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## “Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, Today and Forever.”

IN meditating upon the words, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever,” taken from Paul’s letter to the Hebrews in chapter 13:8, we surely feel a sense of stability, security and enduring faithfulness is conveyed to us by the Apostle with respect to our dear Redeemer, who, at the time these words were written had been exalted to the Father’s right hand, and had gained — “All power in heaven and in earth,” — as our Lord Himself declared in Matt. 28:18.

Reading the context in Heb. 13, from the Revised Standard Version, is most encouraging. “Let brotherly love continue . . . Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, I will never fail you nor forsake you. Hence we can confidently say, The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid; what can man do to me. Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.” (Heb. 13:1, 5-8.)

It seems evident that the Apostle was seeking to confirm the Hebrew Christians in their faith and hope for the future, by impressing the fact that their Lord, their great anti-typical High Priest, having taken over the office of their typical high priest, was able to support, sustain and comfort them in their walk as Christians *for all time*. The wonderful exhortation by the same Apostle, in Heb. 3:1, to those Hebrew Christians, and to us today, links so beautifully with the words of our text — “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”

Let us, then, seek to earnestly consider the Great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, in the three aspects—yesterday, today and forever.

Yesterday, to the mind of the Apostle who wrote it, would likely refer to our Lord’s first advent. And how much we really have to consider about Him in regard to His condescension in coming to this earth, to a fallen human family, to be the Redeemer of mankind! As the same apostle so beautifully expresses it in 2 Cor. 8:9, “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” Also, have we ever considered the waiting time of 30 years which our Lord experienced in growing up to manhood’s estate from the Babe of Bethlehem- 30 years of sacrificing the glory He had with the Father before the world was? Then, the further all-important 31 years of laying down His life, in teaching, guiding and preparing His little band of disciples who were favored with the privilege of carrying on His ministry, and finally the consummation of His sacrifice on the cross. This was of course the Father’s will for Him, and so it was our Lord’s delight to carry out his Father’s will in all things, *as* He declared, — “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” (John 10:10, 11.)

Connected also with the Yesterday aspect of our great High Priest, at His first advent, was His teaching and preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, and His miracles of various kinds, including the raising of the dead to life. “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” (Matt. 9:35). We note that teaching and preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom was our Lord’s main work, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people, would be *as a* witness that He was the true Messiah; especially would this be manifest when our Lord actually raised the dead! Not that our Lord healed all the sick and all the diseased, but rather that He “healed every (kind of) sickness, and every (kind of) disease.” In other words, no sickness or disease could withstand our Lord, because He had the Father’s mighty power at His disposal, to show how completely He will heal all the afflicted, and restore all that are in the death condition, in His wonderful kingdom to come.

Let us now consider the Today aspect of the Apostle’s words respecting our Lord. This could be taken, we would think, to refer to the whole of the Gospel Age, including Paul’s own day. Jesus’ promise to His disciples, just as He was about to ascend to the Heavenly Father, is appropriate in this connection,—“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). Those to whom Jesus spoke would represent His true followers right down the Gospel Age to its close, and our Lord’s promise to be with those who were following Him has surely been fulfilled, and would confirm the hearts and minds of the Lord’s true people that He is the same today as He was yesterday—the

same sympathetic and merciful High Priest—of whom Paul declared —”Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” (See Heb. 4:14-16.)

We now refer to a claim that is rather prevalent today amongst certain people by the name of revivalists. They maintain that the words of our text—”Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever,”—are to be understood as implying that as our Lord healed all manner of sicknesses and diseases when He was here on earth, He is continuing to do this through certain people on earth today. We feel that these claims are very deceptive to people who do not understand the wonderful Plan of the Ages which God is working out for the ultimate blessing of all mankind, not for a few years by working temporary relief from sickness, etc., but rather relief that will last for ever, for those who obey the laws of the kingdom in due time.

We believe that the true understanding of the “gifts of the spirit” is presented so clearly and helpfully by the same Apostle who declared to the Hebrew Christians that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, today and forever. This explanation is found in 1 Cor. 12: 27-31, and chapter 13. Quoting from **verse 29** in chapter 12, we read—”Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.” The *more excellent way* is wonderfully revealed in chapter 13, and we advise all readers to carefully review this beautiful passage of Scripture.

Undoubtedly the Apostle’s object in this presentation to the church at Corinth was to wean them away from the “gifts” of the spirit which, however, up till that time had been a means of much help in the early church, when no New Testament was available, and the scrolls of the Old Testament would be scarce and few people were even able to read. The *more excellent way* than even the best of the gifts of the spirit, we see to be the development of the *fruits of the spirit*.

Let us now examine verse 8 in some detail. “Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies *they shall fail*.” What kind of prophecies did the Apostle have in mind? Undoubtedly, *the gift of prophecy*. “Whether there be tongues, *they shall cease*.” What kind of tongues? Without doubt, *the gift of tongues*. We may question,—Did Jesus speak in tongues, and if not, why not? Surely if speaking in tongues was a sign of God’s favor, our Lord would have used that means of preaching. But not so! Our Lord was sent only “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” and they all understood the words which proceeded out of His mouth. How different it *was* on the day of Pentecost when many people of various languages were present to hear the gospel, and the Lord gave them His truth through the tongues of the Apostles. As our Lord did not use tongues at His first advent to make an outward show, is it reasonable to expect that He would use tongues today for demonstration purposes? Certainly not! Later we shall examine the source of this deception which captivates those looking for outward show in their religious life.

Continuing in verse 8 of 1 Cor. 13, we read,—”Whether there be knowledge *it shall vanish away*.” What kind of knowledge is implied here? Surely not the knowledge of knowing God and His truth, and understanding all the wonderful things in this world. No, but *the gift of knowledge*, given only to the early church.

The following verses 9 and 10 are stated in some circles to refer to the time when the gifts of the spirit would cease, the claim being that “when that which is perfect is come,” refers to our Lord’s second advent, and that the gifts of the spirit would continue until that time. How strange it would seem, if almost 2,000 years must pass before the “more excellent way” was to begin. Surely the Apostle’s advice was intended to apply there and then for the Corinthians in advocating the development of the fruits of the spirit, as *more excellent* than the best gifts of the spirit. Examining the context of this presentation given by the Apostle, we see no indication at all that he had the return of Christ in mind in this passage. Rather, he is giving a helpful illustration of the progress which will be gained by all the faithful followers of the Master when they become perfect beyond the veil—having gained immortality in the heavenly kingdom.

Those who have made some good development with the fruits of the spirit, having followed Paul’s good advice in this “more excellent way,” would still “know in part” in comparison with the perfection of the first resurrection. And this illustration of verses 9 and 10 of the progress from the “in part” to the “perfect” state beyond the veil is used to impress the Apostle’s teaching that progress should be made at that time in the Corinthian church from the “gifts” to the “fruits” of the spirit.

Verses 11 and 12 bear out this interpretation—”When I was a child, I spake as a child; I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things.” Could anything be clearer than that Paul was stating that he had already “become a man” in Christ, by cultivating the fruits of the spirit, and so he had put away childish things, even the gifts of the spirit, and was seeking to wean the Corinthians from childish desires also, that they may become men in Christ. It will be seen also that having become a man, after putting away childish things, Paul still “saw through a glass darkly,” (dimly), he still “knew in part” only, in comparison with the “face to face” state beyond the veil. As verse 12 declares — “For now we see through a glass darkly (or dimly) ; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known.”

The closing verse of this lovely chapter seems to climax the Apostle’s teaching so clearly and beautifully, — “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” Indeed, these lovely fruits of the spirit must be manifest in the hearts and minds of all God’s people as they progress along the Christian way, and these are attained only by the indwelling of God’s holy spirit in good measure.

How, then, shall we account for the claims made in some circles, particularly in these last days of the age, that there are healings and tongues used in some assemblies today? In answer to this question, Have we ever wondered why the Apostle Paul was the only Apostle to mention the gifts of the spirit in the Epistles of the whole of the New Testament, and why his reference is made only to the church at Corinth? This should make us think, for we find in his Epistles to the Romans, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians and the Thessalonians, also to Timothy,

Titus and the Hebrews, not one mention is made of the gifts of the spirit, but much is said in all these epistles about the fruits of the spirit. Surely Paul would have failed greatly in his ministry by so much omission, if the gifts of the spirit were to continue down the Gospel Age to the Lord's second advent.

Then we think of the Epistles of Peter, James and John, and the wonderful Revelation, and we find in these no reference to the gifts of the spirit, but much in all these Scriptures exhorting all Christians to seek to put on the fruits of the spirit — *giving* heed to what the spirit saith unto the churches.

Is there any reason then, why Paul selected the Corinthian church to refer to the gifts, and exhort them to seek the more excellent way of gaining the fruits of the spirit? His words in 1 Cor. 3 seem to supply the answer,—”And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For *ye are yet carnal.*” (1 Cor. 3:1-3.) Apparently there were a number in this church who had not progressed spiritually, and so the outward show of the gifts of the spirit would have more appeal than was good for their development as followers of the Master, and Paul took the occasion to impress the “more excellent way,” for their highest good.

In his second epistle to the Corinthian church Paul reveals the deception which was prevalent in his day, and which applies also down to our own time. In 2 Cor. 11 :10-15, we read from the Revised Standard Version,—”As the truth of Christ is in me, this boast of mine shall not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.” The fact that Satan brought all the trouble, sorrow, pain and death upon the human family by deceiving our first parents, and now would disguise himself as an angel of light in the boasted healings of today, surely reveals the subtilty of the deceptions in these days.

Our Lord's warning in Matt. 24:24 is surely very timely in this connection, — “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders ; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” But it is not possible to deceive the very elect, because our Lord is still the great overseer of His people, and is keeping the true-hearted from all deceptions of every kind; He is still the same—yesterday, today, and forever. We have a lovely example of our Lord's watch-care over Peter in Luke 22:31, 32, and the Today aspect is shown again in Rev. 1:12, 13, where we have revealed in the visions of this prophecy our risen Lord “in the midst of the seven candlesticks”—amidst the churches of the Gospel Age—keeping, protecting, reproofing where necessary, and blessing all His dear followers who are walking in His steps of sacrifice.

The question may arise as to why the Lord permits certain great signs and wonders to deceive people, especially in these closing days of the Gospel Age. The Apostle Paul answers this matter very well, showing that some of mankind are not worthy of being protected, and that God would even send a strong delusion that such should believe a lie. His words are found in 2 Thes. 2 :9-12—”The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false, so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (R.S.V.)

Our Lord Jesus is also the same Forever. In Rev. 3:21 we read respecting the over-corners of this Gospel Age—”To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” This shows the eternal inheritance of the Church, the Bride of Christ, all the members of which will rejoice in the work of co-operating with Christ in the grand restoration of all mankind who may gain the benefit from Christ's sacrifice, when raised from the dead, by becoming His obedient earthly subjects under the administration of the earthly phase of the kingdom. The prophet Isaiah also reveals this wonderful Forever aspect of our text as follows — “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.” (Isa. 9: 6, 7.)

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## **Gloomy View of U.N. by Delegates**

NEW YORK, October 25—”We are witnessing the decline and fall of the United Nations . . . it's our gloomiest day.” That was the view expressed by a number of seasoned diplomats as the United Nations observed its 16th anniversary yesterday, the New York “Herald Tribune” said.

The gloom and cynicism which settled over the world organisation from the very outset of the current General Assembly could not be dispersed even during the brief interlude set aside yesterday for the anniversary celebration at U.N. headquarters, the newspaper's U.N. correspondent wrote.

While the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's symphony orchestra was playing the Brahms' First Symphony, one veteran diplomat whispered: "We will last only one or two more years." His companion, the correspondent said, protested: "You are being pessimistic." "Not at all," replied the first. "I am being optimistic. If it lasts longer, it will be a catastrophe for humanity."

"Everyone is blaming everyone else for the sorry state of affairs and the tragic-comedy which is being played on the world stage in the glass house alongside the (New York) East River," the "Herald Tribune" reporter said.

"The smaller countries blame the great Powers, and the great Powers blame each other or the 'neutrals' of Africa and Asia for standing by and 'fiddling' while the world is threatened with fire. With the two great Powers of East and West deadlocked on all major issues, it has been hoped that the smaller countries, now holding the balance, would have seized the opportunity to uphold the ideals and aims of the U.N. Charter.

"But the smaller countries, notably those of Africa and Asia, have shown themselves unprepared or unwilling to fill the vacuum and have engaged in the favorite U.N. pastime of filling the halls of the U.N. with speeches leading nowhere," the "Herald Tribune" report said.

The above news report which appeared in the Melbourne "Age" reveals an outstanding fulfilment of Bible prophecy which states that as the end of this Gospel Age approaches all the efforts of mankind to bring peace and security to the world will become more and more confused, until finally, the great "earthquake" condition will result in the complete overthrow of this present order of things, to make way for the Kingdom of Christ. The following quotation from "The Divine Plan of the Ages" seems to sum up this matter so clearly and helpfully :—

"The trouble of this day will be in spasms. It will be a series of convulsions more frequent and severe as the day draws on, until the final one. The Apostle so indicates when he says—"as *travail* upon a woman." (1 Thes. 5:2,3.) The relief will come only with the birth of the NEW ORDER of things—a new heavens (the spiritual control of Christ) and a new earth (re-organized society) wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. 3:10,13) — in which justice and love, instead of power and selfishness, will be the law.

"Each time these labor pangs of the new era come upon the present body politic, her strength and courage will be found less, and the pains severer. All that society's physicians (political economists) can do for her relief will be to help, and wisely direct the course of the inevitable birth — to prepare gradually the way for the event. They cannot avert it if they would; for God has decreed that it shall come to pass. Many of society's physicians will, however, be totally ignorant of the real ailment and of the necessities and urgency of the case, These will undertake repressive measures; and as each paroxysm of trouble passes away, they will take advantage of it to fortify the resistive appliances, and will thereby increase the anguish; and while they will not long delay the birth, their malpractice will hasten the death of their patient; for the old order of things will die in the labor of bringing forth the new."

### **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

### **CHILDREN'S HYMNS**

A selection of hymns suitable for children, 52 in number, has been compiled by one of our friends, and copies of these in booklet form have been duplicated in our office. These are available at 1/- each, to cover cost of materials, etc., postage extra.

## **The Law of Love**

THE Law of Love says: For shame that the weaknesses and shortcomings of our brethren or of others should be exposed before the world ;—for shame that pity and sympathy did not at once advance to speak a word in their defense, if too late to spread over their faults a mantle of charity to hide them entirely! As our noble, loving Master declared on one occasion, when asked to condemn a sinner : "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." The person without frailties of his own might be to some extent excusable for assuming unbidden of the Lord the position of executioner of Justice—taking vengeance on wrong-doers, exposing them, etc.; but we find that our Master, who knew no sin, had so much Love in His heart that He was disposed rather to condone and forgive than to punish and expose and berate. And so it will doubtless be with all begotten of His spirit; in proportion as they grow up into His likeness they will be the last to pray for vengeance,—the last to execute punishments by tongue or otherwise, until so commanded by the Great Judge. He now, on the contrary, instructs us, "Judge nothing before the time," and declares, "Vengeance is mine."

Well has the Apostle delineated the spirit of Love, saying, "Love suffereth long and is kind" —to the wrong-doer. "Love envieth not" the success of others, seeks not to detract from their honor nor to pull them back from it. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up," and, consequently, never seeks to detract from the splendor of others to make self shine by contrast. It "doth not behave itself unbecomingly," immoderately,—it has no extreme and selfish desires and avoids extreme methods. Love "seeketh not that which is not her own," does not covet the honors or wealth or fame of others, but delights to see them blessed, and would rather add to than detract from these blessings. Love "is not easily provoked," even to render just recompenses; remembering the present distress of the entire race through the fall, it is sympathetic rather than angry. Love "thinketh no evil"; it not only will not invent and imagine evil, but is so disposed to give the benefit of any doubt that "evil surmisings" are foreign to it. (Compare 1 Tim. 6:4.) Love "rejoiceth not with iniquity, but rejoices with the Truth (rightness) ; hence, it would delight to uncover and make known noble words or acts, but would take no pleasure in, but avoid, exposing ignoble words or deeds. Love

“covereth all things,” as with a mantle of sympathy—for nothing and nobody is perfect, so as to stand full inspection. Love anticipates and has her mantle of benevolence always ready. Love “believes all things,”—is not disposed to dispute claims of good intention, but rather to accept them. Love “hopes all things,” disputing the thought of total depravity so long as possible. Love “endures all things”; it is impossible to fix a limit where it would refuse the truly repentant one. “Love never faileth.” Other graces and gifts may serve their purposes and pass away; but Love is so elemental that, attained, it may always be ours,—throughout eternity. Love is the principal thing. -1 Cor. 13:4-13.

But if to tell uncomplimentary truth is to violate the Law of Love and the Golden Rule, what shall we *say* of the still more disreputable, still more unlovely, still more criminal habit so common, not only amongst the worldly and nominally Christian, but also among true Christians that of telling about others disreputable things not positively known to be the truth. Oh shame! shame! that any of the Lord’s people should so overlook the Lord’s instruction, “speak evil of no man”; and that any but the merest babes and novices in the Law of Love should so misunderstand its message:— that any without the most indubitable proofs at the mouth of two or three witnesses, and then reluctantly, should even believe evil of a brother or neighbor, much less to repeat it—to slander him upon suspicion or hearsay evidence!

The Golden Rule would surely settle this disposition to “gossip” about others and their affairs. What slanderer wishes to be slandered? What gossip wishes to have his matters and difficulties and weaknesses discussed either publicly or confidentially? The “world” has little else to talk about than gossip and scandal, but the New Creation should preferably be dumb until the love and plan of God have furnished them with the great theme of which the angels sang—“Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men.” Then the “words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts” will be acceptable to the Lord and a blessing to those with whom they come in contact. (From “The New Creation.”)

### TRACTS AVAILABLE

The article which appeared in last month’s “Peoples Paper”—“Are You Fearful of World Conditions Today? Have You Heard of the Gospel of Hope ?”—is now available in tract form. These are provided by the General Tract Fund, and friends who can use them to advantage where good may be done are invited to procure supplies.

“Israel in History and Prophecy” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

## A Study in Matthew 24:34

(Contributed Article).

TEN years ago an article appeared in a Truth journal drawing attention to some of the facts herein set forth, and this article as a whole is the result of further investigation and study. The facts supplied have been carefully pondered and checked with concordances and the Diaglott word for word translation, and should provoke thought.

To whom did Jesus refer **when He said**, “This generation”? The evidence seems to *suggest* that He had in mind the generation of His time—those living about Him as He spoke. The word translated “this” is “haute.” A few instances where it is used should help to convince how Jesus meant it to be applied here. Matt 22 :20—“whose is *this image* and superscription”; Matt. 26 :8 — “to what purpose is *this waste*”; Mark 8 :12—“why doth *this generation* seek after a sign”; Luke 4:21)—“*This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*” .It can be seen that the word definitely carries a *present* meaning—Jesus was not referring to a future generation.

In our Authorized Version more than one Greek word is often rendered by the same English word and the shades of meaning cannot be appreciated without recourse to a Bible concordance.

In our text the word “generation” is from “Genea” and it is practically always so rendered, but there are other Greek words rendered “generation” which have different shades of meaning. Examples where the same word is used as in our text are—Matt. 11:16, “But whereunto shall I liken this generation.” Matt. 12:41, “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it.” Mark 8:12 — Here the Greek text is exactly the same as in Matt. 24:34 and reads, “And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth *this generation* seek after a sign.” These are a few of many examples serving to show how difficult it is to make Jesus’ words fit any other generation than that of His day.

