there is a certain degree of equality. Even when Jesus was a man, His reference to God as His Father claimed equality up to a point. John gave this as one of the reasons for the Jews seeking to kill Him — "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" — John 5:18. This amounted to putting Himself on the same plane — a family plane — with God. He certainly did NOT claim an equal position within that plane.

Such unequal equality can be illustrated by an analogy from our own society. Each of the children of our queen is said to be royal. Only the queen is a monarch, but everyone of her children is royal, 100% royal. They are equally royal but not equal in rank.

Similarly, distinction has to be made between several types of likeness. We loathe the unbridled ambition of Lucifer who sought to be like God. He did not want character likeness, but a likeness to God's pre-eminence. On the other hand, we rejoice in the declaration that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is — not as He was. Seeing Him is given as a proof or explanation of our being like Him. Surely this refers to a likeness to His nature as a spirit being or spiritual body. To be like our Lord in this way does not suggest any usurpation of His Headship.

There are great and precious promises whereby ye might be partakers of the divine nature. The part to be taken is not defined. Even without the remainder of 2 Pet. 1:4 — "having escaped the corruption that is in

the world through lust," one should perceive that the part taken would include God's righteousness. The Church is to be conformed to the image of God's Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. But our Lord Jesus will always be the older Brother and God, Himself, will always be God.

In the past we have been reminded that the expression Divine nature is related to our word "native" and indicates natural attributes in the sense of not acquired. With this knowledge 2 Pet. 1:4 must mean that some of the attributes which are 'native' to God are to be partaken of by others. With those who acquire them, these attributes could hardly be said to be "native." The promise is still great and precious because none who really worship God would seek to receive His exclusive place.

In the Ages to Come all will know God and will understand the role of the true God. He will be no longer the God of Hope. This is not because God has changed. Quite simply, it will be because "hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

But in those days they will worship Him for what He is:

The Creator of all matter;
The Originator of all love;
The Centre of all wisdom;
The Artist of all beauty;
The Designer of all harmony;
The Controller of all energy;
The Maintainer of all justice;
The Justifier of all sinners;
The Basis of all security;
The Requirer and Enabler of all righteousness;
The Source and Purpose of all life.

When all this is appreciated in the forward active part of the mind, true worship must follow. Then will all mankind want to join in David's prayer — "Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in heaven and in earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name" — 1 Chron. 29:10-13.

"THE TEN CAMELS"

A supply of these helpful and well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 70¢ in Victoria, 80¢ interstate.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

"Gifts of Spirit — True and False"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Nambour Convention

The Nambour Convention is to be held (D.V.) on July 28th and 29th in the Staff Room, State School, Coronation Drive, Nambour, to which interested friends are invited. Further information from:— Mr. G. Tosh, Paynters Creek Rd., M.S. 1536, Nambour, Queensland, 4560.

The Institute's Work

WITH the close of April, another year's work has been completed for the Berean Bible Institute. We are very thankful to our Heavenly Father for all His blessings in connection with the efforts undertaken throughout another year, and this brief review of the work is now presented.

Many of our Australian and overseas brethren have co-operated very well again over the year past. This is most encouraging, and sincere thanks is expressed to all who have assisted so well. The extent of the work has been of a similar nature to recent years, by the Lord's overruling providence, and all opportunities for service are esteemed as so many privileges, by the Lord's grace.

Our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" has continued to provide a helpful contact with our Australian and overseas brethren and friends. Appreciation of the messages in our "Paper" has been received throughout the year again. This is encouraging, and to all who have contributed to the pages of our journal sincere thanks is expressed for this good assistance in the service of the Lord. The main object of our "Paper" is to build up all readers with the spiritual truths from God's Word.

Some increase in printing costs has been met over the year past, as well as the postage expense with increased rates. Subscriptions to the "Peoples Paper" continue at \$1.00 per annum, and the postage \$1.80 per annum throughout Australia and up to \$2.40 for overseas despatch now applies. This high postage cost is covered by the General Tract Fund which is well

supported by many of our brethren. A number of subscribers cover the postage cost with their subscriptions, and this help is much appreciated.

The publication of the "Peoples Paper" is possible only by a deficiency in cost being covered from the General Tract Fund. This in turn is largely compensated by the "Paper" being provided free to many new friends over various periods, to encourage their interest in the truths of God's Word. Some of our Melbourne friends continue to give willing and valuable assistance with typing of addresses, checking and proof reading for the "Peoples Paper," also with shorthand for articles, etc., all of which is greatly appreciated in the service of the Lord.

Some new booklets were produced throughout the year and were supplied free with the "Peoples Paper" to all readers, and were appreciated generally. Extra supplies were provided for wise distribution by all who desire to witness with the Lord's message of hope and encouragement in these days of world distress.

Continued advertising of suitable booklets in popular magazines has been possible with encouraging responses from all Australian States and areas overseas. Amongst the many who have responded, some new friends show good interest, and we ask God's blessing upon all sincere seekers for His truth. Samples of the "Peoples Paper" are also supplied with the booklets to all who respond. Some new friends attended our recent Memorial Service in Melbourne as a result of the advertising. This witness work will continue as seems good, in the Lord's providence.

The statement of items in the General Tract Fund shows the financial position of the Institute in its work. The voluntary contributions of our brethren and friends throughout Australia and overseas have enabled all expenses to be fully met, in the Lord's providence. Sincere thanks is expressed to all who have so willingly sacrificed earthly good things to assist the work so well, realizing that all has been rendered as to the Lord, for His service.

From year to year there is definite deterioration in world conditions and this has certainly been the pattern in the past twelve months. Bible students are well aware that the passing of "this present evil world" is under way. This would be most tragic did they not know that this is a necessary part of God's Plan to establish His Kingdom of righteousness on a clean foundation. As the Lord's people we must truly be thankful for the assurance that His Kingdom will more than compensate for the reign of sin and death throughout the period of human history. We should also feel honoured that we have been blessed with His truth, and His call to discipleship, and have the privilege of serving the Lord now through His people in hope of the heavenly Kingdom, by His grace. The prayers of our dear brethren are requested that the Lord's guidance and blessing may direct His work in our hearts, and all that is undertaken in His name, to the praise of God.

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/83.	\$2,160.06
" Donations, Legacy, Bank Interest.	19,655.05
	<u>\$21,815.11</u>
By Deficiency "Peoples Paper" and	
Free Tracts.	\$1,931.00
" Advertising "Reader's Digest"	2,962.00
" Advertising "New Idea"	2,640.00
" Advertising "Women's Weekly"	2,047.55
" Other Advertising	24.50
" Free Booklets with "Peoples	
Paper" and Advertising.	2,070.00
" General Expenses (Phone,	
Envelopes, Office, etc.)	1,392.20
" Postage	1,564.97
" Assistance to Brethren.	1,957.00
" Service to Brethren.	436.00
" Travel and Sundries.	232.00
" Banking Tax.	17.15
" Credit Balance 1/5/84.	4,540.74
	<u>\$21,815.11</u>

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

IT was a pleasure and privilege for the Melbourne brethren to observe Christ's Memorial again this year on the anniversary of the sacrifice of our dear Saviour, who — "by the grace of God tasted death for every man" — Heb. 2:9.

Previous Class studies on Isaiah 53, and 1 Cor. 11:23-29; 10:16,17, proved very helpful in refreshing our minds and hearts on the great love of our Heavenly Father in the gift of His dear Son to be the Redeemer of humanity. Also the willingness of our Lord Jesus to lay down His perfect humanity as He delighted to do His Father's will, caused us to feel increased admiration toward our Saviour, in keeping with the Apostle's later declaration "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" — 2 Cor. 5:19.

While Christ's sacrifice will in due time provide a resurrection hope of lasting life for every member of the human family on the restored earth, we realized that the Memorial of His death was instituted especially for our Lord's devoted followers of this Gospel Age — those who are called of God and delight to walk in the steps of their Master. This was particularly stressed in our study of 1 Cor. 10:16,17, where the Apostle Paul was used of God to present the deeper meaning of our Lord's Memorial — that of participation in the death of Christ, if we would participate in His resurrection. On the basis of full faith in the merit of Christ's sacrifice, His followers consecrate their lives to God, to sacrifice in His steps — "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" — Phil. 1:29.

For the Memorial Service we were pleased to have visiting Christians join us, some for the first time, and the Lord blessed the gathering in His name. The suitable hymns and appropriate Scripture readings, with prayers of thankfulness to God were followed by a helpful address, after which we partook of the unleavened bread and wine. These emblems pictured our Lord's body broken for us, and His life poured out in sacrifice. Thus we reverently remembered our dear Lord's great sacrifice for us, as He requested, and manifested our desire to faithfully fulfil our own covenant of sacrifice in His steps, by His grace.

Adelaide

Each year we find that it takes several weeks to concentrate our thoughts on things pertaining to the Memorial, to the extent that the importance of the occasion demands. In this preparation the formal details as to time and manner are interesting but insignificant when compared with things like the extent of love both of the Father and our Saviour, the place of Christ's sacrifice in God's plan, the purpose of Christ's death and additionally His earlier suffering and what was achieved on the Cross.

This year chapters 18 and 19 of John's Gospel were chosen and divided into three Memorial studies. Of course, these took us to many related Scriptures. Foremost in the passage is the ultimate in human suffering endured by the perfect Man when He who was without sin was tortured and died as a blasphemer of God. But this was for our sins — Isa. 53:5; 2 Cor. 5:21. The most immediate effect on us should be ever greater constraint in the direction mentioned by Paul in 2 Cor. 5:14,15. The revulsion we feel from the conduct of those present must be directed where it belongs — against sin. Surely the lesson our Father wants us to learn from the Cross, as He wanted the ancients to learn from the animal sacrifices, was the high cost of redemption so that we come to hate sin.

When we gathered for the annual remembrance, our thoughts centred on the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. How we rejoice in God's merciful provision of counting us all as condemned in Adam, so that it was possible for the single Great Sacrifice to redeem us all as Adam's progeny. Yet we must deplore the fact that our personal sin added to Christ's burden. This repentance should make us hate sin all the more.

Partaking of the emblem of our Saviour's body, reminded us of the fellow participants under the same Head. Some of these are quite close to us, others not even known to us but we do know that they are all one in Christ Jesus. The cup, the emblem of His life's blood, also was taken in remembrance of Christ. Although we need and are thankful for the righteousness of God imputed by faith in the faithfulness of Christ every day of the year, we can see the wisdom from Above in requiring our special con-

centration on the sacrifice, central to God's plan, once a year.

Perth

Our brethren prepared themselves for the Memorial by studying from Volume 6, "The New Creation," from page 457 on "The Passover." This was on the Sunday previous. Then on Memorial Day we had a study beforehand on John 17:14-26 recalling our Lord's intercessory prayer just before His betrayal and death.

As a group we observed our Lord's dying wish to remember His death as a yearly Memorial observance, and a heart searching of our own hearts as we examined our own faithfulness in endeavouring to follow in His footsteps. Recalling the last few days leading to our Lord's crucifixion, and the betrayal itself, we were impressed again with the love and sympathy our dear Redeemer had for us all, in suffering so much as "a ransom for all," but especially as the Passover Lamb which has saved the Church of the Firstborns during this nighttime of sin. Praise the Lord!

Nambour, Queensland

We gladly met together again, as in past years, to remember our dear Saviour's life so willingly given for us and for all mankind. By God's grace all the members of our small group were privileged to be able to attend, as well as some visitors.

Our Service opened with the singing of the lovely words of hymn number 59, after which prayers were offered that we might have the Lord's presence and guidance throughout our meeting. A Study was then taken in John's Gospel, chapter 15. We appreciated the helpful illustration given by our Lord of the vine and the branches; we realized what little strength we have of ourselves; it is only by remaining in the vine and receiving of its strength that we can make any growth at all. How pleased we are that the Master has said He will never leave nor forsake us. Our Lord's new commandment "to love one another, as I have loved you," shows the special bond that should exist between all the Body members, all the branches in the vine.

Next, a very helpful address was given on — "Remembrance." What a wonderful thing memory is; it is one of the good gifts from God. Through memory we are able to re-live the pleasurable experiences of our lives, and also those that were not so pleasurable, such as our misdeeds, short-comings and failures. If we have been rightly exercised by these, remembrance can assist our development and growth, and God can make them stepping stones to better things.

After this, we partook of the emblems of our Lord's broken body and shed blood with grateful and appreciative hearts, with thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for the gift of His only begotten Son, and to Jesus for giving His life in our stead that we might live.

May God grant each and every one of us the strength and will to continue laying down our lives daily in His service for the brethren, being broken with our dear Lord and Master. Our Service closed with the singing of hymn 414.

"Looking Unto Jesus"

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of 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" — Heb.12:2.

THESE words — "Looking unto Jesus" — given by the Apostle Paul in his masterly exhortation to the Hebrews, well illustrates the whole of his own personal Christian life. All Christians well know of the Apostle having persecuted the followers of Jesus in his earlier life, and his apprehension by the risen Lord on the Damascus road. The record of this encounter with the Lord is most extraordinary! There has never been anything like it before or since! As he journeyed to Damascus to apprehend sincere followers of Jesus and bring them bound unto Jerusalem he was apprehended himself, by the power of the risen Saviour.

The record of Paul's encounter with the Lord (his name was then Saul), is found in Acts 9:3-6, and reads — "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." Here was Paul prostrate on the ground and he finds himself — "looking unto Jesus" — for mercy and help, and for the whole of his earthly life henceforth, he was continually "looking unto Jesus" — not in the terrified manner of that first encounter, but in confidence and trust, in the same spirit which he desired to impart to the Hebrews and us, in our text.

Paul was apprehended by the risen Jesus for special service. We might think that he would be about the last person suitable for discipleship, about the last one the Lord would choose, but the Lord knew otherwise. We note the words of Jesus to Ananias, who was sent by the Lord to instruct Paul what he was to do — "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" — Acts 9:15,16.

Then, as Paul engaged in the commission to serve Jesus, he reviewed the circumstances which led to his apprehension before king Agrippa, as found in Acts 26:9-19, which reads — "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of

Jesus of Nazareth. Which things I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou. Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Where upon. O king Agrippa, **I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.**" Thank God, that Paul was not embittered by that experience: he was thoroughly humiliated, as he continued "looking unto Jesus."

During Paul's ministry he was continually mindful of the Lord's condescension and favour to even consider him for discipleship, as he wrote to Timothy in the words — "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" — 1 Tim.1:12-16.

When we come to the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is little wonder that the Apostle commences his letter with the words — "God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." God had certainly spoken unto Paul by His Son, all right — "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" — and throughout this Epistle the Apostle was writing as one fully forgiven respecting his former conduct, and he was continually "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith;" as a true servant of the Master and High Priest, as he ministered to the members of the under-priesthood.

We note Paul's encouraging words to the Hebrew Christians in chapter 3, as follows — "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 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.3:1,2,5,6. "Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we" — that is, God's sons of both Jewish and Gentile Christians of the Gospel Age, to whom the Apostle continues to present such encouraging exhortations throughout his letter to the Hebrews. For instance, his message in chapter 6:13-20, which reads — "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things (God's word and His oath), in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." These lovely lessons which Paul brings out for all Christians give us a thrill indeed, as we are continually "looking unto Jesus."

Then, when we come to the 12th chapter of Hebrews, we find the Apostle looking back over the great "cloud of witnesses" of chapter 11, the individuals who had for the previous nearly 4,000 years exercised abiding faith in the promises of God, and he exhorts all of God's house of sons, which includes all Christians today, to continue "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of **all faith**." What a helpful thought this is! The word "our" in verse 2 has been supplied by the translators and gives a very limited meaning, for Jesus is not only the author and finisher of the Christian's faith, but of **ALL FAITH**. All faith that has ever been manifested by God's people, long before the call of the Christian high calling has apparently been inspired by Jesus as the Logos, prior to His first advent. Yes, the inspiration for the faith of all the "cloud of witnesses" of Hebrews chapter 11, from Abel down the centuries, came from Jesus at the time of His pre-human existence. What wonderful help we gain as we review the faithfulness of all those Ancient Worthies Paul outlines in that 11th chapter.

An indication of how Jesus could be the author and finisher of the faith of all God's people of the periods

prior to the Gospel Age, is shown by the experience of the children of Israel in the wilderness, with Moses as their mediator. In Exodus 17 the account is given of the time when there was a shortage of water for the Israelites who were delivered from Egypt. They were murmuring against Moses, and he appealed to the Lord who told him — "Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." — Exod.17:5,6. Comparing 1 Cor.10:1-4 we read — "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." This shows that our Lord in His pre-human existence was the great Overseer of Israel, who were God's earthly people in covenant relationship with Him.

Further, the Apostle seems to imply that our Lord Jesus was not only the author and finisher of the faith of all the obedient of mankind back to the days of Abel, but also, as the Logos, He was the author and finisher of the faith of all the obedient heavenly host, long before the creation of humanity. This is the mighty risen Jesus to whom we are to look, the author and finisher of all faith, including all Christians' faith, the members of God's house of sons.

We note also, in this verse 2 of Hebrews 12, that the Apostle states of our Lord Jesus — "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 the joy that was set before him" — The joy of delighting to do His Father's will; the joy of redeeming His Bride, to be associated with Him in the great restoration work of the Kingdom; the joy of redeeming "all the families of the earth" from the prisonhouse of death, enabled our Lord to "despise the shame" of the cross, and the words of the prophet will be fulfilled — "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" — Isa.53.11.

The Apostle continues to hold forth the great example of Jesus in his exhortation in verse 3 of the 12th chapter of Hebrews — "For consider him (take note of His faithfulness, as we continue 'looking unto Jesus') that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." To the Corinthians the same Apostle gave a similar encouraging exhortation — "Let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" — 1 Cor.3:21-23.

Beginning and End of Bible

AT the beginning of the Bible, we find a new world — "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth".

At the end of the Bible, we find a new world — "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away"

At the beginning we find Satan entering to deceive and destroy.

At the end we find Satan cast out, "that he should deceive the nations no more."

At the beginning, sin and pain and sorrow, sighing and death find entrance into the world.

At the end there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor sighing and no more death.

At the beginning the earth, for man's transgressions is cursed with thorns and thistles.

At the end, "there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God, and the Lamb shall be in it".

At the beginning we find the Tree of Life in Paradise from which the sinner is shut away from a flaming sword, lest he eat and live forever.

At the end we find the Tree of Life again, "in the midst of the paradise of God", and the blessed and blood-washed ones "have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

At the beginning man was beneath the dominion of death and the grave.

At the end, "the dead small and great stand before God", and the sea gives up its dead, and death and hell are destroyed in the lake of fire.

At the beginning the first Adam lost his dominion and was driven out of the Garden of Eden in shame and sorrow.

At the end we find the Second Adam victorious over sin and death, enthroned as King and Lord of all, reigning in triumph and glory — Selected.

REST.

"Upon Thy Word I rest,
So strong, so sweet, so sure;
So full of comfort blest,
So wonderful, so pure—

Thy Word that changeth not, that faileth never!
My King, I rest upon Thy Word forever!"

Melbourne Class New Address

The Melbourne Class now meets at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn, in building near Wattle Rd. Sunday services are at 11.30 a.m., and 2.30 p.m., to which all interested people are invited for Undenominational study of the Bible.



Volume LXVII No. 4

MELBOURNE, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1984

Price — 20 cents

Our Victorious Faith

(Convention Address Reprint)

“Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”—John 11:40.

INTO the home of our Lord's beloved friends at Bethany a great sorrow had come. Death had invaded the little circle and severed ties that to all appearances had been of most pleasant character. If we may accept as true the various conjectures which make Lazarus the rich young ruler who on one occasion was found inquiring the way of eternal life, we may safely conclude that this home in Bethany was one of more than ordinary comfort and refinement. The deep sorrow of the two faithful sisters would seem to reveal also that the three inmates of this home had lived together in a state of peaceful and tranquil companionship. Under such circumstances, and in view of the special love Jesus had for these three, the grief He witnessed as He approached the home and His reaction thereto, makes this incident one of great interest to us today. When the spirit of inspiration singles out an individual for more than the usual general mention, we may be sure that this peculiar individualization is deeply significant. We are therefore ready to note with appreciation the remark which was by no means incidental—“Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus”—John 11:5. The keeping of this fact before our minds will give much greater force to the helpful lessons this narrative contains for all those who “through much tribulation” are seeking to enter the Kingdom.

Here then, were dear ones who enjoyed this special place in the love and affection of Jesus, loyal hearts whose every experience would be of deep concern to Him, yet how peculiarly He

seemed to act toward them in the earlier hours of their difficulty. Had we been there taking note of the sorrows of the bereaved sisters, and had we been possessed of the knowledge of His wonder-working power, would we too not have asked with a note of surprise—“Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?” The old question of how love can appear to stand aside while the blows of affliction shatter some of our fondest dreams, has been, and will continue to be, asked by burdened hearts until sorrow and sighing flee away forever. True, faith may remain unshaken in the wisdom and love of God, and heroically say—“Though he slay me yet will I trust him,” but, “frail shrinking nature” is ever prone to “cry enough” before the tribulation has accomplished its refining work. Faith will not forget that “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth”—Heb. 12:6—but somehow the thought will remain, “Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”—I would surely not have had this particular trial or experienced this disturbance of my peaceful environments, if Thy presence had been really with me. But where love abounds, the heart is teachable and ever ready to confess “Thy judgments, Lord, are true and right, and brighter every day,” and in our hearts we entreat Thy patience, yea,

“Until by dint of strokes and blows,
The shapeless mass appears
Symmetric, polished, beautiful,
To stand the eternal years.”

The value of so many of the beautiful story lessons contained in the Gospels, lies in the fact that we may live them over again in our own daily lives. They are not just records of what Jesus said and did 1900 years ago, and of how

certain characters reacted under the circumstances, but they are living pictures of the life we live ourselves, in which Jesus moves, and lives, and speaks, with His words of comfort, and compassionate love. How often, then, our beloved Master needs to come to us in the midst of our trials to assure us that we have not been forgotten, and to remind us afresh of the love and power vested in Himself, and perhaps to say to us as of old—"Believest thou this?"

How often in our forgetfulness of the fact that He will be with us in six troubles, and remain with us even in the seventh, we have drawn on the fulness of His patience, and again and again, perhaps as frequently as special trials have overtaken us, He has needed to remind us that these experiences are after all but passing shadows, light afflictions which are but for a moment in present duration, but laden with great possibilities of "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

If then, in the hours of our chastening and scourging we are listening intently, we will find that the love that met the needs that day in Bethany is as blessedly near to us with the same reassuring declaration—"I am the resurrection and the life." Be it the open grave that has received some loved and seemingly indispensable kindred spirit, or be it the defeat of some cherished hope of a worthy character, or some effort to hold aloft the high attainments possible to the people of God, and in connection with which we had entertained great expectations only to see them swept beyond the hope of present realization, or some deep humiliation and grief of heart over our own personal failures to reveal our true self in words and acts both strong and noble—ah, then, it is He who calms our spirits with the confidence that since He is the "resurrection and the life," all is not lost; if we will only believe we shall yet see evidences of His power which will dispel all our sorrow. All these things may be stepping stones, He will say, to higher and greater ends, for I am able to make all things work together for good to those who love Me will supremely,—“Believeth thou this?”

A Very Present Help is He.

In the midst of her trouble Martha was quite prepared to believe that Jesus would eventually act on her behalf. The sad calamity had happened, and her brother had now gone beyond the hope of any present help. Sometime in the distant future all would be well. "I know he shall rise again at the last day." But until then, she thought, she must wait for the reward of her faith. And just as Jesus must teach her that the thought must not always be fixed on the end of the way, when "the toils of the road will

seem nothing," so He is constantly teaching us today. By His own example He has shown us that if we are bearing the cross unwillingly, there will be a very real disposition to talk much about the trials through which He leads us; but if we walk close to Him, happy in the abundant supply of His grace for every time of need, and catching something of His spirit of delight in the Father's will, ah, then, we can and will rejoice in our privileges of suffering for His sake, and to the end that the refining we so much need may be accomplished in us. Then our—

"Sorrow touched by heaven grows bright
With more than rapture's ray;
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day."

My Peace I Give Unto You.

A very beautiful name is given to Christ when He is called "The Lord of Peace." He is the great Peacemaker, for He has "made peace by the blood of his cross", and He is also the great Peacegiver, for He says—"My peace I give unto you." Bringing to us, first of all, peace of conscience, and teaching us how to look up to God without fear, He brings us next, peace of heart, and teaches us how to look out upon the world without fear. By His cross He makes us satisfied with God's way of saving us; by His life He teaches us to be equally satisfied with God's way of training us. He brings us into His own perfect calm by showing us how to live, as He Himself always did, with an absolutely unquestioning trust in a heavenly Father's love. Not one single instance can we find in which He sought to have His earthly lot changed from what His Father had appointed it to be, or complained because He could not change it, or made Himself miserable by anticipating the sorrows that were lying in front and ready to fall.

We are constantly criticizing God. Christ never did. Even though not actually criticizing Him deliberately, we are yet constantly imagining that things might, somehow, have been better arranged for us; the rebellious heart, if not the lips, will say, "I could have borne this if it had only come to me at some other time—if it had come alone, instead of being accompanied by so many other depressing circumstances—if it had been of a different kind, failure in my business instead of failure in my health, a stroke upon myself instead of upon my child, the loss of some other friend than just that one that was the best-loved of all"; and so on through a hundred suppositions of what might have been better arranged. How seldom do we realize the faithlessness that is in such a mood of soul as this!

But we may come to realize it, and escape from it too, if, in the secret of His presence, alone with Him, we lay our burdens at His feet and listen for His word of peace. For, as we listen, He will tell us much.

He will tell us that the whole explanation of the severity of the trial (in our view of it) is that our desires and His purposes are not moving in the same line, that we have not the same idea of life that He has, otherwise there would be no disappointment in us with the pain that life may bring; that if we are making it our chief aim in life just to have a prosperous time of self-indulgence, while His aim is to train us all along life's way to holiness of character and heavenliness of spirit, there is sure to be collision everywhere between our wills and His, and that not till this collision ceases can we get the peace we long to know.

In the secret of His presence He will tell us more. He will tell us that if we rebel against our trials, it is only because we do not see His planned issue of them in our greater good; that they are only a Great Refiner's fire for the purifying of His gold, a Great Vine-dresser's knife for increasing the fruitfulness of His vine. He will whisper to our crushed hearts in the secret place, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

It is only the eye of the sculptor that can see beforehand the finished statue in the rough marbleblock; but he does see it, and all the strokes of his tools are meant to bring out to the eyes of others what is already clear to his own. *And the strokes of God's hand are only to produce the perfect beauty of the soul, and make that as visible to others as it now is to Himself.* Nothing is more certain than that we will be perfectly satisfied with His work when we see it finished. Why should we not be satisfied now when He tells us what a glorious finish He will make, and leave to Him the choosing of the tools.

Our gracious God promises us more than sympathy alone when we lay our sorrows at His feet; He promises us help as well. But we must leave to Him the way of helping us. Many a time we distress ourselves needlessly by refusing to rise above our fears till we see how the help is to come, and in what precise way we may look for an answer to our prayer. We want God to explain to us the secrets of His working before we feel certain that He will make things go right. But there is something better than **understanding** God, and that is, **trusting** Him. He does not promise to explain Himself. He does promise to **reveal** Himself; but He never reveals Himself except to an **absolute trust**.

And has it not been often so, that we, like Martha, have been inclined to say when overshadowed with some special trial, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." And even when we have been conscious of His power, we could think only of its exercise in that future day when all will be made right, forgetting that "the Resurrection and the Life" is even now with us, "a very present help in trouble," and fully competent to steal the bitter from life's woes, and send us on our way with a glad and trustful heart here and now. Over and over again we have been assured of His power to make all things work out for our highest good, to make these things profitable even in the life that now is, and have often been assured that ere long there will be a looking back to praise the way love has led us day by day. And repeated experiences have surely been ours when the cloud has lifted and the afterward of blessing come, that the Master has said to us as He said to Martha long ago—"Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" "Believest thou this?" Yea, Lord, we do believe, help Thou our unbelief, and graciously hear us as we pray—

"O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe"
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

"Lord, lead me to a faith like this,
Through trial though it be;
For O! the rest of faith is bliss,
The bliss of rest in Thee."

Through Faith to Sight.

"Said I not unto thee, that if thou **wouldst believe**, thou **shouldst see**?" This was the Lord's tender way of comforting a very sad-hearted disciple, from whom, after weary waiting and disappointment, hope seemed to have fled forever. Four days before, He had said—"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby;" and these words spoken first beyond Jordan, He had sent as a message of hope, while He Himself still lingered far away. No doubt on coming to Bethany, He had repeated them Himself to her. But the dead body, with corruption already begun, seemed to give them the lie, and as she looked at the grave, her faith staggered under the blow. Jesus did not argue with her; He just calmly put all her objections aside. She was looking at the difficulties in the way. He never so much as alluded to difficulties. He simply took her in behind the difficulties, and bade her think of His Almighty Power, and trust Him to the

(Continued on page 7)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Thoughts on 1 Thess.4:13-18

IN verse 13 the Apostle desires that his readers have clear knowledge concerning the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead. He refers to "them which are asleep", and he is writing with the special object of comforting the brethren so that they may not be found sorrowing as others which have no hope. It is possible that some of the brethren in the early Church regarded it as an advantage to be "alive,"—still in the flesh—at the time of our Lord's second presence, as though these would receive some kind of blessing not possible for those who had "fallen asleep."

In verse 14 the Apostle says,—“If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” Verse 15—“For . . . we which are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord, shall not precede them which are asleep,” (Diaglott). Order will be observed in the resurrection; some will be glorified or “changed first,” and others afterward. The Apostle here declares that the living saints, who remain to the presence of the Lord, will by no means precede those who fell asleep. Those “dead in Christ,” who are fallen asleep are not required to wait in sleep for the living members to finish their course, but are resurrected at once, as one of the first acts of the Lord at His second presence. This is confirmed by the Apostle's words in the latter part of verse 16—“the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

In verse 16 the Apostle describes the conditions which will accompany our Lord's second presence. He says—“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.” “With a shout.” Since our Lord Jesus comes in the manner of a thief, that is, secretly, it is evident that when Paul wrote in our text that Jesus would “descend from heaven with a shout,” he must have been using pictorial language. The Greek word here translated “shout” means literally to incite, or to urge, to encourage. The aspect of affairs in the world for the past hundred years very strikingly corresponds with this symbol, in the outbursts of world-wide 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. In the Lord's providence, the great increase of knowledge of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the enlightenment it has brought to the people world-wide has incited a clamouring for equality and rights. And how this symbolic “shout” has already altered the course of the pre-1914 world, and shaken its very foundations.

Daniel foretold the increase of knowledge which brought about this clamouring for human rights—Dan.12:4. This increase of knowledge along all lines, which is arousing the people to throw off their age-old superstitions, has come about as a result of the fact that we are already in “the day of the Lord.” True, the foundation for this general dissemination of knowledge had already been laid through the use of the printing press and other latter-day devices of communication. Now the general diffusion of knowledge has gained sufficient momentum to stir up the masses to begin casting off their shackles of superstition and class rule, and it is creating within them a desire for that economic liberty, security, and happiness which they insist should be the heritage of every human.

Hence it is seen that a mighty “shout” has attended our Lord's return, even as Paul predicted. The people have heard it and have taken it up, having been incited to clamour for the things which they now believe are rightfully theirs. By it the Lord is creating a state of mind in the masses of the oppressed and suffering millions of the world that will ultimately contribute to the complete overthrow of the present social order. This shout is also accomplishing a gradual preparation of the hearts and minds of the people for the blessings of the coming kingdom of Christ, blessings which will be dispensed to a dying world just beyond the final spasm of this great “time of trouble”—Dan.12:1.

In our text Paul prophesied that the Lord would return “with the voice of the archangel.” This is another striking symbol of similar import. The name “archangel” signifies chief messenger; and our anointed Lord Himself is Jehovah's Chief Messenger—the Messenger of the covenant—Mal.3:1. Daniel refers to the same personage, calling him Michael, which name signifies—**who as God**—an appropriate name for Him who is “the express image of the Father's person,” and the representative of His authority and power. The voice of the archangel represents Christ's authority and command.

The same thought is differently expressed by Daniel, when he says—"Then shall Michael, the great prince, **stand up**." To stand up signifies to assume authority, to give commands. The Psalmist says—"He uttered his voice; the earth melted." The great time of trouble will be precipitated, and the earth (organized society) will melt, or disintegrate, when the new Ruler utters His voice of command. At His command, systems of error, civil, social and religious must go down, however old, or firmly entrenched and fortified they may be. The sword out of His mouth shall cause the havoc. The truth on every subject, and in all its varied aspects, shall judge men, and under His power and overruling, shall cause the overturning of evil and error in all their thousand forms.

"The trump of God" is another meaningful symbol. Paul here refers to what the Revelator designates "the seventh trumpet," the "last trump" in a **series** of symbolic trumpets—Rev.11:15; 1 Cor.15:52. The proof that these references are to the same trumpet is found in the record of the events connected with each. Paul mentions the resurrection, and the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom, as connected with "the trump of God," and the Revelator mentions the same with even greater minuteness. The propriety of calling the "seventh," or "last trump," the **trump of God**," is evident too when we remember that the events mentioned under the preceding six trumpets of Revelation refer to humanity's doings, while the seventh refers specially to the Lord's work, and covers the "Day of the Lord."—Rev.10:7; 11:15,18.

Thus we find the "shout," "the voice of the archangel," and "the trump of God" all symbols, and now in process of fulfilment. Note carefully, too, the fact that each of the three prophecies just referred to—Dan.12:1; Rev.11:15; 1 Thess.4:16—declares the Lord's **presence** at the time when the events mentioned transpire. They were foretold for the very purpose of indicating the manner in which His **invisible** presence would be manifested to those who have faith in the word of prophecy. Paul says, "The Lord **shall descend with** (literally **in**, or **during**) a "shout," "voice," "trumpet," etc. John says that the kingdoms of this world become His during the time of these events; and Daniel says—"At that time shall Michael, the great prince (Christ), stand up" (be present) and begin to prepare to take to Himself His great power. If, therefore, we can recognize the "shout," the voices, and the sounding of the great symbolic trumpet, we should accept them as indications, not that the Lord will come soon, but rather that He has come and is now present,

and that the harvest work of gathering the wheat is already under way. Yet it is not to the natural vision, but only to the eye of faith, through the sure word of prophecy, that His presence and work can be discerned. Also the "shout", the "voice of the archangel," and the "trump of God," are all instrumentalities for the accomplishment of the harvest work of the Gospel Age—See Matt.24:31.

In the latter part of verse 16 the Apostle says—"And the dead in Christ shall rise first." The "**dead in Christ**" are not required to wait in sleep for the living members to finish their course in death, but are resurrected at once, as one of the first acts of the Lord at His second presence: "**for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead (in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed**"—1 Cor.15:52.