The 23rd, 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew are all related to our subject. The latter portion of the 23rd unquestionably is linked with the three questions asked Jesus by His disciples, while all chapters 24 and 25 are in answer to the questions asked in Matt. 24 :3. Parable after parable Jesus gave in answer, which was not completed until “Jesus had finished all these sayings.” (Matt. 26:1.) He spoke of many things, — the destruction of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the people, wars and rumors of wars, persecution of the saints, nations and kingdoms arising against each other, tribulation upon earth such as never previously was experienced, the second coming and the manner in which He would come, and the effect it would have upon Christians and upon men generally, of returning favor to the dispersed Jews as they assembled together in their own land again, while even the parable of the sheep and goats from Matt. 25:31 would relate to *signs of His presence in the Millennial Age.*

As Bible students we know that these events cover thousands of years, therefore it **is manifest** that all these things were not fulfilled **before** the generation of Jesus’ day had **passed**. The translation of the latter part of the verse appears to be at fault. The Greek word “pleroo” means fulfilled, and is so translated to give that meaning on all occasions where it is used, but quite a different word is used in the verse of our study. Both Young and Strong verify in their concordances that the Greek word used by Jesus in our text was. “Genetai,” a derivative of the Greek “Ginomai.”

A Greek scholar says that the meaning of the word Jesus used is “to begin to be,” or “to come to be,” and in support of this Professor Young in his concordance shows the word to be translated 249 times with the meaning of the verb “to be,” and 82 times “come to pass.” Professor Strong also lists many places where the word is used indicative of a *present beginning*, but not the thought of the thing mentioned as being finalized.

An example of great interest showing where the Authorized Version translation errs in the use of the word “ginomai” is found in John 13 :2. All Bible students know that supper was not then ended, but was just beginning. Young gives the word “to become” — and supper to become—that is, about to commence. The Revised Version and the Diaglott both bear out this thought, rendering it — “as supper was preparing.” As the translators erred in respect of the supper, giving the Greek word meaning of ended or fulfilled, so they appear to have done in our text. Two Greek scholars agree that what our Lord really said was—”This generation shall not pass till all these things begin to take place, or begin to happen.”

The long list of events tabulated by Jesus did indeed *begin* to happen to that generation. Within 40 years or so of Jesus speaking the words, Jerusalem was destroyed and the people’s “house” or home made desolate, and they were scattered throughout the earth. The further events continued to happen down through the age, (see Matt. 24:9, 10) and are still happening.

The words that Jesus spoke in relation to the questions of when the kingdom should come were intended to help all Christians right down the age, including those who addressed the questions to Him. To have referred to a generation hundreds of years hence would not have kept their interest alive, but to tell them that in the time in which they were living these things would *commence*, would surely make them thoughtful and WATCHFUL.

Could an event like the Olympic Games illustrate? A huge sports’ programme is drawn up which is to take several days or weeks to complete, and as the runners carry the lighted torch to the arena immediately prior to the commencement of the long programme, the official who opens the games might be heard to declare — Within the next hour all these things will begin to come to pass, or begin to happen. We would not expect the whole programme to begin in that hour, but only the *first* item timed for that hour; all the others listed would follow in order.

Let us now look briefly at the word “pass.” Professor Young says that the meaning of the word here is “to come, or go along.” Literally, our text would read—”This generation shall not *go along* (*i.e.*, very far, shall not pass right away) till (until or before) all these things *begin* to happen.” It is further confirmatory of this translation to review the words “all these things.” There is not the slightest indication that Jesus meant that all the things of which He spoke, in answer to the questions, would be fulfilled in the generation to which He referred. Let us note some examples where the same word “all” is used, Young’s concordance being the reference. Matt. 6 :33—”All these things shall be added unto you,”—as occasion demands or requires —the thought of progressive. Matt. 9 :35— “Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching,”—progressively. Matt. 28 :19—”Go ye and teach all nations,” — when or as you can, — progressively. So, in our text Jesus would not mean to suggest that one generation would see the fulfilment nor the beginning of *all* the things of which He spoke.

The question of greatest moment to His listeners at the time was the Jewish question. Jesus had just told them that while He longed to take Jerusalem to Himself and see it under His sheltering wing, it had refused to have anything to do with Him, and that this would result in its desolation. The disciple reminded Him of the magnificent temple, but Jesus explained that it would not escape either, that not one stone of it would be left upon another.

Jesus, a Jew, had kept the law perfectly and had taught His disciples to conform to the true essence of its teaching (Matt. 23:1-3) ; no wonder they wanted to know more about this foretold destruction. “Tell us when shall these things be?” That is the question the Lord answered principally for them—before this generation passes it will be so. (See Matt. 23:36.)

The accounts given by Mark and Luke in their gospels, in reference to the same three questions, are interesting to compare, and it is a real study to do so. In Mark 13:30 the translators of the A.V. have given a thought of definiteness that is not justified,—”Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.” The word they have rendered “done” is the same “ginomai” which previously has been pointed out means more exactly “begin to come to pass.” Luke is translated—”This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.” Again it is exactly the same Greek word.

In Matt 24 we have to bear in mind that Jesus was answering three questions, and many other things He said during His discourses were in direct answer to the other two questions—”What shall be the sign of thy presence and of the end of the age?” The fulfilment of the answers He gave to these questions lay far in advance of the day of these first disciples, and Jesus did not infer that they would be fulfilled in that generation, indeed not in any ONE generation at all. In Matt. 24:23-27 and similar passages the intent is to stir up watchfulness. Verse 42,—”Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” As Bible students we know that proper watchfulness would reveal the presence of the Lord when the time came, but it would seem clear that it would not have anything to do with any time feature suggested by a generation. (Similarly also with the third question, — “What shall be the sign of the end of the age?” The answer here seems summed up in Matt. 24:33 —”When ye see all these things know that it is near.”

Let us think again of the Olympic Games illustration. Some days of the programme have gone by, and a newcomer may say to his friend, I have not been here before, nor taken any interest, but I am enjoying it; it *is* fine; how much longer does it last? His friend takes out the programme to consult it and they trace down the events to the one that they are watching, and behold, there are only a few events to follow ; thus they know it is all but over.

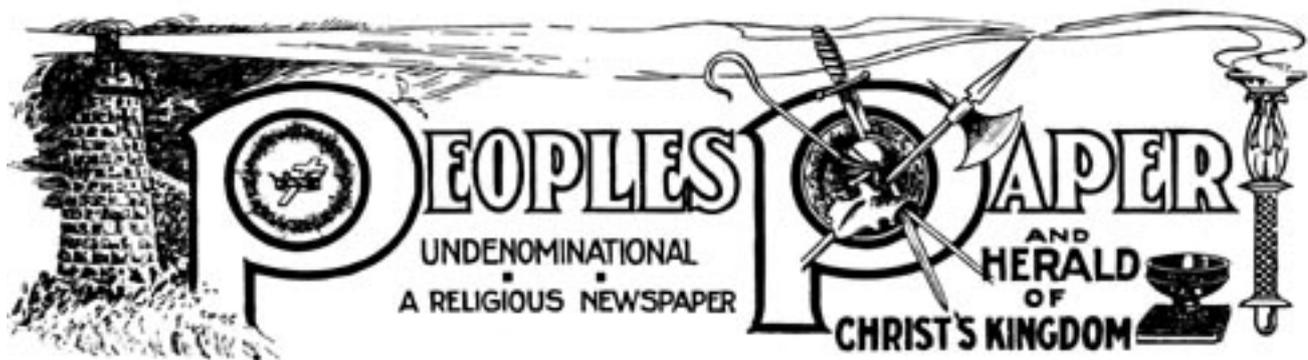
Jesus gave us a long programme in answer to the question, “What shall be the sign of the end of the age?”— Jerusalem sacked and the people scattered, nations rising against nations, tribulation upon earth never before known,

tribes of the earth mourning over the clouds of trouble, messengers accomplishing a separating work in the “heavens,” a fig tree budding again, as well as other trees putting forth leaves, and concluded, — “When you see ALL these things come to pass, know it is near.”

Like the Olympic programme illustration, the events narrated seemed all but over. The Prime Minister of Australia, during an address a few months ago, said that some twenty or so new nations have sprung into being in very recent times and all demanding their “place in the sun.” He said that five years ago it could not possibly have been realised that this would occur in such magnitude, nor have we seen the end of it yet. He forecast that as many as 20 more will arise shortly. So, we see not only the “fig tree” but ALL the trees putting forth “leaves.”

Does it not seem that in our text Jesus intimated that the *initial events* in connection with the three questions asked of Him would take place during the generation then living, the other events would follow in proper time and sequence, and when they had ALL been fulfilled, the end of the age and the Kingdom of God would be right at hand. The verse following our text (Matt. 24:35) seems as if to say, Not one iota of all that I have said shall fail. All I have stated in connection with the whole three questions will come to pass. To all the interested ones who pay proper attention, I have given quite sufficient information. All that any have to do to understand and locate events on the great programme is to take sufficient cognisance of what I have told you—WATCH.

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**Are You Fearful of World Conditions Today?**

**Have You Heard of the Gospel of Hope?**

THIS subject, we feel, is both timely and important. All people who are fully aware of the true condition of world affairs today cannot be otherwise than concerned with the trend of events. Indeed, those people who are best qualified to assess world conditions, the great scientists of our day, are the most concerned, because they know the possibilities of the weapons already manufactured. We repeat —They know the possibility of the destruction which could be caused by the atom and hydrogen bombs already in possession of the two main world powers today. Therefore, if we were looking to these main world powers today and depending upon them to give some reasonable assurance that they will liquidate their stocks of these terrible bombs, we truly would have every reason to be fearful, for time and again conferences on the highest level have failed to give any hope of agreement. Therefore, persons who ignore world conditions today, and use the oft-repeated expression—“All that we see today is just history repeating itself, and the world will right itself within a reasonable time”—are surely like the ostrich, which hides its head in the sand and thinks that all danger will pass when it cannot see the danger approaching.

Our Lord referred to conditions existing today in His words in Luke 21 :25, 26, — “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity ; the sea and the waves roaring.” We know that the reference to the sun, moon and stars is actually symbolic, and yet, some years ago there was a literal fulfilment in the darkening of the sun and moon and falling of stars from the heavens. It seemed as though the Lord was giving a guide to awaken men to the approaching Second Advent. People at that time were so impressed that many were down on their knees praying, because they thought the end of the world was coming. But there is also a symbolic fulfilment, and the portion of the verse to which we particularly refer is that there shall be great distress,— “On the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.”

It is interesting to note that the Greek word from which our English word “perplexity” is translated, means “to have no way out,” “a quandary.” Isn’t that condition revealed throughout the world today amongst the greatest thinkers of our time? There is no way out for human minds today; all men’s plans to provide a solution to earth’s problems have failed. Mankind is truly in a quandary. And the Lord designs that as there is no way out by their own means, this shall bring about the greatest humbling of the human family ever experienced in the 6,000 years of human history since the

creation of our first parents.

We see the effect of this great perplexity, this no way out, in verse 26 of Luke 21. “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.” We notice that our Lord’s words apply to men generally, — “Men’s hearts failing them for fear.” That is, men of the world. Having only worldly minds and hence worldly knowledge, there is certainly no discernible way out, and the Lord intends that there will be absolutely no way out for man himself to engineer. Only by such a lesson will mankind as a whole seek for the Lord’s remedy for a world gone mad with selfishness through disobedience to our loving Creator. God expects and desires the world to look for. His remedy when the opportunity is given to all, in His own due time.

A connecting passage of Scripture to the one just mentioned in Luke 21, is found in Matt. 24:21, 22, from our Lord’s wonderful prophecy. “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” How pleased we are that the Lord added those few words—”No, nor ever shall be”! They remind us of the statement of the prophet Nahum 1 :9—”What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end; affliction shall not rise up the second time.” That is why the Lord said there would never again be such a time of trouble, because this is to be a lasting lesson to humanity. All who will not learn obedience out of this experience and the Kingdom to follow, will be unworthy of life and will be cut off in the Second Death, from which there will be no resurrection. So “affliction shall not rise up the second time.” How thankful we are that the Lord did say, “No, nor ever shall be” regarding such a time of trouble. This surely is of great consolation to those who are able to accept and appreciate it.

In Matt. 24:22 the words occur, “and except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.” We see in these words of Jesus the possibility which the great men of the world fear; that is, the complete destruction of the human race, if there were no intervention. But Jesus said, there would be an intervention, a shortening of the days of the great tribulation, particularly for the elect’s sake, and generally so that all flesh would not be destroyed.

What did our Lord mean in this verse 22 when He said, “But for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened”? In this same chapter, we have two further references to the elect, in verses 24 and 31, the last mentioned verse reading—”And he shall send his angels with a great trumpet (proclamation of truth), and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven (religious heavens) to the other.” We believe that this shortening of the days of trouble for the elect’s sake has reference to the holding back of the trouble in different periods at the end of the age. In the end of the Gospel Age, when the harvest work of gathering the elect is in full swing, a certain shortening of the time of trouble is going on for the elect’s sake in particular, and also in a general sense so that all flesh shall not be destroyed.

We have a helpful text in Rev. 7:1-3. This passage also tells us about holding back the winds of trouble for the elect’s sake. The “earth, the sea and the trees” are symbols of the earth representing earthly society, the sea representing the masses of humanity, and the trees representing the nations at large. “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” This is a wonderfully enlightening Scripture. We can see that this prophecy, given so long ago, is depicting a time at the end of the Gospel Age when, if the winds were allowed to blow too soon, they would interfere with the harvesting work of God’s servants, who not only need to be sealed in their hoar’s, but also intellectually, in their foreheads. They need to know in whom they believe, and why they believe certain doctrines of the Bible. They need to be fully informed of the wonderful plan of salvation—the hope for all humanity, as well as their own hope as Christians—because they are going to be associated with their Lord in the great work of redemption and restoration of all the families of the earth. Therefore, it is essential that they be well informed down here, and prepared to enter into the work awaiting them beyond the veil.

How important it is, then, that the winds of trouble are held back for the elect’s sake, so that the work of sealing the servants of God shall be accomplished. Not that the Lord will hold up His plan for any dilatory disciple, but God has evidently set aside a certain time for the complete development of His servants, and none of the earthly events or forces can in the least interfere with this most important feature of God’s Plan.

Turning to Psa. 46:10, we note the culmination of the trouble upon the earth shown in this prophecy from the Psalmist. After describing in the immediately preceding verses how the Lord will make desolations in the earth, and also wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, the prophet, speaking for the Lord, declares—”Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” These words surely indicate that when mankind has had sufficient humbling experiences, when they have really been taught the lesson of their own selfishness and realised what it has brought upon them of utter desolation, then the Lord will say, “Hush, enough, be still and know that I am God.” With the hushing of humanity, the Lord will then turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon Him with one consent.

Do we not realise the bountifulness and loving kindness of the Lord’s wonderful plan, in permitting only sufficient tribulation to accomplish His great, wise purposes in teaching humanity that of themselves they cannot bring in a happy, peaceful society, and much less can they gain life in this dying existence. Following the Lord’s hushing of humanity, with Armageddon past, the wonderful resurrection time will begin. Generation after generation will come forth from the land of the enemy, and there will be no necessity for any to die at all from that time onward. No one will say to his neighbour, “I am sick,” even. They will be gathering strength and character as they progress up the Highway of Holiness to eternal life—paradise restored, as in the Garden of Eden. That small garden was just a sample of what the whole world will be like, at that time.

While men generally, then, have good cause to fear the outcome of world events, seeing they are depending only

upon fellow men, how should Christians view the world scenes today? Are they also fearful of the turn of events throughout this present evil world? At one time we may have had cause to be fearful of our Heavenly Father, when we wrongly supposed that He was acting as a great monster against the majority of men when they died. But having heard the Gospel of Hope, the Glad Tidings of Great Joy to all people, and not only having heard it, but having proved it true from God's own Word, we have an entirely different estimation of our Heavenly Father, who so loved the whole world of mankind that He sent His beloved Son to be the Saviour of all the willing and obedient of the human family when they have a full opportunity for salvation.

One Scripture that has helped many to clear away the great errors and misunderstandings respecting our loving Heavenly Father is the statement in Isa. 29 :13. "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their *fear* toward me is *taught by the precept of men*." Yes, the God-dishonouring doctrine of eternal torment, which still causes many to be fearful of God, is really man-made, and this is more and more manifest to all who investigate God's Word and His dealings with generations of the human family from the days of Adam and Eve.

Some people may say, but God did send a flood of waters in the days of Noah and destroyed most of the human race. Yes, that is true, but it was because mankind had become so corrupted by inter-mingling with the fallen angels that it was essential to start the human race again with uncontaminated stock, with righteous Noah and his family. (See Gen. 6:9; 7:7, 15, 16.) After Noah and his family, and all the animals had entered the Ark we note—"And the Lord shut him in." The Lord shut the door. And do you know that the Ark had no rudder, no way to steer it? Can you imagine anyone building a ship today without a rudder? Why didn't Noah put a rudder on the Ark? The Lord made no provision in His plans for it. That meant Noah was completely in the hands of God. Isn't that a lovely example for us today? Noah in the Ark without a rudder, and it was the Lord Himself who guided and steered the Ark throughout *all* those days of the Flood, and finally directed it to Mount Ararat. Isn't that a wonderful example of faith?

That is also a lovely picture of the Christian being in the Ark, Christ Jesus, of allowing the Lord to steer our barque, as it were, in full confidence and trust, without fear. We should not be over-concerned, but rather commit our lives into the care of God, just as Noah did. If we do that, we shall be saved so much of the struggles and perplexities of life.

After the Flood, Noah and his family and all the living creatures from the Ark settled down to a new life, and the words of Gen. 9:1 state—"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." And further,—"*and I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth, And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.*" (Gen. 9: 11, 13, 14, 16.)

Isn't that a lovely promise again? Whenever we see a rainbow in the sky, doesn't it remind us of the sign which God gave to Noah? And there is much more in that symbol, for Christians. The dark clouds are encircling the earth today, but the bow is always in the cloud for true Christians. The Lord's people know that the clouds are for a particular purpose. Yes, in God's plan it is essential that there be cloudy experiences, and it is essential that Christians are able to trust God through all things. They know that the darkest hour is very often just before the morning is due to break. "Joy cometh in the morning" after weeping endures for a night. "The bow shall be in the cloud." This is surely a wonderful thought for us; haven't we found it so, as we have taken our pleas to the Lord, seeking His guidance and blessing? We surely have.

In Psa. 97:2 we read,—"*Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*" Then the psalm goes on to show the passing of the heavens and earth, because judgment and righteousness are the habitation of His throne. It is required of God that the present order shall pass away, because He has a much better order prepared to take the place of the present one. (See also verses 9-12.) Yes, "*light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.*" Once we become acquainted with the righteous plan of God our outlook upon life is altered completely. We are not viewing the world at large and wondering which government is going to be installed in the various countries. It does not matter in the slightest which government is operating in this or other lands'. Light is sown for the righteous, the light of the Lord, the light of truth, and gladness for the upright in heart. And who can fail to be glad when they see the righteous judgments of God taking place in the earth? Righteous judgment is the habitation of His throne. It would not be right for God to allow this present order to go on one day longer than it will serve His purpose. God is going to bring it down, because He stands for righteousness and judgment, and He will eliminate all the unrighteousness abroad in the earth, in the greatest time of trouble ever known. But the outcome will mean great blessings for the obedient of humanity. That is why those who can see this rejoice in *the* Lord, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness, for His holiness will be established from one end of the earth to the other when this present order is wiped away forever, and the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He is Governor among the nations.