Verse 17—"Then (thereafter) we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." "We which are alive and remain (at the time of the Lord's second presence) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds (He cometh with clouds) to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord"—See 1 Cor.15:51,52. "We shall not **all sleep** (says the Apostle) but we shall all be changed."

So, then, at the Lord's presence the resurrection of the sleeping saints takes place. It would now be proper to say **has taken place**, since we can recognize the signs of His "parousia," and then the saints still in the flesh are "changed." As each one finishes the earthly course, they are gathered to meet the Lord and the risen saints in the air. What is the significance of being "**caught up together**"? The Diaglott renders this,—"**At the same time**." This would not mean the same **instant** of time, but rather the same period of time—the period of Christ's secret presence, before His manifestation to the world. We should remember that the Apostles were not only instructors, expounders of God's Word, but they were prophets themselves also, and in foretelling events not then due, they used figures, symbols, and dark sayings to be understood by the Church when the due time came for the understanding to be made plain. In regard to the expression "caught away in the clouds together" we should remember that all the prophecies looking down to this period called the "Day of the Lord" and the "Day of Trouble," state the many great events of this time as though they would all take place together; and so they do, for nothing intervenes to break the chain of events; link follows link, and they go all together, clouds of trouble

follow one another closely, the one fading away where the next is beginning. Like the cars in a train, they all go together, and yet one is first and another is last. So likewise the living will be caught away in these clouds to the new power of the air,—together—just as when a school is dismissed the pupils leave it together, yet they do not all pass through the doorway at the same instant of time.

Paul's "clouds" in which the living are to be caught away, coincide exactly with the "clouds and thick darkness" of trouble, by which all the prophets so often represent the troubles of this Day of the Lord. And the "air" into which they are caught, and in which they are to be with the Lord, we apprehend to be no less a symbol than the others. A symbol of what? Of power and dominion. And if we are to be "changed" and are to enter into and share this dominion, how appropriate to say in symbol that we will be caught up into the "air" power, and be forever in it, with the Lord.

Thus, the same word is used elsewhere by the same Apostle. In Eph. 2: 2, he speaks of the "power of the air," and declares that Satan now holds that "power" which the "air" symbolizes. And when we remember that "sea" in symbol represents the lawless and unruly classes of men, that "earth" represents organized society, and that "mountains" represent earthly governments, what is more reasonable than that the "air" or "heavens" should be used to symbolize the invisible yet all-pervading power and influence of spirit beings.

And if "air" is thus used to represent the present evil spiritual control, how appropriate that the same symbol should be used in describing the new spiritual empire of the Prince of light who becomes the new Prince of the air, and deposes and binds the present usurper.

Paul, explaining the resurrection of the sleeping saints, and the "change" of those who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord, calls it a mystery—1 Cor.15:51,52—a matter not yet made fully plain and clear of which he could only give them a glimpse. And he declares of the living—"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at (Greek, 'during,' or 'in') the last trump." Here the symbolic trumpet is again introduced, which covers the period of the Harvest, the period of the Lord's secret presence, and it is *in* or during this time, that the dead saints shall be raised and the living members "changed." "For the trumpet shall sound and the dead (in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed." While, therefore, all must be changed, and the change

of each will be "in a moment," all will not be raised and changed in the same moment—the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we—continuously—as each one finishes their earthly course in death, without interruption or anything to prevent, will be "caught up together,"—to be together—in association with them into the power of the air. "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." Verse 18,—*"Wherefore comfort (exhort, strengthen, encourage) one another with these words."*

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 looked 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.

(Continued from page 3)

last—“Said I not unto thee?” Well, I say the same thing still.

I read these words with deepest joy, not because of what they tell me about Martha, but because of what they tell me of her Master and mine. I see the absolute trustworthiness of my Christ. I see His claim to be trusted; but I see more. I see His right to be trusted to the uttermost; and I see that He is infinitely worthy of that trust. Had Martha only known her Lord sufficiently, no doubt would have troubled her poor heart for a moment. Before I really know Christ, it is difficult for me to trust Him utterly; but, once known, it is impossible not to trust Him. This is a secret that the great Apostle Paul had well learned, when he said—“I know whom I have believed.” He did not say—“I know that I have trusted him”; he said, “I know Him on whom my trust reposes; I know His character to be the infinitely trustworthy One”; and this was a thing that could never need reconsideration. It was a settled matter. “I know whom I have believed”; not, “I know One whom I must trust, as soon as necessity arises”; nor, “I know One whom I must trust as my last resource, when all others fail”; but, “I know Him to whom I have already surrendered my trust, whom I have trusted once for all, and who will keep me safe forever. I trust Him because I know Him. I know Him to be One who will never go back on His word.” Was it not just to this that Jesus sought to bring the weeping Martha? “Said I not unto thee? What I have once said I will never unsay.” It seems to me that, for all the high purposes of faith, it is easier for me to know Christ than to know any one else, or even to know myself, and that for the simple reason, that neither I nor other men are ever two days alike, but He changes not. When I see Christ at all I see what He will always be. Looking at myself and men is like looking at the ever-changing sea. Looking at Christ is like looking at a great mountain-peak, the same in all seasons, the same by night as by day. Mists may cover it for a time, but when they lift, it stands out absolutely as it was before. Knowing Him thus, I must trust Him evermore.

“Said I not unto thee?” was a rebuke as well as an encouragement. It was like what He said to Philip—“Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me Philip?” What

my Master wants from me above all things else is a simple faith in what He has already said to me. There is nothing He takes such loving pains to teach me, but nothing I am so slow to learn as this absolute and unquestioning faith in Himself; and to all my difficulties He has but one reply—“Believe and thou shalt see.” If He delays to fulfil some of His words, and I begin to think that He cannot possibly fulfil them now, I will remember that the blessing is delayed, only that it may be a more enriching blessing when it comes. I think often of my Lord’s anticipating love, the love that foresees my need, and provides beforehand for it; but I will think also of His tarrying love, the love that keeps me long in the darkness, and seems to disregard my cry. I know that if He lays some heavy trial upon me, it is because He loves me; for the more precious the jewel, the more cutting it gets from the lapidary’s hands. I will believe that if He continues the trial, it is still because He loves me; that if He seems only to heap fresh fuel upon an already scorching fire, it is because He loves me; that if, when I call Him to my Bethany, He lingers among the hills of Gilead, it is because He loves me; and I will believe that at last He will explain it all, “it was for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” At the right moment for me, as well as for Him, He will reveal that glory, and turn my sorrow into joy; for—

“His wisdom is sublime,
His heart is ever kind;
God never is before His time,
And never is behind.”

The Unspeakable Glory of the Joys to Come.

Let me learn, also, to deal with my own discouragements as Jesus dealt with Martha’s, and put the things which I believe over against the things I see, and so find rest. If any simple-minded Christian were asked the secret of his peace, he would say, “I just believe what my God tells me, and I am at rest. What I see or feel does not disquiet me, because I set over against it, what, on His authority, I believe. I see enough of sin in me every day to make me cry ‘chief of sinners’; but I believe so fully in the forgiveness of sins, that I know ‘to me there is no condemnation.’ I see in my outward lot, a thousand things that trouble me, but I believe, notwithstanding, that ‘all things work together’ for my good. I see sin covering the earth, and Satan appearing to triumph everywhere; but believe his destruction is as sure to come, as it is that Jehovah reigns. I see the sick bed, and the coffin, and the grave of some dearly loved one whose going from me has left me desolate; but though I see death, I believe in life; though I see

the tomb, I believe in the resurrection from the tomb; though I see and feel the sundering of sweet earthly bonds, I believe in the cementing of still sweeter heavenly ones. I do not see the blessedness of heaven, the white robes, the palms, the harps of gold; and yet I am not disheartened because I cannot see them, for I believe so surely, that God has promised them, that to me they are as the most real of all real things. I can praise Him for all that He is going to do, as truly as for all He has already done, and say, 'Glory to Thee for all the grace I have not tasted yet.' And if, when first in heaven, I should for a moment or two be utterly amazed that such a sinner as I should be a 'partaker of His glory,' I think my tender Lord will just repeat to me His old question, even there: 'Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe thou shouldest see the glory of God?'

Pilgrimage Ended

ON the 15th June, our dear Brother Payne of Melbourne finished the pilgrim way after being a follower of the Master throughout his adult life. Almost 40 years ago he responded to the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts from 3GL Geelong, from which time he greatly rejoiced in God's Plan for the salvation of humanity, and especially for the heavenly Christian calling.

Up till recent times our Brother Payne attended the Melbourne Class and assisted in the Bible Studies and meetings generally, being well known and loved by all members. He also enjoyed fellowship with visiting brethren at Conventions.

Some years ago our dear Brother was afflicted with painful arthritis, which he bore very patiently, without complaint of any kind. Despite his physical disability his attendance at Class meetings was regular and an inspiration to us all. By the Lord's grace, he was a real example of true Christian discipleship. Our sincere sympathy is extended to Mrs. Payne and children in their loss of a devoted Christian husband and father, and also to all relatives. We feel sure he has received the Lord's commendation—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"—Matt. 25:21.

Can Living Talk with Dead?

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Hope

"What though the blossom fall and die?
The flower is not the root;
The sun of love may ripen yet
The Master's pleasant fruit."

"What though by many a wayward fall
Thy garment is defiled?
A Saviour's blood can cleanse them all;
Fear not! thou art His child."

"Arise! and leaning on His strength,
Thy weakness shall be strong;
And He will teach thy heart at length
A new perpetual song."

"Arise! to follow in His track
Each holy footprint clear,
And on an upward course look back
With every brightening year."

"Arise! and on thy future way
His blessing with thee be!
His presence be thy staff and stay
Till thou His glory see."

—F.R. Havergal.

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"**God's Promises Come True**" — \$2.50 (Postage from \$1.85).

"**The Divine Plan of the Ages**" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 in Victoria, \$1.35 interstate).

"**The Creator's Grand Design**" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"**The Book of Books**" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"**Daily Heavenly Manna**" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"**Songs in the Night**" — \$1.20 (Postage 70c and 80c).

"**Emphatic Diaglott**" New Testament — \$3.50 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"**Tabernacle Shadows**" — \$1.20 (Postage 70c and 80c).

"**God and Reason**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"**God's Plan**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"**Hope Beyond the Grave**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"**Israel in History and Prophecy**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"**Our Lord's Great Prophecy**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"**Manner of Christ's Return**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

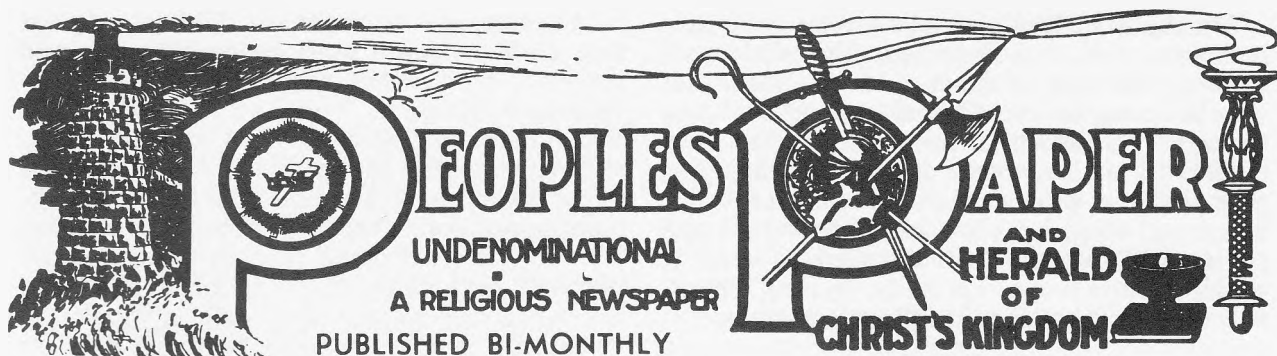
"**Christ's Return**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"**Some of the Parables**" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

Numerous other small booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXVII No. 5

MELBOURNE, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1984

Price — 20 cents

The Manifold Wisdom of God

(Convention Address)

“UNTO me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”—Eph. 3:8-11.

In these verses, the Apostle is referring to God's grand designs and particularly as they focus on the call and preparation of the Gospel Age Church. This he tells us, in verse 11, is part of His eternal purpose, or as it is often referred to—a divine plan of ages. This expression highlights to us the long-term nature of God's plans, and an understanding of this feature of His will has been a wonderful blessing to His people in the end of this age, assisting them to rightly divide the word of truth, as Paul elsewhere advises, not only in its prophetic messages but also in its personal instructions and admonitions.

However, in verse 10, the Apostle is speaking of God's intention to declare His manifold wisdom by the Church. The thought of the verse seems to be that this wisdom might **be made** known by the Church, rather than **be** known by the Church, as in the Authorised Version. A consideration of His manifold or much-diversified wisdom will certainly lead us to a greater appreciation of His character, as it is expressed in all His works and nowhere less so than in the calling out of a people for His name. The extent and the all-embracing completeness of His purposes are, so the Apostle implies, nowhere better exemplified than in this feature of His plan.

Some translations and expositors read this verse as saying that it is God's manifold wisdom which is now being made known **to** the Church. Certainly, it is to the Church alone that the plans and purposes and the love of God are presently being fully made known. But most students take the thought that it is **by** or **through** the Church, as a part of God's master-plan, that His manifold wisdom is being displayed to the angelic powers. This is in keeping with the trend of the Apostle's message in this epistle and with other passages of the New Testament.

The word translated “manifold” in the Authorised Version is in itself interesting. It is used nowhere else in the New Testament, and in another version is rendered “much-diversified”, while one commentator makes these interesting observations—“What the principalities and powers see reflected in the Church is the iridescent wisdom of God. The adjective that modifies wisdom means literally multi-coloured or much-variegated (and). . . it calls attention to the infinite diversity and sparkling beauty of God's wisdom. For both of these characteristics, one is reminded of the rainbow. . . . In every phase of redemption (as well as of creation) the brilliance of God's wisdom reveals itself. . . . There is not a single work of God, whether in creation (or as here in redemption) where that richly variegated wisdom does not manifest itself. It is seen in the Church as a whole when it strives earnestly to live to God's glory. It is seen also in every individual believer, drawn out of darkness into marvellous light.”

That our Heavenly Father should invite any of His creation to the high and heavenly call of the Gospel Age, and that Gentiles should also be included, was hitherto a mystery or divine secret, the Apostle declares (verse 9), though we may see it fore-shadowed in the stars of heaven in the promise of God to Abraham—Gen.22:17.

The Apostle Peter also tells us that the angels in heaven seek to comprehend the wisdom of God in the special grace and salvation that should come to the Gospel Age Church, as follows—"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 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.

God's manifold wisdom is specially to be demonstrated in the Church, but it is also wonderfully seen in His creation and in the cross of Christ. Let us briefly consider therefore the many-faceted wisdom of God as set forth first in creation, again in the cross and then in the Church. And there is one further glorious aspect—the consummation, that is, the final outcome of the previous three demonstrations of His wisdom. As we do, we will surely be led to declare with the Apostle, as we comprehend something of the divine character—"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom.11:33.

There is a note of utter rejoicing in these words, for just as a child rests secure and happy in the apparent all-wisdom of father or mother, so in a far greater way the Apostle, and we with him, rest secure, delighting in the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of His wisdom. Though even yet we only dimly understand, nevertheless we can trace His wisdom and His power and His love in their sheer beauty and comprehensiveness in all His works and ways.

Turning first to God's manifold wisdom as revealed in creation, we are at once reminded that we live in an age when science continues to discover more and more of the wonders of nature, and of human life. But we also live in a time when the Bible account of creation by an all-wise and loving God is increasingly assailed. In a recent newspaper article, a professor of biology told of a young student's dilemma—he could not accept the theory of evolution because the Bible, which he evidently believed in, taught creation, and to abandon that teaching would for him undermine also the moral standards of the Bible. The professor dismissed the problem offhand, saying that there is "of course no connection between that belief (i.e. creation) and any particular moral attitude."

However, we see from the Bible standpoint that God's wisdom must be equally seen and respected both in His mighty works and in His righteous judgments. For if all life, and in particular mankind, merely evolved, and allegedly is still evolving, then the very basis of the ransom is swept away. It seems clear that today's vehement opposition to the Bible account of creation is of more sinister origin than mere science, and may well rank alongside the original great lie of the Adversary to our first parents. Scientific discoveries in themselves throw much light on the wonders of the natural world and as we come to know of these and see the beauty of so much around us how can we seriously doubt the hand of an all-wise and beneficent Creator.

There is an interesting verse in Job 38:22—"Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?" God was questioning Job, who had to admit that he could not answer. But in recent times, man has been able to look into the minute detail and individuality of the snow flakes and the hail, and to see there a beauty and variety unknown in Job's day. The infinite detail and order and harmony of our universe speak to the Christian undeniably of a Creator of limitless power and wisdom. With the Psalmist we confess—"O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches"—Psa.104:24.

But surely one important aspect of God's wisdom in creation is the gift of freewill to mankind. Human wisdom, aware of the consequences of sin in advance, would no doubt argue that things should be so arranged as to make sinning impossible. But this would not be fitting for that creation which was to be in God's image and to fellowship with Him. Science today can produce robots that obey even vocal commands, without question, but how could an all-wise God have delight in such obedience. Rather it is that willing obedience, perfectly exemplified in our Saviour, that He desires, just as a good human parent desires from his or her child. And so the long (in human terms) experience of the sinfulness and consequences of sin has gone on, looking both forward and back to the cross of Christ.

Here again we see in stark contrast the divine wisdom and human reasoning. Paul in that well known passage in 1 Cor.1:18, 23-25 has this to say—"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God (to human

eyes) is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

In these verses, Christ is identified as the supreme display of the manifold wisdom of God, and there could be no greater truth than this. For by means of the cross, God can be not only perfect in justice, but the perfect justifier of all those who believe in Jesus—Rom.3:26. As one writer has well put it, there is the “economy of the cross”, in that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man. Without an appreciation of the Scriptural teaching of the ransom, together with a realisation and experience of the so great love and justice and power, as well as the wisdom of God, how foolish indeed would be the preaching of the cross.

We can well understand Peter's feelings when Jesus spoke of His coming sufferings and death, as recorded in Mark 8:31-33,—“And Jesus began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. . . . And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men”—Revised Version. Jesus had to take Peter to task here, but He would see in Peter's heart the motive of loving concern, even though this was not yet accompanied by the understanding later to be wonderfully developed in the Apostle by the holy spirit. So Peter no doubt reasoned—Why must you go into danger, into suffering and even death? Why not exercise those great powers we have seen in your mighty works and so restore our nation? This is man's wisdom, as Jesus had to tell Peter, and we can see that man's wisdom would have still left the problem of sin and its power over fallen mankind unresolved.

Concluding his epistle to the Galatians Paul writes—“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature”—Gal.6:14,15. Here Paul highlights a further aspect of the wisdom of God expressed in the cross of Christ, for only by means of the cross and the blessings which flow from the perfect offering can there be new hearts and new minds to serve God acceptably. These will eventually be the portion of all the willing and obedient of mankind under the New Covenant, but they are already the blessed experience of those, the Church, who are even now being prepared as able ministers of that covenant.

And so we come to the particular demonstration of the manifold wisdom of God, to which the Apostle refers in our text. Reading verses 10 and 11 from the Amplified Version—“(The purpose is) that through the church the complicated, many-sided wisdom of God in all its infinite variety and innumerable aspects might now be made known to the angelic rulers and authorities (principalities and powers) in the heavenly sphere. This is in accordance with the terms of the eternal and timeless purpose which He has realized and carried into effect, in (the person of) Christ Jesus our Lord.”

It is truly a wonderful provision that our Heavenly Father should determine that His will to bless all nations should be carried out by a specially favoured class, called out of the world to follow in His Son's steps. In every age, God has had His dear and faithful ones, from righteous Abel down to the patriarchs and on through the noble characters of Israel, some of whom are named in Hebrews 11. Yet in His unfathomable wisdom, God still required a further company, that through them His manifold wisdom might be preached and ministered to all mankind and declared even now to angels and principalities in heaven. It is this latter ministry, the calling out, the trials and testings and the perfect preparation of this people to which Paul specially refers in our text. What a privilege it is to be invited to take our part in this exhibition of His surpassing wisdom!

We might ponder why God could not have used the angelic beings for this task, instead of calling out very fallible human beings. But we remember that in speaking of the Captain, the first and chiefest of our salvation the Apostle says—“Therefore he (Jesus) had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted”—Heb.2:17,18, Rev. S. Version. It is surely necessary that those who are to serve with Him in the work of blessing are aware also of the difficulties and trials of the present evil world and of human infirmities.

Only so, in God's mercy and wisdom, can they become gracious and able ministers of the New Covenant. As well as the need for present experience, there is also the opportunity for present example as the Apostle exhorts in 1 Pet.2:12—“Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles, so that in case they speak against you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

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 by Israel's high priest on behalf of "himself and his house" only—Lev.16:11—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 unto God"—Rom.12:1—they are the secondary offering for sin during this Gospel Age. So, in addition to the thought in Heb.10:5—a body hast thou prepared me—for Jesus to be the ransom—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 have been "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—Col.1:24.

Continuing, 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 are being sanctified more and more during the daily presentation (offering) of ourselves as members of the Lord's goat class in His service.

The Apostle then proceeds in verses 16 and 17 of this 10th chapter of Hebrews, 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 with Israel immediately the "seven times" expired, but rather from that time the Lord's favour 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"—Heb.10:16,17.

The Apostle had mentioned this new covenant in more detail in Hebrews 8:8—13, and 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 offer-

ing for sin is no longer needed." No, indeed, the antitypical offerings for sin will be completed before the new covenant becomes 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; 3:29—"Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Also, the 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 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 favour 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 favour 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.

Convention News

The 1984 Nambour Convention proved once again a very blessed time of refreshing with fellow pilgrims on the narrow way. We lift up our hearts in thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father for all the blessings bestowed.

It was a delight to welcome brethren from Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. There was once again a very good number present from the Melbourne Class and their service was very much appreciated.

Four interesting and helpful Bible studies were held on James 5:7-12, and selected verses in Romans 11:5,7,28,16,26,30-32; John 10:1-5,26,27, and Matthew 13:44-46,52. This year the Convention was extended to the afternoon of the third day, at which time the last two studies were held. As usual a Question Time was held, when questions submitted by the brethren were considered.

A variety of subjects was chosen for the 10 addresses, as follows:—"Until"; "Some Great Thing"; "God's Manifold Wisdom"; "Faithfulness"; "Daniel, the Great Man of God"; "Anastasis"; "Thoughts of Eden"; "Oneness in Christ and the Father"; "Waiting for the Salvation of the Lord"; and a Young Peoples' Address.

Many messages and greetings were received from various Classes and individual brethren, which were very much appreciated; it was good to know we had their prayers and good wishes. Christian love is sent from the Convention to all who thus remembered us, and to brethren everywhere, together with the Scriptural message in James 5:7-9.

A short Praise and Testimony session was held, which gave opportunity for the brethren to express their thankfulness to the Lord for all His goodness and providential care.

We wish to express sincere thanks to all who served the Convention, to those who sacrificed much in travelling over such long distances to be with us, and the many hours of labour spent in preparation of studies, addresses, and comments, and to the Sisters who catered so well to our temporal needs.

Many lovely hymns were sung throughout the Convention, and a Love Feast was held with the singing of the appropriate hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds" and "God be with you till we meet again." The twelfth Nambour convention closed and we felt it was good that we came and that the sacrifice and labour involved was but a small thing compared to the bountiful blessings received. We know that all the services were rendered as unto the Lord, to whom we give all praise, honour and glory, and to His dear Son, Jesus Christ.

The Church of the First-Born.

"The general assembly and church of the first-born"—Heb. 12: 22, 23.

THE Church of the First-born 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-born 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 First-born 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-born 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-born"—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-born 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 follow 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-born, but we shall be ushered into the presence of an innumerable company of angels. These are the angels who encamp round 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-born includes the "Great Company" of the Levites as thoroughly as it includes 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.

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 recognize 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 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.

(Continued from page 3)

visitation"—Revised S. Version. The angelic hosts, though always close to the divine throne, have not experienced these things, and as we noted earlier it is this "so great salvation" and the call of the Church which the angels earnestly desire to look into. To these, God's calling out of a people for His name has been all down the Gospel Age a demonstration of His manifold wisdom.

But what of the Old Testament heroes of faith? These have certainly known human frailty, human trials and testings, and by faith overcame them to receive that "good report" of which the Apostle tells us. It is clear from the Scriptures that these are destined for grand service in the earthly phase of the coming Kingdom, and how eminently suitable they will be as guides and leaders of the people. But in His wisdom, God has reserved some "better thing for us"—the call to follow in the steps of His dear Son and to be joint-heirs with Him in that Kingdom. These mighty ones of faith looked forward to the day when that promised seed of blessing should come, but they all died in faith, to await their own reward. It is to God's Gospel Age people that the reality of the hope which inspired those of old times has been made known. These have been privileged to come to know personally by faith Him in whom all the promises of God are made Yea and Amen, who Himself is "the wisdom of God" and in whom "are hid all

the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Not by any merit of their own, but in God's grace and wisdom, these alone have had an opportunity to be called and prepared for God's special purposes.

But why should it be necessary for any others at all to be associated with our Lord in the dispensing of the Kingdom blessings? Here again, it is certainly not a matter of necessity but of God's manifold wisdom. We see the picture way back in Eden of the help meet provided for Adam, as father of the race, and beautifully again in the selection of a bride for Isaac. This illustration is carried over into the New Testament, where the Church is spoken of as the Bride, and the Lamb's wife, and we read in the final chapter of the New Testament that after the marriage of the Lamb, it will be the spirit and the Bride which issue the blessed invitation to whomsoever will—"Come, take the water of life freely"—Rev.22:17.

We can see then in some measure how the beautiful and all-embracing wisdom of God is made manifest in the grandeur of His creation, in the love and justice of the cross, and in the grace and goodness of the call of the Church. And as we meditate on these, surely our hearts respond in wonder, love and praise for such a God and heavenly Father. But there is a further area where the same manifold wisdom must also surely be displayed, not only this time to His chosen ones of past and present ages, but to all mankind. That is in the glorious consummation, the fruition of all His purposes, right from creation. The Apostle speaks of this in Eph.1:9,10—"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." And the Psalmist, by faith looking forward to that time, when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest says—"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"—Psa.145:10,11.

This glorious consummation of all God's purposes is what the Apostle tells us the whole creation groans and travails for even now, and is that for which God's people have so long prayed—"Thy Kingdom come." The wonder and beauty of that time we can only falteringly and dimly conceive, but we have come to see His manifold wisdom in all His works of creation and redemption, and we can be sure that it will be beyond all that we could ask or think. Our present privilege is to show forth His manifold wisdom as He prepares those called according to

His eternal purposes. May this continue to challenge us to closer fellowship with God, that we may be to the praise of His glory, and fitted for His service. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom. 11:33.

The Good Confession

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—Matt. 16: 16.

AFTER the many proofs of His divine anointing, which His disciples had seen, the Lord had reason to expect their faith in His claim to the Messiahship to be established. Hence the questions in the context of our text—(1) "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" and (2) "But whom say ye that I am?" The former was but a leading question; the latter, the pointed one, calculated to bring out a full expression of their faith.

Here Simon Peter's impulsive zeal, which sometimes led him into difficulties and errors, led him to a very warm and prompt expression of his full conviction that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. "And Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God!" Such a prompt and full confession of his faith brought the immediate reward of the Master's approval.

The conviction thus impressed upon his mind was not such as the carnal mind would arrive at, but such as the mind could gain only by submitting itself fully to the spirit of God. Peter and all the other Apostles had done this, but Peter, being the most prompt to confess it, received the first and warmest commendation and reward.

Verse 18. "And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter (Greek, petros, a stone, a piece of a rock); and upon this rock (Greek, petra, the rock in mass, the foundation rock) I will build my church; and the gates of hell (hades, the grave, death) shall not prevail against it."

The foundation "rock" was Christ—"This rock"—which Peter had just confessed, and not Peter, as the church of Rome claims, and as some Protestants are now willing to concede. Peter himself disclaims such distinction, and such usurpation of the Lord's place, when he points to Christ as the foundation stone in the spiritual temple of God, and to all the members of His Body as living stones to be built upon that foundation—1 Pet. 2: 4-6. See also Isa. 28: 16; Matt. 21: 42; Acts 4: 11; Rom. 9: 33; Eph. 2: 20; Psa. 118: 22, 23; 1 Cor. 3: 11.

The promise that the gates of death should not prevail against the Lord's true Church has indeed been verified; for, though assailed by the

fiercest persecutions, she has never yet been exterminated. Throughout the entire age down to its close in the present time the Lord has preserved a people; and His further promise—"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"—has also been richly verified.

But while the gates of death (hades) have not prevailed against the Church as a whole, they have done so (temporarily) against its members—even against the Head, our Lord. But they shall not prevail everlastingly. Our Lord triumphed or prevailed over hades (the grave) on the third day in His resurrection (by the Father's power), and we His Church also shall prevail in the first resurrection. For it is promised that He who raised up our Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus. And thus the gates of the grave shall not eventually prevail or triumph over us. "Weeping (and death) may endure for a night, but joy (in resurrection) cometh in the morning." (From "Reprints.")

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (DV) from December 22nd, in the Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J.B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

Melbourne Class New Address

The Melbourne Class now meets in the Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell. Sunday services are at 11.30 a.m., and 2.30 p.m., to which all interested people are invited for Undenominational study of the Bible.

Thank you, God, for Everything

Thank you, God, for everything—
The big things and the small,
For "every good gift comes from God"—
The Giver of them all—
And all too often we accept
Without any thanks or praise
The gifts God sends as blessings
Each day in many ways—
First, thank you for the little things
That often come our way,
The things we take for granted
But don't mention when we pray,
Then, thank you for the "Miracles"
We are much too blind to see,
And give us new awareness
Of our many gifts from Thee,
And help us to remember
That the Key to Life and Living
Is to make each prayer a Prayer of Thanks
And every day Thanksgiving.

Helen Steiner Rice.



Volume LXVII No.6

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER, 1984, JANUARY, 1985

Price — 20 cents

"Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, 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. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"—Luke 2:8-14.

THE angel's message at the time of the birth of Jesus as the babe of Bethlehem is most inspiring, being helpful and encouraging at all seasons of the year, but especially so at the Christmas season. The words of verse 10 in this 2nd chapter of Luke read—"The angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which **shall be to all people.**" Meditating on these words we realize that they mean something really outstanding, for the "all people" mentioned in the angel's message means **all people who have ever lived on this earth.** This assurance is almost beyond our comprehension until we realize that what the Lord promises in His Word He is abundantly able to perform, in due time.

Further, the message in verse 14 is of the utmost importance also, because it gives assurance that a time is coming when there will be **"on earth peace, good will toward men."** Both these messages, coming from God's holy angels, at the birth of God's dear Son to be the Saviour of the world could not have greater or higher qualifications for the sureness of their fulfilment, because those angels spoke for God.

Examining other Scriptures which also speak for God, through earthly servants, we find that the promised "peace on earth" has never been experienced amongst the human family since Adam disobeyed God and brought the sentence of death upon himself and all mankind who were condemned in him. This is clearly stated 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."

How different, however, is the prospect for all mankind revealed in the wonderful prophecy of Isa. 9:6, 7—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." This prophecy given by Isaiah at least 700 years prior to the birth of Jesus is surely a wonderful message of assurance that the Saviour would come and establish peace on earth, in due time. The difficulty with many people is that almost 2,000 years have passed since Jesus came, and instead of peace on earth, good will toward men, wars and other world-wide troubles have increased. Indeed, to such a pitch have world conditions developed today, that the greatest

"Peoples Paper" Subscriptions

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper"—\$1.00—are now due for 1985. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.80 per annum (\$2.40 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the "Peoples Paper" to receive it regularly.

men on earth fear for the complete destruction of the human family with such weapons of annihilation that are available today.

When Jesus was on earth at His first advent He made no claim that His Kingdom of Peace could be expected at that time, and this is also strange to many people. In John 18:36 we read Jesus' reply to Pilate—"My kingdom is not of this world." The word "world" in this verse is a translation of the Greek word "kosmos", meaning "order of things." So Christ's kingdom would not be established during this "present evil world." We may reason that if our Lord had set up His kingdom at His first advent, He could have prevented the development of such terrible conditions we see worldwide today. That may have been so, but supposing the Lord's power had been operating throughout the world, and wars had not developed, and nations had not invented such weapons of destruction that are so prevalent today, would "peace on earth, good will toward men" have been possible while all members of the human family were growing old and passing away in death, even if there were no dread diseases to cause pain and suffering? It will be admitted readily that there can be **no real peace on earth** in the midst of death amongst the human family.

Therefore, God's promise, through His angels at the birth of Jesus, to establish "peace on earth" was much more far reaching than the mere prevention of war, however desirable that may be. Yes, the promise of "peace on earth, good will toward men" when Jesus was born as the Saviour, Christ the Lord, meant the taking away of every hindrance to lasting peace and happiness for the human family, including the abolishing of the death sentence rightly imposed upon our first parents 4,000 years previously.

In Matt. 18:11 we read—"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost", and this includes the whole human family. The words of Jesus are also recorded—"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might receive it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to receive it again. This commandment have I received of my Father"—John 10:11, 17, 18.

The Psalmist gives us a good outline of God's compassion and love for His human creation, that prompted the sending of His only begotten Son to pay the penalty of death standing against all mankind, in the words of Psalms 102:19, 20—"For he hath 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." These human prisoners under the sentence of death, are also well described by the Apostle Paul—"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now"—Rom. 8:22. However, the promise that God would "loose those that are appointed to death" is abundantly confirmed throughout the Old and New Testaments.

In Isa. 25:7-9, we have a beautiful description of the blessings of Christ's Kingdom operating throughout the world for the benefit of all the obedient in that day—"He will destroy in this mountain (kingdom) the face of the covering (death) cast over all people, and the veil (ignorance) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." (See also Isa. 2:2-4.)

In Psalms 72:17 we read—"His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." This surely will be the time when the message of the angels at the birth of Jesus will be fulfilled—"Peace on earth, good will toward men." However, it may be asked, Why did God allow about 2,000 years to pass from Jesus' birth before the promised peace should come to mankind? The answer is, for the special purpose in God's plan to select the Church, the Bride of Christ, to inherit the heavenly kingdom with Christ, and assist in establishing **lasting peace** throughout the earth, to God's praise. To accomplish the calling and developing of this class of followers of Jesus, the whole Gospel Age has been devoted and each one drawn of the Father to Jesus has been blessed with a measure of inward peace which our Lord exhibited so completely against all the contradiction of sinners against Himself. (See Heb. 12:1-3.)

Our Lord's legacy of peace has been a great blessing to all His true followers, as stated in John 14:27—"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." This peace, comforting the hearts of God's people, comes from the indwelling of His holy spirit, but of course does not fulfil the promise of "peace on earth, good will toward men", which can come only with the setting up of Christ's Kingdom and His rule of righteousness throughout the earth, Satan of

course being bound that he deceives the nations no more at that time—Rev. 20:1-3.