We call to mind the message of Moses, inspired by the Lord, as Israel was approaching the Red Sea, as found in Exod. 14:13, 14,—"*And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today ; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.*" What .a lovely message from Moses! "Stand still, and •see the salvation of God." Very often, dear friends, if we would only stand still and listen to the Lord, arid wait upon Him we, too, would be saved from many troubles that are the result of hustling and bristling and getting excited in connection with the experiences along the Christian way. The One whom Moses typified desires us to fear not, but to trust Him

fully for the great salvation promised in His Word.

Lovely words of consolation and assurance come to us also from the Shepherd Psalm, Psa. 23. In the opening verses we have David depicted as looking up to the great God above, he himself a sheep in the fold, knowing the love of the Shepherd and His care for the sheep, and knowing the Heavenly Shepherd was acting as he himself endeavoured to act in regard to his own flock of sheep. So he says, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. . . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We are all walking through the valley of the shadow of death! Death overshadows us, but the Good Shepherd has given His life for the sheep, and for all mankind as well. Therefore David says, "I will fear no evil." You know, it takes something, doesn't it, to fulfil those words,— "I will fear *no evil*." No evil of any kind? Yes, that is what we really have to get down to. Sometimes it is the little things that trip us up, quite imperceptibly ; little things that get under the skin, so to speak. They are irritating, and sometimes we forget our contact with the Lord, the source of our strength and help in every time of need. We should, we must learn to look more to our Great Shepherd. "The Lord is MY shepherd." That is absolutely personal; "I shall *not want*; I will *fear no evil*," is the wonderful assurance we need to keep before us always.

The Psalmist, again, speaking for the David class, God's people of the present time, says in Psa. 46,— "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." The removing of the earth means the desolation of this order of things. The mountains carried into the midst of the sea means the kingdoms of this world being overthrown by the masses of humanity rising up against the governments. This is to take place for the removal of the present order, to make way for the kingdom of Christ. Verses 4 and 5 of this 46th Psalm help us to see why we need not fear. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high. God is in the midst of her ; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early." And what is the city of God? It is God's people on the earth. God delights to dwell *in* His people (tabernacles of the most high), and this river of truth flows into their hearts and gives them confidence and trust and abiding peace and rest through every experience, so long as they are completely abiding and trusting in the great God who is their refuge and strength—surely their "very present help in trouble."

Outstanding amongst the messages of hope in the New Testament is that proclaimed by the angels at the birth of our dear Redeemer. It does us good not only at Christmas time, but repeatedly, to call to mind this message in Luke 2:10, 11. We know that this message was given to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. What an inspiration it must have been to those of right heart condition at that time! And the angel said unto them, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." These tidings of great joy are going to be to ALL PEOPLE in the resurrection day. Thousands upon thousands had gone into the grave, even then. The good tidings will be *good news* to them, just as much as to those who have lived in the two thousand years since. No one will be overlooked in God's wonderful plan of redemption. The restitution chapter of Isaiah 35 is in full agreement,— "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, *Be strong, fear not*; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." (Isa. 35:4.)

The words of Jesus in Matthew 10, spoken to His disciples, come to us with very great meaning,— "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matt. 10:28-31.) At that time there were various sacrifices made to the Lord; some people were not able to bring a lamb, some brought even a small amount of flour. Even birds were offered in sacrifice. It seems here, that the Lord was comparing the typical sacrifices with His followers offering themselves. "Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." God acknowledged the typical sacrifices, but the disciples of the Lord are much more precious in His sight, because they are walking in the steps of the Redeemer. They are showing, their love for the Redeemer above all else, as they yield their lives fully and completely, presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, a reasonable service. Our Lord's message to these is— "FEAR NOT, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Yes, God looks upon the devoted, faithful sacrifices of His people as very precious indeed, because yielded through the merit of Christ. Of ourselves we are of no account, but under the covering robe of Christ's righteousness all the little offerings of God's people are acceptable and precious to Him.

God's kingdom of two parts will truly glorify His name to the full, and we should surely *fear not* the process to bring this about. Over and over again through the Word of God the Gospel of Hope takes the place of all fear. Our Lord said, that when these things (evident world-wide today) begin to come to pass, lift up your heads and rejoice, for your deliverance draws nigh. So far from becoming fearful or anxious, we should rejoice, for the time is at hand for the passing of the present heavens and earth, so that the new heavens and earth may be established. God's faithful people shall compose the heavens, with the Redeemer. The new earthly order will be the means of bringing all the obedient of humanity back to the likeness and perfection of Adam in Eden. It will be paradise restored,— "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

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## **This Issue of Peoples Paper for October - November.**

This issue of "Peoples Paper" is for the months of October and November. The next, published in December, will also be for two months—covering also the month of January, 1962. It will be determined in the new year if our "Peoples Paper" will be bi-monthly in future.

## **Baptism Service.**

IT was a pleasure to attend a Baptism Service in Adelaide on Saturday, 9th September, when one of our sisters symbolized, by water immersion, her full consecration to be dead with Christ, and to follow in His steps. This means denying self, and pledging oneself to do God's will first and foremost. This is a very great privilege, and we rejoice with our beloved Sister, and we all pray that grace and wisdom and heavenly strength may be realised as this dear member seeks daily to tread the narrow way in the footprints of Him whose life was so fully devoted to the doing of God's will.

What a blessed privilege it is to be associated with our Lord Jesus Christ; first accepting Him as our Redeemer from all sin, and then devoting our justified humanity to be dead with Him,—entering the school of Christ, and seeking daily to learn of Him, and to be 'conformed to **His** character-likeness, so that we may be with Him in His Kingdom and share His great work of uplifting mankind in the grand "times of restitution" now so near.

## **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

## **Words That Burn**

(Continued from last issue.)

*(Reference to John 8: 1-11, which was used towards the close of this article in last month's "Peoples Paper", was overlooked. This passage, appearing in the Authorized Version of John's Gospel, is really spurious. While it is usual for the brethren to base all statements on authentic Scriptural passages, it was found that the thoughts drawn from this quotation in John 8 could rightly apply to the Scriptures as a whole. The booklet "Our Bible Translated", which contains an article from our brethren in U.S.A., states concerning the verses in John 8: 1-11—"A very interesting story, but evidently merely legendary." "Our Bible Translated" contains a list of the spurious passages found in the Authorized Version of the New Testament, and is supplied at 1/- per copy, post paid.)*

YOU remember the disappointment and dashing of all hopes at the crucifixion of the Lord. They had trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel. Instead, He was crucified, they had been scattered, yet kept in fearful touch with each other. The third day had come, and certain women of the little company astonished them with the news that His body was not in the sepulchre, and that a vision of angels had declared He was alive. The leaders of the little band ran to the grave, to find it empty, but no sign of the Master. What now? Two loving disciples at wits' end thought it time to go home. Cleopas and his companion set out for Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and as they travelled they were recounting all the stupendous events of the last few days. So engrossed in their recollections, so confused, so sad, so disappointed, they scarcely noticed a stranger draw alongside and ask them the reason for their sadness; what could be the subject matter to make travellers returning home so sad? They told Him, as they linked themselves with the crucified Jesus, that they had not found in Calvary what they had been looking for. "We had hoped that He was the one." To them the cross spelt failure. Then the Stranger, like Elihu with Job and his three comforters, commanded attention with His burning words, opening up the Scriptures, gently chiding them for their slow-witted understanding, — "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Later they chide themselves, too, — "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us?" It was clear now to them, that they *should have* recognised the Christ by **His** moving exposition of the Scriptures.

If some are slow-witted, surrounded with doubts and fears that blot out blessings crying out to be experienced, others are not so dull of hearing, or *slow* to understand the full import of burning words. We think of two, among many outstanding cases. The woman to whom Jesus said it was "not meet to take from the children to give to the dogs," when the distressed daughter of Greece asked for help on behalf of her daughter. Folk with self-respect could hardly be blamed for taking offense at Jesus' reply, likening one to a dog. This woman worshipped Him, pleaded for help, was refused, and more, was taunted as an outcast from God's favor at this time. SELF was so obliterated from this woman's love that such stinging, burning words as Jesus used left her unaffected. Love could not let her go. Like Jacob, who wrestled with the angel until the break of day, refusing to break the contest until he had been blessed, the Gentile woman refused disappointment. She conceded the Lord's description of Jews and Gentiles as being true, but

were there no crumbs for the dogs? Persistence in the face of such self-abrogation, an evidence of true love and devotion, won for her the blessing she desired for another.

Another outstanding case of instant appreciation of burning words is that of the man who was born blind. He needed no second bidding to effect his restoration of eyesight. Yet with his restoration of sight came troubles greater than when he was blind—disowned by his parents, opposed by Pharisees, and cast out of the Synagogue. Many would have preferred an easy pension to this harsh freedom, yet he loyally upheld the principles of righteousness, and no doubt his answer to Jesus' opponents,—“One thing I know that whereas I was blind, now I see,”—had a penetrating burning about them for his hearers, which of course they resented, the implication of their own blindness.

“He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (Phil. 2:7.) -Unless these words burn into the understanding with the power of the Spirit of Truth, much of their beauty, strength, simplicity and wisdom are curtailed or even lost. Not that He did not HAVE a reputation, but He deliberately MADE Himself of NO reputation, of no consequence, according to world standards. This rule of conduct was tested and made firm by the nature of His temptation, and, overcoming it, in the wilderness. No miracle would be worked for His own comfort or convenience, neither would He demonstrate as an exhibitionist—much to Herod's disgust, for that dignitary set Him at nought, of no reputation. After the wilderness temptations “the devil left him,” no doubt satisfied that if Jesus persisted in that way of life making Himself of no reputation, Satan had little **to fear** from such a **ministry**.

Let the Samaritans represent us since we all were outside of Covenant relationship. If the Samaritans could accept Jesus as the Saviour of the world, with little or no difficulty, so could we. But we propose to show that for the Samaritans to do so, nothing short of a miracle was needed. It takes more than “no reputation” to tear superstition, ignorance and prejudice from sin-blinded eyes. Consider the account: They saw a man, a stranger, a foreigner, sitting on the edge of a well, their well. The stranger is VERY thirsty, hungry, tired, travel-stained (have you ever travelled in the heat and dust?); to our eyes He would appear as a tramp — one of those folk with no certain employment, getting a little food here and there, as opportunity offered. A casual glance would suffice to suggest we must be on our guard. No one would think it strange to see another sheltering from a merciless midday sun. But the stranger asks a favor of you; he wants a drink, at the same time telling you two of His companions have gone to buy some food. There are more of them, and your fears are now really alerted, for with a second look and their speech you discover they are enemies. The Jews are bitter opponents; no Jew, however poor, would ask a favor of, or give one to a Samaritan (remember the parable of the good Samaritan?) No Jew would sink to such a level; two of the chief apostles wanted to bring fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritans. The stranger not only asks a favor, but is willing to share your cup. The sun's heat must have affected him or this is a deep-set trap to embarrass you. His appearance confirms your fears, too. Yet someone just whispered this was the Saviour, the Messiah. The King of the world, so poverty-stricken, so poor, so humble, so WEARY; could you blame anyone for refusing to entertain such a silly idea? It just didn't make sense; the meanest of kings has something to give.

In case we may be biased because of outward appearances, we should examine the credentials of the person who raised such pretensions. In the forefront is a woman. She is reserved towards Jesus. On this hot, summer afternoon she is not in quest of the Saviour. Her needs are simple, but necessary. Why does she draw water in the heat of the day, in- stead of, as was customary, to wait for the cool of the evening? She is either shunned, an outcast, OR she has cut herself off from the fellowship of the village. She denies the stranger a drink, no doubt because of past sad, similar experiences that left her the poorer. Denying the stranger a favor is to her credit, for it indicates a change of heart; she has profited by past mistakes, and wants to avoid, not encourage, embarrassing situations. She knows Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. If this Jew wishes to share her cup there MUST be some ulterior motive; her refusal indicates repentance.

The Stranger deals ever so tenderly with one of society's outcasts. He makes no charge, no humiliation, but proceeds to open to her the well of sin and misery. From this murky underground stream He offers her only a sip —“Call thy husband,”--and then, understandingly, opens a door barred with superstition and prejudice. She responds to His tenderness and is favored with one of those rare blessings—a personal revelation. She has no qualms now, no fears; her chief desire is to share her joy with kinsfolk who had nothing to share with her. But her testimony, from such a person as they all well knew her to be, concerning this Stranger whom they could see for themselves, complicated, rather than assisted the cause. This testimony doubly hindered an acknowledgment that here was the Messiah. No mortal eye or ear COULD assent, under these conditions and circumstances, that here was the Saviour. But for people who are prepared to overlook “no reputation,” words that burn soon flow freely to confirm faith and extend grace.

“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 (of no reputation), and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” “Be still, and know that I am God.” “Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.” “Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.” “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” “The day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all who do wickedly shall be stubble; the day that cometh shall burn them up, leaving them neither root nor branch,” saith the Lord (Mal. 4:1). Peter also speaks of this awful time as the “heavens passing away with great *tumult*, the elements of society melting with *fervent heat*.”

In this day of trial and judgment, the Redeemer declared,—“By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned,” and—“The words that I speak shall judge in the last day.” (John 12:48.) This looks very much like a battle of words —words that burn. No doubt there will be plenty of literal fire, more than enough, but the REAL destructive agent will be WORDS THAT BURN—TRUTH.

Satan will have his fiery darts, but He who is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, “with eyes as a flame of fire, feet like unto fine brass as if burned in a furnace, his countenance as the sun shineth in his strength, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,” will quell the commotion, the voices, thunderings, lightnings, the storm of burning words that will sweep the earth. And after the storm will be heard the “still small voice,” with a message of hope and life, speaking “Peace, be still,” and “God is Love.” What a wonderful world it will be when these words burn their way through to everyone’s understanding.

The Word of Truth has met *fiery* opposition right down the age. Its adherents have suffered “cruel mockings, scourgings, bonds, imprisonment, stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, sheepskins for clothing, destitute, afflicted, tormented, with deserts, mountains and caves for dwelling places,” and as if that list were not enough to daunt the most fearless, Satan has added a couple more—”fed to wild beasts, and burnt at the stake.” Rather than reason with God, diabolical experiences are inflicted on those whose chief and only mission is brotherly love. Yet, despite all this fiery opposition, Truth, with its words that burn, still conquers. The Spirit, the Word of God, the Word made flesh, declared, with full authority, —”Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall never pass away.” Like the burning bush, the burning words coming from Jesus mention life and fellowship with God to those who abide in Him.

“I have *given them* the Word Thou gavest Me.” Just think, Jesus commissions us to take unto ourselves His lovely words of life, to comfort one another with these words, for a word in season, how good it is; and to take heed. unto the more sure word of prophecy. Words that burn will fill us with burning words—burning out the condemnation of sin, fearfulness, superstition, prejudice, ignorance, despondency, sadness, etc., making way for love, sympathy, understanding, to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, opening of the prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim the acceptable day of salvation, and the day of vengeance; to comfort those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” These are the burning words He has given us, both to accept and give out. Excelling all this, including all within the compass of their meaning, are these few simple words, but how they burn—”I HAVE GIVEN THEM THE WORD THOU GAVEST ME.”

**“My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me.”**

O tenderness divine!  
O glorious love of Thine!  
That bids us come to Thee!  
Thy sheep.

Those wondrous tones we hear—  
And banished is our fear,  
Our Guide will never leave  
His sheep.

Each one Thou call’st by name,  
And each Thou lov’st the same;  
Thou gav’st Thy life for all  
Thy sheep.

Can earthly power withstand  
The might of His strong hand!  
Nay! we are safe for aye!  
His sheep.

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## Words That Burn.

(Contributed Article).

“WORDS that burn” need no fire on our part. Truth is sufficiently powerful in itself. It needs no emotional display, no thumping of tables, no fiery temper or dramatisation to capture real spiritual insight. Those methods the Apostle Paul says are “enticing words of man’s wisdom.” Faith rests not in the plausible persuasiveness of man, but in *die* power of God. This, of course, is the power of the spirit. If Truth, coming from this quarter or that quarter, from sage or donkey (Balaam had enough sense to recognise good counsel from a silly quarter), is not sufficiently powerful in itself to burn the understanding, anything one could do would add nothing to the power of Truth.

“I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,” says the Apostle, “not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom; not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, to consider the testimony of God.” No, we could add nothing to excel “My grace is sufficient for thee, for MY strength is made perfect in (your) weakness.” However well-intentioned one may be, there is warning against bringing our strength into the battle to assist God.

You will recollect the experience of Uzzah (2 Sam. 6:37), how he paid the supreme penalty for attempting to assist God in a human fashion. The Ark of the Covenant would never fall if it depended on Uzzah. If Truth is to be carried forward God has given specific directions. How can we uphold Truth if we neglect the specific directions? Had the Ark been carried in the prescribed manner it would not have been, in the cart ; it would have been carried by Levites with the aid of poles balanced on their shoulders. Truth promulgated in error’s “cart” is sure to claim many victims, acting with the best of intentions, as no doubt was Uzzah.

The Apostle Paul also warns of the many subtleties in and around us anxious to “corrupt the simplicity that is in Christ.” Sincerity of motive, speaking the truth in love, coupled with pure devotion should be our aim, with grace to add its blessing. Not SMOOTH words — smooth words are soothe words, and become smothering words. While the Gospel is the most soothing message one could imagine, we aim to show that it is also a burning message.

In Psa. 55:21 David complained of an unfaithful friend, — “His speech was smoother than butter, yet war was in his heart ; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.” And Isaiah 30:10 pictures the same deceitfulness of smooth words. Folk who prefer darkness to light will, for a time, be consoled with smooth words, preferring deceits and lies to truth and righteousness; preferring like the ostrich, to bury their heads in the blinding sand and refuse to see the issues of this awful day. In Psa. 39:3 and Jer. 20:9 is recorded a similar kind of experience felt by these two prophets. David says, “My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned,” and Jeremiah, also refusing to speak concerning the Lord, writes, “His word was in mine heart as a burning fire.”

Were they meditating on God’s goodness, which, like a flame, cannot be contained, or were they, like ordinary men, cursing grievances, sulking, stoking the embers of bitterness, fanning the flames of resentment, nearly consumed with self pity before finding relief in the secret place of the Most High?

Not *comforting* words. Here again, is there any more comfort than that of the Scriptures? If our idea of the Scriptures is such that we derive from study ONLY that which is pleasing, restful, comforting and consoling, etc., our Christian life will be stunted. The Scripture’s *comforting words* are also *burning words*, consuming words. “The zeal of thine house hath consumed me.” “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by EVERY word out of the mouth of God” (out of God’s mouthpieces — Jesus and the Apostles).

Moses was introduced to God at the burning bush, on the mountain that burned with fire. Israel, very appropriately, adopted the symbol “consumed but not destroyed.” And God spake to Moses from out of the burning bush. Words from such a source could not fail to be burning words — words that burn, that command attention, obedience, respect and devotion. Moses was an apt pupil of such an Instructor.

The Law Covenant was inscribed in tablets of stone, graven, BURNT into rock. Burnt in, they are themselves burning words, sufficient to illuminate any dark world concerning the requirements of perfect manhood. Of the New Covenant God has said that He will write it in the hearts. We wonder how it will be written? If stony hearts received the Law of Condemnation, will fleshly hearts receive the Law of Love that will burn away all dross of sin?