While waiting for the kingdom the Lord's people realize what a privilege it is to have a part in the service of Christ, to be active in witnessing with the glad message which has been such a blessing to their own hearts. An important part of the Christian's armour is to have our "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"—Eph. 6:15. In other words, to have one's heart prepared in meekness, humility, and devotedness to the Lord, and so be fitted to commend Christ's gospel of peace wherever there are hearing ears. The same thought is found in Paul's words in Rom. 10:15—"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Yes, indeed, what a favour to have been entrusted with the glad tidings of the gospel of peace, to be proclaimed at all suitable times now, and also assuring all who have ears to hear that the message from the angelic host is sure of fulfilment in the near future, with the establishment of Christ's kingdom—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Thoughts for the New Year

If clouds of trouble gather near,
Sometime throughout this coming year,
And things we prize should disappear,
We'll find no change in Jesus.

If foes surprise and lay us low,
And swell our hearts with pain and woe,
And friends, unheeding, onward go,
We'll find no change in Jesus.

If fortune turns from us away,
And poverty should come to stay,
And friends their shallow hearts betray,
We'll find no change in Jesus.

And so 'twill be until the end,
We'll always have a precious Friend,
Upon whose love we may depend:
We'll find no change in Jesus.

No change in Him, no change in Him:
All glory to His precious Name!
For us His love remains the same:
We'll find no change in Jesus.

—James Rowe.

"THE TEN CAMELS"

A supply of these helpful and well-known Bible Stories for children is in stock. Of 144 pages with 4 illustrations, price \$1.00, plus postage 70¢ in Victoria, 80¢ interstate.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Binding the Strong Man

During our Lord's ministry on earth He performed many and varied miracles by the power of His heavenly Father to demonstrate that He was the true Messiah sent by God, as promised throughout the Old Testament.

One of these miracles is recorded in Matthew 12 from verse 22 as follows—"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." What a strange and foolish accusation by the Pharisees—to imply that our Lord needed and gained the power of Satan to cast out one of Satan's own demons from the afflicted man. But this erroneous statement was used to good purpose by Jesus when He replied—"If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? . . . But if I cast out devils by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you"—Matt. 12:26,28. The Diaglott gives a better rendering of verse 28—"If it be by Divine co-operation that I cast out demons, then God's Royal Majesty has unexpectedly appeared among you." Our Lord was speaking of Himself, and this and other miracles were proofs of His Messiahship.

In verse 29 Jesus went on to speak of the miracle by the power of God as being a binding of the strong man (Satan) in a limited sense to bring about the liberation of the man possessed by the demon. Our Lord was entering the strong man's house, so to speak, and spoiling the control of the demon over the possessed man. This demonstration of God's power in the hands of our Lord also pictured the time when Satan's house would be completely entered, and Satan will be fully bound throughout the kingdom of one thousand years. This is shown in Rev. 20:1-3, and the timing of Satan's binding is clearly revealed as being when "he should deceive the nations no more", which of course is not yet, but will be when Christ's kingdom is fully established in the earth.

The Family of God

"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother"—Matt. 12:50.

The incident during our Lord's ministry, as recorded in Matthew 12:46-50, is apt to be misunderstood. Jesus was busy talking to the people, no doubt about the wonderful kingdom message, when His mother and brethren approached, desiring to speak to Him. On being informed of their presence, He asked—"Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!" Then He added the words of verse 50 stated above.

There can be no doubt that Jesus had the highest respect and love for His mother throughout His earthly life, and this incident does not detract from His love for her, even if she did not become one of His devoted followers. However, there is every likelihood that she did become a consecrated disciple of Jesus, even though this is not confirmed in the Bible. The meaning of our Lord's words would be that His disciples, drawn by His heavenly Father to Him, are truly members of the spiritual family of God here on earth, and would have a much closer relationship to Jesus than any human relative not consecrated to do the will of His Father.

In a recent study of these verses in Matthew, we were reminded that at no time did Jesus' mother seek to restrict His ministry in any way. She did not wish to selfishly control the life of her dear Son as some mothers and fathers are apt to do as their children grow up in the world today. A helpful case was mentioned of a Christian mother's attitude to her daughter who also became a true Christian, in that the mother always thought and spoke of her daughter as being a Sister in the Lord—on the same favoured basis as herself in God's spiritual family. Such is the honoured relationship of all true followers of the Master, as they use the titles of brother and sister in the household of God, quite apart from any human relationship, as the Apostle declared—"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one (one spirit): for which cause he (Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren"—Heb. 2:11.

"Sing, O daughter of Zion" — Zeph. 3:14.

Children of the Heavenly King!

As ye journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in His works and away.

John Cennick.

Pilgrimage Ended

Another of our Australian Sisters in the Lord, the devoted wife of our Brother Martin of Adelaide, finished the pilgrim way on 9th October last. The following brief report is to hand from Adelaide.

Our dear Sister Martin was of a quiet nature and humble minded but had a deep love of the Lord, the Truth and people, especially the Lord's people. Taught by an earnest Christian mother, the late Sister Horner, her love of the Lord would have gone back to her earliest days.

Until frailties of age in recent years, our Sister regularly attended the Adelaide Class for upwards of forty years and was a frequent visitor at Melbourne Conventions. Her faith was steadfast notwithstanding some very difficult times. We have every confidence in our Sister having gained the Lord's approval, and by His grace having merited a part in His wonderful heavenly Kingdom, to which she looked forward. At this time our Brother Martin and Sister's son and his family are very forward in our prayers.

Reprint of "Hope" Booklet

A reprint of the helpful "Hope" booklet has been produced. This booklet was supplied to all "Peoples Paper" readers some time ago and has been duly appreciated. It is being advertised for the public, and all our brethren may procure supplies for general use, provided free through the Tract Fund.

Two other booklets were offered to the public in two magazines in September, and upwards of 300 requests have been received in recent times. We ask the Lord to bless His truth to all sincere people, as He sees good.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (DV) on December 22nd, 23rd, 25th, and 26th, in the Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J.B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

Melbourne Class New Address

The Melbourne Class now meets in the Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell. Sunday services are at 11.30 a.m., and 2.30 p.m., to which all interested people are invited for Undenominational study of the Bible.

The Presence of The Lord

(Convention Address)

When studying our Lord's presence, we naturally turn to our Lord's words in Matt. 24:1-3. Quoting verse 3—"And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the world?" We know that the Diaglott gives a better rendering of the Greek text—"What will be the sign of thy presence, and the consummation of the age?" Young's Literal Translation Bible also uses the words "presence" and "age."

It is important for us to understand that the disciples were not asking for signs of His coming, but of His presence—signs of His parousia, which is the Greek word. In the 1959 edition of Rotherham's Bible, he states that he can see no reason why the Greek word parousia should not be uniformly translated presence in every place where it occurs. The word is taken from the Greek root para, which we can find in good English dictionaries, the meaning being given as side by side, or alongside, such as our word parallel. Young's concordance gives the meaning of parousia as being alongside or present, so it is good to have this evidence from a number of independent sources.

There are two occasions where the King James version has translated the word parousia as presence. One is Phil. 2:12—"Wherefore, my 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." In this case we see how presence is contrasted with absence. It seems that coming is not one of the meanings of this word.

Going back to Matt. 24, the questions asked by the disciples were no doubt providential and were really asked on behalf of their brethren who would be living at the time of our Lord's second presence at the end of the age.

It has been said that all the signs given by our Lord relating to the end of this age are really signs of His presence. We will not have time to go into them all, so will concentrate on those things that Jesus said were in fact signs of His presence.

First let us pose the question, Do we have a firm foundation for the doctrine of the secret, invisible presence of the Lord? After all, many Christians believe that at our Lord's second coming He will be seen by the whole world descending from heaven in a blaze of light. As we know, there are texts which would support this thought if taken literally. We need to be careful not to take symbolic passages literally,

or we will find it impossible to harmonize the Scriptures on the subject of our Lord's second presence.

It is important that we study carefully our Lord's reply to the question, What shall be the sign of thy presence? It is also important to remember what He did not say. For example, when a question was asked of Him that was based on error, He was quick to point it out—such as His words in Matt. 22:29 and Mark 12:24—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." If the question concerning His presence had been an improper one, He would have said so, but in fact He proceeded to answer it at length, showing that the question was a legitimate one.

Let us go back to what He did say. Matt. 24:37-39 strongly supports the thought that there will be a time when our Lord is secretly present, quite unknown to the world. Young's Literal Translation Bible says—"And as the days of Noah—so shall be also the presence of the Son of man; for as they were in the days before the flood eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage till the day Noah entered into the ark and they did not know until the flood came, and took them all away, so shall be also the presence of the Son of man." The Diaglott also gives a similar translation.

There is a thought that "The Bible is its own interpreter." This is the case more than once with our Lord's prophecy. It is recorded in the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and on at least four occasions Luke interprets or enlarges upon the Matthew account. This particular passage is one such case. The accounts in Matthew and Luke are virtually the same, except for one point. Luke 17:26 reads—"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man", showing that "presence" is the correct meaning of the Greek word parousia. The word parousia does not occur in the Luke account at all; so parousia in the Matthew account, "the days of the Son of man", means the days when He is present, not the days of His coming.

The account says "the days of Noe", plural, meaning a period of time. This would be the time when the Ark was being built. It also says "the days of the Son of man", plural, again meaning a period of time. It is a period of time when our Lord is present quite unknown to the world; they go about their business as usual.

The passage in Luke 17:26-29 gives us convincing proof that our Lord is secretly present, but hidden or covered up, as it were. Verse 28 gives the same illustration again in respect of the days of Lot—they builded, planted and so on. Luke mentions the days of Lot as well as the days of Noe and the days of

the Son of man. During the days of Lot, Lot must have been present; likewise during the days of Noe, Noe must have been present. Would we not conclude, then, that during the days of the Son of man, the Son of man would be present?

Luke 17:29,30 reads—"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 day when the Son of man is revealed." Here we have a change from the plural to the singular—the day that Lot went out of Sodom, the day when the Son of man is revealed. During the antitypical days of Noe and Lot at the end of this age our Lord has been present, but not revealed to the world. Now we have a progression, the **day** when Lot went out of Sodom and it was destroyed. This was just one literal day. The antitype would be a very brief period of time right at the close of this age, a time still future. "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." This pictures the final phase of our fiery time of trouble, Armageddon. Apparently this will be the event that will reveal our Lord's presence to the world. It does not say—"Thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man comes", but when He is revealed. He has already come long before, and has been present quite unknown to the world.

The Greek word translated "revealed" is very interesting. It is *apokalupto*, and has about the same meaning as *apokalupsis*, which is a word we often study in connection with our Lord's presence. Both Young's Concordance and Vine's Greek Dictionary give the meaning of *apokalupto* as "to uncover or unveil", with the thought of uncovering something that has previously been hidden by a cover, such as unveiling a statue or a plaque. A thing cannot be uncovered unless it is first present and covered. How well this fits our Lord's secret presence! Matt. 10:26 is a good example of the use of this word—"Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known." Several translations render this verse—"there is nothing covered up that will not be uncovered."

Our Lord is referred to as coming as a thief in Matt. 24:43 and other passages. This gives the thought of secretly, stealthily, unknown until the time of His revelation.

All these passages show us that the doctrine of our Lord's secret, invisible presence at the end of this Age is a Scriptural one.

The next question we ask is, Do we have signs to show that we are living in the time of His presence? In this regard we have one key

verse in Matt. 24:27—"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." The King James translation reads "coming", but the word in the Greek is again *parousia*, or presence. In our Lord's reply to His disciples this is the first mention He made of His presence, so we must place a great deal of importance on it, since it is the answer to their question. Jesus is saying, in effect, You asked me for a sign of my presence; this is the sign, but I am giving it to you in symbolic language, and it is for you to study and work out the meaning.

There has been discussion from time to time as to whether "lightning" is the correct word to be used here, or whether it is the sun that is meant. The Greek word is "*astrape*", a word that has more than one meaning. Lightning is a correct translation, but it would be just as correct to translate it "bright shining", as it is in Luke 11:36, where the bright shining of a candle is referred to. "Sun" is not one of the meanings of this word, but it could well mean the bright shining that comes from the sun.

There is another Greek word for "Sun." The question has been asked, If "sun" is meant, why is the Greek word for "sun" not used here? Perhaps it is because the Lord wanted to emphasize the bright shining that comes from the sun—in other words, the rays of the sun rather than the sun itself. We can look up into the sky and see exactly where the sun is, but that was not the picture our Lord wanted to convey. Rather, He wanted His disciples to think of the bright shining from the sun bathing the whole earth all over, from one side to the other, and is not found in any one spot. We must also link this verse in with Matt. 24:26—"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." Jesus is saying, it is no use going out to look for Me; there is just no place anywhere on earth where I can be found. My presence will not be a literal one like that; I will not be in any one spot. My presence will be manifest like the bright shining, from one side of the earth to the other. Perhaps our Lord used the term "bright shining" so as to leave the matter open, so that both illustrations could be drawn—the lightning and the sun. Whichever illustration we use, we get the same picture. For example, we have Psalm 77:18—"The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook." Then again, look at Psalm 97. Verse 1 begins—"The Lord reigneth." In verse 2—"Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." Verse 4 is the key verse in this

passage—"His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw, and trembled." There are several other interesting passages on lightning in the Old Testament, but this is sufficient to enable us to understand the meaning of Jesus' words. He is saying that the sign of His presence would be the enlightening of the world. It is generally thought our Lord's presence commenced toward the end of the 19th century; it is only since that time that the enlightening of the world has occurred. Before that time there was no electricity, electronics, radio, television, cars, planes and 101 other things we take for granted today.

If we take the illustration as being the rays of the sun, the thought is still the same, that of bringing light to a dark world and, in due time, life and healing. We are told in Mal. 4:2 that the sun of righteousness is to arise with healing in his wings. The Hebrew text contains the thought of a wing, as a covering or protection, and that is exactly what our Lord will be to the world when He commences His mediatorial reign—a covering, a protection, as Mediator between God and man. If we are faithful now, when the Kingdom reign commences we will be privileged to be a part of that Sun of righteousness and assist in the great restitution work. Our Lord makes this point clear in the parable of the wheat and tares—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who has ears to hear, let him hear"—Matt. 13:43. The Apostle Paul tells us in Rom. 8:19 that this is the time the whole creation waits for; he says—"waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God", in other words, the time when they are to shine forth.

Our Lord's bright shining is really contained in the thought that He is the light of the world, a light to lighten the Gentiles, the true light that lighteneth every man—John 8:12, Luke 2:32 and John 1:9. During the Gospel age that light has been shining only on the followers of the Master, and even for them not as fully as it now does during our Lord's second presence.

Our Lord's presence is revealed to us in two ways; through the increase of knowledge to the world, and also through the increase of knowledge to the Church, God's true Church. Dan. 12:4 tells us—"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." There seems little doubt that Daniel's words refer to both the world and the Church; to the world in a scientific way, and to the Church in a spiritual sense, enlightenment on the features of God's plan. The world must await the kingdom age before being enlightened in this way.

Daniel indicates that this increase in knowledge is to take place at "the time of the end." Remembering the question that was asked our Lord—"What shall be the sign of thy presence and the end of the age", these two things tie in together. Our Lord is present at the end of the age. Dan. 12:4 says—"Shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end." So the words of the book are to be opened and made known at the end of the age, during our Lord's presence, as part of the general increase of light due on God's Word at that time. Also, the meaning seems to be that the running to and fro and the general increase in knowledge in the world all take place during the time of the end, which would mean the end of the age, the time of Christ's presence. The running to and fro only began in the full sense with the invention of the motor car and the aeroplane, and bearing in mind Daniel's prophecy, this makes it a good sign of our Lord's presence.

Turning again to our Lord's prophecy, Luke 17:24 is the counterpart of the verse we have been studying in Matt. 24:27 relating to our Lord's bright shining. This is the second occasion where Luke interprets the Matthew account. The verse reads—"For as the lightning, 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." If you wish, you could substitute in your minds "bright shining" for "lightning." The point is, the Matthew account says—"so shall the parousia of the Son of man be." Luke says—"so shall the Son of man be in his day." This shows again that "presence" is the correct meaning of parousia. Our Lord is not saying that just the moment of His coming is going to be accompanied by bright shining, but it is going to be a feature for the whole of His day, and His day is a very long day in the sense it is used here. I take it to cover the period from the start of our Lord's presence right through until the end of the Millennium. While the enlightening begins with our Lord's return, it is not fully accomplished until the close of the thousand years of His reign. This thought is brought out so beautifully in Zech. 14:6,7—"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark, but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." The verse preceding this passage ends with the words—"and the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee"; so there is no doubt that the day referred to is the Millennial day, and it will not be fully light until evening, the close of that day. Sometimes just a few words in the Scriptures can take a thousand years or more to be fulfilled.

I mentioned earlier that the bright shining of our Lord's presence was to bring additional illumination to the Scriptures. The increase in knowledge is not only in worldly matters, but on the Word of God also for those who have ears to hear. This is another of the signs that we are in fact told is a sign of our Lord's presence. We have the Master's words in Luke 12:37—"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." The main point to notice here is that this event occurs after our Lord returns, as the verse says "when he cometh", then He is to make them sit down to a good nourishing meal. It is suggested this meal consists of what we call today "present truth", a clear understanding of our heavenly Father's plans and purposes, an understanding of the exceeding great and precious promises that have been given to us and the glorious restitution blessings shortly to flow to all mankind. The hymn says—"It satisfies our longings as nothing else could do." The precious truths of God's Word are often represented as food. In Luke 4:4 Jesus said—

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." Jesus uses the illustration of food again in John 4:32-34 in a slightly different sense, though the thought behind it is exactly the same. He said—"I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." There is a worldly expression that says virtually the same thing. If a man becomes very absorbed in some hobby or is building up a business that becomes an all-consuming interest, it is often said it is meat and drink to him. In just the same way, the study of God's Word and doing His will should be meat and drink to us, as it was to our Lord, who always delighted to do the Father's will.

Another sign of our Lord's presence is the harvest, which we cannot go into in detail now. In the explanation of the parable of the wheat and tares in Matt. 13:39, Jesus said—"The harvest is the end of the world (age)." Once again this ties in with the disciples' question—What will be the sign of thy presence and the end of the world (age). Have we seen the signs of the harvest, the separation of the wheat from the tares? If so, it means we are living at the end of the age, the time of our Lord's presence. The main signs of the harvest were probably back at the end of last century and early this century, when a great amount of separating work took place.

There is one statement in our Lord's prophecy from which we can receive great comfort and encouragement in Matt. 24:33. This is immediately after Jesus refers to the fig tree putting forth leaves, and He goes on to say—"So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." What is meant? This is the third occasion where Luke interprets the Matthew account for us. We find this companion verse in Luke 21:31—"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand". We have seen the signs, and what a joy it is to know that the message they convey to us is that the Kingdom is even at the doors. As it says in Luke 21:28—"When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." So then, we have reached the time when our prayer and the prayer of all true Christians down the centuries is about to be fulfilled—"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"God's Promises Come True" — \$2.50 (Postage from \$1.85).

"The Divine Plan of the Ages" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 in Victoria, \$1.35 interstate).

"The Creator's Grand Design" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"The Book of Books" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"Daily Heavenly Manna" — \$1.20 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"Songs in the Night" — \$1.20 (Postage 70c and 80c).

"Emphatic Diaglott" New Testament — \$3.50 (Postage \$1.10 and \$1.35).

"Tabernacle Shadows" — \$1.20 (Postage 70c and 80c).

"God and Reason" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"God's Plan" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Hope Beyond the Grave" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Israel in History and Prophecy" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Manner of Christ's Return" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

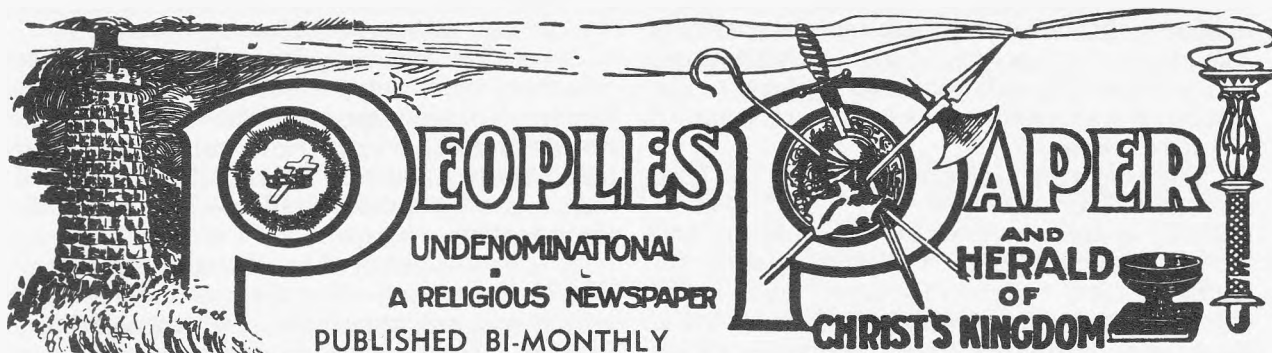
"Christ's Return" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

"Some of the Parables" — 10c (Postage 40c and 45c).

Numerous other small booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101



Volume LXV111 No.1

MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY—MARCH, 1985

Price — 20 cents

The Lord Your God Proveth You

“The Lord your God proveth you, to know 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, honour, 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, 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 realize 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”—Psa. 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 same 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 these 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 honouring the one who is loved. "Surely we are not worthy of God's love!" you say. Very true; 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"—Psa.8:5; Heb.2:6-8.

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; 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, honour 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 not 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. Today all over the world, you will find people saying, "I believe in the Trinity, but I cannot understand it." There 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 our God is one LORD"—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

today 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 your 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 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.

PEOPLES PAPER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Ransom and Sin Offering

There has been some misunderstanding of the thoughts presented in the "Peoples Paper" of October-November issue of last year in the article—"Study in Hebrews 10." The failure to see the important difference between the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus as the Ransom for all mankind and the teaching of the Sin Offering causes this misunderstanding.

The difference between the Ransom and Sin Offering is well defined when we keep in mind that the Ransom is the price Jesus provided by His sacrifice alone, once for all mankind. The teaching of the Sin Offering reveals the way in which this ransom price is made applicable to cancel the sins of the world of mankind.

When the Apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews 9:24—"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands. . . .but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"—he revealed that Christ's appearance before God at that time was on behalf of His own true followers, the "us" class, and not for the world. This agrees with our Lord's prayer in John 17:9—"I pray for them (His own selected disciples): I pray not for the world"—at that time.

At the time the Apostle Paul (who was then called Saul) was apprehended on the Damascus road, when on his mission of persecuting Christ's followers, we have the words of Jesus to him in Acts 9:4—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Our Lord was then in heavenly glory, and could not be persecuted personally, but our risen Lord counted His true followers, the "us" class, as part of Himself, in their sufferings for His cause. Thus they "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church"—Col.1:24. So doing, they are the secondary part of the Sin Offering, because their sacrifice is "holy, acceptable to God" (Rom.12:1), by God accepting their sacrifice through the perfection and merit of Christ. In other words, God accepts the sacrifices of all who are truly "in Christ" as members of Christ.

In our Memorial Service we have the clear teaching of the Sin Offering revealed when we truly grasp the depth of what the Memorial means. Those who take the Memorial only in

memory of Jesus' sacrifice are apparently not able to appreciate the deeper meaning, and the Lord no doubt accepts their faith and love that far. From the study—"The New Creation"—from page 465, under the heading—"We, being many, are one loaf"—and text, 1 Cor.10:16,17, the following is presented as being most helpful on this subject.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread (loaf), and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread"—1 Cor.10:16,17.

The Apostle, under the guidance of the holy spirit, here sets before us an additional thought respecting this Memorial instituted by our Lord. He does not deny, but affirms, that primarily the bread represents our Lord's broken body, sacrificed on our behalf, and that the cup represents His blood, which seals our pardon. But now, in addition, he shows that we, as members of the **Ecclesia**, members of the body of Christ, the prospective Firstborn, the New Creation, become participators with our Lord in His death, sharers in His sacrifice; and, as he has elsewhere stated, it is a part of our covenant to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—Col.1:24. The thought here is the same as that expressed by the words—"We are baptized into **his death**." Thus, while our Lord's flesh was the loaf broken for the world, the believers of this Gospel Age, the faithful, the elect, the New Creation, are counted in as parts of that one loaf, "members of the body of Christ"; and hence, in the breaking of the loaf, after recognizing it as the sacrifice of our Lord on our behalf, we are to recognize it, further, as the breaking or sacrificing of the whole Church, of all those consecrated to be dead with Him, to be broken with Him, to share His sufferings.

This is the exact thought contained in the word "communion"—common-union, common-participation. Hence, with every annual celebration of this Memorial we not only recognize the foundation of all our hopes as resting in the dear Redeemer's sacrifice for our sins, but we revive and renew our own consecration to "be dead with him, that we may also live with him"—to "suffer with him, that we may also reign with him." How grandly comprehensive is the meaning of this divinely instituted celebration! We are not putting the symbols instead of the reality; nothing surely could be further from our Lord's intention, nor further from propriety on our part. The heart-communion with Him, the heart-feeding upon Him, the heart-communion with the fellow-members of the Body, and the heart-realization

of the meaning of our covenant of sacrifice, is the real communion, which, if we are faithful, we will carry out day by day throughout the year—being daily broken with our Lord, and continually feeding upon His merit, growing strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. What a blessing comes to us with the celebration of this Memorial! What a burning of heart for further appreciation and growth in grace and knowledge, and for further participation in the privileges of the service to which we are called, not only as respects the present but also as respects the future!

It will be noticed that the Apostle includes the cup for which we praise God. "Is it not the communion (common-union, common-participation) of the blood of Christ!" Oh, what a thought—that the truly consecrated, faithful "little flock" of the New Creation throughout this Gospel Age, has been Christ in the flesh; and that the suffering and trials and ignominy and death of these whom the Lord has accepted and recognized as "members of his body" in the flesh, are all counted in as parts of His sacrifice, because associated with, and under Him who is our Head, our Chief Priest!

Convention News

The Convention in Melbourne, held over the Christmas period for four days, was a very helpful and refreshing season of fellowship for all able to attend. We are very thankful to our Heavenly Father for His blessings received throughout the gatherings. The attendance was good each day, with visiting brethren being gladly welcomed from South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. Our Polish Australian brethren also joined in the gatherings, some serving helpfully on the program.

During the four days two Bible Studies were conducted, 16 addresses were given by the brethren, also there were Fellowship and Testimony Meetings, a Hymn Session and informal fellowship throughout the gatherings.

Following the opening praise and prayer, and a brief address of welcome, the first Bible Study on 1 John 1:1-7 proved very helpful indeed. This passage from the Apostle John was seen as beautifully expressing the true fellowship in the spirit which exists between consecrated Christians and their Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, all down the Gospel Age to our day. The words of verse 7 seemed to sum up the whole lesson of the passage to us—"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us (continually) from all sin."

On the last day of Convention, the Scripture passage in Revelation 3:14-22 was studied. This message from our risen Lord—"the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God"—was given through the Apostle John to the church of the Laodiceans, early in the Gospel Age. It was seen to have a three-fold application—firstly, to the local church at Laodicea, then, historically to the seventh or last period of the Gospel Age church, and finally to Christians individually. Verses 15 to 17 were seen as describing the terribly fallen condition of nominal Christianity at this end of the Gospel Age, and the complete casting off from the Lord's favour of all ecclesiastical systems—"because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

From verse 18 in this study we saw how the Lord appeals to sincere Christians in this Laodicean period to respond as individuals to "buy of Him gold tried in the fire, that they might be truly rich in Him, and anoint their eyes with eyesalve that they may see His truths." For "as many as I (the Lord) love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Those who truly repent of the sad condition in the Laodicean church, and respond to the words of Rev.18:4—"come out of her, my people"—the Lord promises to "come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"—verse 20. The "knock" of the Lord to the individuals He loves, brings the promised blessings of truth to heart and mind for all who "open the door." Further, the Lord "standing at the door" indicates a true sign of His presence in this seventh period of the church's history. At the close of the sixth church period, to Philadelphia—Rev.3:11—the Lord's message was—"Behold, I come quickly"—but to Laodicea—"Behold, I stand at the door." Verses 21 and 22 in our study revealed the glorious inheritance to all the faithful "overcomers"—to those who, by the Lord's grace, have an ear to hear, and respond to "what the spirit saith unto the churches."

During the Bible Studies and for other meetings as required, the use of a roving microphone was of very great help in conveying the thoughts of each contributor to the assembly. The supplying of the loud speaker equipment was also much appreciated. The selected subjects chosen by the brethren for their addresses proved very helpful, and were as follows—"Obedience"; "Daniel, the Great Man of God"; "Righteousness and Loyalty"; "Waiting for the Sonship"; "Our Building of God"; "Faith, Hope, Love, These Three"; "Last Times"; "Sunrise"; "The Prophecy of the Prophet Habakkuk"; "God's Spirit of Love is Based upon Fixed Principles"; "Blessed are the

Eyes"; "The Day of Atonement"; "Fellowship One with Another"; "Visiting Brethren Overseas" and "The Father Himself Loveth You."

Many kindly greetings with Christian love and assurance of prayers upon the assembly were received and greatly appreciated from Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas. To all who thus remembered us, and to brethren everywhere, the Christian love from the Convention brethren with the Scriptural message in 1 John 1:3,7, is gladly sent along to all.

The Praise and Testimony Meeting gave opportunity for expressions of thanksgiving to God for all His blessings and overruling providences in our lives. Most enjoyable again was the Hymns We Love session, with the music contributed by the Sisters on piano, violin and 'cello being most uplifting in service of the Lord, as well as for the hymns throughout the Convention. The labours of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was also greatly appreciated, as service unto the Lord.

The final session with the Love Feast, and singing of the lovely hymns—"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" and "God be with you till we meet again"—followed by a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all His many blessings, and request for His continued overruling and spiritual care of all His dear people, brought to a close the helpful Melbourne Convention.

Bible Translations

For some years past the attention of Christians has been directed to a considerable number of translations of the Bible, some 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 more 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 the Apostle 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 students of God's Word. The Lord has permitted and directed many valuable manuscripts to be found since the Authorized Version was translated in 1611. All sincere students of God's Word 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 sincere 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, where practically all members have the Authorized Version before them, it seems this Version is the most helpful for general reading. 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 over many years, and now the Revised Standard Version of both the Old and New Testaments in 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 the Authorized Version, and note the improvement

of the R.S.Version.

A note of warning is offered against accepting any translation of the Bible as being absolutely correct without careful examination. It is necessary to prove and compare expressions in translations, as indicated by the following from one of our brethren:—"A copy of the Epistles by J.B. Phillips in modern version has been sent to me, and I now regard it as one of 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 truth. . . . 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 through the Apostle Paul. Again in 1 Thess.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 quite 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 helpful Bible study.

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, may sincere Christians grow both in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

News Item

The following appeared in the Melbourne "Age" under their "Odd Spot" recently:—"A Norwegian fisherman says he found the earring his wife lost while fishing, in the stomach of a fish he caught a week later. His wife backs the story."

This story at once reminds us of our Lord's instruction to Peter in supplying the tribute money. The passage of Scripture reads—"When they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said,

Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him (spoke up first), saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take and give unto them for me and thee"—Matt.17:24-27.

It has been suggested and is probably true, that fish are attracted by bright objects in the water and swallow them quite readily. The great difference between the Norwegian fisherman's story and Peter finding the tribute money in the mouth of the fish is, of course, our Lord's wonderful miracle in knowing of the money being in the mouth of the particular fish He sent Peter to catch.

What a great impression that miracle must have made on the Apostle Peter and all the other disciples, as well as the numerous miracles Jesus performed by the power of His Heavenly Father. We also should exercise full faith and confidence in the love and power of our Heavenly Father to carry out every feature of His Plan. As the Apostle Paul declared in Rom.8:31—"If God be for us, who can be against us?" And God is for us!

The Power of God

"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"—Luke 24:49.

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 for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the holy spirit will not come unto you"—John 16:7.

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 power 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—said the Apostle Paul.

"I cannot do it alone;
I change with the changing sky;
Today, so glad and bright,
Tomorrow, 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, from the Apostles' day down throughout the Gospel Age—"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."

Bible Students' Gathering

The Adelaide Class has decided to hold special meetings at Easter 1985. These are to be held over three days as were the more recent of the annual Conventions held until 1982. However, they are to differ from the Conventions in giving special emphasis to Bible Studies and additional time for informal fellowship.

Provision for three studies and the extra fellowship time, would not permit addresses from all brethren able to contribute. Rather than accept some speakers and reject others it was decided not to include addresses at all.

Instead, the Class hopes to arrange for some films both for spiritual profit and as discussion points for the informal fellowship. Hymns we Love and Why and some provision for more formal fellowship will be included in the new format.

The meetings are to be at the usual meeting place of the Class, Manchester Unity Building, 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide, from 11 am to 4 pm on Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday, April 5th, 6th and 7th, 1985.

The studies chosen are—James 2:18-24; Isaiah 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 1:26-31.

A warm invitation is extended to all who are able to attend, to participate in the worship and rejoicing and in the building up known to come, by the grace of God, with assembling together.

Passover Memorial, 1985

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 4th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

On account of special circumstances this year the following have been arranged:—

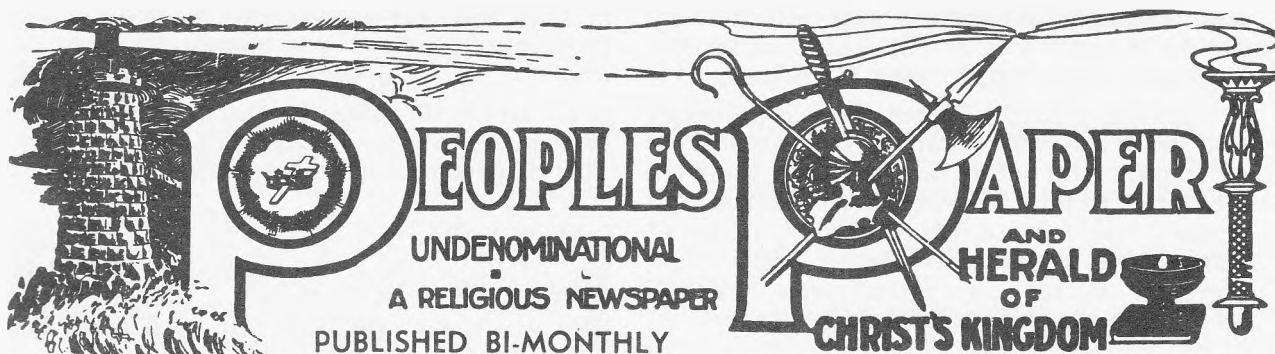
Melbourne—Sunday, 31st March, at 2.30 pm., at Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd. Camberwell.