Job, the prophet, had some burning words, and he knew it. His one aim was to preserve them for posterity; he did not want them to perish with him, and his prayer was that his words could be printed in a book—a different book to ours. He describes the type of book, that his words were “graven with an *iron pen* and lead in the rock forever.” (Job 19: 23-25.) Yes, he wanted a red hot iron pen to scorch out in the rock certain words, and after the scorching the cavity to be filled with lead. Lead, you know, resists all weathers—not subject to rust or decay. With such equipment you could expect some very important announcement, some message for every generation. Here it is,—“I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

Of Jesus it is written, “They all wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; that never man spake such as he; that he spake with authority—not as the scribes.” The scribes did little else but study. Study was their work, their life; study, study, study. What did they study? By no means least included in their studies were the Scriptures. You could say they knew the Scriptures backwards. When the Wise Men of the East sought to know the place where the Messiah would be born, they were able to correctly name Bethlehem. This would have been a very knotty question before that event. The difference between Jesus and the scribes was that the latter were adept at quoting FROM authority, while the Master spoke WITH authority. If you concede this and then make the excuse that what was possible with Jesus is not possible with ordinary folk, we point you to many, many holy men of old ; also to those who spoke at Pentecost.

For example, Daniel (9:2) said that, due to his study of books, he was convinced that the time of deliverance for dispersed Israel was close at hand. He also understood with greater clarity than ever before (as you will note from his recorded prayer) that the dispersion was merited, duo to sin and rebellion; but now that the time was fulfilled, would God once more cause His face to shine upon the sanctuary? Had Daniel been as the scribes, speaking FROM authority, he would have had much knowledge of the contents of the books; he would have been able to quote chapter and verse, every text. Yet his understanding would not have been enlightened; he never would have had that conviction of spirit that enables one to speak *with* authority.

Similarly at Pentecost, had Peter been no more than a scribe, he would have referred to Joel 2 as a promise; he even may have felt competent to say that he was sure the promise would be fulfilled. But to quote it as “being fulfilled this day” was a different matter—this was speaking with authority, not from authority, or rather, not merely from authority. The same idea is behind that memorable occasion when Jesus read the first few verses of Isaiah 61 in the synagogue, and then added,—“This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” After declaring a few more truths with authority they threw Him out of the synagogue. Folk generally will entertain the FROM authority aspects of Truth; but dislike, oppose, and even hate the WITH authority presentation. The difference in presentation is quite easy to recognise. The mere scribes work to the pattern that “the Word was made into a Book” whereas the spiritually-minded confess that “the Word was made *flesh*”—*quite* a difference

At Pentecost the spirit was poured out in a symbolical manner — “there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat on each of them.” The Apostles were then the accredited mouthpieces of the Lord and the *tongues of fire* suggest their words, too, will be *words that burn*. Immediately they met opposition, accused with drunkenness, and later charged that their words were “setting the world on fire.” The truth was upsetting social arrangements; it was biting into the malpractices of the rulers in the religious world, in industry and commerce. As it spread it burnt into not only the Jewish world, but also the heathen.

It is good to consider the social relationships between servants (slaves they were called) and their masters. All have responsibility one to the other, but more especially have ALL a responsibility to God. We too easily emphasise responsibilities of those who enjoy most of the comforts and privileges of living. “And the poor have the gospel preached unto them” is a choice portion that none would exchange for all earthly riches, but that does not excuse us from pointing out the responsibility (or lack of it) where it should be foremost.

Moses (another to speak WITH authority) says of the rulers, or the king, that “he should not multiply horses unto himself, nor wives; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.” Those few directions that cover in principle so much that he should NOT do are incomplete without the things that he SHOULD do. He is to have a copy for *himself* of the Law of God beside him, and it is for his daily meditation. All this is for his good. But the tail part has a nasty sting that bites right into the quick ; these directions are to ensure that “his heart be not lifted above his brethren.” (Deut. 17:16-20.)

The truth burns wherever it touches on the equality and brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. Paul elaborated it so beautifully on Mars’ hill at Athens: “God made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and set the bounds of their habitation,” (Acts 17:26), concluding that all were the offspring of God.

You can burn most things: wood, hay, stubble: things on which you place value and affection ; houses, furniture, works of art, valuable books (in Acts 19:19 we read how they brought out their valuable books and burnt them after “Words that Burn” had penetrated their understanding). A man’s work can be burnt, too—in a few moments a lifetime of struggle and acquisition can come to nought. You have seen folk that all they can think about is their work, their job. Later, when, after fighting against leaving the job, the job now leaves them, the bottom drops out of their living ; nothing to live for, nothing to hope for ; no other field of activity to claim their attention. Yes, “the fire will try every man’s work.”

Now that we have atomic power capable of destroying every living thing, even the earth itself, we need equally as strong “burning words” to counter the tests of this time. “Heaven and earth may pass away, but My word shall never pass away.” And the “word that will not return unto God null” declares that “the earth was made for habitation; that God will make the place of His footstool glorious.” Man may try to, burn the earth, but he is powerless to burn words,

especially the Lord's words. But if we cannot burn words, words can burn us, for our hurt or for our good,—it depends on us.

This is shown under another simile, that of stinging, or cutting. Clothe the Spirit of Truth with words and it becomes sharper than any two-edged sword. Yes, Truth stings (or burns) us to repentance and forgiveness or to bitterness, wrath, anger and rebellion. On the day of Pentecost Peter's words so affected his hearers that it says they "were pricked to the heart"—exceedingly sorrowful and repentant of their part in the crucifixion due to their ignorance. They then asked Peter for guidance as to what they could do to show their sincerity of repentance. On the other hand when Stephen preached his burning words, his hearers were "cut to the heart and gnashed on him,"—in great rage and anger to destroy such a preacher of righteousness. The words uttered in both these instances must have been very powerful, burning, to effect such reformation on one hand and such hatred on the other. The *effect* of burning words depends on the attitude of heart of those understanding them.

Jesus left no written words (He left that to others), yet He is described as "the Word of God." No wonder He could declare, "The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life." He did not multiply words without knowledge. "Words of life and beauty, teach me faith and duty." On one occasion, the only occasion where the records say our Lord wrote anything, it was in sand. It was on the occasion when they brought to Him an unfortunate creature (sinner or sinned against (?)), and they with their charges thought to trap the Master. The record is in John 8. As the accusers were denouncing the victim of sin Jesus was quietly writing in the sand, as if He did not hear them. This galled the accusers and they persisted in denouncing the poor creature and asked Jesus for a verdict. Jesus left His writing in the sand, stood up, and said, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." He then stooped down and resumed His writing in the sand. What did He write? We do not know the exact words, but in view of His answer we can guess. The accusers were convicted of their conscience. All that He needed to write was one or two Commandments, which would suffice to smite any accuser. The words clearly visible in the sand seem to have burnt their way into the consciences of the accusers, and as they clearly saw themselves in the same condemnation as their victim, they were glad to be out of reach of such searching matters. They left, beginning at the eldest,—those with more experience and participation with sin — and including lastly, the youngest, — those whose senses were not so keen to discern between good and evil.

What a blessing that Jesus wrote His condemnation in SAND — erased with Heaven's first breeze. Instead of writing Sin against us, He endured Heaven's wrath in His own body to save us, not to condemn us. "With His stripes we are healed." "The Son of Man came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Until Jesus intervenes we excuse and accuse one another, quick to see the mote in another's eye. But when the Master steps in between us, "how are the mighty fallen." As He shields the sinner and asks where are the accusers, He finds they have vanished. Then His soft, gentle, sympathetic, kind understanding, —"Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." Another chance; another day to live; another life to live. "By grace are ye saved, through faith" — these words themselves will burn away the dross of the old nature.

There must be hard crusts that surround the understanding in some cases. Words that burn take a long time to penetrate, even when so much is at hand for our immediate advantage. Such a case was the poor creature at the "Pool of Bethesda," mentioned in John 5. In the porches surrounding this renowned Pool was a great multitude of impotent folk; blind, halt, withered. It must have been a sorry spectacle to see such numbers of handicapped folk, all seeking relief from their distress. The Outpatients Dept. of our hospitals provide you with a similar picture, except that with the largest number of outpatients they would be a small company against the folk here at Bethesda. Our case is a certain man there who had an infirmity that immobilised him, and he had been there a mere 38 years. The more active you are, the quicker the years fly; the more inactive you are, the slower they pass. A few years would have seemed a lifetime under such circumstances. But 38 years . . . "And served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had for her." . . . But 38 years under the conditions at Bethesda would seem as 76.

Let's take a peep at the "happy" band of unfortunates. Distress brings together people from all shades of life, and under certain conditions a common sense bridges many differences. It is mostly the reverse, and personal distress breeds a callousness towards others. Each thinks his particular complaint peculiarly "different," worse, harder to bear than brethren with their ills to nurse. In this motley company of unfortunates there was no spirit of comradeship; each was for himself. Here, among all places, another law than that of the jungle should have prevailed. There was no queue to safeguard the right of those coming first, being served first; nor was there a queue for those worst hit being considered first. The struggle for existence in the town, in the markets, in the labour force, emerges in the INFIRMARY. It is taken for granted that the right of the strongest among the weak should prevail.

Jesus comes among this unhappy group, unannounced and unknown. He takes in the situation, and possibly after talking with some and noting others, He has no bother to single out the worst cases here. This poor, miserable creature, bedridden for 38 years, with no one to sympathise with him, or care for him, would be the worst of many miserable folk to come under His notice. True, He met lepers, raised the dead, etc., but their condition pales in comparison with this man, living an existence under conditions for so long that amounted surely to living death. Jesus selected the worst case among many to bestow His grace and mercy, and we have an example here of how long it sometimes takes for burning words to penetrate the understanding, in some cases.

Were you in this unfortunate's position, would you have considered — "Wilt thou be made whole?" a burning question? That was the question proposed by Jesus to this certain man. Instead of the instant "Yes" that we think we would have been quick to utter, this poor chap did not grasp the meaning. To this remarkable question he began to tell Jesus his long history of handicap; the reason why they remained in this place; and the conditions of utter selfishness

that prevailed; he told Him of the isolation and its consequent loneliness, and the impossibility of expecting relief. His circle of complaint now full, the man arrived again at his complaint; it was so grievous. (Self pity excludes God's benefits awaiting enjoyment.) Jesus interrupted the man's ramblings with, — "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." These words burnt at last into his understanding, and *immediately* he rose up and carried the bed, the bed that for 38 long years had carried him. But another surprise was waiting just round the corner. An officer told him that it was not lawful to carry this bed on the Sabbath; this was a day: of rest; he must obey the law. The man remonstrated; rest for one more day, after 13,880 days of enforced rest? It didn't make sense .... perhaps his mouth did not utter the burning words that must have been in his heart.

**(To be continued.)**

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## Kept in Perfect Peace.

*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isa. 26:3.)*

THIS thought is very precious to us as New Creatures. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is to rule and keep our minds and hearts. (Phil. 4:7). We are to count the things of the present life as not worthy of comparison with the glories of eternity. And so the Apostle says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4: 17-18). When our minds are stayed on the Lord, and we take the proper view of our experiences, we can sing with the poet:

"No storm can shake my inmost calm,  
While to this Refuge clinging."

We have peace, no matter what the outward conditions may be. The trials and difficulties of life come to the Lord's people commingled with joys — the rain and storm, then the sunshine. They enjoy all righteous pleasures that are in harmony with their consecration. They learn to cultivate patience in trial, knowing that patience works out experience, and experience works out more and more that hope which maketh not ashamed. (Rom. 5:3-5.)

So, then, it is to the Christian that our text brings the assurance that when God gives quietness, none can make trouble. They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake," said the Master, but then we are to "rejoice and **be exceeding** glad." "Let not your heart be troubled" (Matt. 5:11; John 14:1.)

Our Heavenly Father designs that various kinds of trouble shall come upon us, that these may develop and prove our characters. It is part of the Divine Plan to permit us to have experiences of affliction. (Psalm 119: 67, 71, 75; 34: 19-20.) So when we see God's people in trouble or trial today we are not to say what God is against them. We are each to demonstrate our willingness to suffer according His will. We are to walk in His footsteps. We have the examples of the Apostles when trials and difficulties and persecutions came upon them; and the example of other saints all down the Age.

Trouble is not necessarily a sign of the disfavor of God. On the contrary, we know that "many are the afflictions of the righteous," and that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The truth will cost them something. Faithfulness to the Lord will cost them much. As the Apostle says, "If ye be without chastisement (discipline, training), then ye are bastards and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all. And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge, which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this shelter ; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. "And *we* know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28).

"What though my joys and comforts die!  
The Lord, my Saviour, liveth;  
What though the darkness gather round!  
Songs in the night He giveth.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm,  
While to that Refuge clinging;  
Since Christ is Lord a Heaven and earth,  
How can I keep from singing?"

## “Keep the Door of My Lips.

ONE great mark of character development is demonstrated by the control of the words of our mouths. How much trouble, discord and disintegration of companies of the Lord’s people has been brought about by word of mouth. The Apostle Paul admonishes, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” Viewing the Apostle’s statement, we see clearly this admonition is very applicable to many religious people today. How many there are who do injury to their fellow creatures with their words and use the same tongue in offering praise to God.

We know of no evil to which God’s people are more exposed, than to the wrongful use of the tongue. With many it is as natural to gossip as it is to breathe; they do it unconsciously, and many are the peculiar methods which the fallen nature will use in its attempt to stifle conscience, and yet maintain the of this channel, long after it has been driven from evil practices, which are less common, less popular, though more generally recognised as sinful. It will say, I do not mean any harm to anyone, but I must have something to talk about, and nothing is so interesting to friends and neighbours as something which has a gossipy flavour connected with it. Hence it is that the Scriptures instruct us, “Let your conversation be such as becometh saints.” “Let your speech be with grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

Those of the gossiping disposition, however refined their methods and words, well know that, so far from the gossip ministering grace to the hearer, it ministers evil; that the hearer is impelled by the forces of his fallen nature to go quickly and tell it further. Fallen natures feast on just such things, feeling the more liberty to do so, because they delude themselves that thus they are preaching against sin, and that in discussing and denouncing the said matters as being transgressions of another, they are mentioning subjects abhorrent to their righteous souls. How defective are the reasonings of the weak human nature, when the counsels in righteousness of the Lord’s Word are ignored. There is a wide scope for conversation among Christian people on the subject of the riches of God’s grace in Christ Jesus expressed in His Word, and in these things we have that which not only ministers grace to the hearer, but which adds also to the speaker. Such conversations shower blessings on every hand, so far as the new creature is concerned, and assists in deadening the old nature with its evil desires, tastes and appetites.

That is what the Apostle no doubt had in mind when he said that the Lord’s people should “show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.” And a heart filled with the spirit of love, the spirit of God, the spirit of the truth and overflowing at the mouth, will be sure to overflow that which is within, for “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” A mouth, therefore, which does injury to others, either to fellow-members of “the Body of Christ,” or to those that are without, indicates an evil heart, implies that the heart is not pure.

Another excuse for gossip about other men’s matters is offered by some who say they can talk about religious matters to those who are religiously inclined, but when they are with worldly people or professors of religion who take no interest in Christian themes, they must be agreeable and accommodating and must at least hear their gossip and news, and if they do not share in such conversation, they would be considered very peculiar, and their company would not be desired. But this is one of the peculiarities of the saints. They are not only to be different from the world, but different also from the nominal professors of religion. Their religion is not merely to be on the surface, and on one day of the week, and under a certain suit of clothes, but is to be of the heart, related to all the affairs of life, for every day and every moment.

To follow strictly the Divine injunction will indeed separate them from some who are now their friends, and who love things of the world, forbidden to those who have become sons of God, and who have received of His spirit. That the Lord intended us to know this, is evident from the fact that He foretold that the way of discipleship would be a “narrow way.” If, therefore, one’s failure to be an entertaining visitor, neighbour or friend is because of one’s fidelity as a new creature to the law of Christ — love which “worketh no ill to his neighbour,” either in word or deed, and friendships are lost on this account, then, indeed, such have cause for rejoicing because they are suffering a little for Christ and righteousness’ sake. The loss at first may seem heavy, but if it is endured for Christ’s sake in obedience to His righteous law of love, such will soon be able to say with the Apostle that such losses are “light afflictions” not worthy to be compared with the off-setting blessings.

It is in harmony with this that the Scriptures declare that the friendship of this world signifies enmity with God. (James 4:4.) God has purposely placed the matter in such a position that His people must take their choice, and lose either the Divine friendship and fellowship, or the worldly friendship, because those things the Lord loves are distasteful to the worldly, and those things the worldly love, evil deeds, evil thoughts, and evil speaking, are an abomination in the sight of the Lord. “For, as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” (1 Pet. 1:15.)

Saviour, I long to walk  
Closer with Thee:  
Led by Thy guiding hand  
Ever to be;  
Constantly near Thy side,  
Quickened and purified,  
Living for Him Who died  
Freely for me.

—C. T. Robinson.

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## **Greatest in the Kingdom.**

*“In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father.” — Matt. 18:10.*

PERHAPS it was the fact that Peter, James and John had been favoured more than the others on several occasions that led to the query connected with our text : “Who, then, is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” They knew, of course, as St. Paul declares, that the Heavenly Father is above all, and that next to Him is our Lord Jesus Christ. “To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.” What the disciples wished to know was, which of them would be greatest, most influential, in Messiah’s Kingdom, next to Himself.

Jesus, calling to Him a little child, set him in the midst of them and said, “Verily I say unto you, except ye turn (from this spirit of self-seeking which your question implies) and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven”—you will have no part in it, you will not be fit. Whoever would be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven should therefore become as humble as this little child.

A little child, unsophisticated, is ready to acknowledge its lack of wisdom. It asks questions, a thousand a day ; it seeks instruction ; it does not profess and boast wisdom or knowledge—it is candid, it is truthful. It is in later years that it learns from its parents and others, untruthfulness, pride, bombast and various qualities which it did not possess at first. It may have possessed the disposition to pride and arrogance and haughtiness, etc., by heredity, but at first it was guileless, and “as a little child.”

The Master’s lesson is that whoever would become a child of God and be taught of God, and be eventually developed as a child of God, for the glorious position in the Kingdom to which we were called, must become child-like—must turn away from all pride, from selfish ambitions and hypocrisies and pretensions. They must confess their littleness and ignorance, and go humbly to the Lord for the necessary instruction.

Any who refuse to adopt this proper, childlike spirit will thus be refused the opportunities of the Kingdom, for God will have none others—none others can be taught of God, they will not learn the lessons necessary, under the arrangements of this present time. Here then is the standard of simplicity and artlessness which the Lord’s people should adopt and should continue to allow to control them, regardless of their years and experiences. “Now we know in part”; we are dependent upon our Father and His instructions. We have entered the School of Christ, our Elder Brother ; He is our Instructor; we must learn of Him, and to learn we must be in this proper, childlike attitude of mind.

### **“ONE SUCH LITTLE CHILD”**

We are not to understand that little children, however guileless, are members of Christ’s Kingdom class, nor that the dear little ones dying in infancy will be members thereof. The Lord is seeking for mature men and women, who have a childlikeness of mind, a readiness to receive the Heavenly Father’s Message and who in gladness and simplicity of heart accept it. “Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me”; whoever are My disciples are privileged to be God’s little children, and thus to be My younger brothers; whoever will receive one such will be receiving Me. “Whosoever shall offend,” or injure, “one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were sunk in the depths of the sea.”