Adelaide—Sunday, 31st March, at 2.30 pm., at M.U. Hall, (2nd Floor) 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Submission

"O! 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."



Volume LXVIII No.2

MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY, 1985

Price — 20 cents

Memorial Participation

Reviewing the Gospel of Mark 14:12-16, we find detailed instructions from our Lord to two of His disciples to prepare for the important Passover at the close of Jesus' earthly life, in response to their request—"Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?"

We see at once that was the annual Jewish Passover that the disciples of the Lord asked about and for which they prepared. They could have asked the same question and prepared similarly on previous Jewish Passovers, for this would be the fourth Passover since Jesus began His ministry 3½ years earlier.

We call to mind that the prophet Daniel stated that Messiah would be cut off "in the midst of the week." That was in the midst of the seven-year prophetic week, a year represented by a day—Dan.9:26,27

In Mark 14:17,18, we read—"And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you, which eateth with me shall betray me." This would be a terrible shock to the disciples, except to one, the betrayer himself, who had previously entered into an agreement with the Jewish chief priests to deliver Jesus to them, as shown in Matt.26:14-16. These verses read—"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him."

Previous to this, on more than one occasion our Lord had tried to prepare the disciples for the time when He would be betrayed and put to death, but they seemed unable to grasp this, even when told so plainly, as in Matt. 17:22,23—"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, 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." Again, in Matt.20:17-19 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." There was one consolation in both these Scriptures, and that was, "the third day he shall rise again." But even this failed to register with the disciples. The Lord's efforts to condition the minds and hearts of His little band to His death seemed to fail. They could not grasp it; or perhaps they thought He was speaking in parables. They did not wish to hear it anyway, to think that their Master could be treated as He described.

However, why did the Lord need to reveal beforehand that Judas would betray Him, as Mark 14:20,21 seems to show? The reason seems to be fully explained in John 13:26-30, as follows—"Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, that thou doest do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him."

We understand the words, "Satan entered into him" to imply that Satan entered fully into Judas then. Satan had been working in his mind for months at least along the line of betraying his Master. But now, when the Lord gave him the sop at the Jewish Passover and he was about to depart from the little group, it says Satan entered into him, meaning Satan fully captivated the life of this man at that time. The record continues—"He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night." This means that the power of darkness

from Satan entered into this man fully; he went out to actually betray the Lord, as he had covenanted previously with the priests.

From this record we see that it was necessary that Judas leave the company of Jesus and the eleven Apostles before our Lord gave them His Memorial. In John 13 where we read that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, verse 11 states—"He knew who should betray him; therefore said he, ye are not all clean." In verse 18 of this same chapter Jesus said—"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." Our Lord was quoting from Psalms 41:9, where we read prophetically—"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Obviously God had put into the mind of the Psalmist those very words that would be fulfilled when the betrayer went out to actually betray our Lord on that fateful night.

How pathetic are the words of Psalms 55:12-14, describing prophetically our Lord's feelings towards His betrayer. "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." Then verse 16—"As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me."

When Judas departed on his mission of actually betraying his Master, the Lord proceeded to institute the Memorial of His death, which was to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover in the minds and hearts of the true disciples of Jesus from that time onwards. So we read in Mark 14:22—"And 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 unleavened bread is a beautiful symbol, depicting the purity and perfection of our dear Lord, and was a picture of putting away sin. The Jews were instructed to have no leaven in their homes for seven days. These seven days pictured completeness. The Lord took this bread, saying, Take it, this represents my body. It pictured in the minds of the disciples the perfection of Christ Himself. Hebrews 7:26 says—"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." "Take, eat"—appropriate the merit of Christ, bringing justification by faith; appropriating His complete perfection; appropriating it by faith means justification. As stated in Romans 5:1—"Therefore being justified

by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

When our Lord gave this Memorial of His death to His disciples, He did not at that time explain the deeper meaning of the emblems. This He gave through the Apostle Paul later, by revelation.

Mark 14:23 reads—"And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it." Here again the fruit of the vine pictured our Lord's life, His blood shed for us. His disciples again appropriate the merit of Christ by faith in His shed blood, and this brings justification by faith. When the Lord gave the understanding of this Memorial to the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11, we notice both in respect of the bread and the cup His words were—"this do in remembrance of me"—verses 24,25. These words of information were given to the Apostle Paul by revelation. It is wonderful how God gave so many of the deep secrets of His Word to the Apostle Paul directly; God revealed them to him in a miraculous way. We need to keep in mind that primarily this Memorial is in remembrance of Christ, as a Memorial of Christ our Passover Lamb, as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 5:7,8—"For even 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."

"Keeping the feast" here refers to the whole of the Christian's life, pictured by the seven days of unleavened bread which Israel observed from the time they were given their Passover in Egypt and which was kept annually as a memorial of their great deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

Thus far we have seen that our Lord's Memorial, which He intended should take the place of the Jewish Passover each year, once a year, was to be kept in remembrance of Christ. "This do in remembrance of me" were our Saviour's own words. Many people throughout the world do keep the Lord's Supper in memory of Christ's sacrifice on their behalf, and receive a measure of blessing by so doing. However, after the Day of Pentecost, when the holy spirit came upon the Lord's followers, a deeper insight into Christ's Memorial was revealed. This is found in the words of 1 Corinthians 10:16,17—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." The word "communion" means "common participation." By giving the bread

and wine to His followers, Jesus impresses the privilege to partake or participate in the very things those emblems symbolized. Participating in the broken bread means to be also broken with Christ. As His life was broken and sacrificed completely, so He says, Be also broken with Me as My followers. It is a common participation. The cup of blessing which we bless, and the bread which we break, are both emblems picturing our participation in the experiences through which Christ passed. This is for His little band of consecrated followers only, those who, by His grace, are invited to walk in His steps of sacrifice. Writing to the saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi, Paul says—"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake"—Phil.1:29. This is the deeper meaning in the Memorial for those whom the Lord is drawing unto Himself now, to be members of His Body, His own Church, in glory. Here we see clearly the thought of participating with Christ in the experiences which brought about His broken body and shed blood.

It may be asked, How is this possible? Our Lord's words in Luke 9:23 show how this is not only possible, but the Master issued this invitation as being essential to accept for all who would be His faithful followers—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." We realize that the Lord is not giving a command. He is presenting an invitation to those who delight to walk in His steps. Comparatively few of mankind have accepted this invitation. Comparatively few have been called of the Father to Jesus for this very purpose. These are the privileged ones who gladly walk in the steps of Christ. All others of humanity are to be blessed as subjects of the wonderful kingdom of Christ, for which we also thank God. But this Memorial is given only to His own little band, His Body members, His Church, His Bride who shall share in His heavenly glory.

"If any man will come after me"; if any human being will take up his cross daily and follow Him. This means fellowship in Christ's sufferings. Paul explains this in Phil.3:10,11—"That I may know him (Christ), 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." He is speaking here of the chief resurrection, the first resurrection. We know all mankind will have part in the general resurrection, but this is the First Resurrection, the chiefest of all resurrections by knowing Christ, His power,

fellowship in His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death. It means even being accounted a fool for Christ's sake. As Paul declared in 1 Cor.4:13—"We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Our Lord was treated as such, mocked and scourged and nailed upon, when He was on the cross. The very One who was saving the railers and mockers from death suffered thus. We see in 2 Cor.4:10,11, the example of the Apostle Paul, who was such a devoted and faithful disciple when he walked in the steps of Christ—"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 alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

From Rom.8:18,17, we read—"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "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." We see what a privilege it is to being invited into the fellowship of Christ now, to use up our strength now for Christ's sake.

After our Lord gave the Memorial of His death, we read in Mark 14 from verse 27—"And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him. Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all."

Then came our Lord's crucial Gethsemane experiences, His apprehension and mock trial. Then came also Peter's testing of his own assurance that though all should be offended at the Shepherd being smitten, he never would. As Jesus predicted, the once brave Peter who sought to defend his Master with the sword, when asked quietly if he were not one of Jesus' disciples, denied that he was three times. What a situation for Peter, what a dilemma to be in! However, Peter's true repentance restored him to the Lord's favour following the resurrection of his Lord and Master.

Peter's denial and overcoming has meant victory to many Christians since, who have also denied their Master. We have all surely denied the Master, haven't we? Because his heart was

(Continued on page 8)

PEOPLES PAPER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(bi-Monthly \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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 Lord is Risen"

The story of our Lord's resurrection is one of exquisite pathos and beauty. The crucifixion had smitten the Shepherd and scattered the sheep. In grief and silence the faithful few had removed the body from the cross and laid it in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

It was Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses and Solome who brought the spices to anoint the body. In the dim dawn of the day following the Sabbath they stole to the tomb. The thought of the resurrection did not come to them. They thought only that the grave had been rifled. One of them, Mary Magdalene, fled away, blind to everything but her own loss, saying—"They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him"—John 20:13. The angels in the tomb gave to the other two the glad truth—"He is not here, he is risen, as he said." Before this truth was brought home to them they were in despair, their hopes were buried. They had entertained high hopes, but now since Jesus had died, their hopes were withered. How different when the fact of the resurrection was made known—what joy replaced their despondency! It became true to them, "We are begotten to a lively hope by his resurrection." Because He lives, we have ground for hoping that we shall live. In His resurrection lies our assurance.

It is an interesting study to trace the harmony on this subject between the various writers of the Bible. Matthew, Mark and Luke, Peter, John and Paul, all make mention of His resurrection. Each account is different, depending on the point of view of the writer, but they are unanimous in affirming the fact that Jesus died and rose from the dead. Remarkably, it is not difficult to combine these various accounts and arrange them into one connected and complete picture. By so doing, we perceive our Lord's first work of consoling and encouraging.

He first appeared to the women, turning their sorrow into joy. This was early in the morning, the same day He arose. Then He appeared, the same day in the afternoon, to the two disciples going to Emmaus. As a stranger He walked with them, and finally revealed Himself to them, by

the familiar way in which He broke bread with them. Unable to contain themselves, they hastened back to Jerusalem to tell the good news. But the Lord was travelling faster than they knew. He had appeared to another. What passed between our Lord and the Apostle Peter we do not know, but we know something of His mercy and grace, and may well understand the peace and comfort which possessed Peter after that meeting. At all events, Peter had not been slow to tell the good news, for when the two came and told their story, the others said—"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon"—Luke 24:34. Later on while recounting their own experiences, they remembered how Jesus had been known by His habit of breaking bread, and He appeared in their midst, saying—"Peace be unto you." So on the very day of His resurrection, He appeared first to the women, next to Peter, then to the two disciples, and lastly to the eleven, each time bringing a sense of comfort, hope and joy. What a day, to be remembered for all time!

A week later He appeared to the disciples again, this time for the special benefit of Thomas, who had been absent on the previous occasion. The next appearing was to James. This is mentioned by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians. Another occasion is recounted by John in the last chapter of his Gospel. Several of the disciples had gone fishing. They toiled all night and caught nothing. Jesus revealed Himself by telling them where to cast their net. Finally, He took His last leave of them, leading them out as far as Bethany.

They were witnesses not only of all the wonderful things He had done; they were witnesses not only of the fact that He was crucified and buried, but witnesses especially of His resurrection. We are thankful that these records have been preserved for the Church. It is strengthening indeed to faith to trace in the Acts of the Apostles how they who were witnesses of His resurrection proceeded to carry out this commission—"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"—Acts 1:8

But first they were to receive power. "Tarry ye in Jerusalem unto ye be endued with power from on high"—Luke 24:49. So they waited in prayer and supplication until they received the promise, and then began the work of witnessing. One cannot but be impressed by the prominence given in the Scriptures to the resurrection of Jesus.

We are exhorted to the sacrifice of our bodies unto God—the mouth to proclaim His Word; the eyes to gaze on His works; the hands to do Him service; the feet to walk on His errands.

Goulburn.

Considering Jesus

(Contributed)

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 realize 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 antitypical 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 spake, 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 spake 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 your minds." 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 poor, 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 labour-saving 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 car or tram we don't go; if transport 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 about 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 Michel 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 this 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 for 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"—Matt. 20:22

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?

Diversity in 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, other 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"—Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13. 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 their 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 crossgrain 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 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. 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.

Treasure of the Humble

"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 lodgement 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 self-advertisement 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.'"—Selected.

Bible Students' Gathering

The Adelaide Class has decided to hold special meetings at Easter 1985. These are to be held over three days as were the more recent of the annual Conventions held until 1982. However, they are to differ from the Conventions in giving special emphasis to Bible Studies and additional time for informal fellowship.

The meetings are to be at the usual meeting place of the Class, Manchester Unity Building, 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide, from 11 am to 4 pm on Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday, April 5th, 6th and 7th, 1985.

The studies chosen are— **James 2:18-24; Isaiah 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 1:26-31.**

A warm invitation is extended to all who are able to attend, to participate in the worship and rejoicing and in the building up known to come, by the grace of God, with assembling together.

"God's Two Distinct Salvations"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who are able to use them to advantage.

(Continued from page 3)

right, Peter's victory was complete, by the Lord's grace and strength. Jesus forgave him in His commission to "feed His lambs and feed His sheep", at almost the last appearance of our Lord before His ascension. Godly sorrow indicated his repentant heart and greater suitability henceforth for service in the Master's footsteps. No doubt he proved faithful unto death, in accord with his own words to us in 1 Pet. 5:10—"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." As with Peter, so shall it be with everyone who depends fully on the Lord's grace and strength in the days ahead. As Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.



Volume LXVII No.3

MELBOURNE, JUNE—JULY, 1985

Price — 20 cents

Evolution in the Light of the Bible

The part of the evolution theory that concerns us most as Christians is the claim that man was not created by God a perfect human being, but rather that the human creature reached the stage recorded in the Bible as being able to commune with the heavenly Creator by a long process of development, commencing with a low form of life and taking many thousands of years to attain to human intelligence. In other words, the thought is expressed quite often that Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden were merely symbolic of the human race, and were not the first human pair. People who speak in this way are not taking the Bible as their guide at all, but are accepting man's wisdom as being superior to the plain statements of Scripture.

The Bible record respecting the creation of man is very clear and understandable for everyone of average intelligence, as found in the well-known text in Gen.2:7. Here we have the statement that "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Here we see that God created the human body, with all the elements required to live; a perfect body but without life. Every organ was perfect, and then God breathed into that body the breath of life, and the body began to live; the lungs began to breathe, the heart began to pump the blood, and all the senses came to life. Man **became** "a living soul" by the union of the body with the breath of life. But how few, comparatively, of mankind understand that simple creation of our first parent, Adam.

In this connection we have an interesting verse in Eccles.12:7, which reads—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." This spirit refers to the breath of life that God gave to man to create him a living soul by union with the perfect though lifeless body. Many people think of the spirit returning to God as the soul of man returning to God. It is nothing of the kind. It takes the breath of life and the body to

create a living soul, and when the breath returns to God, at death, there is no living soul. The union of two things creates the soul; when these two are separated there is no soul until in the resurrection the two are united again.

In 1 Cor.15:45, we have the Apostle Paul quoting from Gen.2:7, when he says—"So it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul." The fact that the inspired Apostle refers to Adam as the **first man** certainly confirms the record of Genesis. Who that esteems the Bible as God's Word would contradict the Apostle Paul and claim that he was wrong in his plain declaration that Adam was **made** a living soul? Adam did not reach that stage of development over hundreds or thousands of years. He was made a living soul in the first instance, and also "in the image of God"—Gen.1:27.

The Psalmist's inspired account of man's creation is also of much interest and help to Bible students, as found in Psa.8:3-9, as follows—"When I consider thy heavens...which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?...For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour"—of perfect human life. We note particularly the wording of verse 5—"Thou has **MADE** him a little lower than the angels"; and **NOT** that it took thousands of years of evolutionary processes to reach that state. Some people interpret it this way that man was made a little while lower than the angels. This was not the case! He was made a little lower in degree, is the thought in the text, not that man would evolve to something higher in course of time.

Further, when we have the Apostle Paul in Heb.2:6-8 quoting the very words of the Psalmist respecting man's creation, we see how important it is for us to accept the Bible's testimony on this subject. After quoting the words from Psa.8, Paul adds—"But now we see not yet all things put under him"—under man. No, indeed, fallen man is unworthy to control

earth's affairs. If he had continued faithful in the Garden of Eden he would have been an obedient human king of the earth, and would have had all things under his control for all time. While then "we see not yet all things put under him", verse 9 of Heb.2 contains a lovely assurance to Christians of the wonderful plan of God, and eventually what could have been in the Garden of Eden will really come to pass in the kingdom of Christ. We read—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels (the same nature as perfect Adam) for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Paul was looking back on our Lord's sacrifice, knowing that He was willing to be made a "little lower than the angels." He was a corresponding-price to pay the sacrifice on behalf of Adam and all mankind condemned in Adam. Our Lord was crowned with glory and honour as a perfect man, as Adam had been in the Garden of Eden. This equality of Christ's sacrifice for the perfect Adam who sinned is the secret of the doctrine of the ransom.

What Paul tells us in 1 Cor.15:21,22 reveals the beauty and simplicity of God's plan; how it reflects the love and mercy of God in providing our Saviour to be the Redeemer of all mankind—"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."

In full agreement are the words in 1 Tim.2:4-6—"God will have all men to be saved (from death in Adam in the resurrection, and then) come unto the knowledge of the truth....that the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom (corresponding-price) for all, to be testified in due time." But if the evolutionary theory were correct, man has been and is evolving to higher and higher attainments, and needs no salvation. In other words, evolution denies the fall of man, and has no place in its teachings for a Saviour. So we see how erroneous and deceptive a teaching evolution really is, being based on man's exalted idea of his own wisdom.

How clearly did the Apostle Paul describe the wisdom of the worldly wise, in 1 Cor.1:18-24. "....Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world....But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks (Gentiles) foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." This is a lovely presentation, to show the difference between the simplicity of the appealing message of the gospel of the cross of Christ, in contrast with the exalted ideas of the wisdom of the wise men of this world.

It is very evident that in the theory of evolution there is no place for the cross of Christ; but the Gospel message of hope for humanity because "Christ died for our sins" is the main theme of

the Bible from beginning to end. (See 1 Cor.15:1-4.)

How important it is also that we understand and appreciate the Bible's teachings on restitution for the majority of the human family, as described in Acts 3:20,21. The teaching of restitution was lost and hidden over the greater part of the Gospel Age, but God through His servants made it known again following the Reformation period, and when understood it is seen that this part of the Plan of God is just as important for the majority of humanity as is the High Calling of God for the Church. The verses in Acts 3 read—"And he (God) shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven 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." This must be a very important truth for God to have put it into the mouths of all His holy prophets, that there were to be times of restitution of all things at our Lord's second advent. The word translated "restitution" in the Greek carries the thought of "reconstitution, or restoration." The question naturally arises, Restitution to what? Our friends believing in evolution must answer, Restoring to a very low state of intelligence, even the very lowest form of life. Can we imagine that to be part of God's plan for His human family created in His own image? How poor and weak, how unscriptural, how unlike God, is the theory of evolution! But how lovely is the thought of mankind being restored to that perfection enjoyed by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, as our Lord declared—"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"—Luke 19:10.

We call to mind the promise of our Lord to the thief on the cross, as recorded in Luke 23:42,43. Jesus was crucified between two thieves; one apparently had a wrong spirit in respect of our Lord, while the other appealed for help when he saw, perhaps, the writing on the Lord's cross—"This is the king of the Jews." He felt some good may result in asking the Lord to remember him when He came into His kingdom. He said—"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee today (this very day I am on the cross, and it seems I will never have a kingdom, humanly speaking), shalt thou be with me in paradise." That will be the very paradise to which all mankind are to be restored in the "times of restitution." Garden of Eden conditions will then exist throughout the lengths and breadths of the whole earth. That thief will then be resurrected and come forth when the other millions of humanity return from the "land of the enemy" to paradise conditions. That is what "restitution" really means.

The Apostle Paul quoted from the Old Testament records with reference to the blessings of restitution in Gal.3:8—"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." This is the message of glad tidings of great joy to all people, when they are able to receive it into their hearts in the Millennial Age.

As an example of the many prophecies revealing the wonderful message of restitution back to the perfection lost in Adam and redeemed through Christ, Ezekiel 36:16-38 is most enlightening. (Please read.) Who that reads these verses would not be convinced respecting the "times of restitution." Israel, the nations, all mankind, rejoice in the wonderful restoring time—back to that which was lost. Even the Garden of Eden is mentioned by the prophet—"This land that was desolate is become like the Garden of Eden....Then the heathen that are left round about you (Israel) shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places....I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it"—verses 35,36.

However, while restitution is a wonderful provision for mankind generally in the Kingdom of Christ during the Millennial Age, it is not God's plan for the followers of Christ during this Gospel Age—between our Lord's first and second advents. The Apostle's statement in Heb.11:39,40 shows a clear distinction between the people of God prior to Jesus' first advent, and those who become His followers since then—"And these all (who lived before the Gospel Age) having obtained a good report through faith, received not (the fulfilment of) the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The "us" class refers to Christians since our Lord's first advent, and the "better thing" for Christ's followers is well described as "so great salvation," even the "heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus." (See Heb.2:3; 3:1.) Of great importance is the fact that this heavenly inheritance is not gained through any evolutionary process. In other words, no one after accepting Christ as their Saviour can become a Christian by progressive steps of an evolutionary nature. The only way to enter the real Christian way is to commit one's life fully and completely to God, after being justified by faith in Christ's sacrifice, and then being begotten by God's holy spirit, as a member of the New Creation. No one becomes a true Christian by a sincere desire to live a good life and become better and better and please the Lord that way. No, but only by full consecration to God, and His spirit beginning a new spiritual life within. See 2 Cor.1:21,22; James 1:17,18; 1 Pet.1:3-5. "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." "God hath

begotten us again unto a lively hope."

It will be seen that the illustration sometimes used to prove the theory of evolution respecting mankind; namely, the process of the grub or caterpillar entering its cocoon and coming out a moth or butterfly is totally out of place. That process is quite normal in the development of the butterfly, but we do not find the butterfly continuing a further process to become a bird or other creature. So, mankind in general in going into death are not transformed into angels by any process of evolution, but will be raised human beings to inherit the restored earth in the "times of restitution." True Christians, on the other hand, begotten of God's holy spirit in this life, and proving faithful unto death in sacrifice, are given spirit bodies in the first resurrection. That is why the Apostle spoke as he did, when he stated—"We have this treasure (of the new mind, the new creature) in earthen vessels, that the power may be of God, and not of us"—2 Cor.4:6,7. Further, we read respecting the spiritual resurrection of true Christians in 2 Cor.5:1—"For 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."

A clear explanation of the earthly and heavenly resurrections is also found in the Apostle's masterly presentation of this subject in 1 Cor.15:37,38—"That which thou sowest (in death) thou sowest not that body that shall be....But God giveth it (the being to be restored) a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." To those begotten of the holy spirit, and proving faithful unto death God gives a spirit body. For all others "of the earth, earthy", human, fleshly bodies will be given in the resurrection, that they may inhabit the earth. (See 1 Cor.15:45-50.)

How clear it is that evolution viewed in the light of the Bible is an erroneous and deceptive teaching and is absolutely opposed to the salvation of mankind through the sacrifice of Christ. The Apostle Paul's words to Timothy are very applicable as a warning to us today against the errors of evolution and other anti-ransom doctrines—"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith"—1Tim.6:20,21.

If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God.

George MacDonald.

He that of greatest works is finisher,
Oft does them by the weakest minister.

Shakspere.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(bi-Monthly \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

While it is our intimation 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 Institute's Work

Another year's work for the Berean Bible Institute has been completed with the close of April. It is with thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for His blessings in connection with the efforts to serve His cause of truth that this brief review of the work is presented at this time.

Our brethren throughout Australia and in some overseas countries have co-operated helpfully again during the year past. This is most encouraging and sincere thanks is expressed to all who have rendered assistance, as unto the Lord. The efforts to serve the Lord have been of a similar nature as in past years, by the Lord's overruling providence, and all that is undertaken is considered as a privilege, by the Lord's grace.

Our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" has provided a helpful means of contact with our Australian and overseas brethren and friends as in years past. The messages in the "Paper" have also been appreciated generally, which is encouraging. To those who have contributed to the columns of our "Paper" sincere thanks is expressed for this help in the service of our Lord. The main object of our journal is that it provides the spiritual truths of God's Word to encourage and build up all readers in their Christian walk.

Considerable increase in printing costs has had to be met over the past year, as well as extra postage expense. "Peoples Paper" subscriptions have continued at \$1.00 per annum, and the postage of \$1.98 per annum throughout Australia and up to \$2.70 for despatch overseas now applies. This high postage cost is covered by the General Tract Fund which is supported well by many of our brethren. A number of subscribers also cover the postage cost with their subscriptions, and this help is much appreciated.

Publication of our "Peoples Paper" is possible only by a considerable deficiency in cost being covered by the General Tract Fund. This is largely compensated by the "Paper" being supplied free to many friends, including new friends over various periods, to encourage their interest in the truths of God's Word. Some of our Melbourne friends give willing and valuable assistance in the production of our "Paper" with

checking of articles, and proof reading, also with shorthand for articles, all of which is of much help, and is greatly appreciated in the Lord's service.

Throughout the year some new booklets were produced and supplied free to all readers with the "Peoples Paper" and were generally appreciated. Extra supplies of the booklets are provided for wise distribution by all who desire to witness with the truths of God's Word, as they have opportunity.

Advertising of suitable booklets has continued in popular magazines over the past year again with quite good responses from all Australian States and areas overseas. Numerous requests for the booklets arrive regularly from Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Isles. As a result some new friends are appreciating God's truths for the first time. Sample copies of "Peoples Paper" are also supplied with the booklets to all who respond. We ask the Lord's blessing upon all sincere people, that His truth may give encouragement in the Christian way, as He sees good.

The items listed in the General Tract Fund reveal the financial position of the Institute in its work. Our brethren and friends throughout Australia and overseas have contributed voluntarily to the efforts to serve the Lord's cause of truth, enabling all expenses to be fully met, in the Lord's providence. To all who have so willingly sacrificed earthly good things to assist the work so well, sincere thanks is expressed, as it is realized all has been rendered as unto the Lord Himself.

Looking back over the past twelve months there has been further deterioration in world conditions, and this trend must certainly continue in fulfilment of Bible prophecy. Happy are the Lord's people who understand and appreciate God's plan for the salvation of humanity through the sacrifice of His dear Son. Happy are they also who have full faith and trust in God that His time for the passing of "this present evil world" must be in the best interest of humanity. To have the assurance that God's Kingdom blessings will more than compensate for the reign of sin and death is also a very great favour to have instilled into our hearts. In the meantime, before the night comes "when no man can work"—John 9:4—it is the privilege of the Lord's people to continue "holding forth the word of life", for the encouragement and blessing of still others whom the Lord our God may call. This also adds blessing to our own hearts in our desire to be faithful in our heavenly calling, by the Lord's grace. The prayers of our dear brethren are requested that the guidance and blessing of the Lord may direct His work in our hearts, and in all that is undertaken in His name, to the praise of our Heavenly Father.

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/84	\$4,540.74
" Donations, Bank Interest	20,869.00
	<u>\$25,409.74</u>
By Deficiency "Peoples Paper" and	
Free Tracts	\$3,411.00
" Advertising Booklets, "Women's Weekly"	6,524.69
" Advertising Booklets, "New Idea"	4,992.00
" Other Advertising	208.62
" Free Booklets with "Peoples Paper"	
and Advertising	1,300.00
" General Expenses ('Phone, Envelopes,	
Office, etc.)	899.70
" Postage	1,730.30
" Assistance to Brethren	1,439.00
" Service to Brethren, visiting, etc.	612.00
" Sundries	67.70
" Banking Tax	15.70
" Credit Balance 1/5/85	4,209.03
	<u>\$25,409.74</u>

Memorial Observances**Melbourne**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class gladly observed the Memorial of our Lord's death again this year on the anniversary of His sacrifice for us and for all mankind—1 John 2:2.

It was helpful to conduct previous studies on this important observance from the Jewish Passover ceremony as outlined in Exodus 12. Then to compare the lessons from the type and realize the important antitype of our Lord's Memorial, which undoubtedly took the place of the annual Jewish Passover ceremony. Quotations from the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 5:7,8; 1 Cor. 11:26-29, and 1 Cor. 10:16,17, gave much scope to impress the importance and sacredness of our observance, in addition to the words of our Lord Jesus in the Gospels.

During His earthly ministry Jesus briefly referred to the participation of His true followers in His sacrifice, when He said — "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. . . . He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him"—John 6:53,56. However, in instituting the Memorial of His death, He did not present this deeper meaning in the observance. This was revealed after Pentecost through the Apostle Paul in particular, in his quotation in 1 Cor. 10:16,17. This was in keeping with Jesus' words to His apostles after giving them His Memorial on the last night of His earthly life—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear (receive) them now. Howbeit when the spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth"—John 16:12,13.

During our service we sang appropriate hymns, and joined in prayers of thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for the gift of our dear

Redeemer, and our association with Him in our Christian walk. Scripture readings in the Gospels of Mark and John covered the last hours of our Lord's earthly life, culminating with His sacrificial death on the cross. After a helpful address, the Lord's blessing was asked on the emblems of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine; these were partaken of with thankfulness in remembrance of our Saviour's great sacrifice for us, and the privilege of our daily walk in His steps, by His grace.

Adelaide

During the pre-memorial season this year, formal preparation took the form of three Bible studies in 1 Cor. 11:23,29. The first of these was somewhat less profitable tending towards historic detail like timing and who was present at the Last Supper. In the second study we concentrated on "in remembrance of Me", considering just who He was, what He did, what that achieved and who He is. On the next Sunday, thought was given to "Ye do show the Lord's death", and the question of who should partake with the words—"Let a man examine himself."

The fact that so few aspects of the subject could be considered over a three week period emphasizes the need for a season of preparation before the annual remembrancer.

When we met together to partake of the emblems of remembrance, we were mindful of the association of the occasion with the Passover. As the lamb of the Passover, without spot or blemish pointed ahead to Christ, so we remembered Christ our Passover sacrificed for us.

Meeting as "partakers of that one bread", we thought particularly of the various members of our Lord's Body. Some would have been partaking when we did. Others would do so at a time calculated to be closer to the anniversary of our Lord's institution of His Memorial.

Consideration was given to the frequency of the season of remembrance. It is from the Passover that we see the annual nature of the Memorial. Here we can see God's wisdom. Although we must always be mindful of Christ and our entire dependence upon Him, our frailty as earthen vessels needs a season of concentration on that Ransom which is life itself to the New Creature.

The lesson God provided in the killing of the innocent lamb must surely be the same lesson which He intended in Christ's death. Of course our Lord giving Himself for the world of mankind conveyed that lesson with much weight, but it is the same lesson. Surely the message from "without shedding of blood is no remission" must impress the heinous nature of sin. God wants us to hate sin.

Perth

The brethren again assembled to memorialize our dear Saviour's dying wish to remember His supreme sacrifice "till he come." The thoughts from the service drew vividly to our attention just what our Lord sacrificed and suffered, culminating at Calvary, dying the "just for the unjust."

"By faith we took the bread of life
Which this doth symbolize;
This cup in token of the blood,
His costly sacrifice."

We each renewed our determination to serve and honour our Lord, and walk in His steps, as we are able, by His grace.

Nambour, Queensland

In memory of our dear Saviour's ransom sacrifice, a small group of the Lord's people assembled again this year as requested by our Master—"This do in remembrance of me." It served to remind us that Jesus is the way, the only way for salvation. All our hopes and standing before God are centred in Him.

Our Service opened with the singing of the lovely hymn 437—"When I survey the wondrous cross"—after which prayers were offered to our Heavenly Father for the priceless gift of His only begotten Son who gave Himself so willingly that we might have life everlasting.

An appropriate study was then taken in 1 Cor. 5:7,8; 1 Cor. 11:26-29; and 1 Cor. 10:16,17. We saw that Christ is our Passover Lamb, the fulfilment of the lamb first slain in Egypt so long ago. As our Lamb was without blemish or spot, this must be our goal also. We must keep the feast of unleavened bread, not a seven-day feast of literal bread, but a life time of following in the Master's steps, becoming copies of His sinless purity. We appreciated the Scriptural lesson on the deep meaning of the emblems, symbols of our Lord's broken body and shed blood, and of the solemn manner in which the observance was to be conducted. We saw the beautiful picture of the intimacy that was to exist between the Body members and their Head—one body all fellowshiping in their Master's experiences.

This was followed by a helpful address, also based on 1 Cor. 10:16. It was pointed out that the word rendered "communion" is often presented as common-union. A concordance study shows that by far the greatest number of times the word is rendered "fellowship", meaning joint-participation in the body and blood of Christ. Everything a Christian has he owes to Christ; in due time we have the hope of a share in HIS resurrection.

We then humbly partook of the emblems of our Lord's broken body and shed blood, gratefully reaffirming our acceptance of the provision made for our redemption. Our service closed with the singing of hymn 414.

Adelaide Easter Gathering

"**B**ehold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"—Psa. 133:1. It was good and pleasant to have brothers and sisters coming from near and far for special meetings taking advantage of the secular holidays over Easter.

The gathering changed the format which had been used for Conventions in Adelaide until Easter 1982. It was intended to provide more time for informal fellowship but on this occasion the program fell into place with the normal balance between formal and informal times.

Bible studies were the first item on the program each day. Each study was one which had not previously been considered at an Australian Convention in the last forty years.

James 2:18-24 addressed the question of justification by works or by faith. It was seen that both faith and works are necessary, the works being those which follow faith. Additional to the witness involved, works were seen to indicate the depth of faith. Sufficient faith to justify constrains the believer to be careful to maintain good works.

Isaiah 2:1-4 transported our thoughts firstly to the establishment of the Kingdom, but many of our thoughts extended to the time when there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 must remove any boasting save in our God and His Anointed. Verse 26 thoroughly establishes this principle which underlies so much of God's dealing with mankind. Verse 30 takes away any thought of Christ being interposed to hold away a vengeful God, because it is **of God** that we are in Christ Jesus.

Dawn Film Service of U.S.A., provided four films which were both interesting and instructive. Additionally, it was good to see the efforts that our brethren at the Dawn are making to witness to our God. "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"—Psa. 107:8,15,21,31.

Those gathered in Adelaide responded to messages received by sending warm Christian love to these and all in every place who love the Lord in sincerity and truth, coupled with the Scripture Romans 15:13.

The dwelling and the working must go together. If we are indeed dwelling with the King, we shall be working for Him, as we have opportunity.

F.R. Havergal.

More Value than Sparrows

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows"—Luke 12:6, 7.

These words of the Master, which, as verse one of the chapter shows "He began to say unto His disciples first of all," have no doubt been of very great comfort and encouragement to His true followers who, without such assurance of the care of their heavenly Father, may at times have thought they were wholly forgotten amidst severe trials and persecutions throughout the centuries of the Gospel Age.