If some one were thus drowned in the sea, it would indeed terminate his present life, but it would not at all endanger or influence his future life. A future life, by a Restitution awakening, is assured to Adam and every member of his race. Neither drowning nor any other form of death could possibly interfere with it. But he who would injure one of the Lord’s little ones would thereby come under such a measure of Divine displeasure that it would affect his future interests beyond the grave, beyond his awakening. He would be held responsible for his deeds, even in the next life, in proportion as he realised what he was doing when he injured the Lord’s saints.

The Lord declares that His faithful ones are as precious to Him as the apple of His eye, and that all their interests are subject to Divine supervision. He will allow nothing to happen to these; troubles permitted to come upon them will be only such as the Lord has foreseen and is able to make work out some blessing in connection with their preparation for the Kingdom. But even this fact will not excuse wilfulness on the part of those who do evil to the members of the Body of Jesus.

We remember the persecution of the saints by Saul of Tarsus. We remember Jesus said to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” He answered, “Who art Thou, Lord?” And Jesus replied, “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.” In persecuting the saints Saul of Tarsus had been persecuting Jesus, but because he did it ignorantly, God had mercy upon him. Doubtless many saints from Jesus’ day down have been persecuted ignorantly, and the

Lord will have mercy upon those persecutors; but some of the persecutors have had such light, such knowledge, as to make them responsible; and it is of this class that our lesson speaks. Our Lord added a warning: “Woe unto the world because of offences ! It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.”

### **CUT OFF HAND OR FOOT**

Here the Master brought in a saying which has perplexed many. “If thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter life maimed, or halt, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; it is better to enter into life, with one eye, than that having two eyes thou be cast into Gehenna fire.”

Those who fail to remember that Jesus spake to the people in parables, and never without a parable, will be liable to stumble over these words of His. His teaching is this: If you have anything in your make-up dear to you as a right hand or a foot or an eye, that is likely to cause you to stumble and fail to enter the Kingdom, you had better cut off that tendency, no matter what it costs, no matter how precious, no matter how great a hold it may have upon the very tendrils of your life. Would it not be better to enter into life than to go into Gehenna fire, that is, destruction, the Second Death? Surely this is true. Having put our hands to the plough, having become followers of Jesus, we must either go on and be accepted as conquerors, or must perish.

There will, of course, be none in the Kingdom with but one eye, but the illustration is the same. If it should cost us the cutting off of some of our members, it would surely pay us to gain the eternal life in glory, even thus maimed, rather than to take the consequences of the Second Death, utter extinction. The lesson is that having begun as followers of Christ, and entered upon the contract and received a part of the reward, the holy spirit, the Divine favour, we cannot back out of the contract; we must go on to everlasting life or to everlasting death.

How careful the Lords' people should be not to stumble one another, even one of the least of the little ones who has accepted Jesus and become His follower!—is the lesson. To illustrate it, Jesus suggested that any shepherd losing one of his sheep would leave all the others to go and seek that one; and he rejoices specially at its recovery. So we, the followers of Jesus, should be careful not to stumble each other, but rather to remember that we are all sheep under the great Shepherd, our Heavenly Father, and the great Under Shepherd, our

Heavenly Lord, and that He has the spirit of loving interest and care which would go after the straying sheep, and that we should have this same spirit; and possessing this spirit, we would be very careful not to stumble or hinder even the least of the Lord's followers.

All the Lord's true followers are God's "little ones," and are subject to special Divine supervision, represented in our text as angel care. The messengers who have guarded over the lives of God's saintly few always have access to the Heavenly Father's presence, to make known the necessities of those whom they represent, for Divine Power is ever on the alert for the protection of these. Oh, how blessed the privilege of being children of God. Oh, how wise to continue so little, so humble, so childlike, as to abide in His love, and to be enabled to learn the necessary lessons, and be ultimately received with Messiah in His Kingdom, honour and glory!

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**Acceptable to God.**

(Convention Address)

*“Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” (Eph. 5:16.)*

FROM the dawn of Biblical history man has been a worshipping creature. The Creator has constructed man with the organ of veneration and spirituality situated high in the forehead. In all ages and generations men generally have been conscious of obligations to a higher power—the Creator—to whom they felt responsible for their words or actions, whether in civilized or heathen lands. As a result they have invented certain organizations, rites or ceremonies, or objects of worship to appease a higher power or Being to, whom they felt they owed their loyalty and devotion.

During the course of the Apostle Paul’s missionary tours he arrived in Athens, a city full of idols, and addressing the learned men there, he said—“Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious.” (R.S.V. See Acts 17:22-31.) He reminded them that they owed worship and obedience to a higher Being and their own poets had said, “We are his offspring,” and if that is so, “we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver, or stone.” These idols were unable to bestow any blessings, or give life, but the Deity whom Paul announced was able and would bestow enduring blessings to those who responded then, and in obedience to life-giving commands to all others in due time—in a day of judgment to come.

All this desire to worship and crave the favor and blessing of a Supreme Creator and Lawgiver stems from the first man Adam. After the fall of the first pair into condemnation through disobedience, two sons were born unto them, Cain and Abel, and in the course of events this desire seems to have been strongest in Abel. Both thought of offering a sacrifice to the Creator, and the recorded results are well known. Abel’s sacrificial offering was more acceptable to God than Cain’s. Cain’s offering of the fruits of the field was by no means wrong, but Abel’s sacrifice of an animal—the shedding of blood—was more acceptable and pleasing to God, though in later times, under the Law Covenant, some kinds of the fruits of the field were offered, and indeed were commanded by God to be offered.

Why was Abel’s sacrifice the more acceptable when both brothers desired to offer that which would have the Lord’s approval? Abel’s offering showed, perhaps not so clearly to Abel as Christians see it now, that the first requirement is that an offering must be made to establish atonement between the sinner and the Creator, through the shedding of blood—a life sacrificed. Those who study the Bible from this standpoint can be assured of understanding the Scriptures. Isa. 1:18 reads—“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Here the transgressor is invited by the Creator to reason upon the subject of atonement and reconciliation, whereby those under condemnation may learn how they can be cleansed and become acceptable to God again.

The atonement through the sacrificial death of another is absolutely the solid and only basis of approach to God, for by this one sacrificial act of His only Begotten Son giving Himself a ransom price for all, the righteousness of God by faith is now available. “Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.” (See Heb. 9:22-26.) All became sinners in Adam’s original transgression — “By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. 5:12.) Nevertheless, the Lord has said, “Let us reason together.” He has arranged a way to justly cancel condemnation, and cleanse the guilty.

No one could be acceptable to God while His law declared all mankind were sinners, for none were righteous; but God foreshadowed how He would remove this condemnation by instituting a Law Covenant with Israel. An important feature of that Law Covenant required the shedding of blood. Typical atonement was made through the sacrifice of bulls and goats; their blood made atonement and typically cancelled sin for twelve months. This was repeated year by year until the anti-typical sacrifice was offered by Jesus, “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

When the typical sacrifices had served their purpose they were done away; they were no longer acceptable, as stated in Heb. 10:1-4—“For the law . . . can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? . . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his

(God's) sight ; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God (justification), by faith of Jesus Christ unto all them that believe (Jew and Gentile) . . . is manifested," etc. (Rom. 3 :20-22.)

The following verses, 25 and 26, state that God has done this in a just way, not by excusing the transgressor, but Himself supplying the ransom price for all in Adam, through offering up His Son as a perfect man—a life for a life. Thus the justice of this arrangement honors God's own broken law. We have Jesus' words also—"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life (soul) a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45.) At the due time Jesus responded, — "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will." (Heb. 10:7.)

Jesus began this ministry by a public water immersion — baptism — to fulfil all righteousness, and we read — "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." (Matt. 3:16, 17.) There the Heavenly Father accepted Him as an acceptable sacrifice for sins, and Jesus proved what was acceptable to His Father. In the words of Paul, this acceptable sacrifice given for us, was "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." (Eph. 5:2.) Having finished the work given Him to do, His Heavenly Father showed His approval in a very marked way by raising Him from the dead.

Continuing His mission at Nazareth, Jesus based a sermon on the 61st chapter of Isaiah. Among other things, He said He came, "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:19. R.S.V. — "Year of the Lord's favor.") Jesus began a new phase of God's plan ; the acceptable year (or period) had come. This acceptable time of Jehovah's favor was also mentioned by Isaiah in chapter 49 :8— "In an acceptable time have I heard thee." (R.S.V.—"In a time of favor have I answered you." Jehovah is addressing the Messiah—His servant.) "In a day of salvation have I helped you." These words have their first fulfilment in Jesus. What is this acceptable time, or season of favor? Is it that all men everywhere are offered salvation from the time of Jesus' first advent? Some Christians draw this conclusion, and also say that there is no further probation after Jesus' return. When do these words apply and to whom? The Apostle Paul quotes these words of Isa. 49:8 in 2 Cor. 6:2. They apply first to our Lord, and since Jesus' first advent to the end of the Gospel Age to the followers of Jesus only—those whose consecration, begetting and sacrificial mission is acceptable to the Father. Then, this acceptable or favorable time will close at Christ's second advent ; hence, Paul exhorts,—"that ye receive not this grace (favor) of God in vain."

It is a mistake to say that these words in 2 Cor. 6 prove that no further probation will be granted to anyone after the Lord's second coming. The context in Isa. 49:6-13 definitely proves the contrary, for it describes the Messiah's (Head and Body) office and work during His presence and glorious reign on the earth. The context shows the first application of this chapter is to Israel's restoration under the glorified Messiah, and then to all Gentile nations — verse 6. There are four major operations here. Firstly, the Messiah (Head and Body) will be given to the people (Israel) as a mediator of a New Covenant. Secondly, "to raise up (margin) the land,"—the land of Israel—which has lain desolate for centuries, and she will again receive it as her heritage. We are already witnessing this. Thirdly, verse 9,—"**Prisoners go forth.**" We have already witnessed many thousands of Israel going forth from among the nations back to their land. Some countries still hold them as prisoners as in Russia, but Isa. 43:6,—"**I will say to the north, Give up,**" — will surely be fulfilled; they will surely "go forth." Fourthly—"To them that are in darkness, show yourselves." Not only those appointed to death, but those also in the land of darkness and the shadow of death (Job 10:21, 22), shall come to the light by a resurrection.

Although the Messiah will begin His work with Israel first, nevertheless, in verse 6 Jehovah says—"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you (additionally) as a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (R.S.V.). Yes, greater things shall be done by the Lord's anointed servant, even for all mankind. The Messiah is destined for greater things even than raising up Israel —given as a covenant to Israel, and as a light to Gentiles.

Verses 10-13 of this 49th chapter of Isaiah describe the times of restitution. "Highways shall be exalted," which means that every obstacle shall be removed and every facility granted for conversion and salvation unto the ends of the earth. It is an error to say that all probation will cease at the second return of Christ. Indeed, the world's salvation only then begins.

As previously noted, Isa. 49:8 reads—"In a day of salvation have I answered thee; in an acceptable time (or season of favor) have I helped thee." The Church's salvation is a special time of favor. It is called a "great salvation" (Heb. 2:3) ; and "a high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14.) This was announced by Jesus and the Apostles to Israel. "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." This message did not go to the Gentiles during those 3; years of our Lord's ministry; they knew nothing of a day of acceptable salvation and were without hope and without God, as the Scriptures declare in Eph. 2:12.

The point of time when this special salvation was extended to the Gentiles began about 3- years after Pentecost, and the account of this is given in the 10th chapter of Acts. The first believing Gentile was Cornelius, a pious man. From that time forward his alms and prayers became acceptable to God, and the history of this is given in Acts 15:8-11, where the Apostle Peter states that the Gospel had gone to the Gentiles. The Lord showed His acceptance of Gentiles by a miraculous demonstration of 'the holy spirit (Acts 10: 44-47), even as He did to Jewish believers, putting no difference between Jews and Gentiles purifying their hearts by faith.

Again in Rom. 15:16, 17 the Apostle Paul says he was greatly honored in having the favor bestowed upon him to preach this acceptable season- of grace (favor) of the high calling to the Gentiles through the power of the holy spirit. "That I should be the minister (public servant) of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the

offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified through the holy spirit.” The Apostle says here that he holds this appointment under (the supervision of) Christ Jesus. “Therefore I hold this appointment under Christ Jesus for affairs relating to God.” (F. Fenton.)

There is a reference here to the priestly office and service of the Jewish Tabernacle rites and offerings. The Apostle Paul represents himself as figuratively doing a similar priestly service or duty in connection with the gospel, so that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable to God, their sacrifice being an offering which the holy spirit sanctified. The words, “ministering the gospel of God,” are better translated in the R.S.V., also Weymouth’s —”In the priestly service of the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable.” The offerings of the Gentiles do not refer to their material possessions. No, but themselves —offering their bodies and all their powers in the service of God—in full consecration, a living sacrifice, represented by the Lord’s goat in the tabernacle offerings. This is the chief work in this acceptable day of our salvation —during this Gospel Age — when those who would voluntarily offer themselves in sacrifice —are acceptable to God through the merit of Jesus Christ, being sanctified by the holy spirit. Thus only can Christians fulfil the complete will of God in this their day of salvation. There is no other hope or calling during this age.

Now, have we proved or tested these things, as our text urges?—”Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” Have we, each one, proved that the Christian way is the chief calling of this age? Have we desired to enter in and fulfil our consecration, and experience the full measure of Jehovah’s “time of favor” and peace through a knowledge of Jesus Christ? Are we fully sanctified—set apart—through the influence of God’s holy spirit? Have we yielded ourselves, all that we have and are, to God? If so then you have some evidence, have you not? You have a witness in yourselves; God has accepted you; He hears your prayers; you know, too, of His guidance during your coming in and going out. He takes pleasure in doing this for His spirit-begotten sons and daughters ; He supervises your experiences—makes them work for good.

God’s precious promises are yours for the taking; you know these promises and your good hope cleanses the flesh, corrects the natural disposition and perfects holiness and reverence for God, (2 Cor. 7:1), this being also a witness of the spirit. If so, you are proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, and this shall not be in vain. The advice given in Psa. 119:9 is for the young and also the ageing,—”Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his ways? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.”

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## 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 tent-making. 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 realise 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 tent-making, 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 a day in the service of our avocations, how can such consider or serve the interests of their vocation, 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.

**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.**

**Holiness is the architectural plan upon which God buildeth up His living temple.**

**Spurgeon.**

## **Patient Endurance.**

THERE are two words in the Greek, which are translated by our English word "patience," in the New Testament. "Makrothuma" is one, which, in a general way, corresponds to the common thought of patience as we use it in the affairs of our life. It means long suffering, and is so used in the New Testament in Rom. 2 :4 ; 2 Pet. 3:15.

The other word we are to consider, and which has also been translated "patience" in the New Testament is "Hupnomonee." This word has a much deeper and fuller significance than has our English word patience. It signifies rather, constancy, the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing, patient manner, and thus represents an element of character and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. It signifies such a condition of heart and character as manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full submission to the divine wisdom and love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in due time.

Let us look to God's Word to examine this element of Christian character. In Rev. 3 :10 it reads, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth." In Luke 8:15, in the parable of the sower, we read, "That (sown) on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (with cheerful endurance, constancy). There we have the thought that to be of the fruit-bearing class it is necessary to do more than receive the word of His testimony, even though we receive it with joy, for those who do not continue in His word are represented in the parable by the stony ground which at first gave promise of much fruit, but when the sun of persecution arose, and the hard winds, bitter experiences, came, the grain withered because of lack of depth of soil. Our Lord explains that the stony, shallow soil represents a class of hearers who rejoice greatly in the truth but do not endure, cannot withstand opposition, but wither under it and become discouraged.

This parable goes to show that patient endurance, or constancy, is the final test following after the seed has been received and has sprouted, and love and hope and joy and faith have caused it to spring forth and give fruitage. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the grain may be developed and **thoroughly ripened and made** fit for the garner.

Our Lord Jesus made no mistake when He used the growing wheat to symbolise or picture the pathway of the Christian. During the growing stage wheat often needs checking, to sweeten and harden the plant and grain, and if the natural elements, such as hard winds and heavy frost, are absent, the husbandman resorts to rolling or feeding down to check the rank growth, to develop and bring the fruit, "the golden grain," to maturity — that for which the husbandman has long waited.

The other instance in which our Lord used the word is recorded in Luke 21 :19. He had just been telling His followers what they must expect as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds with Satan "the prince of this world." They must expect tribulation, opposition from various quarters, but He assures them that they would nevertheless be fully and completely under divine care and protection, even though the persecutions would be permitted to reach them. Then follow the words, "In your patience (patient endurance, cheerful constancy) possess ye your souls."

The Apostle Paul in Heb. 12 :1 exhorts, "Let us run with patience (cheerful constancy, patient endurance) the race set before us," in the Gospel. The race must be run with constancy if we would reach the mark, and after reaching the mark, the position can only be maintained by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having done all we may stand.

Why is it necessary that the Christian should possess this quality of character? The answer is : It is one of the

conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship in the kingdom. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth. The importance of patient endurance in the Christian character is also borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word, for on more than one occasion he places this characteristic above and beyond love (the mark for which we are to run). In Titus 2 :2, enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order, “vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity (love), in patience (patient, cheerful endurance).” Though we have all the other qualities, the final test of patient, cheerful endurance must be passed before we could be accepted of the Lord as members of the very elect.

Again, in 2 Tim. 3:10, respecting himself, the Apostle again puts this quality of character in place beyond love. “Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patient endurance.” If love is the fulfilling of the Law and the mark of the prize of our “high calling,” how can this quality of patient endurance rank higher than love? The answer would be that patient endurance does not merely come in at the close of the race, but is required all along the way. The spirit of cheerful endurance should be growing, and to maintain that spirit of love and devotion and growth in grace and knowledge means we must place our all entirely in the keeping of our Lord.

The Scriptures tell us that God's ways are not our ways, “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” Thus the trials and experiences we meet along the way are not joyous but grievous. They were grievous to our Lord, in His Gethsemane experiences. The truth has a refining effect for the followers of Jesus and they are therefore more sensitive to pain and ignominy than the worldly, who delight in witnessing contests of physical torture and endurance, and are quite willing to idolise and honour those who achieve success by showing a Stoic-like indifference to pain. Therefore the Apostle has pointed out that we need the whole armour of God that we may grow in faith and love and patient endurance, strengthened by the lessons of experience which He has allowed incidental to the passing away of the old order of things and the introduction of the new. The Apostle Peter has written to encourage and help us, “Think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which are to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”-1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

## Keeping Our Hearts.

(Contributed Article).

*“Keep thy heart with all diligence ; for out of it are the issues of life. (Prov. 4:23.)*

THE heart is probably the most important organ in the, human body, and the most industrious. By rhythmical contractions it drives the blood to all parts of the body, and if it ceases to work, death follows.. In view of this important function of the heart, the Bible very properly uses it as a symbol of our motives, affections, intentions and desires, and it is used in the Bible about eight hundred times.

The first time it is used in Genesis 6:5, which reads—“God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually.” The last time it is used in the Bible is in Rev. 18:7. This reads—“She saith in her heart I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” The reference here is to Babylon, the “harlot woman,” and she is depicted as being destroyed, but even while being destroyed she continues to boast in her “heart.” To be pleasing to the Lord we have an urgent need for the fulfilment of the Psalmist's words—“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” (Psa. 51 :10.)

As God's children we have been taught through the Scriptures concerning the only way by which we can have our hearts made right with our Heavenly Father. It is through His beloved Son who gave Himself a ransom for all. (1 Tim. 2:6.) “He is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2 :2.) We have therefore, accepted Jesus as our personal Saviour, and also the invitation —“My son, give me thine heart.” (Prov. 23: 26.)

Having consecrated ourselves, Paul tells us,—“God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. 4:6.) We have received of His spirit, for God having anointed us has stamped us with His seal, giving us the holy spirit as a pledge in our hearts. (2 Cor. 1 :21, 22.) Thus, it is our privilege, as Heb. 10:22 says, “to draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled (clean) from an evil conscience.” Then, if we seek divine assistance in times of stress and discouragement, being humble and submissive to the refining influences of God, we will receive that help and blessing of which we are assured—“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart ; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” (Psa. 34:18.)

A heart is contrite when it has a quiet, deep sorrow because of thoughts, words and deeds not in harmony with righteousness. To these, whose spirit is humble, who realise they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with the Lord, and dwell in holiness, He, is ever near to renew and give them\* strength. “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and V)” revive the heart of the contrite Ones.” (Isa. 57:15.)

The Lord is looking at our hearts, at the motives that prompt what we say and do, also concerning what we are not doing. “The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.” (1 Chron. 28: 9.) “Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” (1 Sam. 16:7.) We see, therefore, the importance of having our hearts, our motives, right before God in all matters. If we do something that is perfectly right in itself, something that would receive the commendation and approval of all around us, and yet there is a wrong spirit behind it, then it would not receive God's approval. Because it is difficult to discern our motives clearly, we should

go carefully and prayerfully to the Word of God which is provided for instruction and correction, as it teaches us to discern our intentions, the thoughts of the heart.

Heb. 4:12 states—”The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” The Lord has made it clear that we cannot judge correctly the motives of others. We cannot read their hearts; but we are to judge ourselves. We are to examine our motives in the light of the Scriptures and not merely guess at the matter. Paul says—”The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations (reasonings).” (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.) Our human imaginations, ideas and reasonings which are so very unreliable are to be demolished. We should also rid our hearts of anger, envy, malice, hatred and selfishness which are the works of the flesh and the devil.

These things are the legacies of the flesh which we have to fight continually, and are roots in our motives which the Apostle Paul warns us about in Heb. 12:14, 15. He says, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; 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.” Let us, then, dig out these roots completely from our hearts, especially in our dealings with our brethren, as 1 John 4:20 says,—”If a man says, I love God, and hateth, his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” Let us, then, love one another without dissimulation (hypocrisy), and forgive, as we hope to be forgiven for Christ’s sake.

How beautiful are the words of Jesus—”Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God,” (Matt. 5:8), and His invitation,— “Come unto me . . . , and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” (Matt. 11:28, 29.) We want our hearts to **be like His. Jesus** said—”If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23.)

In the Psalms we read,—”Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end.” (Psa. 119: 11, 80, 111, 112.) If we let Christ and His spirit dwell in our hearts, and let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, also sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, letting God’s peace rule in our hearts, then the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

While for us this “peace of God” is essential, so is the quality of love. Paul wrote,—”May the Lord cause you to be full and to overflow with love to each other, and to all, even as we also to you, so as to establish your hearts blameless in holiness before God, even our Father.” (1 Thes. 3:12. Diag.)

How true it is that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Mat. 12:34.) Our heart, then, should be full of God’s Word, and His love, His peace and the holy spirit, full even to overflowing.

Thou must be true thyself  
If thou the truth would’st teach,  
Thy soul must overflow, if thou  
Another soul would’st reach;  
It needs the overflow of heart  
To give the lips full speech.

Think truly, and thy thoughts  
Shall the world’s famine feed,  
Speak truly, and each word of thine  
Shall be a faithful seed;  
Live truly, and thy life shall be  
A great and noble creed.

## .Question Box'

QUESTION.—What is the antitypical *significance* of the priests wearing bonnets? (Exod. 28 :40.)

ANSWER. In the services of the typical tabernacle it will be found that the high priest who typified Christ, the High Priest of our profession, alone went with uncovered head when in priestly attire ; and that all of the under priests who typified the Church, “the Royal Priesthood,” wore head coverings called “bonnets.” The teaching of this type is in full accord with the words of the Apostle (1 Cor. 11: 4-6), for in the gatherings of the Ecclesia of the” New Creation, the Lord, the antitypical High Priest, is represented by the brethren, while the Church or Royal Priesthood is represented by the sisters, who, the Apostle declares, should likewise wear a head covering as indicating the same lesson—the subserviency of the Church to the Lord.

QUESTION. — What is the explanation of Mark 4:12: “That seeing they may see and not perceive and hearing that they may hear and not understand lest at any time they should be converted and their sins be forgiven”?

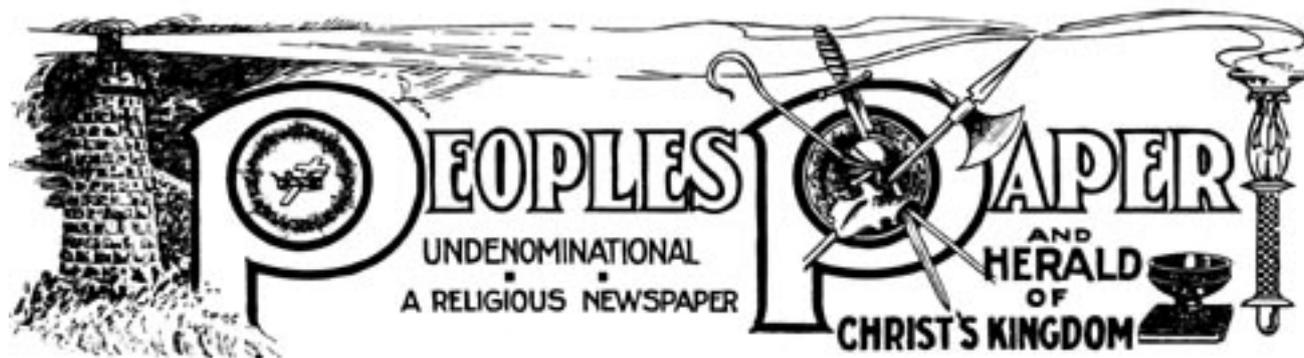
ANSWER. — To those who know only the usual church teachings, i.e., that this life is a trial time for all mankind, that when death comes the eternal condition is sealed for each and all, either for eternal life or otherwise, This passage would surely be beyond understanding. How out of accord with the gentleness and kindness of Christ to think that He would deliberately speak in parables so that sinners could not understand the way of salvation—so that they would not be converted. What is the Gospel for if not to convert the world ! Ah, that is just where the mistake has been. We had failed to understand the great Divine plan of the ages in the past; but now that we can see that God’s plan covers various ages during which certain features of His purpose are accomplished, the preceding verse (11) explains the matter. The Lord’s intention was to select only a particular class during the present age; the rest of humanity would be dealt with later, during the Millennial Age.

The gospel message was therefore delivered in parables and dark sayings which only those of suitable disposition and aided by the holy spirit could comprehend; “Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables.”

Thus by the gradual unfolding of Divine truths, God’s purposes are accomplished. “No man cometh unto the Son except the Father draw him”; “No man can come unto Me, except it were given him of My Father”; “My sheep hear my voice”; and to the Scribes and Pharisees Jesus said, “Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep.”

It is only those whom God has granted “ears to hear” and “eyes to see” that can at present enjoy the Gospel; but when “God’s elect” — the Church class—is complete, then “the residue of men will seek the Lord.” (Acts 15:14-17.) Then it is that Christ “will draw all men unto Him,” when the “light shall lighten every man that cometh into the world,” for God has promised that the pure language will be turned to the people and all will call upon the name of the Lord. (Zeph. 3:9.) The way shall be made so plain that “the way-faring man though a fool shall not err therein.” (Isa. 35:8-10.)

The difficulty has been that men generally do not see the purpose of revealed truth. The Word is God’s instrument in working out His purposes and selecting certain classes in preparation for the setting up of the Kingdom of Christ. The Bible unfolds its secrets in due time, and when necessary, in the progressive steps of the great Divine plan of blessing the poor groaning creation.



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## **Why Is There So Much Unrest In So Many Countries Today?**

ANYONE who takes the slightest interest in world events must be impressed with the extent of the unrest throughout the world today, at a time, when, humanly speaking, people really should be happier with this 20th century of progress and enlightenment — with all the labor-saving devices, and a hundred and one improvements in the living standards of the majority of people,—and yet unrest, uneasiness, disquietude, has increased to an amazing extent. Therefore, a reasonable question is—Why is there so much unrest in the world today?

We believe the Bible alone supplies the answer to this question ; and we believe the Bible alone supplies the remedy, the only remedy for the whole human family lost and ruined by the fall from the loving care and protection of our gracious Creator.

We note the creation of our first parents and the rich provision for their lasting happiness, in Genesis 1 :26-31—”God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” This meant, of course, perfection in every thing, and complete rest and peace of heart and mind for both Adam and Eve in this happy state.

We know not how long this Edenic perfection continued, but before any children were born to the perfect pair, disobedience upset their peace and rest of mind and heart, for God had to expel them from their Edenic home—out into the unmade world, to experience the fruits of disobedience. Genesis 3 tells us the whole story, and it is a sad picture, and must have grieved the Heavenly Father to see His perfect human creation cast out of their prepared home ; but God could not violate one of the principles of His throne—Justice. The penalty for disobedience — death — must take effect, and associated with the dying process was the loss of rest, peace and quietness of mind and heart previously enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. And the Apostle Paul informs us in Romans 5 :12—”Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, in whom all have sinned ; and so death passed upon all men.”

An important point to note in connection with the disobedience of our first parents is, that it was their own choice. Being created “in the image of God” implied that they must have a free will. Lacking in experience they were deceived by the Adversary ; yet they definitely disobeyed the God to whom they owed their lives, and they must suffer the consequences ; also the whole human race inherited their dying existence. We think of the anguish, the sorrow, the sadness of heart which must have struck our first parents at the death of Abel — murdered by his brother, Cain. Unrest and uneasiness of mind and heart surely came so quickly with the fall into disobedience, with God’s just penalty of death requiring to be put into operation.

However, there were some individuals who trusted God down through the early centuries of human history, and their lives were blessed with a good measure of rest and confidence, such as we find related of Noah,—”Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a just man and perfect (upright) in his generations, and Noah walked with God.” (Gen. 6:8,9.) The same testimony is given of Enoch in Genesis 5, that—”he walked with God.”

So great was the corruption in the earth in Noah’s day, however, that it was really a mercy that all except Noah and his family were taken away in the great Flood—to sleep in the death condition until the resurrection day, when much better opportunities for gaining lasting life on earth will be available to all.

In Abraham’s day we find he was a most outstanding “father of the faithful,” and no doubt he was blessed with a good measure of rest and contentment of heart and mind. Yet, at that same time we find that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God for their wickedness, of whom it was stated by the Lord, through Ezekiel—”I took them away as I saw good.” (Ezek. 16:50.) The Lord saw good to prevent further corruption amongst that wicked people, and in the resurrection they also will have the opportunity of recovery under much more favorable conditions, during the Kingdom Age.

At the time of the Jewish Age and the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, one might expect that the Israelites would never forget such favors of God—that perhaps generation after generation would have been influenced by God’s mighty miracles at the Red Sea, and in the desert. However, the record from the Lord, through the Psalmist is, — “My people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts’ lust; and they walked in their own counsels.” (See Psa. 81:8-14.) God did not force Israel to obey Him, just as He did not

force Adam and Eve to obey. Freedom of choice is the principle of God's dealings with all His human creatures — individuals and nations. Obedience to the Lord brings a goodly measure of rest and peace of mind and heart ; disobedience brings unrest, discontent, and sorrow of heart and mind.

With the coming of our Lord's first advent, Israel was subjected to a great testing time, as the Apostle John declared—"He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11.) Here, again, we see the principle of freedom of choice — even their own Messiah did not press Himself upon them, to do them good. No, God's gifts are too precious to be pressed upon any ; they must be accepted gratefully, and appreciatively. How pathetic are the words of Jesus after His ministry of 3 years on behalf of Israel, as He wept over Jerusalem,—"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.)

What a difference it would have meant for Israel had they been able to appreciate the One in their midst, their Messiah; He could have given them rest and peace, even amidst the imperfections of the fallen condition. But not so; they were not worthy of His blessing of rest and peace—they chose their own way of disobedience in rejecting their Messiah, the way of unrest, ruin and destruction, as described by Jesus in His prophetic utterance in verses 43 and 44 of Luke 19—"Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

However, at the same time as our Lord pronounced this sad message upon Israel as a nation, there were some—a little band—who knew the time of their visitation; they knew the things which belonged unto their peace, and to these, the Lord left His legacy of peace and blessing contained in His words in John 14: 27, 28—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you . . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid . . . . If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father ; for my Father is greater than I." (See also John 16:20-22.)

This great contrast between Israel whom our Lord had to reject, and declare—"Your house is left unto you desolate," — and His faithful little band of disciples to whom He bestowed His legacy of peace, seems a fitting illustration of the two main groups of mankind down through the centuries of this Gospel Age. The majority of mankind God has suffered to walk in their own ways of unrest, distress and struggle against conditions in this present evil world. On the other hand, there have been those, called of God, who have committed their whole lives into the Lord's care and keeping, even though they have endured hardship and persecution for His sake. As an illustration, it does us good to meditate upon the words of the faithful Apostle Paul,—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses . . . . By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the holy spirit, by love unfeigned . . . . By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report ; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:4-10.)

What a wealth of meaning we see in these words of the beloved Apostle, who was persuaded that the Lord was able to keep that which he had committed unto Him, against that day—so long as Paul also did his part in keeping his sacrifice on the altar, with his heart yielded to the keeping power of the Lord who had apprehended him for His service on earth, in preparation for greater service above.

But why should there be increasing unrest and instability in the nations of the earth today—today, when many like to boast of this 20th century civilization? Even back about 50 years ago, prior to the First World War, the claim was made that mankind was too civilized to go to war! Then the 1914-18 war was also declared to be a war to end war ! What, then, has gone wrong with the nations of the earth, that we find greater unrest today, and a greater number of uprisings in various lands than ever before in the 6000 years of human history? Just when some of the world's leaders were claiming that *we* were about to enter the condition of "paradise restored" in this 20th century, then the greatest revolutionary conditions the world has seen are enacted before our eyes. One of the greatest revolutions in history, and in our memory, took place immediately after the First World War in Russia, and since then, government after government has been overthrown throughout Asia, Europe, Africa, South America, etc., and there is no end to such upheavals, as we view the world scene today.

The Scriptures alone help us to understand the reason for the present-day unrest, the upheavals, the revolutions being enacted before our eyes. One of these appropriate Scriptures is provided by the prophet Zephaniah 3:8,—"Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey ; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger ; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." We note that God Himself is speaking through this prophet, and it might be asked what is meant by "gathering the nations and assembling the kingdoms," in preparation for God's judgments against them? The nations certainly were not gathered or assembled together at the time this prophecy was given by God. Even after Christ's first advent, when He had to declare to Israel—"Your house is left unto you desolate" — and the destruction of Jerusalem took place about A.D.70, there was no gathering or assembling of the nations of earth upon whom God would pour out His indignation. Indeed, one of the most remarkable things about the period of this Gospel Age has been the lack of progress and enlightenment amongst all nations, which could have brought them together, until about 100 years or more ago, when light really started to influence some countries. But in the last 50 years, and especially during the last 25 years, even all the backward nations have been stirred, and are stirring themselves as never before.

What has caused all this? Undoubtedly, the great increase of knowledge throughout the world, and which is a fulfilment of the words of the prophet Daniel, during "the time of the end," as we read in Dan. 12 :4,1.—"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which

standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.” God withheld the increase of knowledge until the due time to carry out His designed Plan of the Ages. Had the increase of knowledge come sooner amongst the masses of mankind, this, in the hands of imperfect and selfish human beings, would have created the time of trouble too soon. It seems that God desires 6000 years of human history to pass before He “devours the earth (earthly social order) with the fire of his jealousy,” and this devouring in God’s Plan is to be done by mankind themselves. So doing, they shall learn, once and for all, that apart from obedience to a loving Creator, no real rest and lasting peace can be attained in the world.

How vividly does the Lord describe coming world events through the prophet Isaiah.—”Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master ; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller ; as with the lender, so with the borrower ; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled ; for the Lord hath spoken this word ..... And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days they shall be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem and before his ancients gloriously.” (Isa. 24:1-3, 21-23.) How good it is to know that after the humiliating experiences of the time of trouble, the Lord declares that He shall reign in Mount Zion (the heavenly phase of Christ’s Kingdom), and in Jerusalem (the earthly phase of the kingdom), before His ancients (and through His ancient prophets) gloriously.

Our Lord Jesus also described the same time and events when He stated—”Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be . . . upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken,” etc. (Luke 21:24-33.)

The outcome for the whole world of mankind, chastened and subdued by the fiery experiences of the Lord’s indignation, is beautifully revealed in Zeph. 3:9, following the descriptive account in verse 8, previously quoted, where we read—”For then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent.” Happy day, indeed, for all the people then living, after which the resurrection of mankind generally will proceed, to the intent that “all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest,” for “the desire of all nations shall come.” (See Jer. 31:31-34; Haggai 2:6, 7.)

It may be asked, How do the Lord’s people view the coming clash of the masses of mankind? Knowing that God will permit nothing that cannot be overruled for good, they look forward with confidence to the outcome, as expressed by Paul in his comparison of the shaking time at the inauguration of the Law Covenant, with the greater shaking time at the inauguration of the *New Law Covenant*, in Hebrews 12. — “Whose voice then shook the earth Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made (man made), that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” (Heb. 12:26-28.) Truly, “Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.” “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.” (Psa. 119:165; Isa. 26 :3.)

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## The Institute’s Work

ANOTHER year’s work for the Berean Bible Institute was completed with the close of April, and we continually lift up thankful hearts to the Lord for His blessings and overruling providence in connection with the efforts undertaken in co-operation with our brethren throughout this land and overseas. It has been a pleasure and a source of much encouragement to receive the ready co-operation also of a number of the dear friends in the various States, all of which, no doubt, has been rendered in service to the Lord Himself.

As over past years, the work of our Institute has been directed mainly towards the encouragement of all who are sincerely walking in the Christian way, in appreciation of the wonderful Plan of the Ages and the truths pertaining to the harvest period of the Gospel Age, by which God’s people are separated unto Himself and prepared for the grand work of the incoming Kingdom Age, soon to be inaugurated. The message of the kingdom is also sounded forth as a witness to others who have hearing ears—those who are feeling after something really satisfying to both heart and mind, and which reveals our Heavenly Father as loving, merciful and all powerful to accomplish His will, in due time, in the highest interests of all His human. creation.

Our monthly “Peoples Paper” continues to provide the main means of contact with our brethren scattered throughout this continent and overseas, as well as reaching a considerable number of other interested friends. Appreciation of the “Peoples Paper” has been freely expressed, and we are indebted to a number of brethren for their contribution to the columns of our monthly, to whom sincere thanks is extended. Other friends having helpful articles suitable for

publication are invited to forward them along also, as convenient.