Right through the 12th chapter of Luke's Gospel the same lesson of the assurance of God's utmost care over the followers of Christ is brought out for the benefit of all who have been, and are yet walking in the "narrow way" of sacrifice in the steps of their Master. Verses 24, 27 and 28 are especially noteworthy—"Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap. . . and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls?" "Consider the lilies, how they grow. . . Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass. . . how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

But is this the only meaning our Lord intended? The question may arise as to why the Lord mentioned the sale of the sparrows—"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?"—or as Matt. 10: 29 reads—"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" Then again, what is the connection between the sale of these birds and "one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Why should God be so specially interested in remembering these birds as they "fall on the ground" after their sale at small cost?

From the Old Testament we find that God accepted typical sacrifices of animals and birds as sin-offerings, or even a portion of fine flour when a person was very poor, and these offerings to the Lord (through the priest appointed) made satisfaction for sins in a typical way, prior to Christ's sacrifice on Calvary. This is explained in Lev. 5: 7-11—"And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the Lord; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first", etc. It is of interest to find that the Hebrew word for sparrow is used for all sorts of clean birds, or such whose use was not forbidden by the law; and in most of the

passages where sparrow is read, we may understand a bird of any kind.

It would seem that our Lord in speaking to the disciples about "two sparrows sold for a farthing" or "five sparrows sold for two farthings" was reminding them of the typical sacrifices for sin, and in a way fitting to their own cases, which no doubt they would understand—they being men of small means who could not likely offer a lamb for sacrifice. Then He would lead their thoughts from the typical sacrifices which God was still remembering (until Christ's sacrifice was complete) to the much more important sacrifices, even the privilege of offering themselves as sacrifices through the merit of His precious blood shortly to be shed at Calvary.

It is a truly great privilege for all the consecrated followers of Christ to be counted in with His sacrifice in the offerings for sin, the "better sacrifices" which will indeed take away the sins of the world, all the value or merit being in Christ Himself—"Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (See Col. 1:24)

One has stated respecting this subject—"The more I consider Luke 12:6, 7, the more sure I feel that our Lord was indeed referring to the typical sacrifices. Naturally He would often behold these birds being bought and used for the purposes of sacrifice. We know the typical sacrifices were intended to impress that 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.' Therefore, while our Lord would note sympathetically the fall of the birds, He would rejoice in the Father's good pleasure being accomplished, in that, then the requirements for atonement were being complied with. How much more, indeed, would God take note of the 'better sacrifices' which in His providence are to mean so much in the way of blessing to all people."

EVENING

Another closing day,
Another setting sun:
What progress have I made?
What duty have I done?
Behold the record, Lord, and see
If I have tried to live for Thee,
And where I fail, O pardon me.

Have I in simple faith,
Before Thy gracious throne,
Lived only in Thy strength,
Or trusted in my own?
Behold the record, Lord, and see
If I have tried to live for Thee,
And where I fail, O pardon me.

—Anon.

"Happy are the Gentle"

What man among us—or what woman for that matter—likes to be called “meek”? Yet the familiar words of the 3rd Beatitude stand—“Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.” But meekness, as the word is used today, is not a quality we admire; it makes us think of someone who is easily put upon. It was certainly not that sort of man our Lord was thinking of when He gave the Beatitude. The modern translations of the Bible help us to get nearer His meaning for several of them substitute the word “gentle.” So it reads—“Happy are the gentle for the earth is their heritage.”

There is a good reason for this. The word previously translated “meek”, and now “gentle”, was often used to describe the taming of animals. A horse that is broken in is not an animal without spirit; on the contrary its spirit is trained and disciplined.

A trained animal is gentle, so is a trained man. Indeed this is the notion behind the word gentleman. It is life which trains us. If we bear suffering without rebellion, if we refuse to let sorrow embitter us, if we accept the discipline of work, we are on the road to happiness.

There are some experiences which we cannot explain, and no one else can explain. They are hard to accept; a burden which we alone must carry. But if we carry them we become stronger under the burden.

When things go against us it is natural to rage and rebel. Young children who are frustrated in their efforts to make things, or who are crossed by the will of their parents, show anger by shouting or crying. To grow up means putting away childish things; it is to learn self-control.

A horse is useless until it can be harnessed. Natural gas lying deep beneath the sea is of no value until it is captured and confined. A river may run wild, but when it is channelled it provides light and power for a large part of a country.

We are useful if we are trained, and to be trained is to be gentle.—Selected.

Nambour Convention

The Nambour Convention is to be held (D.V.) on July 27th and 28th in the Staff Room, State School, Coronation Drive, Nambour, with extra meetings elsewhere on the 29th, to which interested friends are invited. Further information from—Mr. G. Tosh, Paynters Creek Rd., M.S. 1536, Nambour, Queensland, 4560.

Pilgrim Way Ended

Our dear elderly Sister Charlton of Melbourne, formerly of Queanbeyan, N.S.W., and Canberra, finished the pilgrim way in March, after a Christian life in full appreciation of God's loving plan of salvation for all humanity. We had first heard of our Sister having attended Melbourne Conventions with her father (Brother Percival) and sister upwards of seventy years ago. Sincere sympathy is expressed to Sister Charlton's daughter, Sister Grant, and to her grandchildren in the loss they have suffered, who we are pleased to say “sorrow not, even as others which have no hope”—1 Thess.4:13. Sister Grant has prepared the following information.

“Our Sister Ettie Charlton finished her Christian course of about 73 years on 27th March 1985. In spite of physical infirmities she had resolved, by our Father's grace, to attend the Melbourne Class for just as long as she could, and did so until she suffered a stroke six weeks previous to her death.

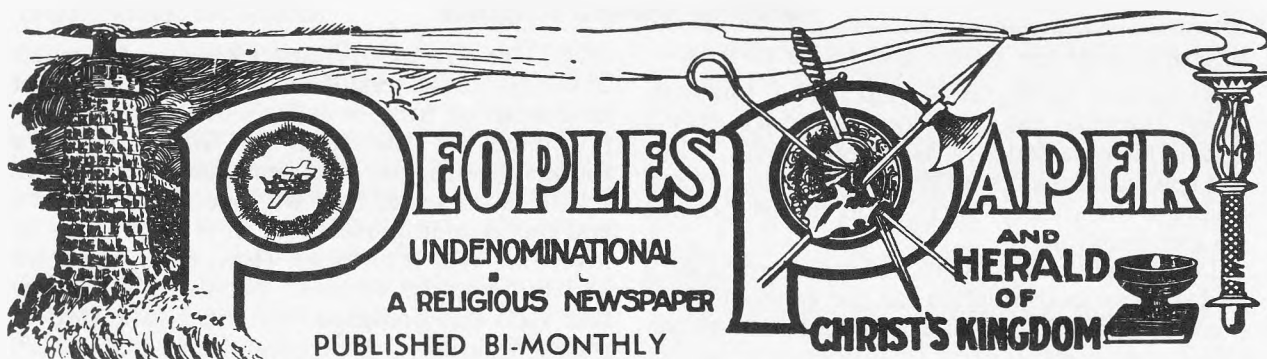
“Sister Ettie's father (of Queanbeyan, N.S.W.) accepted the Truth about 1906, and some years later Sister Ettie and her sister May consecrated. In course of time Sister Ettie married Brother Charlton, who had received the Truth in Narrogin, W.A., and Sister May married Brother Warren. Sister Ettie was the last of this little family group. She was never rich; but she gave of herself, in a very real measure, to all with whom she came in contact. Giving was the essence of her life, and it was of the kind pressed down and overflowing.

“Some are remembered by monuments, or leave behind a record of great deeds. Sister Ettie was not one of these; she brought no crowds to the Lord, but leaves behind a family who value the Lord's gifts, and who gratefully remember the things she said and did. ‘The Lord has been good to us’, three successive generations heard; and that was her last word to her family, when some days prior to her death she reminded them of the wonderful love of the Lord and His continuing providences, encouraging all to read from the past that the future will be far better than all their fears.

“Behold, what wondrous grace
The Father hath bestowed
On members of a fallen race,
To make them sons of God.”

Acts of homage to God must go hand in hand with acts of love to man.

Goulburn.



Volume LXVIII No.4

MELBOURNE, AUGUST—SEPTEMBER, 1985

Price — 20 cents

Friendship Begotten From Above

(Convention Address Reprint)

"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity"—Prov.17:17.

FRIENDSHIP-LOVE is not a miracle, but results from certain combinations. The one we love need not necessarily be just like ourselves, but rather would appeal to us more as a counterpart possessing qualities which we admire, but do not so strongly possess. Darkness, however, never loved the light; the light never loves darkness. Hence for friendship-love on a noble plane both friends must have high ideals, noble aspirations, even though they may have these in different measure. Each should see in the other something to esteem and to look up to; although in the case of our Heavenly Father this cannot be true; His love for us is of a parental character and chiefly along the lines of sympathy for us and appreciation of our endeavours to attain to His standard of character.

Reverence for the Lord and a recognition of the righteousness of His ways and precepts, and an appreciation of the Divine will and providences, are most essential to all true friendship, a hindrance to all spirit of rivalry and in general constitute a most valuable uplifting influence in every Christian character. How much it means to us in the way of contentment to know that our Heavenly Father is at the helm as respects all the affairs of His people! How much rest it permits in our hearts! How much meekness, gentleness, kindness, and love it prompts toward others, both to realize that they as well as ourselves are subjects of Divine care, and to have a heart so fully submitted to the Lord as to desire that His will shall be done irrespective of our own temporal interests or those of others.

This undoubtedly is the fruitful soil out of which all proper love amongst the Lord's people will be developed. We must love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength before we shall be prepared to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to sincerely wish for him the

same riches of grace that we desire for ourselves under the Lord's providences. Still more is it necessary to have this supreme love for God before we could in any measure approximate the degree of love which the Lord set before His followers as a new commandment, saying—"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you"—John 13:34.

Jonathan's love approximated this Christian love, this self-sacrificing love which so loved his neighbour as to delight to see that neighbour have the Lord's blessing upon him, even while this meant his own loss of honour, prestige, and kingly power. Oh, that such love as this might more and more prevail in the hearts of the New Creation! It is to such that the Apostle says—"Let the brother of high degree rejoice in that he is abased, and the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted"—under the Lord's providences.

At times friendships spring up based upon mutual admiration, and often with a measure of selfishness in co-operation. But this is not the result where the love and reverence of the Lord properly enter in. As for instance in the case of Jonathan and David, selfishness would have operated against the friendship; it is, therefore, a sample of disinterested love. Every success and honour that came to David raised him as a popular idol to the place which Jonathan to a considerable extent had held. Every advancement of David meant the preparation of the people to receive him instead of Jonathan as Saul's successor. The king saw this, so did Jonathan; but they were reversely affected by it. The king was made jealous, angry; Jonathan, reversely, loved his rival, and that from the time of their first meeting, on which occasion he gave to David his armour and court robes—1 Sam.18:4. We read—"The soul of Jonathan was knit unto the soul of David"—1 Sam.18:1—their natures interwove, intermixed—a beautiful

description of the purest and truest of love.

Alexander White says—"Had I read 'Jonathan loved David as his own soul', for once only I should have passed it by as exaggeration . . . but as I read again the rest of the story, I found myself saying to the sacred writer, 'Lo, in all this speakest no exaggeration.'"

David and Jonathan have had their fore-runners and successors throughout all the generations of men; but the story of their devotion, one to the other, continues to exert its influence upon the minds of the children of God as they ponder over this exhibition of fidelity. Such contemplation reveals the power of an unselfish love to crush out of the heart every ignoble, selfish thought, and to elevate the mind and character up to that grand ideal so beautifully described by the Apostle where "love seeketh not her own," "suffereth long and is kind," "is not provoked," "thinketh no evil"; "beareth all things, endureth all things"—where love reaches its clearest expression in actual demonstration.

So often the thought is held that real, true, brotherly love may be defined as the test of our patience, forbearance, and sympathy, or a reciprocative response to the love bestowed upon us by others; but these things have more to do with the passive side of love's operation, while the more positive action of love seems to have to do with its power to achieve results—where love controls, where the soul triumphs over hindrances that otherwise would be insurmountable, and exhibits strength, vitality, and beauty. These in turn stand out as an attractive force drawing to itself kindred spirits, uniting them to itself and imparting to such its own invigorating influence until fully reflected in the oneness of true brotherhood.

Thus we see that in the purposes of God our highest spiritual interests are served by our being so constituted as to require the mutual friendship of kindred minds—brethren controlled by similar aspirations and holy desires. Not only because the exercise of their true love upon us will react to our highest good, encouraging and stimulating our minds to reciprocate their love by seeking to be lovable, attractive, and pleasing to them, but also because we in turn require such companionship in Jesus in order that our love may be exercised upon others in assisting, strengthening, and beautifying their lives by its sanctifying power.

Now in all this, as well as in other matters, Jesus seems to fulfil rather than to destroy. He sent His disciples out two by two, as we believe, on a recognition of this great necessity in human life; and to this time in all Christian service and Christian living, the strength and joy of a strong personal Christian friendship is almost beyond computation. Another has beautifully observed

that "The love of God never disturbs the order of things He has established. We never love our neighbour so truly, as when our love for him is prompted by the love of God. All other foundations for our affections have reference to self. It is ourselves that we love in our friends, and this is an imperfect love. It is more like self-love than real friendship. How, then, must we love our friends? We must love them in the way that God has ordained. We must love God in them. We must love the good things with which God has endowed them, and we must, for His sake, submit to the privation of those things which He has denied them. When we love them with reference to self, our self-love makes us impatient, sensitive, and jealous, demanding much and deserving little; ever distrusting ourselves and our friends. It soon becomes wearied and disgusted; it very soon sees the termination of what it believed was inexhaustible; it meets everywhere with disappointment; it looks for what is perfect, and finds it nowhere; it becomes dissatisfied, changes, and has no repose; while the friendship that is regulated by the love of God is patient with defects, and does not insist upon finding in our friends what God has not placed there. It thinks of God and of what He has given; it thinks that all is good, provided it is from Him, and it can support that which God suffers to be, and to which it is His will that we should submit, by conforming ourselves to His designs . . . It is all things to all men, not in a forced appearance and in cold demonstrations, but from a full and overflowing heart, in which the love of God is a living spring of the tenderest, the deepest, and the truest feelings."

Surely this represents the thought of our blessed Lord as He sets before us the requirements of true brotherhood. What language can express the delight, comfort, and strength experienced by those whose hearts are blended together in the spirit of this deep, unselfish friendship! But facing the disciple in this matter of friendship, there is a great limitation. He cannot enter into any close bond save with those who are, like himself, entirely consecrated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the highest law of all to him, and nothing that could possibly interfere with his relation to the Lord must be tolerated for a moment.

The claim itself looks hard and arbitrary, but the infinite wisdom and love thereof has been evidenced by the sad results accruing to those who have disregarded it, and have formed friendships with the worldly, or with those who walk disorderly, "after the flesh and not after the spirit", which friendships have proved to be "enmity against God."

The reason is perfectly clear to those who have a true conception of what discipleship really is,

and how radically it differs from all other associations. It is intended to be a relationship centred in Jesus, a union of hearts touched deeply by His love, purity, and greatness, with each individual earnestly seeking continuance of His friendship by remembering His definite statement—"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Behind all this stands the great desire of this One we mutually love, namely that our association centred in Him might represent to us a high spiritual vision of His loveliness, begetting in our hearts that spirit of oneness, helpfulness, and faithfulness so grandly exemplified in His friendship to us.

Additionally, how evident it is that those restrictions are necessary, since Jesus has repeatedly taught us that it is His will that His friends should in their relationship to Him, and to one another, bear testimony to the world as "the salt of the earth"; that there is a power in His friendship to constitute us a witness to the practical results of union with Him, producing characters and relationships that demonstrate the power of His gospel to purify, and the power of His love to bring together the high and the low, the rich and poor, the learned and unlearned, mature and immature, binding all together in a fellowship like to that above—"that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Remembering this, let us now consider how this discipleship in Jesus is, in itself, a perfect qualification for the highest form of friendship. The disciples of Jesus drawn toward each other by the law of spiritual affinity will find His work in them fitting them for a friendship of the strongest and most enduring kind. There is the self-denial which He has enjoined upon them as the way of entrance upon discipleship, and the condition of its continuity. If self be smitten to death, and the one most prolific source of dissension, resulting in that breaking up of friendship, has gone, with what strength we can love and serve—if we have given up our hold on self with all its increasing demands. Then the common consecration of the life to the Kingship of Jesus, His people loving each other, and each able to say—"That life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God"—Gal.2:20—have the will and the impulse of One, and that One in His way and work is love.

Still further, there is a communion of interests. It is written of the hosts that gathered to "Hebron" that they were of "one heart to make David king." That common cause made a people, a nation, solid and strong. So with friendship in Jesus. Each disciple has nothing to live for but by word and deed to emulate Him and to be the fullest expression of His mind and character.

When two or more of these are brought into

comradeship through the love and grace of God, and their friendship becomes fervent with a great desire and purpose such as this, how strong and lasting must that friendship be. Each will cherish for the other a very high ideal of life, character, and service, no less than the will of God in each. The prayer of Epaphras for the Colossian brethren—"That ye may all stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God"—Col.4:12—is a delightful statement of the desire that disciples, comrades, ever cherish for each other, and that friendship is ever looked upon as a means to that end. Thus the very heart of the Golden Rule is reached in that friendship, for each does to the other what he would the other should do to him. Yea, more—each catches the spirit of Jesus, who went beyond the requirements of the Golden Rule, even to loving others better than Himself. Such a love is rarely known, except among the saints; and, alas, we fear not often experienced even among these. When, however, we do find a friend who sticketh closer than a brother, we properly appreciate him all the more because of the rarity of his kind. And to Jonathan the depth of David's affection was shown when they were forced to part. "And they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded"—1 Sam.20:41. This love found expression in David's lament at the death of his friend—"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women"—2 Sam.1:26.

When this mutual love becomes established amongst brethren in Jesus, then comes that delightful sense of rest and naturalness in each other's company, which is the very essence of friendship. A writer has most beautifully expressed this thought thus—"O, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pour them all right out just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then, with the breath of kindness blow the rest away."

That is the abiding condition of friends of Jesus. All necessity for reserve and hiding is gone, in the absolute confidence born of the certainty of high unselfish love. This laying bare of each to each produces the true vision of each to each. I shall thus be able to recognize quickly all the excellencies in the character of my friend, which perchance other persons may be slow to discover. He will see with clearest vision the points of my shortcoming and failure. Intelligent love is **never blind**. We shall know each other more deeply and truly in that life of mutual love than it is possible for man to know man by careful

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(bi-Monthly \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

"Our Earthly House" and "Our House from Heaven."

The Apostle is writing to the New Creation respecting their condition—not including the natural man. He recognizes the new will as the New Creature, and the body as its "tabernacle", or tent, which is much better than none, though quite unsatisfactory. The New Creature cannot feel perfectly at home in it, but earnestly longs for the perfect body, to be his in the resurrection—his permanent home, or share in the "mansion" our Lord promised to prepare for the New Creation—John 14:2. "We know that if our earthly house of this temporary dwelling were dissolved, we have a permanent structure of God, a house not made with hands (not produced by human powers), everlasting, heavenly."

It is true that in this present body, or temporary house of pilgrimage, we groan—oppressed not only by the evil influences of the world and the devil on every hand, but also and especially by the weaknesses of our own flesh. For when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that the good which we would do we are often hindered from doing, while the evil which we do not approve often obtrudes itself on us and requires to be continually resisted and overcome. As the Apostle elsewhere declares, we "which have the firstfruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body"—the Church, into the glorious likeness of our Lord.

But our groaning is not with a desire to be unclothed. We do not wish to be without a body, for that at very best all down through the Gospel Age would mean to be "asleep" waiting for the resurrection morning, to be "clothed upon with our house from heaven", our new, perfect and permanent body, our "home." What we prefer is not to have the little spark of present life extinguished, but to have it swallowed up, absorbed into the perfect conditions of the perfect life to which we are begotten. We long for resurrection birth, with its perfect body.

"Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit." This perfect condition, which we are to obtain in the resurrection, will be the grand

consummation of our salvation, which God has promised; and the new mind, the new will begotten by the Word of truth, is reckoned as the beginning of that New Creature, which will be perfected in the divine nature when the first resurrection shall have completed it. The holy spirit granted us in the present time is a prepayment, so to speak—an "earnest" or assurance of the grand and gracious results for which we are hoping and striving, groaning and praying.

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body (so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings), we are absent from the Lord." If we were living near to Him, "walking with God", we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, etc; but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love him." But this, as the Apostle explains, is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight. "But we are confident (full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith), and well pleased rather to be from home (homeless, pilgrims and strangers on the earth) and to be at home with the Lord" in the spirit of our fellowship.

For this cause we are striving, that whether it be by and by when we reach our home, or whether it be in the present time when we are actually away from home, pilgrims and strangers, we strive that we may be acceptable with the Lord; that we may have His favour and blessing and realize His fellowship and presence and know that we shall ultimately be accepted by Him.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." All through this pilgrimage we are standing at the bar of our Lord's judgment: He is testing us, proving us, to see whether or not we love Him and the things which make for righteousness and peace; and if so, how much we are willing to sacrifice for righteousness' sake. He marks the degree of our love by the measure of our self-denials and self-sacrifices for His sake, the Truth's sake.

But thus to speak of our bodies as houses can be true only of the "saints", the "New Creatures" in Christ. Others of mankind have not duality of nature, and could not properly apply to themselves such expressions as that of Romans 8:10, 11—"If Christ be in you the body is (reckoned) dead because of sin; but the spirit is alive because of (the imputed) righteousness" of Christ. The new nature of the saints, begotten by the Word of truth, is really only the new will, which, however, is thenceforth addressed as the real person, and it alone is recognized of God, who knows us not after the flesh but after the

spirit of our new minds—Christ-minds. Notice also Romans 6:3,4. These “New Creatures” have an old man, or outward man, that is perishing, and a new man, inward man, or hidden man of the heart, who is being renewed day by day—2 Cor.4:16; Col.3:9,10; Eph.4:23,24; 1 Pet. 3:4. (From—“The New Creation.”)

Visiting Brethren Overseas

(By Brother Graeme Smith)

Proverbs 10:22 expresses a great truth—“The blessing of the Lord, it (indeed) maketh rich.” The inclination of David as stated in Psalm 13:6 is therefore easily understood—“I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.” Both of these realizations were with me throughout a trip around the world in 20 days. Although the reason for travel was my temporal employment, there was some opportunity to visit brethren in U.S.A., Canada (by telephone) and England. It is hoped that sharing some of my experiences might enable some of the blessings to flow to others, and to thus assist the whole Body to be fitly framed together, to the glory of God.

God's Own

One profound impression gained was that expressed in 2 Tim.2:19—“The Lord knoweth them that are his.” In all places, the spirit is working out the same qualities of character, although in different ways in different circumstances. This was in vivid contrast to the worldly scene where national attitudes differ so markedly. Government objectives differ so widely—some aim to control and restrain, some to protect liberty and freedom, and some plot a somewhat confused course between the two. Our Father's purpose is uniform throughout the world, and Heb.13:8 came frequently to mind—“Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today, and forever”, in all countries.

Darkness

Another powerful impression gained was that spiritual darkness indeed now covers the earth. The world rushes on—everywhere. This is clearly an encouragement to us—“When the Son of man cometh, shall he find (the) faith on the earth?” As we therefore see the world so totally devoted to mammon, “let us look up, and lift up our heads, for our redemption (deliverance) draweth nigh.”

The Lord's people were in small numbers in all the places visited. Being tied to a business itinerary did not permit attendance at any Conventions, but this was really an added blessing because all meetings attended were more representative of the Lord's work in that local area.

First Meeting

It was a thrill to speak by telephone with Sister Ludmila Grudzien at The Dawn. I was at Washington, D.C., and she was able to give me the telephone number of Brother and Sister Hagensick at Chicago, and Brother Earle in Maryland State. I telephoned Chicago immediately and the Hagensicks send their warm Christian love to all, together with Phil. 4:4-8.

As the Lord would have it, there was a meeting in Vienna, Virginia, on the Tuesday evening, and Brother Earle kindly provided transport from my hotel. The meeting was in a private home, with less than 10 present. The Lord was truly with us as we meditated on Heb.2:9-11.

Canada

Time in Canada was very limited. The offices where we worked were in the same building complex as our hotel, so that one did not need to go outside to go to work. The only contact I had was with Sister Elaine Myhill, at Belleville, approximately 120 miles from Ottawa. However, there was insufficient time to visit Belleville, and I had to be satisfied with a lengthy telephone call. Sister Myhill remembers all the brethren around Melbourne well and sends her warm Christian love, by God's grace.

England

After work on Friday, we flew all night to London, arriving early Saturday morning. Although suffering from jet lag, it was an inspiration to attend the Class at West Wickham, Kent, for two meetings on Sunday. West Wickham is an outer suburb—30 minutes by train south from central London. The Class met in a basement of a school hall, with 8 present for the afternoon study (which commenced at 4 pm, by which time it was already dark) and 10 for the evening study.

There I met several brethren whose names I had heard before leaving Australia. Several of the brethren were well acquainted with the “Peoples Paper”, and one Brother had a copy of a book entitled “The Bible Teaching on the Covenants, Ransom and Sin Offering” (“What P.R. Taught”). This had been reproduced by Brother E. Martin in Melbourne in 1939-40, and was still being cherished after almost 45 years. Several items of the “Berean Series” of literature were on display and my mind recalled the words of Matt. 13:57. How careful we must be to recognize the Lord's providences on every hand.

After three days in London, our next “business call” was at Oxford, approximately 100 km. north west. It was here that the Lord's hand was most dramatically revealed. Although scheduled for two days' work, our hosts were unable to accommodate us and so we had finished all we could do in two hours. I telephoned Brother Hudson of “Bible Study Monthly” immediately,

and within 30 minutes was on my way by car to Milbourne Port, Dorset. Milbourne Port is approximately 180 km. south west from Oxford, in the south west of England. My pulse quickened with every passing kilometre, but wet roads and light rain called for caution and the trip took just on 3 hours.

Gainsborough House

Brother Hudson met me in the grounds of Gainsborough House at 2.40 pm. It was heavily overcast, and with sunset only an hour away, darkness was closing in. Brother Hudson had an appointment later which he could not alter, and so our time together was limited. However, it was a very thrilling experience to talk with him and the other brethren living at Gainsborough House.

Brother Hudson was at Brother Russell's meetings in London in 1913. 1500 members of the public attended one meeting, and the English speakers often attracted 500 people to meetings in Albert Hall. Brother Hudson has been corresponding with some Australian brethren for 45 years.

The concept of Gainsborough House is excellent, as those readers who receive the "Bible Study Monthly" will know. It is the original Gainsborough Manor House, and was built in 1840. The brethren have had it refurbished and subdivided into self-contained units. The brethren live independently except for the midday meal which is prepared by a housekeeper lady in the kitchen and eaten together in the dining room. The complex contains a meeting room and about 30 brethren meet on Sundays and Thursday nights, five of whom currently live at Gainsborough House. The only feature which is perhaps not so palatable is the number of steps and stairs—manor houses had two storeys. Leaving brethren is a sad moment at any time, and the words of Acts 20:37 were vividly in my mind as I drove out of the gate.

Bedford

Our last assignment was at Bedford, in Bedfordshire, about 100 km. north of London. The weekend was spent here, and again bountiful blessings flowed from the Lord. Each month the brethren from around this area meet for a Saturday mini-convention in the home of Brother and Sister Robinson, at Holwell, near Hitchin, in Hertfordshire. This is only 16 km. from Bedford and coincided with my visit, so I was able to attend both sessions. Again it was a great thrill to meet several brethren whose names I had read in Sister Grant's record of her visit several years before.

One point of a "lighter" nature was the provision of music for the meetings. A portable organ was used, and this was of great interest to me. I had always associated the great church

organs of the world with Westminster Abbey, and so wondered what brand the portable instrument would be. Alas!—it was a Yamaha: the Japanese influence had infiltrated into the very heart of tradition! Japanese or not, the brethren made a very cordial and joyful "noise unto the Lord", and our minds were quickly fixed on things above, and not on things on the earth.

There were 19 brethren present and the meetings were an exhilarating experience. One practice of this Class which I had not met before (and which was not the case for this meeting) is that occasionally one Brother gives a discourse during the first meeting on a particular day, and the Class then discusses the thoughts expressed during the following meeting. They find it very helpful, and it appeals to me as being very appropriate to clarify the deeper doctrinal truths. Extended comments are not always in order during normal studies, but they are necessary to explain some of the more involved truths. Discussion facilitates comprehension and assimilation.

My last meeting with the brethren was on the Sunday when Brother and Sister Robinson took me to visit Sister Boote in Hitchin. Sister Boote had a broken leg and was unable to attend on the previous day. It was a precious time of quiet, sweet fellowship.

Homeward Bound

The 24 hour trip home was punctuated by only two stops for fuel—at Bahrain and Singapore. We left London at 9 pm. and so we were in darkness until approaching the Persian Gulf. We flew down the southern side of the Gulf but could see many miles of the desolate wilderness of Iran to the north. It sent a chill down my spine to realize that I was looking over a country which at that moment was so intensely involved in war. Although I strained my eyes I could not identify the Karg Island oil terminal—a vital post in this prolonged struggle. The reality of the hostilities in the area was further impressed by the soldiers patrolling Bahrain airport, sub-machine guns over their shoulders. This was in stark contrast to the overflowing spirit of love and unity so greatly enjoyed only two days before. The **need** for the Kingdom of God was dramatically and indelibly impressed into one's mind. "Even so, come Lord Jesus"—Rev.22:20.

"A New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope!"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all readers with this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

(Continued from page 3.)

calculation or closest critical observation. It has been said that "love will stand at the door and knock long after self-conscious dignity has fallen asleep", which is only another way of expressing the beloved Apostle Paul's great words—"Love suffereth long and is kind", and because this is true, the clear vision of friendship ever makes demands on eager consecrated service. The good recognized will be developed by fellowship, by encouragement and fidelity—even when that good is costing my friend much sacrifice and suffering. As sharers in common of the friendship of Jesus, the shortcomings of each will be a matter concerning which the true disciple-friend will mourn and pray in secret, and of which he will speak in such tones of tender love that his brother will be won to the highest surrender, which ever means victory and advancement. So, together, and by the reciprocity of holy comradeship there will be a building of each other up and a several growth in grace.

There is no higher or more wonderful description of possibilities of true friendship in Jesus than that contained in Paul's words to the Romans 12:15—"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." That is true sympathy, and perfect sympathy between two is friendship. The word "sympathy" has too long been robbed of its glory by the narrowing interpretation which has considered it only as power to "weep with them that weep." That is the smaller and easier part of true sympathy. Sympathy we would say, is the power that projects life outside the circle of personality, and shares the life of another, feeling the thrill of the other's joy, and the pains of the other's woe. "There is such a thing as making my brother's sin my own, and bearing it in the spirit before God, as though it were my own. We need to be very near to Christ in order to enter into the spiritual meaning and application of all this. It is a wonderfully blessed and holy exercise, and it can be known only in the immediate presence of God. How little we really know of this the heart can testify. Our tendency is, when a brother or sister has sinned, to sit in judgment upon them; to take the place of a severe censor, to look upon their sin as something with which we have nothing whatever to do. This is to fail sadly in our priestly functions. It is a most precious fruit of grace to be able so to identify oneself with an erring brother or sister as to make their sin one's own—to bear it in spirit before God. This truly is a very high order of priestly service, and demands a large measure of the spirit and mind of Christ. It is only the spiritual who really enter into this; and how few of us are truly spiritual! 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault **ye which are spiritual** restore such an one in the

spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ"—Gal. 6:1,2. May the Lord give us grace to fulfil this blessed 'law'! How unlike it is to everything in us! How it rebukes our harshness and selfishness! Oh! to be more like Christ in this as in all beside!"

This attitude can be realized only when the friendship is in Jesus. There it can be, and is. Is my brother in trouble, in difficulty, in temptation? I am his companion still, and the sorrow, the perplexity, the anguish, are mine also. Leave him now that he is fallen? **Impossible!** When he fell, I fell; not in the sense of manifesting his weakness, but in sympathy with him in his failure, and I shall not feel erect again until he has made even that fall a stepping-stone to higher things.

Is my brother in joy, in prosperity, in victory? I am yet with him, and the rapture, the success, the triumph are mine because they are his. Be jealous of his promotion? Again, **impossible!** If he rises, so do I, and all his advancement is my greatest progress, for we are one.

Blessed is the man that hath such a friend, and himself becomes such a friend, in the brotherhood of Jesus! It may be impossible to have many. It is questionable whether any person apart from the higher realm of relationship can ever have many. Such friendship cannot be separated. Oceans and continents may divide, but mutual love laughs at these, and in daily service, prayer, and meditation, each is still with the other, and thinks and plans and works under the old influences.

Friendship is always beautiful, but the friendship of disciples of Jesus, based upon the law of spiritual affinity, and conditioned and consummated in Christ, is **Peerless**.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Who Divided the Bible into Chapters and Verses?

(From "A Book about the Bible"
by George Stimpson)

EARLY editions of the Bible were not divided into chapters and the smaller sections now known as verses. They did not contain even perceptible spaces between words. The divisions into chapters and verses were a gradual process that started during the Middle Ages. Tertullian,

who died before 240 A.D., referred to some sort of sections in the New Testament. Later the Gospels were divided into what were known as the Ammonian-Eusebian sections, which were smaller divisions than our present chapters. Euthalius, a deacon and bishop who lived about the middle of the 5th century, divided parts of the New Testament into minute portions similar to the present verses. About 1226 Cardinal Hugo de Sancto-Caro of France divided the entire Latin Vulgate into chapters and verses somewhat similar to those of today. But even the early printed Bibles, such as the Gutenberg Bible, were not divided into chapters and verses. The first printed New Testament with such divisions was issued in 1527 at Lyons by Sanctus Pagninus. Robert Stephens followed a similar arrangement in his edition of the new Testament printed at Geneva in 1551. This was a two-volume work with the Greek text in the centre of the page and with the Latin of Erasmus on one side and the Latin Vulgate on the other. Stephens, whose French name was Robert Estienne, was a member of a famous family of scholars and printers in France. In the preface to his concordance, the son of Robert Stephens says his father worked out the system of chapters and verses for his edition of the New Testament while he was journeying on horseback from Paris to London. His system of dividing the Bible into chapters and verses was adopted by William Whittingham and his associates in the Geneva or Breeches Bible, the New Testament of which was first printed in 1557 and the Old Testament in 1560. An introductory note to the reader of the Bible says: "The argumentes bothe for the booke and for the chapters with the nombre of the verse are added." The Geneva Bible is the first English version with the chapter and verse enumeration as we now know them. It should be borne in mind that the Greek classics and other ancient books were likewise arbitrarily divided into sections for convenience and reference. The general plan appears to have been to include each separate sentence or its equivalent in a verse, but this plan was not always followed. Both chapters and verses often disregard natural divisions of thought and are misleading. For instance the first 3 verses of Genesis 2 are clearly the conclusion of the narrative in Genesis 1. But the chapters and verses are now definitely fixed and are regarded as virtually parts of the Bible. Although the arrangement sometimes obscures the sense and interrupts the flow of the narrative, it is so convenient for reference and citation that its elimination would destroy the usefulness of thousands of concordances and other reference books and make millions of citations meaningless. The Revisers of 1885 tried to solve the problem by printing the chapter and verse number in the margin.