The publishing costs of our periodical have remained at the same high level this year as in the previous year, and with a full year of increased postage charges, the subscription rate of 6/- per year does not nearly meet the expense, a deficiency being required to be made up from the General Tract Fund. However, as in the past, quantities of the "Peoples Paper" have been distributed free among enquiring friends during the year, and it is felt that a good service is rendered in this way, with the expense wisely used in the service of truth. All friends are welcome to extra copies of the "Paper" for passing out to the interested, and the supplying of subscriptions for others who may be helped is much appreciated and is of good assistance in the work. One of our brethren in another State has recently contributed 30 half-yearly subscriptions to the "Peoples Paper" for the benefit of enquirers who responded to an advertisement offering -the booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave." In this way the message of the kingdom arrives in the homes at various intervals to feed the interest, and we know that the Lord will grant the increase as He sees good. The posting out of two issues of the periodical together does help to meet the high postage costs, and our readers seem quite satisfied with this arrangement. Some of our Melbourne friends continue to give good assistance with the proof reading of the monthly "Paper" and which is greatly appreciated, as is also the folding and wrapping ready for despatch.

Appropriate tracts for distribution are supplied from the General Tract Fund, and the friends generally are invited to keep a supply on hand for passing out as opportunities offer. The Apostle's advice to be "instant in season out of season" is good to keep in mind for all seeking to serve the Lord day by day. Consolation Cards are also forwarded to the bereaved by some of the brethren, and this is a service which can be undertaken by others, the cards being gladly supplied upon request. A message of consolation from God's Word is surely very precious to hearts able to appreciate it, especially when so little of comfort is available from other sources.

Public lectures have been continued throughout the year from time to time, the messages being arranged to serve the brethren as well as any new friends who respond to the invitations extended over the air, or by the leaflets distributed by willing hands, some of our younger members being quite active in this work, as unto the Lord. In this way new friends are encouraged to appreciate the Plan of the Ages, and to prepare for the regular Bible studies which, otherwise, can become rather confusing—it is possible for even very earnest enquirers to hear too much too soon, and be hindered from continuing in appreciation of the truth.

Throughout the year the witness to the message of the kingdom by the use of the radio has been continued, and the Lord's blessing has also been experienced on this feature of the work, for which we are very grateful to our Heavenly Father. To the many friends who have assisted with this witnessing to the Divine Plan of the Ages, sincere appreciation is also expressed. Without the generous co-operation thus rendered, in the Lord's providence, this work could not have continued at all.

While the response generally to the radio messages has not been as great this year as in former years, yet some very good inquiries have been received, and to these, appropriate literature has been supplied, with the result that a number have come to appreciate the truth very fully in the various localities reached with the messages over the air. Apart from the Perth area, the same radio stations have been used in Geelong (Victoria), Sydney and Brisbane, and two country radio stations are being tried at Maryborough, Queensland, and Moree, N.S. Wales, at present. While these country stations are very much cheaper, it is quite evident that the results are not nearly as good, pound for pound, in comparison with the stations covering the capital cities, but as friends in both States desired these broadcasts and are providing the expense in their localities, these trial periods are gladly undertaken, and we trust some good will result, by the Lord's grace. Copies of the discussions are supplied to all who respond to the broadcasts, as well as other literature and various copies of the "Peoples Paper," and friends able to advertise the radio sessions in the localities covered by this witness are invited to cooperate in this work, as they have opportunity.

The broadcasts were discontinued in Perth by the brethren there in favor of advertising suitable literature, and some response had been received by this method of witness also. Another of our brethren has had some initial success in advertising in suitable papers, though the interest following has been small up to the present time. This same friend has been zealous in procuring a supply of TV films on the truth message from the brethren in U.S.A., and at the moment is awaiting an opportunity of getting these accepted by TV stations for screening, should this be possible. It is surely good to use all available means of proclaiming the glad message of the kingdom, and all who are zealously using time and talent in the service of the Lord, as wisely as they know how, will in no wise lose their reward.

The General Tract Fund and Radio Fund accounts reveal the financial side of the Institute's general work and radio witness, and the voluntary contributions from our dear friends have enabled the work to be carried on, in the Lord's providence. No doubt the assistance rendered represents much of sacrifice of the good things of the present time, and all is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord Himself. It is often expressed that we know not how much longer the days of opportunity and privilege of serving the truth cause on earth remain with us, and this is very true. However, we need not be concerned, for the Lord is in control, directing His own work, and so long as we serve Him as faithfully as we know how, day by day, all will be well.

It may be necessary to curtail some of the radio witness shortly, as was expected some months ago, but further assistance was provided at that time, enabling this work to continue up till the present. We commit the future days, and all other concerns to the Lord in prayer, and request that the prayers of the brethren may also ascend to our loving Heavenly Father for His guidance and blessing to be over all efforts to serve His cause of truth faithfully, in the days that lie ahead, to His praise. "Therefore, beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.)



How wonderful the words of our Lord must have appeared to the woman at the well—"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4: 13, 14.) How wonderful also these words appear to us, especially after we have learned their real meaning. We are continually learning more and more from this water of life, appreciating it more each day we live, finding still greater refreshment in it as we continue to partake of it.

Those who have truly found Jesus and have made a full consecration of their hearts to God have found the happiness which the world is seeking in vain in other directions. They have found a heart satisfaction which is able to offset trials, sorrows, difficulties and disappointments, and are able to glory in the realization that their experiences are working to their advantage, proving them and preparing them for still greater riches by and by.

To gain eternal life one must embrace in this life the teachings of God's Word respecting His plans and purposes as we read in John 17:3 --"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Other Scriptures also refer to the value of the Word of God, such as John 6: 67-69—"Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Again in 1 Pet. 1 :23-25, the Apostle Peter speaks of believers as being begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Then he goes on to say,—"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word by which the gospel is preached unto you." This passage indicates the great power behind the Word of God—so great that it is like the water of life—it can and does lead one to the position where he becomes begotten of the spirit.

In Phil. 2:15, 16 the statement of "holding forth the word of life" is spoken of those who have partaken of the water of life, the truths revealed in the Word of God, and have consecrated their lives to God. The noticeable thing about these words is the exhortation to pass this good news of the Word of God on to others, by "holding forth the word of life."

The water of life is always refreshing to the Lord's people; no matter how often we turn to the Word of God it is always the same—it does not lose its refreshing taste. For instance, Psa. 23 :2 is appropriate—"He leadeth me beside the still waters." And again — "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119:105.) We can always turn to appropriate Scriptures to suit the occasion of our needs, for the Word of God is indeed the water of life to the Christian today, as in the past.

At the beginning of the Gospel Age our Lord gave out enough truth to satisfy the needs of His followers at that time. He told them that He had many things to tell them, but they could not bear them then. Now, at the end of the age, God's Word has been revealed to us, giving us a knowledge of His plans and purposes not only for the Church during the present time, but also for the world of mankind in the Millennial Age.

It is interesting to note that in the Millennial Age God's Word is also spoken of as the water of life. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. 55:1.) "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 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 . . . . And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22: 1, 2, 17.)

So, whether it is now or in the age to come, salvation can come only through partaking of the water of life, of which Jehovah Himself is the fountain.

## **Baptism Service.**

IT was the privilege and pleasure of the brethren at Adelaide to attend a Baptism Service on Saturday, 10th June, when one of our brothers, who for some time has been a sincere believer and follower of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, symbolized his full consecration to be dead with Christ by immersion in water.

Those who by faith accept Christ as their personal Saviour from sin and death are said to be "justified." (See Rom. 3:21-26; 5:1-11.) Such "justified believers" are urged by the Apostle Paul to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." (Rom. 12:1.) Baptism in water is the Scriptural symbol (see Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 8:35-38) of the real baptism of our wills into the will of Christ, to be dead with Him. (See Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12.)

It is indeed a very great privilege to be invited in this "acceptable day" (2 Cor. 6:2), to give our lives, redeemed by His blood, to Him who so freely gave His life for us. (2 Cor. 5:14,15.) We are no longer our own ; we belong to Christ—our lives, our wills, our time, our means, and all our powers of memory and intellect, and all our heart's love and affection belong to Him. What a privilege it is to be in this blessed condition — "in Christ" — (2 Cor. 5:17) ; to know that Christ — the spirit of Christ—is in us, in our hearts, and more and more controlling our thoughts and words and actions. (Col. 1:27; 2 Cor. 3:18.)

May God grant us grace to be faithful to our consecration vows, that we may "so run as to obtain" the heavenly reward. (1 Cor. 9:24.) It means self-denial and sacrifice of the earthly good things (Matt. 16:24), but what a privilege

it will be for the faithful overcomers to be with Christ in His Kingdom. (John 14:2, 3; 1 John 3:1-3; Rev. 3:21.) They will share in His grand work of assisting mankind to walk along the Highway of Holiness in the Kingdom Age, and to regain the original likeness to God, lost by father Adam's disobedience, but redeemed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is said of the Christ company that they "are baptized for (or on behalf of) the dead"—the dead world of mankind. (1 Cor. 15:29.) Happy Zion, what a favored lot is thine. (Read Psa. 116; Hymn 401.)

## Correspondence.

Dear Brother, — Enclosed you will find £2 in notes, which we wish you to use for the Lord's work as you think best. We listen to your messages from Geelong each Sunday, and find them most helpful, and are consequently very much blest. In this connection I would like to make request for Sundays, May 14th, and 21st, broadcasts — "Shall we know our loved ones in the Resurrection Day?" —and would also like next Sunday's message on Paul's "Third Heaven" experience. If you have put in print the lectures on "Cremation," and "Why is there so much unrest in so many countries today?" I would like these also, thank you.

I am trying to pass on the good news to as many as I can ; although delivered in weakness, we know that our Lord has said that His Word shall not return to Him void. Praise His name. With Christian regards and wishing you the Lord's blessing in your work, I am, yours in the Lord.

The Secretary, Berean Bible Society, — Enclosed is contribution to the society's funds. Thanks for posting the "Peoples Paper" regularly, and other interesting leaflets. We also find the talks from 3GL very refreshing. Hoping that you will be able to continue this grand work. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs, — Will you please forward booklet, "God and Reason," as mentioned in the broadcast this morning over 3GL station. Please find enclosed note for 10/- as a donation to your work, to be used as you may decide. Yours in His service.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends, — We much appreciate you sending us the "Peoples Paper" and please find herewith 10/- covering a year's subscription, plus some extra for previous copies and other literature sent to us.

We would appreciate receiving a copy of your talks on the subject—"Will we know our loved ones in the resurrection day?"—if same is not included in your "Peoples Paper." Thanking you for your messages. Sincerely yours.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs,—I shall be delighted to receive a copy of your discussion on "Baptism." Therein the broadcast gave so much food for thought, but unable to remember all it contained, I would love to have the copy on hand to read and study it. Thank you for such an uplift in faith in God. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest, — I listened in to your session this morning for the first time and was most interested in your anti-evolutionist discussion. Will you kindly send me your article on the "Age of the Earth" please? I enclose a £1 note towards the expenses of your broadcasts. Sincerely.

### **FRANK & ERNEST TALKS**

**Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.**

**Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.**

**Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.**

**Maryborough, 4MBI 8.15 a.m.**

**Moree, 2VM 8.45 a.m.**



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## **The One True Church.**

(This article is published by request).

THIS subject we feel is one of the most important presented to us in God's Word. Many sincere people wish to know which is God's true Church, and the words of the lovely hymn—"The Church's One Foundation"—express much truth respecting our subject, the first verse of which states

"The Church's one foundation,  
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;  
She is His new creation,  
By water and the Word.  
From heav'n He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her,  
And for her life He died."

In Eph. 1:3-7 the Apostle Paul made reference to a time long before the Church's foundation—Jesus Christ— came to earth to seek His holy bride. "According as he (God) hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love ; having predestinated us unto sonship by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." What a wonderful and amazing thought that is, that God had predetermined to select a Church from the fallen human family, by Jesus Christ to Himself because this was His good pleasure to do so, and this was formulated in God's mind, "before the foundation of the world." This predestination was of a class that would be "conformed to the image of his Son," (Rom. 8:29), and not individuals being predestinated in God's plan.

Does this make us feel important—we who are striving to be true and faithful members of this Church of God today? No, indeed! It gives us a feeling of humiliation in the sight of the great Eternal One who condescended thus to favor the children of men, without any attractiveness on our part, as fallen human beings. Sometimes we may wonder why God passed by the glorious holy angels in the heavens who had not sinned, in His choice of a Bride for His beloved Son—"the beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14.) But this was God's good pleasure, and the fact that He is able to transform such poor material into beings fit to be joint-heirs with Christ will demonstrate to all intelligent creatures the mighty power of our loving Heavenly Father to all eternity.

Let us now review to some extent the lines of the hymn already mentioned—"The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord." Christians generally are agreed on this point, but Scriptural references should also prove helpful. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians we read—"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"—and this was most essential to be established seeing that the Apostle had also declared in this connection—"We are labourers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." (1 Cor. 3: 9-11.)

In Matt. 16:13-18 we read of a discussion between Jesus and His disciples which is of much interest. After asking about the opinion of men generally as to whom He was, the Lord put this vital question to His disciples—"But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, being the spokesman, immediately declared—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus was very pleased with this answer, and after stating that the Father had really revealed this to Peter, declared—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell (hades) shall not prevail against it." It is of interest to know that the word "Peter" comes from a Greek word meaning "a piece of stone," while the Greek word from which the word "rock" is translated means "a mass of rock or great boulder." So, our Lord was saying— Upon this massive, foundation truth which Peter had declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living

God,” He would build His church.

“And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”—against the Church. What could this mean? Well, Jesus Himself entered into the hell condition to ransom mankind, including His Church, but the gates of hell (hades), or death, could not prevail against Him, because God raised Him from the dead, from the hell condition, on the third day, commemorated on Easter Sunday. The risen Lord Himself declared—“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.” (Rev. 1 :18.) Likewise, Jesus told Peter that the hell or hades condition could not prevail against His Church either, because the same power of God would operate on behalf of the members of the Church, at the time of the first resurrection. (See 1 Cor. 15:55-57.)

The third and fourth lines of our hymn, state respecting the Church—“She is His new creation, by water and the Word.” This wonderful truth that the Church is a New Creation of God of this Gospel Age is shown by the words of Jesus in John 14 :2, 3,—“In my Father’s house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you.” Even though there were already many mansions in His Father’s house, it was still necessary for Jesus to prepare a place for His Church, because it is a New Creation —additional to all other creations even in the spiritual realm. (See 2 Cor. 5:14-17.)

Is it Scriptural to say that the Church is the New Creation, “By water and the word”? Turning to John 3:5 we have our Lord’s words to Nicodemus as a guide—“Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Jesus’ reference to the water seems to apply to the baptism of John the Baptist for the Jews, picturing repentance and returning to harmony with God, and thus gaining justification, in readiness to receive Jesus as their Messiah and Saviour. Grasping the privilege of justification, through faith in the sacrifice of Christ, “the Word” gives instruction for the next step, which is full consecration (Rom. 12:1), resulting in the begetting of the spirit, and finally spirit birth—to enter into the Kingdom of God. In James 1:18, we read—“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.”

The fact, then, that the Lord’s Church is a New Creation fits the meaning of the Greek word “ecclesia” from which our English word “Church” is translated, for it means—“A calling out.” How fitting are the words of our Lord in His prayer to the Father in John 17:6 —“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gayest me *out of the world.*” (See also verses 9, 14-16, 20.)

At this time when our Lord was commending His little band of disciples to the Father in prayer, He was preparing them for the time—within a few hours—when He would be put to death, and leave them in an unfriendly world, so that they may continue to be free from the systems of religion of the day, and thus form the beginning of God’s True Church when the day of Pentecost arrived. So Jesus gave them a parting message of comfort in the words of John 14 :27-29,—“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 . . . If you loved me (fully), ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father ; for my Father is greater than I.”

Even though these lovely messages of comfort were conveyed to the disciples, they could not but be shocked when the Lord was actually crucified, but with His resurrection and periodical visits to them during the forty days prior to His ascension, they gained confidence, and with the coming of Pentecost they were furnished with the enlightenment and guidance of the spirit in their hearts and minds, and were able to commence their ministry as God’s True Church.

After the recording of 3,000 being added to the number of the disciples in one day, we read in Acts 2 :47 — “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” No doubt “such as should be saved” for the heavenly calling; not implying that all others were lost forever. Rather, such as were being saved by the enlightenment of the ministry of the apostles, in addition to our Lord’s own ministry in Israel for 3½ years, the results of which were then manifest in the days of the early church.

From the Acts of the Apostles we find many stirring and outstanding events which thrill our hearts as we contemplate the Lord’s overruling providence in connection with His Church at that time, called out from the world. The Lord’s deliverance of Peter from prison, and the conversion of Paul are inspiring happenings, but as time passed on, we find God’s True Church being assailed by the great Adversary, with the Lord’s permission, for the necessary testing and proving of each member in this select company of the followers of the Master. Thus, we find that the Churches needed “confirming” and “establishing in the faith” by the apostles as they journeyed from place to place. (See Acts 15:40, 41; 16:5.) This reminds us of the privileges we enjoy today in our Conventions and regular weekly meetings, for undoubtedly these are the Lord’s means of “confirming” His true people today, and those who neglect these provisions from the Lord’s hand, when available, are likely to suffer loss. On the other hand, the confirmation ceremonies in some church systems today are of little avail, and have nothing to recommend them from the Word of God.

A most notable exhortation in those days of the early Church was that given by Paul to the elders of the Church at Ephesus,—“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the holy spirit hath made you overseers, *to feed the church of God.* . . . For after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch . . .” (See Acts 20: 17-38.) The faithful Apostle was seeking to warn the members of the Church against the attacks of the Adversary through various agents. Someone may ask, Why did God permit the Evil One to attack and deceive some in the Church? Undoubtedly, to prove the loyalty and obedience of those who had promised to walk faithfully in the steps of the Master, and doesn’t the same apply today? Yes, indeed ! This makes Paul’s words most appropriate to us, as well as to those entrusted with the care and oversight of the Church in his day.

As time progressed the Church of God comprised many sections in various places, just as it does today. It is

encouraging to read Paul's messages to the brethren in Rome, such as in Romans 16:1-5, with his exhortation—"Likewise greet the church that is in their house." We may ask, What is very noticeable in these records of the early church? Even when there were 3,000 added, and later 5,000 mentioned in Acts 4:4, do we find these true Christians erecting churches or cathedrals for their worship of God? No, not once in the whole of the New Testament do we find a record of such; they were too busy and active preaching the word, and any money they had was much better spent in the Lord's cause than on buildings of earthly materials. So it was — "Greet the church that is in their house."

Much to the point in this respect is Paul's wonderful sermon on Mars' Hill, found in Acts 17. "The Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." (Acts 17: 22-25.) Some time later Paul wrote to Timothy concerning — "The house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15.) Here we see that the real house of God is "the Church of the living God." How small, how futile is the building of material churches, temples and cathedrals, and thinking of them as the house of God! No, indeed — "The Lord dwelleth not in temples made with hands." (See also John 4:20-24.)

Let us hear the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20—"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify **God in your body.**" And again—"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. . . . will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:16-18.) Here, then, is the one True Church, the House of God, composed of many members right down the Gospel Age, and scattered throughout many nations — the Church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven. (Heb. 12:23.) It is not of much account to have one's name written on an earthly church roll; but when God dwells in each member of the One True Church, then, indeed, their names are written in heaven—in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 13:8.)

We note, also, that the Church of the Living God, is the pillar and ground (or stay) of the truth. A few lines on this point by a dear Christian read—"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 recognised nor recognisable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven. Its head and bishop is the Lord, its law is 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."