Born of the Spirit

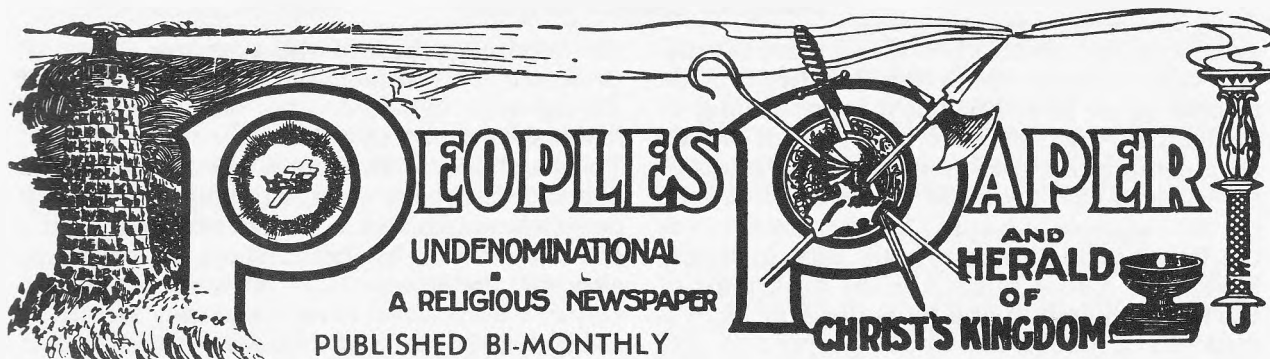
There are a number of expressions used in the Scriptures to describe the work of the holy spirit in the hearts and lives of Christians. One of these is "born." This is a word which suggests the coming into existence of a new life, and this is one of the things accomplished by the power of the holy spirit. This new life, when it comes fully to birth, will be so different from the human life that concerning it Jesus said—"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"—John 3:8.

The Greek word in the Bible translated "born" is also correctly translated "begotten", and it is necessary to determine from the context which thought is intended by the writer. By observing this distinction we learn that it is not proper to speak of conversion to Christ as being born of the spirit. When one comes to God in repentance and, through faith in Christ as his Redeemer, surrenders himself in full consecration to do God's will, what occurs is properly described as a "begetting" of the spirit of God. In other words, a new life is then begun.

However, this new life, to continue the symbolism, is merely an embryo. It needs to be nourished by the Word of God, and thus to develop, growing strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is not until the resurrection that this new life comes to the birth. Not until then is one truly born of the spirit, Not until then are the words of Jesus true that one thus born is able to go and come invisibly as the wind. Thus we see that to note this difference in the use of the words born and begotten gives us a much more comprehensive understanding of what the power of God exercised through His Word accomplishes on behalf of the consecrated followers of the Master—Selected.

"The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"—1 Tim. 3:15.

The Lord's Church, the only one to which the name ecclesia, Body or Church, is properly applicable, is so insignificant, so unostentatious, and comparatively so poor in this world's riches, that it is not recognized nor recognizable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven—Heb. 12:23. Its Head and Bishop is the Lord; its law in His Word: it has but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; and it is built upon the testimonies of the holy apostles and prophets—Jesus Christ Himself being its chief corner-stone. Z. '99-37.



Volume LXVIII No.5

MELBOURNE, OCTOBER—NOVEMBER, 1985

Price — 20 cents

“Blessed are the Merciful”

“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”—Eph. 4:32.

The climax of Joseph’s story is outlined in Genesis 45:1-15; 50:15-21, and truly no one can read this simple narrative in the Bible and not be blessed by it. This lesson dates twenty-two years after Joseph came into Egypt a slave. Seven years of bountiful harvests had passed, and the second year of the famine seven had come. If we are inclined to wonder why in all those twenty-two years Joseph had not communicated with his aged father, remembering especially that he had plenty of opportunity for so doing after he became governor of Egypt, let us remember also how particularly his affairs were guided of the Lord, and that quite possibly in this matter he was acting under divine direction. He evidently was expecting his brethren, knowing that the drought and consequently the famine extended to Palestine and over a wide range of country. Through trusted servants a watch was evidently kept for the Hebrews, anticipating that the famine would drive them to Egypt for supplies. Thus on the arrival of the ten sons of Jacob, Joseph was immediately told of the fact. They were arrested and brought before him, treated with suspicion and accused of being spies, and put into prison for three days.

Joseph, the governor, addressed them through an interpreter, that he might the more thoroughly conceal himself, and that they might be more frank in their utterances in his presence. He interviewed them after they had spent three days in prison, and heard their admissions the one to the other that their adversity in this matter was esteemed as a judgment from the Lord on account of their wrong course toward their brother twenty-two years previously. He noted that they still remembered his cries as they had put him into the pit to die; he perceived that the matter had made a deep impression upon their minds, and that they were now in a different attitude of

heart. He kept one of their number as a hostage and gave the others a small amount of food, bidding them return and, as a proof of their story, to bring with them the younger brother whom they had mentioned, assuring them that with this proof of their sincerity they would be privileged to trade without interruption.

The brethren properly enough associated their experiences in the dungeon with those of Joseph, and evidently took to heart the lesson of their wrong course. Although it is possible that these men with one exception were murderers in their hearts, we will see in the present lesson a marked change in their characters. This was brought about perhaps partly by their father’s grief over the loss of Joseph, and partly, no doubt, by their own remorse in respect of their wrong doing. Thus an evil deed does not always predict further evil, but sometimes becomes the turning point of character. What Christian has not had an experience along this line—that his point of failure, demonstrating his weakness in some particular line of character, has really been to him a valuable lesson, making him the stronger in that particular, the better able to stand future trials and temptations from the same quarter. Thus all of our experiences in life rightly received (even life’s stumbling-stones) may prove to be stepping-stones to better things.

Ten Very Changed Men

On arrival at home their experiences were related to their father, Jacob, who now also mourned the loss of Simeon, the hostage, but utterly refused to allow Benjamin to go from him. It was here that Reuben, noting his father’s sorrow, offered himself and his children as hostages for the safe return of Benjamin. It was not until the famine pressed them sorely and starvation stared them in the face that Jacob consented to allow Benjamin to go with his brethren to Egypt, upon the assurance of Judah that if anything happened to him he would bear the blame. How evidently these men had learned

sympathy from their father during those twenty-two years. Once so indifferent that they brought trouble upon him, they now were willing to pledge their own lives for his comfort. We are to remember that these men were the heads of the tribes of Israel, some of whose children were the most notable in history: for instance Levi was the father of the entire priestly tribe including Moses and Aaron; Judah was the progenitor of David and Solomon and Jesus our Lord. It was evidently a part of the divine purpose to give these men a great lesson in connection with their father, the famine, etc.—a lesson that not only would be beneficial to themselves but have an influence upon all future time.

Arriving back in Egypt from their father's house, the ten brethren were astonished when they were directed to enter the governor's palace. The money for their previous purchase they had found in their sacks when they emptied them, and this they explained to Joseph's steward, saying that they had brought it back with additional money for the purchase of more wheat. Their trepidation was lest it should be claimed that the money was stolen, the penalty for theft under the Egyptian law being slavery. Joseph's steward gave evidence of having to some extent his master's confidence and some knowledge of his religion, for he answered them kindly—"Peace be unto you: the money returned to you was from the God of your father." He further restored their confidence by bringing Simeon to them at liberty. They washed and prepared for dinner at the governor's house, as they were instructed. What could it all mean?

Farmers, they felt out of place in the palace, and queried why the governor, who had treated them previously as spies, should now treat them so generously. Their astonishment grew momentarily as they noted the peculiarities of the situation: the seats assigned them were in the order of their birth, and when portions were sent from Joseph's separate table they noted that five portions were sent to Benjamin, as indicative of the governor's favour especially upon him. They knew not that the governor, able to understand their tongue, was listening to know whether or not they still were envious, or how they would receive this manifestation of special favour to the younger brother. They stood the test. They showed that their envy was dead, that they rejoiced in their younger brother's favour.

Yet another step of testing was to be taken: the men were allowed to depart with their supplies, but into one of Benjamin's sacks of wheat upon his beast the steward by direction placed the governor's silver cup, and then, ere the men had gotten far from the city, they were overtaken by the palace guard and accused of dishonourable conduct, rendering evil for good in the theft of

the "divining cup" of the governor. They all professed their innocence, and declared that if the cup were to be found not only the one who had it should be a slave but the entire company. The search for the cup began with the eldest and concluded with the youngest, Benjamin, the cup being found in his sack. We can well imagine the dismay of the brethren; they all returned, although the steward said he wanted only the culprit for his slave. How could they face their father Jacob and tell him of this calamity? Returning to the palace the governor, Joseph, was still there. They prostrated before him, and knowing the futility of protestation as to innocence they spoke of the matter as a calamity and resigned themselves to their fate as bondsmen.

The governor replied—"Not so! we in Egypt are not unjust to take you all for bondsmen for one man's fault. Let the guilty one serve, the rest may go free. Return to your home and your families and take with you your wheat." Then it was that Judah, once hard hearted in respect of his brother Joseph and his father Jacob, addresses the governor with a most pathetic plea, which for its simplicity and directness and pathos stands out preeminently amongst all the records of history. He detailed to the governor the circumstances connected with the bringing of Benjamin, his father's grief in parting with him, his assurance that it would mean the hastening of his death if anything happened to him, the fact that he, Judah, had become surety for his brother, etc.; then he concludes—"Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad as a bondsman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren, for how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me, lest peradventure I shall see the evil that shall come to my father?"—Gen.44:18-34.

The Silver Lining of the Cloud

The final test put upon the brethren by the Lord and by Joseph was met successfully. It was demonstrated that they were changed men, that instead of coldness, indifference and gross brutality, they were tender hearted, sympathetic and willing to suffer one for the other. The time, therefore, had come for the clouds and shadows that had been over them for some time to break away. Joseph, the governor, could refrain himself no longer. He ordered the place cleared of the attendants that he might be alone with his brethren—the matter was too sacred for the eyes of others. The time had come for him to throw off his reserve and reveal himself to them. Alone with them he wept, and his voice shook with emotion as he told them who he was and how their designs against him of twenty-two years before had, under God's providence, been overruled for his good. What wonder that

the guilty men trembled now as much or more than ever. What resentment might their brother feel against them? how might he now requite them evil for evil, and send them to the house of bondage or to the dungeon?

But through his tears of joy Joseph spoke graciously to them; and, at first disposed to flee, they gathered to him as he said—"Be not grieved with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; God sent me before you to preserve life. . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God, and he hath made me a life-giver to Pharaoh. . . . Haste ye and go up to my father and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt, come down unto me, tarry not." A more dramatic scene could scarcely be imagined, yet through it all runs the thread of simplicity and honesty, and above all the spirit of love and mercy, which could emanate only from the one great instructor, God, and could be exemplified only by those who have been near to Him and received His instructions.

"Tender Hearted, Forgiving One Another"

Had Joseph been a saint of this Gospel Age, begotten of the holy spirit and illuminated thereby through the manifold revelations of the divine purpose and character as we have been in the Bible, his conduct would still be worthy of the very highest type of Christian development. But when we think of the circumstances and conditions under which his character was developed, in a heathen land and with but a small revelation of the divine character and plan, we stand amazed. Do we not properly say to ourselves, while studying this lesson, What manner of persons ought we to be considering our great advantages every way? Would we have proven as noble and generous as Joseph under the same circumstances and conditions? If not, why not, except that we have not made the proper use of the lessons provided for us in the school of Christ? We know that unless we do learn these lessons and develop at heart such a character of mercy and generosity we will not be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light—not be acceptable to the Lord as members of the elect, the Bride Class.

When sending them home Joseph kissed his brother Benjamin and tarried with him quite a while, the two weeping upon each other's necks. Then came the turn of the other ten brothers. How would he deal with them? Surely he would not manifest the affection of kissing them after the custom of eastern lands, because surely he could not feel toward them a perfect love and goodwill. But he did kiss every one of them, and since the matter was neither of constraint nor for effect, it evidenced the fact that his heart was full of generosity and loving kindness. "Blessed are the merciful", they are the kind to whom

the heavenly Father will be pleased to extend His mercy and His favour. They are the only ones who will be in a proper attitude to receive the great blessing of the kingdom—others not having developed this character for mercy will be unfit for the exaltation whatever may be their portion.

"Am I in the Place of God?"

Our lesson skips over that part of the narrative which relates to the coming of Jacob and his household in wagons sent for them by the governor of Egypt, with the full knowledge and consent of Pharaoh the king, and how they were settled in the land of Goshen and prospered there. By and by the aged Jacob died in the land of Egypt, but was taken for burial back into Palestine. The funeral over, Joseph's brethren were in some trepidation. Joseph's course in rendering so much good in return for so much evil seemed so unnatural that they feared that it was only a temporary matter for their father's sake, and that now since his death they would be out of favour with the governor. They came to Joseph again and, apologizing for the past, asked assurance of his forgiveness, telling him they were the servants of God and that they were quite willing to be Joseph's servants also. Note the noble answer they got—"Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now, therefore, fear ye not; I will nourish you and your little ones"—and he comforted them, speaking kindly to them.

Generous Joseph! Not a complaint, not a bitter word, only excuses for their villainy. Since the matter had worked out good why should he think evil of the agencies or agents which God had permitted and used? His expression—"Am I in the place of God?"—signifies, Is it for me to judge you or attempt to punish you in any manner? Is it not God alone to whom you have responsibility in this matter? and if you can make the matter right with Him it already is right with me, for vengeance belongeth unto the Lord and not to His creatures, all of whom are imperfect in one way or another.

Let us apply this lesson each to himself and herself, not only as respects the brotherhood in the Church of God, but also in regard to the dealings with our brethren in the flesh and with our neighbours. What matter it to us whether they meant us evil or good, have we not God's assurance that all things are working together for good to them that love Him—to the called ones according to His purpose? And this being the case, why should we have the slightest anger or resentment against the persons or instrumentalities in any way used of the Lord in connection with our affairs? Those who thus trust

(Continued on page 7.)

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(bi-Monthly \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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

Many spiritual blessings were experienced by the small band of the Lord's people who attended the 13th Annual Nambour Convention. The opening thought was expressed that we all might maintain an open mind while partaking of the spiritual feast set before us, and like the Bereans of old we would prove all things from God's Word before assimilating them.

It was a joy to welcome brethren from Brisbane, Sydney area, Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide. Also as in previous years it was a pleasure to receive many lovely messages and greetings from various Classes and individual brethren throughout Australia and overseas. Christian love is sent from the Convention to all these and the the Lord's people everywhere, together with the beautiful message in 1 Peter 5:6-11.

Helpful studies were conducted on the Scriptures—2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Pet. 5:6-11; Gal. 6:1-8, and Heb. 13:8-14. Many interesting questions were also submitted for the Question Time section, and 10 addresses were given by the brethren with the topics—"To Seek and to Save that which was Lost"; "Lazarus and the Rich Man"; "Esau's Hate"; "The Bread and Water of Life"; "Daniel the Great Man of God"; "Fellowship"; "The Greatest Ransom Ever Paid"; "The Lord Knows His Own"; "The Trigger" and "The Nature of Spiritual Things" (Young Peoples' Address).

We would like to express our appreciation to all who served the Convention in any way, and in catering for our temporal needs. A Praise and Testimony Meeting was also held when thankfulness was freely expressed to our loving Heavenly Father for all His blessings and overruling providences of life.

Many lovely hymns were sung throughout the Convention, the closing feature as usual being the Love Feast. All thanks and praise we give to our gracious Heavenly Father and to His Son Jesus Christ for the many blessings, warm fellowship and the opportunities of service.

Seldom can the heart be lonely
If it seek a lonelier still,
Self-forgetting, seeking only
Empier cups of love to fill.

"For Me and Thee"

"But lest we should offend them, go to the lake, throw a hook, and take the first fish coming up, and opening his mouth, thou wilt find a stater; take that, and give it to them, for me and thee"—Matt. 17:27; Diaglott.

In the earlier days of our Lord's ministry, following His rejection by His own townspeople of Nazareth, He seems to have resided for some considerable time in Capernaum. According to Matthew's order of events it would appear that shortly after His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus had made His way to Capernaum, and had there attracted much attention to Himself by healing the servant of the Centurion and also restoring Peter's mother-in-law to health. Days of popularity followed, until Jesus found it expedient to depart to a more quiet place. But this popularity which at first promised so much, had sadly waned when in after days our Lord again visited this greatly privileged city. The hatred of the religious leaders had grown in volume, and they had succeeded in influencing many of the people against Jesus and His work. The incident recorded in Matthew 17, and from which our text is chosen, was a very manifest evidence of this changed attitude on the part of the people of Capernaum.

Jesus had been absent with His disciples for some time, but now returns once more to this scene of many of His early activities. Shortly after their arrival, the tax collectors had encountered Peter with the challenge—"Doth not your Master pay tribute?" This tribute was a voluntary tax imposed only upon the Jews for the upkeep of the temple services, etc., having had its beginning in the days of Moses. By general consent it was understood that religious teachers were exempt from this tax, and in former days this courtesy seems to have been given to Jesus also. Now, however, He had lost caste, and was no longer thought worthy of this exemption. Hence the demand made upon Peter.

As the narrative shows, Peter entertained no doubt about Jesus being prepared to pay such a tax, and therefore in his usual impulsive way virtually promised it. By this promise he obligated both himself and his Master. We may judge therefore his surprise when he found himself being questioned by Jesus as to the propriety of His paying such tribute. Surely the hasty promise was scarcely consistent with the confession he had made but a few days before, when he confessed His Master—"the Son of the living God."

Jesus did not contest the payment of the tax, and recognizing that no principle was involved, He provided for the payment. Peter is sent down to the lake with the instructions contained in our

text, and of course returns with the coin the Master had promised. As to how the money came to be in the mouth of the fish, a reasonable suggestion is that the bright coin had been thrown or had dropped into the water from a passing boat and was quickly seized by this particular fish, lodging in its throat in such a way as to prevent its getting rid of it. Doubtless in some such way, in the unlimited, overruling power of God, the matter was properly timed; the special feature of the miracle being in our Lord's power to find it there at the appropriate time.

Jesus Pays the Debt of His Disciple

This is the historical narrative as it pertains to the little incident itself, but like so many other things in our Lord's intimate associations with His immediate disciples, this incident with Peter is replete with suggestive lessons possible of present and personal application—lessons that are surely calculated to draw us close to Him in a deeper appreciation of His love.

It should be observed that the fish did not provide two half shekels, but only one, a stater, which was in value equivalent to the one shekel needed—"For Me and thee." Thus Jesus linked Himself in the payment of this demand in the most intimate way with His disciple. That little word "and" should not be overlooked, for it is laden with significance, not only to the weak and impoverished Peter, but full of encouragement to us—to you and to me. Our blessed Master still pays the charges for all His penniless disciples, who like Peter have become indebted beyond their ability to pay, and who also in their extremities rejoice to hear Him say—"that take, and give for Me and thee."

"Let our debts be what they may,
However great or small,
So soon as we have naught to pay
Our Lord forgives us all.
"'Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large,
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge."

At the call of Jesus, Peter had left all to follow Him. His fishing business had been abandoned, at least in so far as giving attention to it might go. No income would therefore be forthcoming from that source. In common with his fellow disciples he had "forsaken all to follow" the Lord in His ministry, and apparently is now without funds. When, therefore, he finds himself face to face with this demand for the tax, he makes his appeal to Jesus. His extremity, however, becomes the Lord's opportunity to teach him how graciously "the Lord will provide" for every need. To us also the lesson is taught that when we too can truthfully say, "Lord I have left all to follow Thee", I am therefore,

"Not my own, my time, my talent,
Freely all to Christ I bring,"

that He is ever ready to become our surety for demands made upon us for His name's sake, or because we have given up all for His cause.

Casting All Our Care Upon Him

As in the days of His earthly ministry, when three years of absence from home and business had passed over the heads of His disciples, He could turn to them with the inquiry—"When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything?" and they could promptly reply—"Nothing"—Luke 22:35—so it has been with all the long line of His faithful followers. With one voice all would say with Paul—"I have all and abound." All things needful and best have been supplied according to His riches in glory, for—"I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content", fully assured that—"He knows and loves and cares." If all has been given up for Him, He cannot fail to meet our needs, for His acceptance of our gift becomes His pledge that all our needs are now His special care. As a devoted life-long disciple has well expressed it—"Whenever you give yourself absolutely to Christ and His service, not at your whim, but by His direct invitation, you may reckon absolutely on His thoughtful provision, and even if your faith should give out, He will remain faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."

Let us note that when Peter found himself involved by his promise, he did not attempt to carry the burden alone. He took it to the Lord for His attention. By His summons to leave all, and Peter's acceptance of that call, Jesus had now become his burden bearer. As Peter might interpret it, this experience was traceable to the fact that he was so vitally associated with Jesus that their experiences were one. What a relief it must have been to him, when he found that the need had already been anticipated and provided for. And what a lasting impression must have been left on his mind to strengthen his faith in after days. He could always remember that no emergency could arise in the Lord's service that could not be met by Divine help. Jesus, by this act, had shown him, that even before he had any realization of his own need, ample provision had already been made for it, by One who makes the burden of His disciples first of all His own, before it touches those who have become the objects of His special love and care.

O that by some means our patient, loving Master might teach us this lesson also. What fully consecrated heart does not long for a deeper realization of "What a friend we have in Jesus"—One who really does "stick closer than a brother" to every sincere disciple, One who in every experience of burden or trial never fails to assure

and encourage by reminding us that this also is shared by Him. The trial is for our discipline and instruction in righteousness, and for Him, wherein He shows Himself gracious, sympathetic, and strong on behalf of those who flee to Him in every time of need. Like Peter, we may often be unmindful of the fact that before we found ourselves in the trial, He had already provided a way of escape; but oh, if we could only emulate Peter in our unquestioning confidence in His abundant provisions, and roll our burden on Him, then what a blessed afterward of joy would come into our experience. How wonderful it would be if we could only truthfully say—"I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit, because 'faith can firmly trust Him, come what may'" His method of sharing our burden may not be in some miraculous way, as in Peter's case, yet, though heaven and earth pass away, His word of promise can never fail. He will meet the need of His weakest and most impoverished, devoted disciple. None that put their trust in Him can ever be forsaken, or overburdened with a trial too great to bear. The **tax gatherer** may be ever at our door in many forms, but if we take his demands to Jesus, and lay them at His feet, we will be able to face every demand with His "grace sufficient" in our possession, and inexpressible joy in our hearts, for to us He will have also said—"That take, and give for **Me** and **thee**."

Our Master Links Himself to Sinful Men

How often Peter must have recalled that memorable day, when Jesus first took him into partnership, and filled his boat to the brim, giving evidence of His power to assist those who obey Him. How often the same impulse that threw him at the Master's feet on that occasion, must have moved him again and again to acknowledge his unworthiness—"depart from me, for I am a sinful man." Beloved Peter, impetuous, yes, aggressive sometimes beyond discretion, yes, presumptuous, to the point of rebuking his Master, yes—but indeed, Peter with a heart of gold, and a power of affection sensitive to the slightest hint of its possible insincerity—"Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." Now once more his heart is thrilled, for again Jesus has linked him with Himself in words that must have been music to his soul—"For **Me** and **thee**." Again the lesson comes to us, for this also is our blessed privilege today. We too have enjoyed the privilege of turning our "boats" over to the Lord, and because we did so there are now hallowed memories deep down in our hearts, too sacred to parade before others who might not understand. Precious moments, when the very abundance of His blessings overwhelmed us with a sense of our utter unprofitableness, and, like

Peter, we too have realized at such times more deeply than ever the depth of that condescending love that bridged the gulf between ourselves and the Blessed One who had so graciously accepted us into fellowship.

God's Love Broader than the Measure of Man's Mind

Surely this is the greatest wonder of all the "wideness of God's mercy"—that we, unworthy mortals, should be called into such partnership. But even partnership was too cold a word for Jesus to convey His meaning to us, and to call us servants was unthinkable, for there were some confidences He sought that could not be enjoyed by servants, so He chose to call us friends. But He delights in even a more intimate term than that, for "He is not ashamed to call us **brethren**." And does He not like that term best, for the Prophet has Him saying—"I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee"—Heb.2:12. And not alone in the house of our pilgrimage will He rejoice with us, but He is yearning to have us drink with Him in deeper joys in the place He has gone to prepare. As His brethren He fervently desires to have us share with Him in His glory before the Father and all His holy angels. He invites our participation with Him in His triumphant reign of a thousand years. And He has not left us without the fullest assurance that "in the ages to come" we are to share with Him the unfolding glories of endless eternities. In all of this we may hear Him say, Though eye hath not seen, nor ear heard what My Father hath in reservation for those that love Him, yet in His love and wisdom it waits in reservation "for **Me** and **thee**." How incredible it seems! Yet it was all determined for us in the counsels of God before the foundation of the world.

How much of the Divine Plan the Father may have revealed to the Son in His pre-human existence, we may not be too sure, but that He was well informed that the redemption of mankind would involve the greatest test of His own devotion to God, and His love for man, is beyond doubt. He would surely know that His obedience would secure for Him the right to be the great Deliverer of the race. He must also have known that a class of called out ones, developed under similar tests of fidelity, would share with Him those exceptional privileges of Kingdom rulership. Therefore, as He endured the cross, despising the shame, and remembered that the future for Himself and His Bride was all bound up in the issues of His own sacrificial life, He could address us again and again from those crisis periods, in the words addressed to Peter—"This is for **Me** and **thee**."

He Gave Himself for Me

From His conflict with Satan, alone in the solitudes of the wilderness, He emerges triumphant, having gained for Himself a victory over that Prince of Darkness that meant everything to Him and us. How fierce that conflict was we do not know, but this we do know, that the great issues before His mind were obedience to God, and the salvation of fallen man. Therefore in His victory He is saying to us again—"This is for Me and thee."

Again we are with Him in the deep recesses of the Garden of His agony. We see the cup the Father has put into His hands, and how with an anguish of soul too deep for our comprehension, He falters in the extremity of His sorrow, and pleads its removal. But He overcame! His—"Nevertheless, not my will not thine be done", proclaims once more His triumph and He comes to us again to calm and rejoice our hearts with the same sweet message—"This is for Me and thee."

We see Him at last when "lifted up was He to die", as Moses had lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. The anguish of the Garden has been surpassed by the heart-breaking cry of the God-forsaken, Sin-bearer. The temple veil has been rent in twain and all seems over, and lost. But no, ere He utters His final words—"It is finished"; He sees us, like the beloved John and the faithful women looking on with our tears of sympathy, and again we hear Him assure us that this bitterness also was necessary to fulfil His delight in the Father's will, necessary also to redeem unto Himself a Church out of every nation and kindred—therefore, this also is "for Me and thee."

Finally, we stand with Him as He emerges from the tomb, a conqueror over death and the grave. We listen to His words of hope and comfort—words that make our hearts burn within us while He opens to us the Scriptures: It must needs be that Christ should suffer before entering into His glory. Such is the testimony of all the Prophets, beginning with Moses. But My beloved disciples, as the Father has appointed unto Me a Kingdom, so I now appoint unto you that glorious Kingdom wherein I shall see the travail of My soul and be satisfied; that blessed day when the earth shall resound with glory to God, and good will to men; that delightful time when the glory of God shall cover the earth, and sin and death shall be no more; that Kingdom, I now go to receive for Myself, yes and for you. This also is "for Me and thee." Thus He links Himself to sinful men in redeeming love, and who shall separate us from this One who has loved us and bought us with His own precious blood, and made us sharers with Himself and all the Father has given to Him? (From—"The Herald of Christ's Kingdom.")

"Naught of merit or of price
Remains to justice due;
Jesus died and paid it all—
Yes, all that I did owe.

When He from His lofty throne
Stooped down to do and die,
Everything was fully done;
"Tis finished!" was His cry.

Jesus paid it all,
All the debt I owed;
Jesus died and paid it all,
Yes, all the debt I owned."

(Continued from page 3.)

in the Lord, and they only, are able to properly view and meet the affairs of life, and they alone are able to rejoice in tribulation, in persecution, in suffering for righteousness' sake, because they know, as the Apostle assures us, that all these things are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and that present difficulties and trails are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us by and by—when we with our dear Redeemer shall sit upon the throne on high for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

"The Spirit of Prayer and Supplication"

If the story of Joseph, his sufferings and exaltation to power as the governor of Egypt next to the king, represents the story of Jesus and all those who follow in His footsteps in the narrow way of self sacrifice and suffering, incidental to their exaltation to power in the kingdom of God under the whole heavens; and if the preparation and afterward the distribution of the wheat, the bread of Egypt, for the saving of the lives of that whole people represents well the blessings and glorious opportunities that are to come to the world of mankind during the Millennial Age through the glorified Redeemer, it does not seem amiss to suppose that Joseph's eleven brethren are somewhat typical also. We are to remember that it was His own that received Jesus, not those who cried—"Crucify him, his blood be upon us and upon our children."

We perceive that in the Lord's providence that nation has passed through severe experiences and ordeals since. We may hope that these are proving beneficial, and that ere long the famine for the Word of the Lord will reach them and cause them to come to the great Governor for the bread of life. The Scriptures intimate that this will be the time of "Jacob's trouble"—Jer.30:7—but he will be delivered out of it. The Apostle assures us of the same, saying that God's gifts and callings He will not repent of or alter, and that ultimately the natural Israelite shall obtain mercy through the favour of the spiritual Israelite—Rom.11:30,31. The Prophet—Zech.12:10—takes up the theme, and tells us of how they shall yet look upon Him whom they have pierced, and how they shall

mourn as these brethren mourned, and how then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and upon their manifestation of repentance His forgiveness, and how ultimately their sins and iniquities He will remember no more—that instead He will be very gracious to them and kiss them.

We close this lesson with the Apostle Paul's exhortation—"Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." The more we each realize our own indebtedness to the Lord for the forgiveness of our sins and for our adoption into His family and for the blessings that come to us as the sons of God, the more shall we seek to copy His glorious character and be copies of our dear Redeemer, the essence of whose character is nothing less than justice to every one—with as much additional of love and mercy as we can possibly attain to. The larger our attainments of this God-like quality the more pleasing we will be in the Father's sight and the better fitted for joint-heirship in the heavenly kingdom, in the dispensing of the bread of life to all the world of mankind.

He who sees not these things and follows not this course according to the Apostle's word is blind and cannot see afar off—cannot see and appreciate the blessings which the Lord has promised to those who faithfully copy Him. Those who do see, find the eyes of their understanding opening more widely day by day to the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth understanding; and to make this progress in joyful appreciation of our benefactor, our Lord assures us means a corresponding growth in benevolence, kindness, gentleness and mercy to those with whom we have to do. While this rule must obtain, especially in the household of faith, it will also extend not only to our own immediate relationship in the flesh, but also to our neighbours and friends—yea to our enemies and to the brute creation. All of these will more and more realize the changing of our characters and dispositions, and it will be to their general blessing as well as to our joy.

Fellowship Weekend

The brethren of Wentworth Falls (in the Blue Mountains, N.S.W.) cordially invite all able to attend the Fellowship Weekend to be held (DV) November 9th and 10th at the Wentworth Falls Pre-School Hall, Corner Armstrong and Day Streets, Wentworth Falls. Further information and programs from Mr. D. Ostapovitch, 24 Tarewella Rd., Wentworth Falls, N.S.Wales, 2782. Phone (047) 571 656.

Our Lord's Resurrection

While there are a number of Scriptures which state that Jesus would be resurrected on the third day after His crucifixion, such as Matt.6:21; Mark 9:31, and Luke 18:33, and other Scriptures after the event state—"Him God raised up the third day"—Acts 10:40, one Scripture, Matt.12:40, seems contradictory. The following from the "Reprints" seems to clarify this matter helpfully.

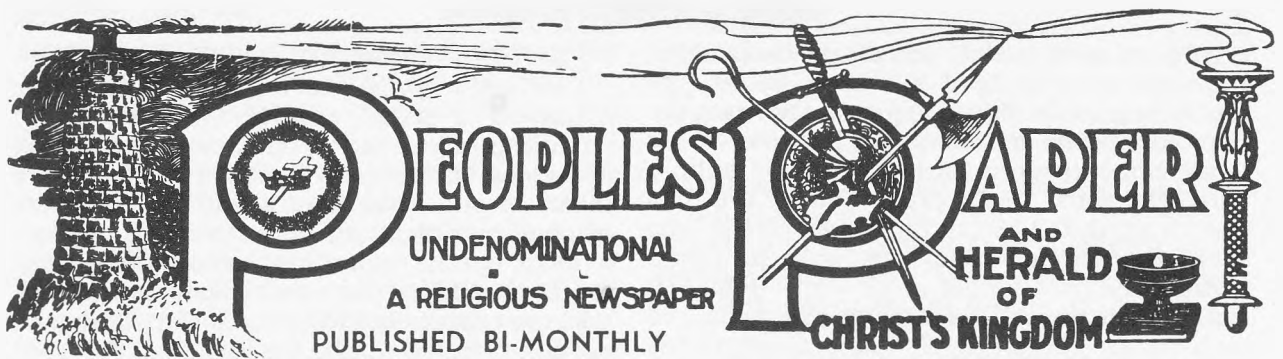
"The waving of the barley sheaf of firstfruits on the 16th of Nisan ('the morrow after the Sabbath' or Passover of the 15th—Lev.23:5,6,10,11) typified the resurrection of Christ our Lord, as 'the firstfruits of them that slept'—1 Cor.15:20.

"Here is the strongest possible confirmation of the correctness that our Lord was not three full 24-hour days in the tomb, but only parts of the three days and nights; that He was crucified on the day corresponding to our Friday afternoon, and arose on what corresponded to our Sunday morning. The showing of this type that the Paschal lamb was to be killed sometime during the 14th of Nisan, and the wave offering of the sheaf of firstfruits was to occur on the 16th, should settle the matter for all. It agrees with the repeated statement—1 Cor. 15:4; Luke 24:46—that our Lord rose on 'the **third day**, according to the Scriptures.' This Scripture concerning the firstfruits is the only one which we recall as in any way pointing out the time of our Lord's resurrection.

"The only Scripture seeming to oppose this understanding is the declaration that our Lord would be three days and three nights in the earth—Mat.12:40—and the only explanation that can be offered to this is, that the expression is used in a general and not in a specific manner, the nights being mentioned to preclude the idea of any cessation of death until the third day. Thus understood, the expression would signify that during portions of three days-and-nights our Lord would be in the tomb. At all events the evidence is overwhelming that our Lord died on the 14th of Nisan and rose on the 16th—the third day after."

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (DV) on December 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J.B. Hiam, 1056 Mountain Highway, Boronia, Victoria, 3155. Phone (03) 729 6207.



Volume LXVIII No. 6

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 1985 — JANUARY 1986

Price — 20 cents

The Anointing of Jesus

"She hath done what she could"—Mark 14:8.

The last week of our Lord's earthly ministry was a very busy one. 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 home of Simon the leper" — probably their father. Lazarus, their brother, whom the Lord had raised from the dead was also one of the table-guests.

Our Lord knew that the time of His death was near at hand, and He had given intimation of this to His beloved disciples, but they were so accustomed to having Him say wonderful things beyond the power of their comprehension that they probably failed to realize their closeness to the great tragedy of Calvary. This need not surprise us when we remember the Scriptural declaration that our Lord spake in parables and dark sayings—"and without a parable spake he not unto them." For instance, His declaration—"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." And again—"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." Further—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you"—John 2:19; 6:51,53. Having in mind such unusual language, the apostles would be entirely excusable in doubting the proper meaning to be attached to our Lord's declaration—"The Son of man must be lifted up", and other similar expressions foretelling His death.

Before coming to the consideration of the Bethany supper and the anointing on that Sabbath evening, let us have before our minds the incidents of the days following it, that we may be able to appreciate our Lord's declaration that the anointing with the spikenard was preparatory to His burial. The next morning (the first day of the week, now usually called

Sunday), having sent for the ass, our Lord rode upon it to Jerusalem. The people, recognizing the wonderful miracle wrought upon Lazarus, congregated and hailed Him as Messiah, the Son of David, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, and strewed clothing and palm branches in the way; (hence this is generally known as Palm Sunday). It was on this occasion that our Lord wept over Jerusalem and declared—"Your house is left unto you desolate"—Matt. 23:38.

It is supposed that it was on the second day (Monday) that our Lord scourged the money-changers out of the Temple, and taught the people there; and we gather from the narrative that it was in His journey on this day that He pronounced the curse upon "the barren fig tree", supposed to represent the Jewish nation—barren of fruit, and therefore rejected. It would appear that the third day (Tuesday) was again spent teaching in the Temple, answering questions, etc., and that evening, as they returned again to Bethany, He discoursed with His disciples respecting the great events near at hand. The fourth day (Wednesday) apparently was spent quietly at Bethany, and on the fifth day (Thursday) the disciples made ready the Passover supper, which was eaten after 6 o'clock that evening—the beginning of the sixth day (Friday) according to the Jewish reckoning—the 14th of Nisan. The Gethsemane experiences followed that night and the trial before Pilate the next morning, and the crucifixion and death a few hours later.

"Peoples Paper" Subscriptions

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper" — \$1.00 — are now due for 1986. In view of the high postage cost of \$1.98 per annum (\$2.70 overseas), this postage expense is covered by the Tract Fund (which is supported by the brethren generally) to enable all who desire the "Peoples Paper" to receive it regularly.

Now we come back to witness the hospitalities extended to our Lord six days before the crucifixion, at the house of Simon the leper, the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus. We are to remember that our Lord was a visitor in those parts; His home, to the extent that He ever had one, being in Galilee, and the most of His time spent there. "He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him"—John 7:1. But now the time of His sacrifice had come, and in harmony therewith He came amongst His enemies—although it was known that prominent Jews sought to kill Him, and also sought the death of Lazarus, who was a living witness to His Messianic power.

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, 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.

One has said—"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 clew respecting the costliness of this perfume, for he says 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, we see that the perfume was indeed "very costly." There was nearly a pint of the perfume, a Roman pound being twelve ounces.

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"—John 12:6, 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 opportunity 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. He shows 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, 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 as 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-affectings, 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"; attention to these is proper always, and is generally so 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.

With reference to 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."

Books Available

In view of the reduced value in the Australian dollar, and increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

"God's Promises Come True" — \$3.00 (Postage from \$2.20 according to distance).

"The Divine Plan of the Ages" — \$1.50 (Postage \$1.20 in Victoria, \$1.55 interstate).

"The Creator's Grand Design" — \$1.50 (Postage \$1.20 and \$1.55).

"The Book of Books" — \$1.50 (Postage \$1.20 and \$1.55).

"Daily Heavenly Manna" — \$1.50 (Postage \$1.20 and \$1.55).

"Songs in the Night" — \$1.50 (Postage 80c and 90c).

"Emphatic Diaglott" New Testament — \$4.00 (Postage \$1.20 and \$1.55).

"Tabernacle Shadows" — \$1.50 (Postage 80c and 90c).

"Cod and Reason" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

"God's Plan" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

"Hope Beyond the Grave" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

"Israel in History and Prophecy" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

"Manner of Christ's Return" — 15c (postage 45c and 50c).

"Christ's Return" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

"Some of the Parables" — 15c (Postage 45c and 50c).

Numerous other small booklets.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, Victoria, Australia, 3101.

ation of the many wonderful Offices He will fill and services He will accomplish. But these are yet future. His great work in the past, the Redemption work, was the foundation of all His future work. On account of His faithfulness He will have a right to assume these various offices and use these various powers; and as each comes into operation it will be used by Jesus. The right to govern the world is His since He died on our behalf, but He awaits the Father's time for taking to Himself His glorious power to reign; and the Government must come to Him before He can begin to fulfil the various titles.

First of all, His revelation to the world will be as the Wonderful One, the embodiment, the Expression, of divine justice, divine love, divine wisdom and divine power. As yet the world knoweth Him not. He will be revealed to mankind "in flaming fire" in the time of trouble, and subsequently, in the rescue work of His Millennial kingdom.

He will be the world's Counsellor, to give assistance, guidance, direction, whereby they may return through restitution into harmony with Jehovah and to the enjoyment of the blessings provided through redemption. As the Head of the Church He has been her Counsellor, but our text refers to Him as the Great King or Governor of the world, and as the world's Instructor, the Great Prophet, or Teacher, whom God promised through Moses.

His title, The mighty God, will be recognized then, on earth, as well as in heaven — "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" and "to all that are afar off" — Acts 5:31; 2:39.

The title, The Everlasting Father, will apply to Him as the Life-Giver of the world, during the thousand years of His reign. In all that time He will be giving "life indeed" to mankind — everlasting life to all who will obey Him — therefore His title, The Everlasting Father, or the Father who will give everlasting life to humanity. All the world of mankind, regenerated on the human plane, will obtain their right to everlasting life as human beings in an earthly Paradise from their Redeemer, who will then be their King. Not so the Church, for Jesus is not the Church's Everlasting Father. On the contrary, St. Peter declares — "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us again to a hope of life."

His title, The Prince of Peace, will not apply to Him at the beginning of His reign, when He will be breaking in pieces as a potter's vessel every human system out of accord with the divine standards — Rev. 2:27; Ps. 2:9 — but true peace shall speedily be established, and He

shall be known as The Prince of Peace, the One whose reign will be undisputed and unmolested. "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end"; there will be no rebellion; His kingdom shall not pass away. When His reign shall terminate finally, at the close of the thousand years, it will be because "He will deliver the kingdom over to God, even the Father", that He may be the Great All in All.

"Upon the Throne of David"

Messiah's kingdom is styled "the Throne of David" for two reasons: first, the name of David signifies Beloved, and the Messiah, as the Beloved of God, of the Father, is the Antitype of David, even as Messiah's kingdom will be the Antitype of David's kingdom. David merely "sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord"; it was not his. So the Greater than David will sit upon the Throne of the kingdom of Jehovah, to order it and to establish it to completion, during the thousand years of His reign. Then He will deliver it up. "The zeal (love) of Jehovah of hosts will perform this", operating through Messiah.

Inspiration of the Bible

The Bible claims to be a book written under divine inspiration. The word "inspire" signifies to breathe in, to infuse, to fill, to inhale — as to inspire the lungs with air. (See Webster's Dictionary). Hence, when it is said that certain Scriptures of writings of godly men, were given by inspiration of God — 2 Tim.3:16 — it signifies that those men were in some way, whether through miraculous or natural means, inspired by, or brought under the inspiration of God; so as to be used by Him in speaking or writing such words as He wished to have expressed. The Apostle Peter says — "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit" — 2 Pet.1:21.

Through Moses we have the law of God and the only existing credible history of mankind from the creation of Adam down to his own time, covering a period of about 2500 years. While Moses and the other Bible writers were holy men, inspired with pure motives and holy zeal, and while personal pride, ambition, etc., were no part of their spirit, we learn that Moses was inspired with the knowledge of God's law, both in its great principles and also in the minutiae of its typical ceremonials, by revelation from God at Mount Sinai, and at some points of duty at the burning bush at Horeb, etc.

As for his historical writings, Moses was evidently guided of God in the collation and presentation in its present complete and connected form of the history of the world down to his day, which was really in great part the history of his own family back to Adam with an account of the creation doubtless given by God to Adam while he was yet in fellowship in Eden. Nor does a correct handing down of family information, covering a period of over 2300 years, seem impossible, or liable, as it would now be, to have become polluted; for, aside from the fact that it was handed down through the God-fearing family of Seth, it should be remembered that at that time the bodies, brains and memories of men were not so weak as they are now, and as they have been since the Flood; and finally, because the long lives of two men link Adam with the family of Abraham, the family of covenant favour — with Isaac, the typical seed of promise. These two men were Methuselah and Shem. Methuselah was over 200 years old when Adam died, and had abundant opportunity, therefore, for information at first hand; and Shem, the son of Noah, lived contemporaneously with Methuselah for 98 years, and with Isaac for 50 years. Thus, these two living, God-fearing men acted as God's historians to communicate His revelations and dealings to the family in whom centred the promises of which Moses was one of the prospective heirs.

In addition to these facts, we have the statement by Josephus that Methuselah, Noah and Shem, the year before the Flood, inscribed the history and discoveries of the world on two monuments of stone and brick which were still standing in Moses' time.

As for the writings of the prophets, their devoted, godly lives attest their sincerity; their lives were spent for God and in the defense of righteousness, and not for gain and worldly honour. And as for proofs that God acted through them and that they merely expressed His messages, as Peter declares, it is to be found in the fulfilment of their predictions.

This brings us to the examination of the inspiration of the New Testament. Of the four gospel narratives and the book of the Acts of the Apostles, which are merely historic narratives, it might with considerable force be argued that no inspiration was necessary. But we must remember that since it was God's will that the important doings and teachings of our Lord and His disciples should be handed down, for the information and guidance of His Church throughout the age, it was necessary that God, even while leaving the writers free to record those truths in their own several styles of expression and arrangement, should neverthe-

less exercise a supervision of His work in their hands. To this end it would appear reasonable that He would cause circumstances, etc., to call to the memory of one or another of them items and details which, otherwise, in so condensed an account of matters so important, would have been overlooked. And this was no less the work of God's spirit, power, or influence than the more noticeable and peculiar manifestations through the prophets.

The Apostle Peter tells us that the prophets of old time often did not understand their own utterances, as they themselves also acknowledge — 1 Pet.1:12; Dan.12:4, 8-10 — and we should remember that the twelve apostles (Paul taking the place of Judas — Gal.1:17; 1 Tim.2:7) not only filled the office of apostles — or specially appointed teachers and expounders of the Gospel — but they also, especially Peter and Paul and John, filled the office of **prophets**, and were not only given the spirit of wisdom and understanding by which they were enabled to understand and explain the previously dark prophecies, but in addition to this we believe that they were under the guidance and supervision of the Lord to such an extent that their references to things future from their day, things therefore then not due to be fully understood, were guided, so as to be true to an extent far beyond their comprehension, and such consequently were as really prophetic as the utterances of the old-time prophets. Illustrations of this are to be found in the Revelation of the Apostle John, in Peter's symbolic description of the Day of the Lord — 2 Pet.3:10-13 — and in numerous references to the same period by Paul also, among which were some things hard to be understood even by Peter — 2 Pet.3:16 — and only partially then by Paul himself. The latter, however, was permitted to see **future things** more clearly than others of his time, and to that end he was given special visions and revelations which he was not allowed to make known to others — 2 Cor.12:1-4 — but which, nevertheless, influenced and coloured his subsequent teachings and epistles. And these very items which Peter thought strange of, and called "hard to be understood", are the very items which **now**, in God's due time, for which they were intended, so grandly illuminate not only Peter's prophecies and John's Revelation, but the entire word and plan of God — that the man of God may be **thoroughly furnished** — 2 Tim.3:16,17.

That the early Church considered the writings and teachings of the apostles different from all others, in authority, is manifest from the early arrangement of these writings together and the keeping separate from these, as

apocryphal, other good writings of other good men. And yet there were, even in the days of the apostles, ambitious men who taught another gospel and claimed for themselves the honours of special revelation and authority as apostles and teachers of no less authority than the twelve apostles.

And ambitious men of the same sort have from time to time since arisen — Emanuel Swedenborg and many less able and less notable — whose claims, if conceded, would not only place them in rank far above Paul, the prince of the apostles, but whose teachings would tend to discredit entirely, as “old wives’ fables” the whole story of redemption and remission of sins through the blood of Jesus. These would-be apostles, boastful, heady, high-minded, have “another gospel”, a perversion of the gospel of Christ; and above all they despise and seek to cast discredit upon the words of Paul who so clearly, forcibly and logically lifts up the standard of faith and points to the cross — **the ransom** — as the sure foundation, and who so clearly showed that **pseudo-apostles**, false apostles, would arise and deceive many.

It not only required an inspiration to write God's plan, but it also requires an inspiration of the Almighty to give **an understanding** of that revelation; yet this inspiration is of a different sort. When any one has realized himself a sinner, weak, imperfect and condemned, and has accepted Christ as his Redeemer, and full of love and appreciation has consecrated his heart (his mind, his will) to the Lord, to henceforth please not himself but his Redeemer — God has arranged that such a consecration of the natural mind begins a new mind. It opens the way for the holy mind or will of God, expressed through His written Word, to be received; and as it is received into such a good, honest, consecrated heart, it **informs** that heart and opens the eyes of the understanding, so that from the new standpoint (God's standpoint) many things wear a very different aspect, and among other things the Scripture teachings, which gradually open up as item after item of the divine plan is fulfilled, and new features of the unfolding plan become due to be understood, and from the new standpoint appreciated and accepted.

Just as with astronomers, the close observations of facts and influences already recognized often leads them to look in certain directions for hitherto undiscovered planets, and they find them, so with the seekers after spiritual truths; the clear appreciation and close study of the known plan lead gradually, step by step, to the discovery of other particulars, hitherto unnoticed, each of which only adds to the beauty and harmony of the truths previously

seen. Thus it is that “The path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Of course the writings of all such as have their wills fully subjected to the mind of God, as revealed in His Word, must be also somewhat inspired by God's spirit, received **from His Word** by their complete subjection to its leading. The spirit of the truth inspires and controls to a greater or lesser extent not only their pens but their words and thoughts, and even their very looks. Yet **such an inspiration**, common to all the saints, in proportion to their development, should be critically distinguished from the special and peculiarly guided and guarded inspiration of the twelve apostles, whom God specially appointed to be the teachers of the Church, and who have no **successors** in this office. Only twelve were “chosen”, and when one of these, Judas, fell from his honourable office, the Lord in due time appointed Paul to the place; and He not only has never recognized others, but clearly indicates that He never will recognize others to that office — Rev.21:14.

With the death of the Apostles the canon of Scripture closed, because God had there given a full and complete revelation of His plan for man's salvation; though some of it was in a condensed form which has since expanded and is expanding and unfolding and will continue to expand and shine more and more until the perfect day — the Millennial Day — has been fully ushered in. Paul expresses this thought clearly when he declares that the Holy Scriptures are able to make **wise** unto salvation, and that they are **sufficient**.

As we consider, then, the completeness, harmony, purity and grandeur of the Bible, its age and wonderful preservation through the wreck and storms of six thousand years, it must be admitted to be a most wonderful Book; and those who have learned to read it understandably; who see in it the great Plan of the ages, cannot doubt that God was its inspiring Author, as well as its Preserver.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (DV) on December 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J.B. Hiam, 1056 Mountain Highway, Boronia, Victoria, 3155. Phone (03) 729 6207.

Pilgrim Way Ended

On the 25th October last, our dear Sister Rae Price of Perth finished the pilgrim way after being a follower of our Lord Jesus since childhood. Born of godly parents who accepted the Truth early in this century, our dear Sister Rae was also blessed with God's Truth as a teenager along with her sisters and three brothers. Coming nearer to Melbourne from Gippsland in Victoria, the Hiam family of father, mother and children attended the Melbourne Class for some time and assisted helpfully in various ways in the gatherings with the brethren.

In 1939 our Sister Rae was married in Melbourne to Brother Price of Western Australia, and with our Brother Price had attended the Perth Class for the past 46 years, assisting in the gatherings as organist and in other helpful ways, in the service of the Lord.

More recently our Sister Price was overcome with a bodily affliction which she bore with much fortitude and courage, and with full faith in accepting God's will in the outcome. The closing days of our dear Sister's earthly pilgrimage well reflected her whole Christian life, as reported by our Brother Price, as follows.

"I thought I would let you know what has gladdened my heart, even through this vale of sorrow, which or wherein we do not sorrow as with others who have not this hope. About two days before Sister died in hospital, a lady in a ward opposite to where Sister Rae was, beckoned to me to come into her room — she had something to say. She said, 'I rose up from my bed at about 3.30 a.m., and felt led to write a poem about your wife — I have heard so much from the nurses about her. Would you like me to read it to you?' I said, 'Yes'. It really touched my heart, I must frame it. (Poem printed below).

"Sister has been a great witness amongst the doctors and nurses, judging by their remarks. In fact, the Nursing Staff have made several copies of this poem, and one is pinned up on the Staff window.

"Sister has been a great comforter to all the elderly brethren who have passed on over here — she had that sympathizing talent. Also you may know, she had a talent with her acquaintance with the sacred hymns and was able to quote verse by verse several scores of not only our hymns, but choice ones from other hymn books.

"It is going to leave a void in our small numbers, but we indeed rejoice in the victory we all hope and pray that we may come to. The Church has to be completed, so we can rejoice that one by one the full number will be attained.

We value the memory of the faithfulness of those gone before, who have trusted in the merit of their Redeemer for victory."

Our sincere sympathy is extended to our dear Brother Price and children, and other relatives in their loss of a devoted Christian wife, mother, grandmother and sister, who we feel sure has merited the Lord's approval, by His grace. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" — Malachi 4:17.

Mrs. Price

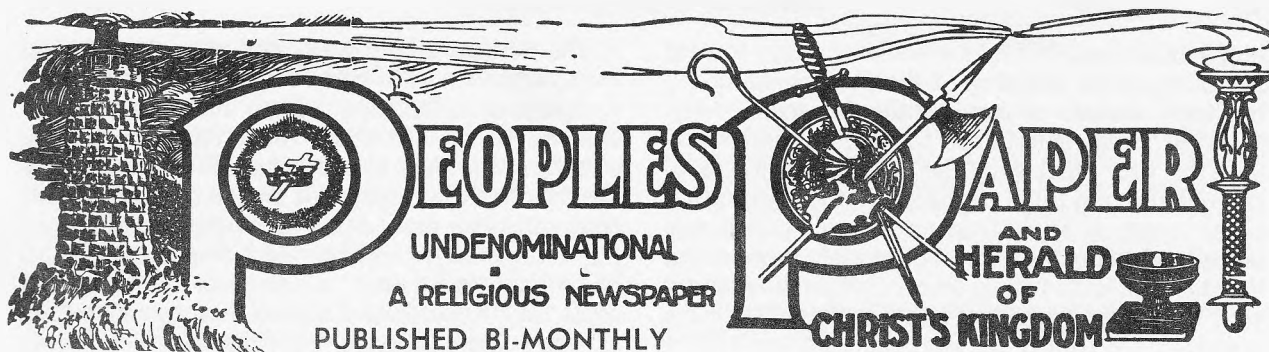
I often caught a glimpse of her
As nurses closed the door,
I knew that life was leaving her
And soon 'twould be no more;
The family came from day to day
To watch her slowly ebb,
As if a horde of spiders
Were working on a web.
I heard her name so often,
Yet never saw her frame,
And it made me think that God above
Was playing at "some game".
"Serenity" and "dignity",
The nurses often said,
As they rushed into her tiny room
And busied round her bed.
I've always had this fear of death,
Of suffering and pain,
But Mrs Price has given me strength
And I never will again.
She seemed as if she welcomed it —
Accepted "what's to be",
Prepared to meet the Lord above
With grateful dignity.

Nita Sadler, W.A.

"However small and seemin' mean
Your place may be, you have that place
In that great glorious machine
That to fulfilment runs its race.
Cog in some wheel at least perchance,
Amid the stir and whirl about you,
Take comfort in the circumstance
That greater wheels would slip without you."

"Blessed Hope for Suffering Humanity"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.



Volume LXIX No. 2

MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY, 1986

Price — 20 cents

The Lord's Supper

Our thoughts being more directly focused on the Memorial of our Saviour's death at this time of the year, it is especially helpful to review the institution of this Supper which our Lord established just before the close of His sacrificial life on earth. It was celebrated on the day before the Passover proper began—on the 14th of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish sacred year. The law respecting the Jewish Passover was very exact. The lamb was to be selected on the 10th day of Nisan, killed on the 14th, and eaten during the night of that same Jewish day. In the antitype Jesus offered Himself at Jordan and was killed 3½ years later, on the 14th of Nisan, after most of Israel except His faithful few neglected to receive Him. It was 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.

In Luke's Gospel it is recorded that our Lord said to His disciples—"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer"—Luke 22:15. 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 14th day in 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 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 antitypical 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 antitype 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 them **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 firstborn 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 13:21. In this same verse 21 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 be sure, 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 enquiries 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 went forthwith 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, 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.

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 is, This symbolizes 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 recognize that the unleavened bread represented our Lord's sinless flesh—leaven being a symbol of sin under the Law, especially 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 life unto 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 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 is what we are to "eat", appropriate to ourselves; that is to say, His perfect human life 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 would.

The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all of past sins cancelled and should recognize us as having a right 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, namely, 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 symbolized our Lord's life given for us—His human life, His being 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 the Church by faith 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 those 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"—John 16:12,13. 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?"—1 Cor.10:16—to share with Christ as joint-sacrificers even unto death that we may be sharers of His glory.

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 realize that the entire Body of Christ is from the divine standpoint, a composite Body of many members of which Jesus is the Head, and that the 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 must we 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 the 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 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 in baptism into His death, and thus to be with Him in His resurrection to glory, honour and immortality. Romans 6:3-5; 8:17.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.*

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.

Pilgrimage Ended

On the 28th February our dear Brother Pywell of Chewton, Victoria, finished the pilgrim way after a devoted Christian life of many years. Just over forty years ago he appreciated the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts, and since that time has rejoiced in God's wonderful Plan of salvation not only for Christians, but for all mankind. Being isolated he was unable to enjoy Class fellowship, but was undoubtedly a faithful follower of the Master, and by His grace had hope of the heavenly kingdom. Sincere sympathy is extended to our Brother's family in the loss they have suffered. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels"—Mal. 3:17.

The World in John 3:16, and 1 John 2:15

(Contributed Address)

The contrast of the meaning of the word "world" in John 3:16 as against the meaning of the same Greek word in 1 John 2:15 can lead to some interesting thoughts. These Scriptures read—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "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."

The conflict follows instructions that we should pattern ourselves upon God, in being merciful, in being holy and in being perfect. In the Gospel, God loved the world and accordingly we should love the world. In the Epistle, we are told not to love the world.

Whenever we see an apparent contradiction within the complete Word which we regard as inspired by God Himself, we ought to look for an explanation. God cannot lie. With Him there is no variableness neither shadow of turning. Sometimes we cannot see an answer and have to leave question marks beside our understanding of both sides of the difference. On occasions, the context indicates differences of time either in application of a prophecy or progress in the development of mankind.

Often we can find help by checking from a detailed concordance which words were used in the original language. In our case, however, the same Greek word "kosmos" is used in the two Scriptures we are considering. Strong's Concordance gives the meaning of "kosmos" as "orderly arrangement, i.e. decoration, by implication the world (in a wide or narrow sense including its inhabitants literally or figuratively [morally])" and it is translated both as "adorning" and "world."

While considering which Greek words were used it is fitting to observe that in both passages it is the Greek word "agapao" which is rendered as "love." This is consistent with the thought that "agapao" and the corresponding noun "agape" relate to voluntary love, whilst "phileo" is involuntary or in-

instinctive. Only a voluntary action can be commanded although to some extent one can develop and expand the love which just happens, including family love and brotherly love.

There is nothing very profound in observing that John 3:16 speaks of love for the inhabitants of the world, the people themselves, whereas 1 John 2:15 refers to the things and ways of the world. Reference to things in this context does not mean God's original creation. He saw that that was very good. Rather would we connect 1 John 2:15 with those things and practices which have become important to man since sin entered into the world.

Both uses are reasonable applications of the English word "world", just as they were of the Greek. It is an unfortunate fact that languages do not provide precise and exclusive meanings. For example the Macquarie Dictionary lists 20 shades of meaning of our English word "world."

Perhaps we can consider first the love for the world's inhabitants. Our Lord Jesus must be the ultimate manifestation of God's love for the world of mankind and 1 Peter 2:21 tells us we should closely follow Him.

Love for the world of mankind was not a new rule for the Gospel Age. Way back in Leviticus the Law of 19:18 amounted to the same thing. The breadth of that Law of 19:18 was never fully realized until Jesus explained it in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Let us read Lev.19:18—"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD."

The Law of Lev.19:18 was re-affirmed in the New Testament when our Lord was asked "Which in the great commandment in the law." And again by Paul to the Galatians. James called it the "Royal Law". John 13:34,35 provides further support.

Certainly, Jesus did describe His instructions to love as "A new commandment", but the newness lay in the high level of love made possible by His example. Since our text refers to love for the world it is fitting to observe that The New Commandment may relate to love for the Church, yet it is difficult to find a Scripture which says we should love others less. One text sometimes said to make such a distinction is Gal.6:10. Note, however, that this Scripture is concerned with "doing good." It is now suggested to you that priorities are appropriate for the doing of good because of limits to our time and other resources whereas there should be no limit to our love.

Please understand that we are not here considering love which has already been achieved except by Christ. Our subject is the love which God has commanded and which is exemplified in Christ. God's degree of love will not be abroad until the King-

dom, but that is not to say that it is not the acceptable standard for which we must all strive. To suggest that the Church or anybody else is entitled to a higher degree of love is to suggest that God has commanded inferior love for others. Our text in John 3:16 tells us that God SO loved the World of Mankind that He gave the dearest treasure of His heart.

Christ did give Himself for the Church. He also gave Himself for the unlovely while they, too, were yet sinners. If there be an acceptable standard of love, lower than the standard we should have for the Church, the little flock, then that lower standard would have to at least reach the minimum level of Christ's example.

Perhaps we can move on to consider the love of 1 John 2:15. The next verse enlarges on it and makes clear that the epistle is not referring to love for the world of mankind.

The correct attitude to the things and ways of the world is often summarized in an expression drawn from our Lord's prayer in John chapter 17. That attitude is that we should be "in the world but not of the world." The contrast is not between the two phases of the Kingdom of God, the earthly and the spiritual. When that Kingdom is ushered in the distinction will no longer apply. Rather does it illustrate the difference between the Kingdom of God and the present world under the god of this world who has blinded the minds of them that believe not.

The thought is not that we should try to establish the Lord's Kingdom before its time. When the time is right every knee shall bow to Jesus and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father. Right now, however, Christ should rule in the heart of each one who has yielded to His Lordship.

One could hardly say that the world should not be of the world. For this reason, "In the world but not of the world" is an attitude for Christians, using that word in its Biblical sense of "disciple." One needs to be careful when using the word "Christian" because the English word also has much wider meanings and careless use of the word "Christian" can cause hurt.

Mankind has made gods out of many things. Those of wood, stone, brass or gold are the ones more easily recognized. Less obvious are idols of money, rank, social status, power or the acclaim of one's fellow men. The way of this world is to give to many persons, things and abstracts the worship which should be reserved for God alone. Jesus said "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."

When it is said that the Christian should not be "of the world", it means, like our verse in 1 John

2:15, that the Christian should have no part in the worship of those false gods. All our worship belongs to the one True and Living God and His Son. Surely, this is the message from our Lord on the Mount recorded in Matthew 6:19-34. It is well known and verses 20, 21, and 33 will serve to remind.

In the spirit of a sound mind we do have to be prudent, but are not to take any anxious thought for our well-being. If we can measure time with proper regard to eternity, we will have no problem with treasures upon earth.

Often there are errors as to the meaning of "in the world." A full understanding requires due regard for that part of God's Plan which we summarize in the words "Permission of Evil."

Rather than create robots compelled to do His will, our God chose in His human creatures to allow freewill but planned by exposing them to sin to bring them to a position of hating sin and obeying His will in their absolute free choice.

Because God knows the end from the beginning, He must have known that our first parents would fall victims of the sin to which they were exposed. Impurity cannot beget purity and accordingly all the descendants of father Adam inherited his condemnation. Many would regard as unjust any judgment of children based on the sin of an ancestor. The Bible answers this in no uncertain terms. It says "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We see then that quite apart from our guilt in Adam we are all sinners in our own wrong. But the beauty of God's plan requires our condemnation in Adam. It is God's merciful provision. It is only because of this that a ransom for Adam is able to redeem the whole world from sin and death.

It was in the reality of Christ's death that the penalty for Adam's sin was paid. When Adam was redeemed so also was all his progeny. Our own sins are deemed to be a consequence of the sinful nature we inherited. When the original penalty was paid by another the consequential guilt as well as that inherited was struck off. That is why a single Saviour was able to redeem all the millions of mankind. But it had to be a perfect man free from sin otherwise it would have been His own sin which caused His death.

Being "in the world" is essential to God's intention in permitting evil. Unless we are in the world we will not learn the lessons He intends for us. In particular, we would not gain the understanding God wants us to have. Even Jesus Christ had to have those experiences.

Again the spirit of a sound mind should stop us from excessive exposure. We can walk along a road without deliberately throwing ourselves under a truck. But to hide ourselves from all things to which

the tag "worldly" can be added is to attempt to defeat one part of God's plan for us.

An extreme case may illustrate this point. Some have regarded movies as worldly and accordingly unfit for consecrated Christians. One of the finest Christians I have known would not have had any great personal desire for movies in themselves but she did go sometimes with another simply for love of the other and the belief that the sister she loved needed the two hours of rest and companionship.

This is not intended to support the view that movies are unsuitable for the Church. Some can be most informative but more importantly, many can help us to be touched with feeling for the infirmities and troubles of others.

On the contrary, to endeavour to hide from the ordinary things and ways of the world, is to court mental instability as well as the danger of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. John puts it well. We are not to lust after these things. But neither are we to try to hide from that which God puts in our path.

Our Lord gave us some beautiful examples along these lines. Do you remember the woman who washed His feet with tears in Simon's house. Simon thought Jesus should have had nothing to do with such a sinner. How beautifully our Lord corrected Simon's error. One suspects that there are still a number of Simons about today.

More than once our Lord was accused of what would be called today, mixing with bad company. An example is in Matt.9:10-13. Applying this lesson and example to our lives certainly takes the spirit of a sound mind. We may have to ask God for wisdom in this direction, provided of course, that we have used the wisdom which He had already given us.

It was James who recommended asking specifically for wisdom. It was James again who linked good works with faith. Involvement with the world must be implicit in good works. James 2:18 is most pertinent but it must be understood that James is not advocating justification by works. Works cannot justify anybody. Only faith can justify, but if faith be of a sufficient degree to justify it will be followed by works.

Indeed it is hard to separate the works that should follow faith from the love for the inhabitants of the world which is the first facet of that fruit which results from the indwelling of God's holy spirit. The steps seem to be Calling by God, Repentance, Trust or Faith bringing about Justification, Yielding in Consecration to which God responds by begetting to Sonship by His holy spirit and that in turn brings forth the fruit of God's spirit working in the believer.

The things and ways of the world have been said to be one of the three sources of temptation. The other two are the flesh and the devil. They are not really separate. The devil uses the things and ways of the world in temptations of his own instigation. He uses the flesh also. Knowing this and knowing that an intelligent being can apply them, calls for great carefulness. Perhaps that is the reason many have sought to hide from the world. In earlier days hiding was usually behind stone walls. Today, mental blocks, prejudice and religious dogma are more often used to hide behind.

We should not hide. Neither should we be afraid. Jesus did not hide. A proper awareness of danger and care not to succumb to it does not require us to be obsessed with it. Fear is of the devil. To give inordinate weight to the danger of the world or the flesh is to deny one's faith and yield oneself directly into Satan's hands. It is in the Bible—"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me"—Heb.13:5,6. Fear is much more harmful than temptation. Temptation only harms if we yield to it. Fear harms wherever it touches. And in any case there is no reason for us to fear temptation.

Certainly the Bible does encourage fear of God but that is a reverential fear. Another great Christian lady once described the proper nature of reverential fear. The wise child who deeply and sincerely loves its parent and who appreciates the loving parent's desire for the child's welfare will be so concerned not to displease or even disappoint the parent loved so much that it amounts to fear. The reverential fear of God is along the same lines. The proper fear of God is not a terror fear. See 1 John 4:18,—“fear hath restraint.”

Neither is the Christian's fear of God a fear of consequences. We want the loving Father's correction but faith must remove any fear of penalty above that which has already been paid. In Moffatt's translation, Romans 8:33,34 reads—"Who is to accuse the elect of God? When God acquits who shall condemn? Will Christ?—the Christ who died, yes and rose (was raised would have been better) from the dead! the Christ who is at God's right hand, who actually pleads for us!"

In conclusion, one must observe that it is not a straight forward matter to balance the various aspects of our relationship with the world. Without our Yoke-sharer it would be impossible. Our love for the inhabitants of the world must follow closely our Lord's example and the leading of God's holy spirit. Our care not to be entangled with the false gods of this world should not bring about an obsession which would offset God's very purpose in our being here. More than all others, Christians should measure time with proper regard for eternity, long-

ing for God's Kingdom to come and for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The Sin Offering (Convention Address)

The Gospel message is indeed the Good Tidings respecting a ransom sacrifice, on account of which God may be just and yet the justifier of the believer. God's original arrangement for the perfectly created man, Adam, was that he should have the privilege of living forever on condition that he would be obedient, loyal to his Creator. When our earthly father sinned, became disloyal and disobeyed, the thing that was lost by father Adam for himself and all of his family was the right to earthly life, thus because of Adam's disobedience we all have come under the penalty for sin—death. This is well expressed by the Psalmist—"None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him"—Psa.49:7.

The prophet David teaches truly that no man can give a ransom for his brother; that is to say, that all mankind are imperfect through the Adamic fall and there is no one that could stand before God in the sense of justifying himself, or another, their brother. The Apostle Paul emphasizes this teaching when he declared—"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"—Rom.5:12.

God reveals to us in His Word that while He wishes to be merciful and to receive us back into harmony with Himself, that is, all the willing and obedient of the race, nevertheless, He must first maintain the dignity of His law and cannot set aside the death sentence except upon the conditions of justice which He has arranged. If Adam is ransomed justice will have no further claim against his life, and the ransomer would have the right to restore Adam and his family. But no ransomer could be found among all the families of the earth; all were sinners, none was perfect, all had the inherited blemishes of sin. Hence the necessity for God's arrangement—the sending of His only begotten Son to be the Redeemer, the Ransomer of Adam and his family and ultimately to be the Restorer of all that was lost.

Of the Ransomer God gave the important intimation to father Abraham, yet without explaining the particulars, in Genesis 12:1-3. God merely intimated that in some manner divine justice would be satisfied by Abraham's offspring, the Messiah, and as a consequence a blessing would go through his seed to all the families of the earth. Our Lord, as the seed of Abraham, revealed the philosophy of the divine plan by which, as Abraham's seed, He

was to bring the promised blessing, in His statement in Matt.20:28—"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

This comprehensive statement of the Ransomer was not elaborated on by our Lord at that time, but we may state the philosophy of the ransom as such—As the sinner was the perfect man Adam, in full harmony and fellowship with God and only a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour as a perfect human being, so the one who would redeem him must have all of these qualifications. He must be a perfect man, in him God's image and likeness must be complete. He must be crowned with the glory and honour of perfection; he must be holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and in full fellowship with God, as stated by the Apostle in Hebrews 7:26. The man Jesus was all this, a perfect corresponding price, nothing more was necessary. There was nothing lacking in the perfect Man to redeem the first man and his family. No one adds to that ransom and no one takes away from it.

Please read 1 Peter 2:3-9. Having this Scripture before us, where the Apostle teaches the Lord Jesus to be a High Priest of a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, we come to a further feature of the great Heavenly Father's plan which is working out right through the Gospel Age. This is an arrangement by which a certain number of the children of Adam may become associates with Jesus in the suffering of death in this present time, and in the glory that is to follow. This feature of the Plan is not the providing of a ransom, for that was already provided for in the death of Jesus, but this aspect is to provide an under priesthood whose members are eventually to be kings with the Saviour—a Royal Priesthood. Therefore, the sin-offering must not be confused with the ransom price, because the ransom price is complete and was complete before the Church was invited to come into the privilege of self sacrifice.

The Jewish day of atonement pictured the entire work and operation of the Sin-offering which began in the person of Jesus. The death of Jesus was typified by the killing of the bullock on the day of atonement. That was the great sacrifice for sins, a sin-offering which was made by Jesus who offered up Himself. He was both the anointed priest of God and also the devoted sacrifice. The merit of that sacrifice might have been applicable to all the people, but if so, there would have been no provision for the sacrifice of the Lord's goat class, the sacrifice of the under priests, who, if faithful, are by and by to be made the Royal Priesthood of the Millennium. In the type, the high priest applies the merit of his sacrifice to himself and his house—himself representing the Church, which is

Christ's Body, his house representing the household of faith, the consecrated ones who will fail to become members of the Body of Christ, but who will be on the spirit plane "before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple"—Rev.7:15.

These better sacrifices and offerings for sin are not made by us, but are made by the great High Priest whom the Father has appointed for the purpose. This great High Priest has been completing His sacrifice for sins, first His own flesh, and then the flesh of all those who have come unto the Father through Him. Soon our Lord will complete His great sacrificial work and glorify all those who have suffered with Him.

After this will be the time for applying to all mankind the merit of the sacrifice which He finished at Calvary and which He has merely loaned or imputed to His faithful followers during this Gospel Age. So in thinking of the merit of our Lord Jesus' sacrifice we should remember that all sin-atonement merit sprang from our Lord's sacrificial death—wherever or however applied.

We may enquire why it is that the merit of Christ's sacrifice is placed upon the household of faith first and not upon the world of mankind in general? Reading Colossians 1:23-27, it is evident that this feature of God's Plan of the Ages is as yet a mystery to mankind generally, but is given to the saints to understand. To the saints God reveals this great privilege as outlined in Hebrews 2:9-11. What a great favour indeed when we realize that our Heavenly Father desired to make us real sons through Jesus Christ, and further that the Lord of salvation is not ashamed to call us brethren. How great a love have the Father and Son bestowed upon us. This class of saints under the captaincy of Jesus share in His sufferings, in His death of sacrifice, in order that they may also share in His future glory.

Just as the Lord had to suffer, the just for the unjust, so the Lord's followers, being justified through faith in His blood, must similarly suffer as His members, and as "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—Col.1:24. Not afflictions left behind in the sense of the Redeemer's incompetency to make the full atonement for the sins of the whole world, but afflictions left behind in the sense that our Lord did not apply His own merit directly to the world of unbelievers. However, the merit of Christ passing through the elect Church will benefit all unbelievers just as much in the end, and additionally gives the elect of this Gospel Age the opportunity of suffering with their Lord and Head, in order that in due time they might be glorified with Him.

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.

Brother Edgar's Address Appreciated

One of our readers writes respecting the booklet which was produced in lieu of the "Peoples Paper" for February-March recently—"I must thank you for the priceless booklet on 'A Tree Planted by the Rivers of Water'. This is clearly the most valued issue that I have ever seen on the subject of divine gardening. I could have done with this many years ago when I gave an address in New Zealand. It is a masterpiece. Since that time I have often had in mind this sum of divine arithmetic as outlined in 2 Pet. 1:5-7. One of these days I would like to work this out from the Greek just to see what the total really is!"

Tyranny

Tyranny appears in many forms. Often it is displayed by eager, enthusiastic, energetic people who see clearly what is best for their business, their community, or their family. The Apostle Paul confessed that, in other days, "I was a tyrant." Would that all strongminded people, both men and women, had the honesty to admit the fact, and could share his experience of defeating the enemy.

For it is the well-meaning, the clear-minded, the successful people who are most likely to be numbered among the tyrants—the father-knows-best type. In some families eager, hopeful parents wanting only the best for their children bend their wills, speak for them and decide their careers. They cannot conceive of a child of theirs choosing an occupation or assuming a life-style other than their own.

But there are still more subtle kinds of domestic tyranny. Such as the tyranny of the invalid. Many families carry the burden of caring for a relative suffering physical or mental disabilities. The normal family gladly shoulders the burden and pays the cost without grumbling; sometimes with cheerfulness. This is made easier if the invalid himself accepts what cannot be changed. But if he continually complains at his lot, makes demands for added attention when other members of the family have first claim—this is to exercise the tyranny of the invalid.

And there is the tyranny of grief. It is natural and proper to feel and to show grief when we lose someone dearly loved—and none is immune to the experience—but it is indecent to allow grief to dominate one's life and spoil the lives of others.

There is a cure. It is resolutely to deny oneself the indulgence of grief, to become less self-centred and, above all, to have concern for other people. This indeed is the spirit many gallant souls display. To know them is itself an inspiration. And more, it is a preparation for the time when we too must face the common enemy.—Selected.

Passover Memorial, 1986

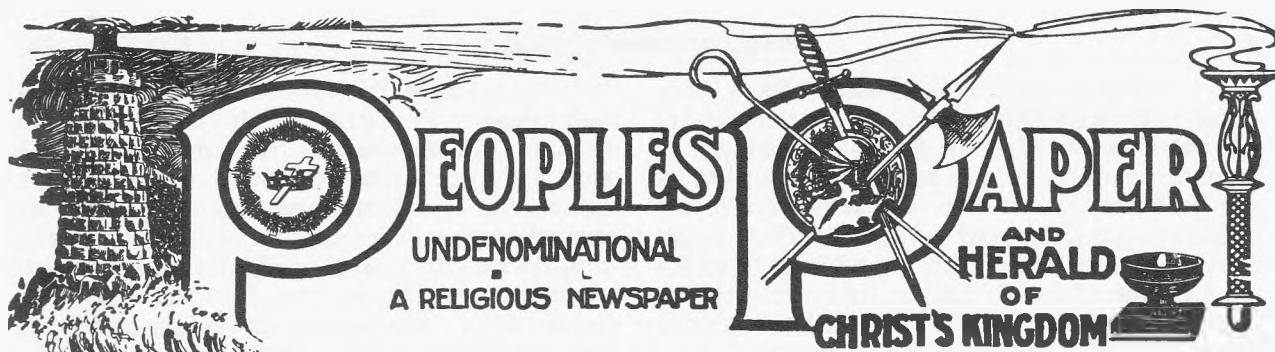
The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 22nd April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this Memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

On account of special circumstances this year the following have been arranged:-

Melbourne—Sunday, 20th April, at 2.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 12 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell.

Adelaide—Sunday, 20th April, at 2 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.



Volume 73 No. 6

MELBOURNE, NOV/DEC, 1990

The Long-Awaited Kingdom

(Convention Address)

No student of God's word needs to be told what kingdom is meant—the only one that is of interest is God's kingdom, ruled over by His appointed king, the Lord Jesus. When we look around us at the governments and kingdoms of this world and see their feeble efforts to bring stability to a world in crisis, we pray the more fervently "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth".

Australia has a severe balance of payments problem. Each month we import very much more than we export so we have an ever-increasing overseas debt. Inflation is once again on the rise and we have soaring interest rates. From a recent inquiry into corruption we have seen that many of those in positions of authority are primarily looking after their own interests rather than those of the people. No doubt there are also many genuine and sincere ones who are striving to do the very best they can but are meeting with little success. Even when the very best people become leaders, they find themselves hamstrung by lack of power and authority. A Prime Minister, a President or a King has very little absolute power in these days; they are all subject to a Cabinet or similar body. The government itself is subject to many pressure and lobby groups seeking their own interests.

A speaker recently pointed out that Queen Elizabeth and most of the small number of monarchs that still remain are reigning kings and queens but not ruling kings and queens. They have no real authority or power. A government made up of many members who each have different ideas of what should be done also can make only limited progress. In Biblical times and up to not so long ago, kings both reigned and ruled. Their word was law and no one could tell them what to do or not to do. Such power in the hands of an unrighteous king could be a very

dangerous thing, but in the hands of a perfect king would provide the very best form of government possible.

THE COMING KING

Just such a king is promised, our King, the One of whom we sing—"Praise to our King who is coming to reign, Glory to Jesus the Lamb who was slain". In John 18:37 Pilate asked Jesus "art thou a king?" Our Lord's reply was "thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world". Later in Matt. 28:18, after Jesus had risen from the dead, He said "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth". The Greek word translated power means privilege and authority. This mighty power and authority was conferred upon Him by His Heavenly Father. How beautifully this harmonises with the words of the second Psalm.

- "1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?
2. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,
3. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.
4. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.
5. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.
6. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.
7. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.
8. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.
9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel". (Psalm 2:1-9)

We tend perhaps to think of this psalm as being purely prophetic of our day, just the close of this age, but it seems that the Psalmist looking at it from the vantage point of his day, sees our Lord's first advent, then the whole Gospel Age culminating in the start of the kingdom reign. Verse 7 applies to the raising up of Jesus from the dead by the Heavenly Father. Here Jesus is the one speaking. Young's Literal Translation gives a better rendering, using the term "brought forth" in place of "begotten" (AV) "Jehovah says unto me, My Son Thou art, I today have brought thee forth". The New Testament writers quote this verse three times, in Heb. 1:5, Heb. 5:5 and Acts 13:33. The context of the last-named reads—"and we declare unto you glad tidings, how the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David". (Acts 13:32-34)

THE ANOINTING

The passage clearly applies Psalms 2:7 to the resurrection of our Lord. Young's translation of Verse 6 is also interesting—"I have anointed My King, upon Zion My holy hill". The allusion here would seem to be to King David, who ruled over the typical kingdom and established his throne on literal Mount Zion, being anointed by God three separate times. The final anointing of our Lord is on the symbolic Mount Zion in the heavenly Jerusalem, when he commences his kingdom reign from the throne of David. All authority and power was given to Jesus when the Heavenly Father raised him from the dead on the third day after the crucifixion, but it was not yet time for him to exercise that authority so far as the world was concerned, not yet time to take over David's throne. There had first to be a selection of joint-heirs to share the kingdom reign with their Master. The world was to be given a further period of time to experience what it is like to live in the kingdom of darkness under the Adversary's control, for he is the prince of this world.

Jesus has always been a ruling and reigning monarch so far as His true followers are concerned. They gladly accept Him as their King, they delight to obey His laws, though sometimes they may carry them out rather imperfectly through weakness of the fallen nature. Very soon, however, He is to be a ruling and reigning king over all the earth from God's holy hill of Zion.

Psalms 2:4 says "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision". Sometimes in translating from one language to another, it is hard to convey the subtle shades of meaning contained in the original tongue. One scholar has said the word 'laugh' would be better translated 'smile' but this still does not convey the full meaning. The thought is of calm serenity on the part of God; He is not in the least fazed or perturbed by all the tumult that it going on, by the raging of the nations and by the rulers banding together against Him and His Anointed. What indeed can puny man do against the almighty God? Everything is under His control, His plans are all made and will be fulfilled right to the letter at the appointed time. The outcome has never been in doubt, God has always known what the end result will be from the very beginning. God's attitude should be ours also, one of calm serenity and inner peace, no matter how difficult the days may become. If we see the symbolic sea and waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, it should not perturb us either. If our faith remain strong, we will know that God is in control and that all things are working out his plans and purposes which will be to the ultimate benefit of the whole human family.

The following verse (Psalms 2:5) gives the contrast "Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure". Down the ages, God has been sitting by, as it were, allowing mankind to go their own way, but the time has come in the divine program for the kingdom reign to start. The day of God's wrath has come, the great time of trouble in which the control of this world's affairs will be taken out of the hands of fallen mankind and given to God's appointed King. It is Jesus who then speaks in Verse 7 "I will declare the decree; the Lord (Jehovah) hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I brought thee forth".

Many scoff at the suggestion that Jesus who lived nearly 2000 years ago was anything more than a mere man. They ridicule the truth that He was God's Son brought forth from the grave by the Father's power. In this verse (V.7) Jesus is saying that the time will come when He is going to declare this decree, that He is in fact the Son of the living God who brought Him forth from the dead. No doubt the decree will go out to all the earth and this time they will believe. Israel will mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son. (Zech. 12:10) All the tribes of the earth will mourn and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matt. 24:30) "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power". (Psalms 110:3) The kingdom reign will be a success, the majority of

the people will be willing then when Jesus comes in power and glory. They will be brought to a realisation of their undone condition, their consciences will be sensitised. They will mourn over sin, what they have been, what they have done, just as the followers of Jesus at this time mourn when through weakness of the flesh they do something which they know will have displeased their Heavenly Father.

THE KING'S INHERITANCE

In Psalm 2:8,9, the Heavenly Father is speaking to His Son—"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel". There can be no doubt that these verses refer to the kingdom reign. It would seem to be the ruling authorities and powers that are to be broken in pieces. The rule by a rod of iron is pictorial language, an iron rod cannot be bent or broken. And so will it be with the laws of the kingdom, there will never be any compromise with unrighteousness. "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters shall overflow the hiding place". (Isa. 28:17) Different pictorial language is used in Isa. 11:4, but the thought contained is very similar—"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked". In Isa. 28:17, the water represents our Lord's words, which He said would judge the world in the last day. The hail is the hard truth which will hurt the unrighteous. In Isa. 11:4, "the rod of his mouth and the breath of his lips" are again His word, the truth. The majority of the wicked will be figuratively slain in this way by the truth and turn to righteousness. Only those who are incorrigible will experience a literal slaying in the second death. We would hope and expect that these will be few in number.

Most Christians would admit to a belief in the kingdom of God but many do not understand either the scope or the grandeur of that kingdom. Some think of it as simply a sentiment in the hearts of believers, others understand the church in the flesh to be all that is meant by the term "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven" as it is so frequently called in the scriptures. The true church in the flesh is indeed the kingdom, not the reigning kingdom but the kingdom in its embryonic stage, in its developmental state. It can rightly be called the kingdom of heaven because its members are the potential kings and priests who are to reign with Christ in the glorified stage of the kingdom.

THE KINGDOM PREACHED

In the New Testament, attention is first drawn to the kingdom by the words of John the Baptist in Matt. 3:2 "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". When Jesus commenced His ministry, He carried on the same theme. In Matt. 4:17 He repeated John's earlier statement, "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". Then Jesus instructed His 12 apostles to preach the same message, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand". (Matt. 10:7) The kingdom was always uppermost in our Lord's mind, and in Matt. 9:35 we read that Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching in the synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Some have had difficulties in understanding these passages. John the Baptist and Jesus both declared that the kingdom of heaven was then at hand, yet nearly 2000 years have passed since that far away day and we are still praying and waiting for the kingdom to come. Has something gone wrong? No, nothing can go wrong with any of our Heavenly Father's plans. It is very clear that Jesus was speaking of the opening of the door to the high calling as the Apostle Paul later described it. The way into the spiritual phase of the kingdom was now open for the first time. A change of dispensation had taken place and God's program was entering a new stage. The dispensation of the law and the prophets was only until John the Baptist, from that time on the kingdom of heaven was preached. God was now making a selection of those of the right heart condition to be the future kings and priests and to rule under their Head at the appointed time. It was in this sense that the kingdom was at hand then, in the sense that now is the acceptable time, the time for one to consecrate his or her life and make ready to assist in the great restitution work, when the kingdom is reigning over the earth. All such are looked upon by God as being in the kingdom of heaven now, as the apostle Paul tells us in Col. 1:13, "the Father—hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son".

Luke 17:20,21 records that the Pharisees wanted to know when the kingdom of God would come, and our Lord's reply was that "the kingdom cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, lo here! or lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is among you". (AV margin) Jesus and His followers were the nucleus of the kingdom at that time. They were among the people, but were unappreciated and unrecognised and this has been so all through the age until today — the true kingdom of heaven class has not been recognised by the world. Yet they have been in the midst of the people just as Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is among you".

KINGDOM PARABLES

Matthew 13 records a number of parables which our Lord gave and which we refer to as the kingdom parables. Each begins with the words "the kingdom of heaven is like unto this or like unto that". These again are speaking of the church in the flesh during the Gospel Age, which is described as the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom which contains both true and false Christians, as the parable of the wheat and tares shows. The wheat which is the good seed is sown by Jesus and represents the true children of the kingdom. The tares are the children of the wicked one, whose seed is sown by the devil in an attempt to confuse and choke out the true wheat. A similar picture is given in the parable of the dragnet, but using different symbolism. The parable commences with the words "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net", a net which gathers in both good and bad fish, corresponding with the wheat and tares of the earlier parable, the good being retained and the bad rejected. We should note that both classes had previously been in the net representing the kingdom. None of these parables is speaking of the wicked people of the world in general but only of imitation Christians who have come into the church masquerading as true wheat.

In Matt. 13:33 we have the parable of the leaven showing the spread of error and false doctrine by the counterfeit church. The verse reads "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened". Some understand this parable to show the spread of truth throughout the whole world. If we were to extend the duration of the parable to the end of the Millennial Age, none would doubt that this would be the ultimate result. However this interpretation presents several difficulties, firstly that the parables do not seem to depict the outcome for the world in general during the Gospel or Millennial Ages but are confined to the church, true and nominal, which is the kingdom of heaven of the parables.

It is notable that a woman hid the leaven in the meal. There are two prominent women mentioned in the scriptures, one being referred to in Gal. 4:26 where we are told of "Jerusalem above, the free woman which is the mother of us all". (Diaglott) This is a symbol of the true church. The other woman is Babylon the Great (Rev. 17:3-5) which depicts the false church. This would be the woman who hid the leaven in the meal. The meal would represent the basic fundamental truth of God's word, the Christian's genuine spiritual food, originally pure and uncontaminated. This woman hid the leaven, something she did secretly, furtively, unobserved and unknown to most that it was there. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole

lump". (1 Cor. 5:6) Leaven never pictures anything good in either the Old or New Testaments. Under the law, Israel were to observe seven days of unleavened bread when no leaven was to be found in their homes. This was at the time of Passover and pictured a sinless condition which should be the aim of all God's people. At Memorial times we partake of unleavened bread, symbolic of our Lord's perfect, sinless body.

Furthermore, our Lord's advice to His followers (Matt. 16:6) was to "take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees". Verse 12 in the chapter tells us that the leaven represented their false doctrine. These were the recognised religious leaders of that day and the same warning applies with equal force to us — we are also to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees of our day, those presenting doctrines of manmade origin.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

It is most appropriate that the church in the flesh bear the title of the kingdom of heaven, because that is exactly what it is. God's government reigning over the earth in the next age will be made up of its members, the true wheat class. These will live and reign with Christ for 1000 years. (Rev. 20:6) As the Master said to His followers (Luke 22:29) "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me", or as the Diaglott renders it "I covenant for you even as my Father has covenanted for me a kingdom". Daniel 7 shows the fulfilment of our Lord's words. In verse 13, we have a picture of Jesus coming before the Heavenly Father to receive the Kingdom, then verse 14 goes on "and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed".

This verse is very comprehensive and should be source of very great encouragement to all who can accept it. Verse 27 in the same chapter shows the saints receiving the kingdom as the Lord said, "and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens, 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". Christians who fail to see this future aspect of the kingdom miss its main point and objective. It would be true to say that all of past history from the Garden of Eden until today has been but a time of preparation for the kingdom reign. In the centuries before Christ, a selection of the Princes, the visible rulers in the earthly phase of the kingdom, was being made; after Christ, a selection of the kings and priests to reign with Him in the spiritual phase has been

going on. The great majority of people understand none of these things, they see a world virtually crying out for help and they ask, "If there is a God, why does He not do something about it?" His plans have, however, been steadily progressing for the last 6000 years, unhindered by the many and varied upheavals that have taken place in the social order during that time. But these plans have been unobserved and unknown to most.

THE KINGDOM ESTABLISHED

The future aspect of the kingdom is brought out by our Lord in the parable of the nobleman in Luke 19:11-27. He said that a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return. Jesus Himself went to the far country of heaven and received the kingdom from His Father, but it is not until after His return that His reign commences. The apostle Peter tells us in Acts 3:21, that the heavens must receive Jesus "until the times of restitution of all things". The parable of the nobleman goes on to show the saints given ruling authority in varying degrees according to their faithfulness and labours. Verse 11 gives two reasons why Jesus told this parable just then—firstly because He was near to Jerusalem and secondly because the disciples thought that the kingdom would immediately appear. Jerusalem is synonymous with the kingdom and symbolises it in both its phases. It was the seat of God's government during the days of the typical kingdom and David reigned from there. We understand that it will be once again the seat of God's kingdom during the Millenium. The disciples at that time thought that Jesus would immediately bring in the kingdom which was to be restored, evidently not having yet come to understand about the heavenly, spiritual phase.

The two on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:21) said "we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel" and in Acts 1:6 we read that when the disciples came together on the Mount of Olives to witness our Lord's ascension, they asked Him "wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" His reply was that "it is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath put in His own power". The Master's reply indicates that their hopes for Israel would indeed be fulfilled, though not as soon as they had expected. Acts 1:12 tells us that it was a Sabbath's day journey back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. Scholars tell that this refers to the distance the Jews were allowed to travel on the Sabbath, namely 2000 cubits or paces. This might well picture the 2000 years of the Gospel Age which were to intervene before the kingdom symbolised by Jerusalem was restored.

The words of the thief on the cross next to Jesus are recorded in Luke 23:42—"And he said unto, Jesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom". These are indeed remarkable words. Jesus was hanging there on a cross, just about to die, and the thief asked to be remembered when he came into his kingdom. What a display of faith, this man evidently accepted our Lord's claim that he was a king and would one day in the future receive a kingdom, and also that God would raise him from the dead, for, after all, a dead king can grant no favours.

KINGDOM BLESSINGS

Our Lord's great prophecy lists the various signs that are to occur at the time of His second presence, right at the end of this age, and in Luke 21:31 we read "so likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand".

The Matthew account has the words "even at the doors". Have we not seen these signs? What a great blessing and source of encouragement our Lord's words should be to us who are living on the very threshold of the kingdom age! This sin-sick world, a world of sorrow and tears, is about to pass away forever and to be replaced by a new heaven and earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Then the world will surely know—

A new age in which all the wonderful promises of God will be fulfilled—

No more wars, sickness, sorrow or tears.
No more crime, violence or hatred.

A world whose inhabitants will forever remain in the flower of youth—

No more growing old, sick or decrepit.
Eventually, no more death.

A world restored to perfection, where nothing will hurt or destroy in all God's holy kingdom. (JGT:89)

"God has promised a glorious day,
And by faith we now see it draw near.
Our Redeemer has opened the way,
And soon will its glory appear".

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth
as it is in heaven". Amen.

PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
1 Springfield Street, Briar Hill,
Victoria, Australia, 3088*

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.

“Unto You Is Born— A Saviour

(Luke 2:11)

Once again the coming Christmas season will remind us especially of the so great love of God shown in the gift of His dearly beloved and only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of the world. In our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, coupled with full harmony with and obedience to the Father's will, we recognise the same so great love as the apostle Paul declares—“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”.

Yes, the Son of God so loved that He gave Himself not only for Paul, but for each one of us and ultimately for all mankind. Our response should surely be—

“He gave His life for me,
Lord, I give all to Thee”.

The condescension of our Saviour in leaving the heavenly courts to be born a babe in the little town of Bethlehem is made clear in scripture—“Christ Jesus,....though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross”. (Phil. 2:5-8 R.S.V.)

The words of the Wise Man in Proverbs 8 seem also to speak clearly of our Lord's former glory with the Father—“The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting to everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men”. (Prov. 8:22, 23,30,31)

In His great high priestly prayer our Saviour asked that He might be restored to this glory which He had with the Father before the world was and the apostle Paul assures us that following His perfect obedience even unto death, God has indeed even more highly exalted Him and set Him over all things in heaven, in earth and under the earth.. (Phil. 2:9,10) Meantime, His earthly ministry required the learning of obedience and being made perfect through suffering. (Heb. 5:8, 2:10) He by whom all things were created and who had long shared the heavenly home with the Father, on earth was to confess that the Son of Man had not where to lay His head.

Every child of God, indeed all of mankind, have been redeemed not with the costliest of corruptible things but at far greater price, even the precious blood of Christ, who was ready to lay aside for a while His heavenly glory to share our human experience and to bear our sins in His body on the tree. This greatest of all gift of God is that which each true Christian especially remembers at this season of the year.

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift”.

Two Men Went up to Pray

*“God, I thank Thee that I am not as
other men are.”*

“God, be merciful to me a sinner.”
—Luke 18:11, 13.

Two men went up into the Temple to pray...” A story so well known that it needs no repetition. Yet how often do we stop to consider whether we ourselves are become like the man who, fasting twice in the week and giving tithes of all he possessed, found cause for glory, not in the separateness to God but in the separateness from his fellow-men. “I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.” What a miserable confession to make. In looking upon his fellows he saw nothing to emulate, no characteristics or virtues which he could desire for himself, but only the sordid evidences of evil. The reign of sin and death was a very real thing to this Pharisee; and with an exquisite nicety he carefully dissociated himself from it all and explained to the Almighty that, living perforce in an evil world and amidst sinful men, he was nevertheless not of them nor with them, and that he at least was one to whom had come the superior inward knowledge which, separating forever from the plebeian multitude, rendered him a fit companion for the One who dwelt in the inner sanctuary.

We read the story, we smile pityingly at the vivid picture of this pompous Israelite, and mentally place ourselves with the publican standing afar off, as we continue our reading. But what of the lesson behind the parable? Is it not true that many times in the individual Christian life we find ourselves thanking God that we are not as other men? Does it not often happen that this wonderful separateness to God which we call consecration degenerates into a mere smug and self-satisfied separateness from the world? And worse still, at times the suggestion is made that in this latter day, when the purpose of God in calling from the nations a people for his name seems to be on the brink of

completion, a still more exclusive and narrow-minded outlook is called for: — to wit, that our age-old mission as witnesses of Jesus and ministers one to the other must be abrogated in favor of an individual contemplation of the sacred mysteries and a refusal to extend the privilege of fellowship and the Word of Life to all but the favored few who are accepted as being likewise the “sealed of God.” Alas, that the fruit of a one-time zealous response to be “not conformed to this world” should be, not a transforming by the renewing of the mind, with all the marvelous light of spiritual understanding that transformation can bring, but a gravitation to the lowest depths of bigotry, of self-delusion, of utter spiritual blindness which separation from our fellows must mean when we are not separated to God.

The spirit of exclusiveness is amongst us—we must fight it. It is within our hearts—we must root it out. No matter how discouraging our experiences with those to whom we bear the Word of Life—no matter how disappointing our efforts to serve and strengthen our brethren—we must not become narrow or bigoted. Our mission is not to evolve novel expositions and ordered theologies from the Sixty-six Books and demand acceptance of these man-made creations as the way to God. We are exhorted to be sure of our foundation and to have a reason for the faith that is in us, by all means. We are expected to be rooted and grounded in the knowledge which has come our way and we are warned not to compromise our understanding of Divine Truth for the sake of outward harmony. But above all things we are impressed, time and time again, with the necessity for continual progress and advancement in our personal understanding of Truth—and it is in recognizing this basic principle that we shall be able to take our stand in the Temple, with open face and open heart worshipping the Father who dispenses His blessings upon all who come to Him in spirit and in truth. There may be many things—there must of necessity be many things—upon which various disciples do not see eye to eye, and because of differences of thought there must upon occasion be a physical separation into groups for orderly worship and service. But the mystic communion which binds together all who truly name the Name of Christ, transcends such temporary divisions and triumphantly demonstrates the fulfilment of the Savior's prayer, “I will... that they may be one.”

Stand then upon this sure foundation, and we shall have cause to rejoice, not in work of righteousness which we have done but in that common standing in Christ which is our privilege and the seal of divine sonship. (B.S.M.)

Divine Detours

(A Testimony)

“A few years ago, while on a trip through a very hilly country, we came to a detour. We had only gone a few hundred feet when we said, “This cannot be the right road. The ones who routed this highway would not detour us over a road as bad as this one.” But when we looked at the road signs, we saw that this was exactly what they had done. The detour was about eight miles long, and it took us at least an hour to travel the entire length of it. But it led us along a mountain road where we saw some very beautiful scenery which we otherwise would have missed, and brought us again to an even better highway. When we saw how smooth and wide it was, we were not sorry we had taken the side road, for the detour was really a short cut to a better road.

This pictures how sometimes we find ourselves in some trial or bitter experience and we say, “This must be some mistake. God would never arrange for me to have a trial like this. Others may have experiences like this, but such an experience is not for me.” But then we look again at the signposts, and we find the Lord has arranged for us to have this very experience. So we say, “Where He leads me, I will follow.” And just as on the detour we saw scenery we otherwise would have missed, so through this experience we get views of our Heavenly Father's love and sympathy and grace to help that we would otherwise not gain.”

*'Tis sweet to keep my hand in His
While all is dim;
To close my weary, aching eyes
And follow Him.*

And Where is Now My Hope?

Job 17:15

Job's dilemma challenges us to assess the basis of our hope. In the distinctiveness of divine purposes, hope is developed through what might naturally be considered the hopeless circumstances of life. It comes from patience born out of tribulation (Romans 5:3-5). The blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13) provides a daily source of strength and stimulates saints to a life of holy purity (1 John 3:3). —Garry W. Seale

*His oath, His covenant and blood,
Support me in the whelming flood,
When all around my soul gives way
He then is all my hope and stay.
—Edward Mote*

Come to Bethlehem

One mile from Bethlehem is a little plain, in which, under a grove of olives, stands the bare and neglected chapel known by the name of "the Angel and the Shepherds". It is built over the traditional site of the fields where, in the beautiful language of St. Luke—more exquisite than any idyll to Christian ears—"there were shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night, when, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them", and to their happy ears were uttered the good tidings of great joy that unto them was born that day in the city of David a Saviour, which was Christ the Lord.

The associations of our Lord's nativity were all of the humblest character, and the very scenery of His birthplace was connected with memories of poverty and toil. On that night, indeed, it seemed as though the heavens must burst to disclose their radiant minstrelsies. The stars, and the feeding sheep, and the "light and sound in the darkness and stillness", and the rapture of faithful hearts, combine to furnish us with a picture painted in the colours of heaven.

But in the brief and thrilling verses of the Evangelist we are not told that those angel songs were heard by any except the wakeful shepherds of an obscure village;—and those shepherds, amid the chill dews of night, were guarding their flocks from the wolf and the robber, in fields where Ruth, their Saviour's ancestress, had "gleaned, sick at heart, amid the alien corn," and David, the despised and youngest son of a numerous family, had followed the ewes great with young.

"And suddenly", adds the sole Evangelist who has narrated the circumstances of that memorable night in which Jesus was born, amid the indifference of the world unconscious of its Deliverer, "there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will".

"Come now! let us go into Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord made known to us", said the shepherds, when those angel songs had ceased to break the starry silence. Their way would lead them up the terraced hill, and through the moonlit gardens of Bethlehem, until they reached the summit of the grey ridge on which the little town is built. On that summit stood the village inn. The khan (inn) of a Syrian village, at that day, was probably identical, in its appearance and accommodation,

with those which still exist in Palestine. A khan is a low structure....it consists for the most part of a square enclosure, in which the cattle can be tied up safely for the night, and an arched recess for the accommodation of travellers.

Guided by the lamp which usually swings from the centre of a rope hung across the entrance of the khan, the shepherds found their way to the inn of Bethlehem, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger. The fancy of poet and painter has revelled in the imaginary glories of the scene. They have sung of the "bright harnessed angels".... They have painted the radiation of light from His manger-cradle... But all this is wide of the reality. Such glories as the simple shepherds saw were seen only by the eye of faith; and all which met their gaze was a peasant of Galilee, already beyond the prime of life, and a young mother, of whom they could not know that she was wedded maid and virgin wife, with an infant child, whom, since there was none to help her, her own hands had wrapped in swaddling clothes. The light that shined in darkness was no physical, but a spiritual beam; the Dayspring from on high, which had now visited mankind, dawned only in a few faithful and humble hearts. (F.W. Farrar)

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." Luke 2:20.

We Walk by Faith, Not by Sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7

An irate passenger complained to a crewman that the ship was travelling far too fast along the fog-covered St. Lawrence River of Canada, to which the sailor replied, "The Captain is on the bridge and can see well above the fog. He knows exactly where the vessel is going". The confident believer rejoices in knowing his Captain in Heaven sees well above the fog of this sinful world and will guide His children safely to heaven.

—Arnot P. McIntee

*Child of love, fear not the unknown
morrow,
Dread not the new demands life makes of
thee;
Thy lack of knowledge holds no cause for
sorrow,
Since what thou knowest not is known to
Me.*

—Alfred P. Gibbs