Referring again to Paul's message of exhortation to the elders at Ephesus, we call to mind Christ's words to the Church at Ephesus, as recorded in Rev. 2:1-4, particularly verse 4. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." What is implied by the "first love"? It means the unreserved yielding up of the heart, the affections, to God, when full consecration is made to follow Christ, even unto death. All true Christians have surely realised the thrill, the experience, of "tasting that the Lord is gracious" and yielding up their whole beings to Him. As prospective members of God's true Church all such must zealously maintain their "first love" right throughout their Christian life, so that their names may not only be written in heaven, but also confessed before the Father, and before His angels. (Rev. 3:5.)

As the period of the Church's history progressed throughout the Gospel Age, we find other shortcomings revealed by our Lord in His messages to the Churches. However, His words to the Church at Philadelphia, in Rev. 3 :7-13, are encouraging, covering, historically, the period of the Reformation, when the Lord gave courage to His faithful servants to resist the assaults upon the True Church following the "dark ages" of persecution. No doubt the words—"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth; I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it,"—meant volumes to those dear, persecuted saints of the Reformation period, and they endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

But the message to the Church at Laodicea, covering the last period of the Church's history at the close of the Gospel Age in which we have been living for some time, is one of reproof and rejection by the Lord, as shown in Rev. 3 :14-17.—"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; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.'" This shows the condition of Christendom as a whole, and God's true people, the members of God's True Church, are being "called out" unto the Lord

Himself, as further revealed in Rev. 18 :1-4.-- "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." All worthy of this name—"My people"—will hear the Lord's call, sooner or later, and come unto the Lord Himself, even all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 13:8.)

Our Lord's call to His people to come out of the confused teachings and worldliness of the Babylonian church systems is well described in Luke 17, by Jesus — "I tell you there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field ; one shall be taken and the other left. And they answered and said unto Him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." (Luke 17:34-37.) Here we have the harvest work described at the end of this Gospel Age. "Two shall be in one bed" —the creed bed in which many slumber. "One shall be taken, and the other shall be left"—one is attracted by the truth message, the other slumbers on, not worthy of the truth at this time for the heavenly kingdom. Also those "grinding together" or "in the field",—preparing food for sections of the nominal church, or in the mission field — of these "one shall be taken, and the other left."

“Where, Lord?”—“Wheresoever the body (the food, the truth) is thither will the eagles (sharp-eyed Christians, alert and anxious to know the Lord’s truth and His will for them) be gathered together.”

So, God’s True Church members are found amongst the alert, appreciative, household of faith, scattered here and there throughout the world, without any denominational name or standing, but with their faith and hope based on the foundation of Jesus Christ, and rejoicing in His teachings and those of His faithful apostles. This is the happy and blessed condition of all these members comprising the One True Church of God in readiness for their gathering Home beyond the veil — the Great Church Victorious—to reign with Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth in the grand Millennial Kingdom now near at hand.

Though, with a scornful wonder,  
Men see her sore opprest  
By foes too great in number,  
By trials sore distrest,  
Yet saints their watch are keeping;  
Their cry goes up, “How long?”  
And soon the night of weeping  
Shall change to morn of song.

’Mid toil and tribulation,  
And tumult of her war,  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace for evermore;  
Till with the vision glorious,  
Her longing eyes are blest,  
And the great Church victorious  
Shall be the Church at rest.

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## The Test of Endurance.

*“Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.” — 1 Kings 20:11.*

THE test of endurance is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect Church, the Body of Christ, is subjected. It is the test which gauges and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test. The Christian life is a warfare, and the above words of one of the kings of Israel to a boastful enemy of the Lord’s people are applicable, not only to every new recruit in the Lord’s army, but, similarly, to all who have not yet finished the good fight of faith.

The first gush of enthusiasm in the Lord’s service, much as we may and do appreciate it, may be but the hasty production of the shallow soil of a heart which immediately receives the truth with gladness, but, having no root in itself, endures but for a time, and afterward, when affliction and persecution arise, immediately is offended. (Mark 4: 16, 17.) Such characters cannot stand the fiery tests of this “evil day,” whereof it is written : “The fire (of that day) shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is.” (1 Cor. 3: 13.)

Therefore, says the Apostle Peter, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” (1 Peter 4:12.) All of the elect Church must be so tried ; and blessed is he that shall endure unto the end. The sure Word of prophecy points to severe conflicts and great trials in the closing scenes of the Church’s history. Elijah, a type of the Body of Christ, finished his earthly career and went up by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire—strong symbols of storms and great afflictions. John, another type of the Church, was cast into prison and then beheaded. And we are forewarned of the great necessity of the whole armour of God, if we would stand in this “evil day.”

It therefore behoves every one who aspires to the prize of our high calling to brace himself for the severer conflicts and trials of faith and patience that may suddenly and without a moment’s warning be sprung upon him. In the battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the Enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord’s people; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armour of God—the Truth and the spirit of the Truth.

“In your patience possess ye your souls.” No other grace will be more needed than this in the fiery ordeals of this “evil day” ; for without great patience no man can endure to the end. All along the Christian’s pathway, ever and anon, he comes to a new crisis ; perhaps these are often seemingly of trivial importance, yet he realises that they

may be turning points in his Christian course. Who has not realised them? There comes a temptation in weariness in well-doing, together with the suggestion of an easier way ; or there springs up a little root of pride or ambition with suggestions of ways and means for feeding and gratifying it. Then there comes, by and by, the decisive moment when you must choose this course or that ; and lo, you have reached a crisis!

Which way will you turn? Most likely you will turn in the direction to which the sentiments you have cultivated have been tending, whether that be the right way or the wrong way. If it be the wrong way, most likely you will be unable to discern it clearly ; for your long cultivated sentiments will sway your judgment. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death.” (Prey. 14:12.) How necessary, therefore, is prayer, that in every crisis we may pass the test successfully ! Nor can we safely delay to watch and pray until the crisis is upon us ; but such should be our constant attitude.

The life of a soldier, ever on the alert and on duty, is by no means an easy life ; nor do the Scriptures warrant any such expectation. On the contrary, they say, “Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” ; “Fight the good fight of faith,” etc. And yet many Christian people seem to have the very opposite idea. Their ideal Christian life is one without a breeze or a storm ; it must be one continuous calm. Such a life was indeed more possible in former days than now, though the world, the flesh and the Devil always have opposed them, and always have had to be resisted by every loyal soldier of the cross. But now the opposition is daily becoming more and more intense ; for Satan realises that his time is short, and he is determined by any and every means to exert his power against the consummation of the Lord’s plan for the exaltation of the Church.

Consequently, we have had within this Harvest period many and severe storms of opposition; and still there are, doubtless, more severe trials to follow. But those who, with overcoming faith, outride them all—who patiently endure, who cultivate the spirit of Christ with its fruits and graces, and who valiantly fight the good fight of faith, rather than withdraw from the field—such will be the “overcomers” to whom the laurels of victory will be given when the crowning day has come.

## Sorrow Turned to Joy.

(Convention Address)

CONSIDERING such a topic at this Easter season it would be natural that our first thoughts would revolve around the disciples’ reactions to the death and resurrection of our Lord. We need not itemize the many sorrowful experiences of the last days of their Master’s life upon earth, for we have read them many times. Then followed the resurrection, the intermingled fear, amazement, doubt, hope, and ultimate joy in connection with that. The 24th chapter of Luke, carefully read, reveals all this.

The suggestion that the Lord whom they had loved so dearly, from whom they had expected so much, whom they had seen brutally put to death, was alive again, filled them with fear and perplexity, first of all, for had they not seen His lifeless body placed in the tomb? It must have been an eerie experience to hear unnatural beings addressing them—“Why seek ye the LIVING among the dead?” Yet the massive stone that sealed the sepulchre had been rolled back. Who had done that?

Doubt continued as the risen Lord demonstrated in various ways that He was really alive again, and so real and sustained were these that at last they began to *hope* that it was real and not fantasy. When at last it was proved beyond doubt, and THE SCRIPTURES HAD BEEN OPENED to show them why all these things had to happen, then we read that “they returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” (Luke 24:52.)

We can note, too, the numerous instances in the Old Testament where sorrow was turned to happier experiences. Job, Joseph, David and others met with hard experiences at the hands of jealous opponents and other calamities, yet they were richly blessed later. We might be surprised at the number of the ancients who received blessings AFTER great trials and suffering; further, we know that their richest blessings lie still future. They were stoned, sawn asunder, made destitute, afflicted, tormented, mocked and imprisoned, etc., showing a wonderful faith in their God, yet they have not received the fulfilment of the promises made to them. (Heb. 11:36-39.) The verse that closes this chapter tells us they await full reward, because, firstly, God has provided some better things for US.

Do these “better things” laid up for us (the Gospel Age church) involve, firstly, some suffering too? In answer, let us review, briefly, the experiences of Him whom we are called to follow, and note what sufferings were prerequisite to His glory. He suffered “for righteousness’ sake”—never did He suffer for imperfections or wrongdoing. This immediately creates a gulf between Him and His followers which it is impossible to bridge; yet we need not be discouraged.

When the famous Persian carpets are being made we are told that mistakes are made by apprentices who are allowed to assist in the work. The master-artist in control does not attempt to undo these mistakes but cleverly weaves them into the pattern. It is said that in so doing he often achieves new and enhanced heights of design and craftsmanship. We, too, are apprentices, in the school of Christ, making many mistakes, and the Lord manifests great patience with us if we are properly exercised by them. The many mercies and forgivenesses realised are helping us toward that time when, as Christ’s associates in the Kingdom, we will be required to show the same patience to those going up over the great highway towards Edenic perfection. “If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.” It seems evident that we cannot suffer WITH Christ through sufferings in which we become involved because of wrongdoing; therefore, they must be other than those which we share with Him.

God said of Jesus that He would make His soul (His earthly life) an “offering for sin,” and we learn that the purpose

of this was to redeem mankind and return them to the life enjoyed by Adam before he transgressed. The Bible makes it plain that Christians are to share or taste of Christ's sufferings; therefore, they must be sufferings for righteousness' sake, else they could not be termed His. The Bible does not lead us to believe that there is any merit in our sufferings to redeem anyone, but we believe it does show that Christ will not make the value of His sacrifice available to the world until His followers of this age (the church) have all tasted or sampled His sufferings. It is quite necessary for us to experience these things if we are to become His helpers during His reign of glory. If we suffer with Him (now) we shall share His glory (later). If we wrest ourselves away from the sufferings, if after putting our hands to the plow we look back (desire again the flesh, the world and its ways), we are not worthy of Him—it would stand clearly revealed to our Lord (if to no other) that we are not the kind of co-heirs for whom He is looking.

Our Lord experienced the extreme of fallen humanity's moods. The gracious words that fell from His lips, and the kindly deeds He performed, caused men to hail Him as a great teacher and benefactor; but as soon as He began to reveal His doctrines and the people discerned that He was not in full sympathy with the popular recognised religions of the time, hatred was soon manifest.

We sometimes hear it said of a man at his death that he was loved by all who knew him. We often read newspaper reports of the death of great religious leaders that they had no foes, that even those who differed with them in their belief or practice respected them highly—such eulogies are accepted as evidence of a man's worth. But what of Jesus at His death? Was He loved by all who knew Him? Did the religious element that differed with His teachings afford Him any leniency? No, they hated Him with intense, bitter hatred, and without any cause, except that He lived and taught the TRUTH. This is surely one of the sufferings for righteousness' sake that all the Lord's true people share or experience. But by the subtle cunning of the Adversary many are led to misunderstand and misinterpret the pure truth of God's Word and are caused to persecute those who point it out.

There are many who know something about the promised Kingdom of God, yet do not know THE TRUTH. In Christ's day even the devils knew something about the plan of God, evidenced by their words on one or two occasions when He interfered with their operations,—”What hast thou to do with us, Art thou come to judge us before the time?” They knew they were out of harmony with the great Creator, and that He would not always suffer them to pursue their evil course, but would one day bring them to judgment when they would be compelled to either change their ways or else suffer annihilation.

Many good people also share in a superficial knowledge. The founding and maintaining of hospitals, asylums, clubs, lodges, etc., that contribute to improved standards of society and serve to alleviate the sorrows and misfortunes of the groaning creation are often contributed to in a major way by professing Christians, who, nevertheless, do not know the truth. Many good church goers believe in God and in Jesus Christ, and also know something about the glad tidings of the Kingdom—that some day, some where and in some way a time of joy and happiness is to supersede this present life with its alternating joys and sorrows, but they still do not know the TRUTH.

Read Col. 1:1-6. This and other passages suggest that only the truth in its FULNESS. can change men in heart and life; more than a mere superficial knowledge about the coming Kingdom is required. It is the truth that performs the separating work of this harvest time in the end of the Gospel Age. We can appreciate the goodwill, to a limited extent it may be termed fellowship, of many a one who knows something about the gospel, yet a barrier exists of which we are conscious, and of which our friend is also conscious, which makes it impossible to enjoy fullest communion together. The barrier is the TRUTH.

The truth explains, gives knowledge of when and how the glad tidings of the kingdom will operate; it reveals the work that God is especially interested in during the present time. It sets forth the only principles by which immortality can be attained, also the principles by which everlasting life may be enjoyed when the Kingdom does begin to operate. It shows that there is no hell-fire such as traditional theology has taught, no purgatory, and no trinity—no God in three persons. This knowledge is not sought by the majority of professing Christians, indeed it is often bitterly opposed and has led to the persecution of those who point these things out from the Scriptures.

Contrary to the thought of many there are essential doctrines and principles of truth which are not to be GUESSED at. The truth does not allow the thought that it does not matter what we believe so long as we live good moral lives and do our best to practise the golden rule, that we will all some day become spiritual beings in a heavenly kingdom irrespective of our differing beliefs. Taking a stand for the TRUTH, knowing it and teaching it, often ostracizes us; in other words, we appear such peculiar people that others do not seek our company, nor do they desire to hear us express our opinion, and sometimes even leads to severer forms of persecution. These are some of the sufferings for righteousness' sake that the Lord's people are often called upon to endure.

The more accurate we become in the knowledge of the TRUTH the better we know God and the better able we become to walk in those ways that really please Him. (Read Col. 1: 9-12.) Note particularly verse 11, revealing the need for increasing patience and long-sufferings with joyfulness. Only the truth can produce this. What we may term “the wearing down processes of life” tend, without the truth, to embitter the soul; but with the truth they produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness. We do not find it hi our heart to bear hatred toward any, not even those who are causing us our present sufferings. More and more we find it easier to sink into the Lord's will. As another has expressed it—”It is only by an understanding of God's purpose and His dealings with us that we can rest in the circumstances of life which are very unrestful, painful and extremely depressing in many cases. . . . Unless we have contact and fellowship with God we could never arrive at the position of joyfulness in affliction. IT TAKES A LONG TIME to have the apostle's words worked out in us, `Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness.’ “

But this is the point where our sorrow can be turned into joy, just as with the disciples at the first advent. Once knowledge and understanding became theirs, their sorrow was turned -to joy; once the Scriptures were opened to reveal the MEANING and reason for the sufferings of their Lord the weight was measurably removed.

We are apt to form the impression that since the Scriptures so clearly point out that Christians have first to suffer with Christ before they can reign with Him, and since we have already found out something in experience just how difficult and straight the narrow way is, then we must wait until our earthly course is finished in death and we are raised in resurrection glory before we can experience the joyous part of the Christian life. However, an accurate knowledge of the truth and the conforming of our lives to it, by the grace of God provided through Christ, will bring us even in this life to a position where sorrow is turned to joy. Sorrowful experiences still being endured, yes, but as Paul expressed it—"Sorrowful yet always rejoicing."

When we can *maintain* this spirit (not merely for an hour or a day) we realise that our apprenticeship is doing something for us in our education; now we are learning something about the peace and joy that Jesus promised all His followers and which nothing in this world can take away; and like Paul we will be able to continue in the faith grounded and scaled and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel because of hard experiences. We -will be able to rejoice in the sufferings which are "filling up the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:23, 24.)

Another has said—"There is no vital value in our afflictions for covering sin, but the deeds and teachings that brought the afflictions which Paul suffered WERE EXCEEDING POWERFUL for encouraging other Christians (the body of Christ). If one stands against sin, especially false doctrine and teaching, the affliction must come from those who are sinners. Christ suffered in that way. Paul suffered in that way."

Sufferings which come to us because of our ministry to other members of the Body of Christ are surely very especially "sufferings for righteousness' sake" which are filling up or completing the sufferings of Christ, and in these may the Lord help us more and more to rejoice.

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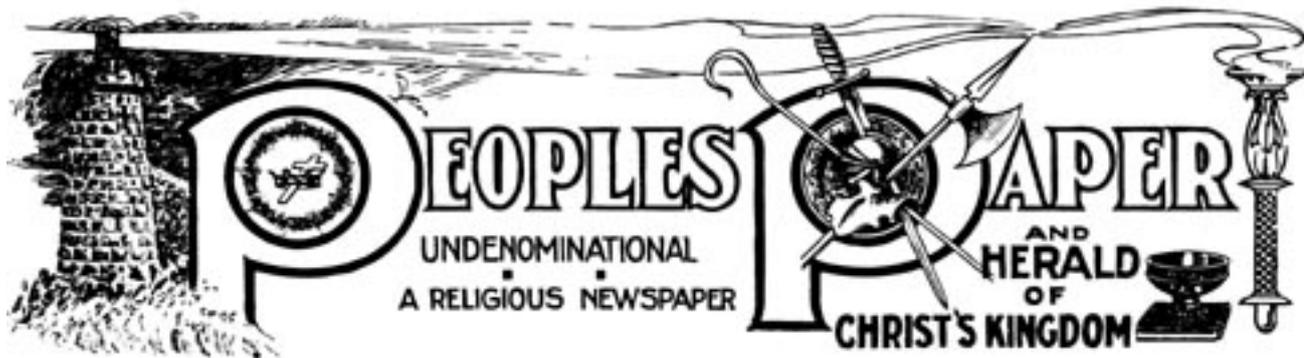
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## **“Blessed are the Pure in Heart.”**

(Convention Address)

(Col. 3 : 1-4; 1 Pet. 1: 13-16.)

IN 1 Thes. 4:3 the Apostle Paul says, “This is the will of God (concerning you), even your sanctification,” and again in 1 Thes. 5:23 — “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” Only by “abiding in Christ,” and yielding ourselves completely to be controlled by His spirit of full consecration to do the will of God, can this blessed transformation of heart and mind take place. We must of course “redeem the time,” and guard against the things around us in the world that would hinder our progress in grace and heavenly knowledge. (See Rom. 12:2.)

Our Lord gave us good advice when He said, — “Seek ye first (chiefly) the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” Again we are exhorted to “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Col. 3:16.) Also we must “put on Christ,” allowing His spirit, His disposition to actuate our hearts and thoughts. (See Col. 3:12-14.)

Many there are who have very erroneous views of what is signified by the expression “pure in heart.” One class considers this impossible of attainment in the present life ; another class, no less mistakenly, considers this to mean absolute perfection in every thought, word and deed ; and in believing that they fulfil these conditions, and in teaching others similarly, they are making a grave mistake.

It is possible for one to deceive himself respecting his own heart and his own condition, as for instance, apparently, the Pharisees of our Lord’s day ; claiming that they were perfect, and that they kept the whole law, they were merely deceiving themselves, but not the Lord ; by their self-deception, a form of hypocrisy, which blinding them to their own need of the robe of Christ’s righteousness, left them in the filthy rags of their own righteousness for the kingdom. And so with some today, who claim perfection of thought, word and deed. They have blinded themselves to their own weaknesses, imperfections and errors, and are in a far worse condition than he who, though outwardly less moral, is at heart better in the Lord’s sight, because honest in confessing his unworthiness, because for such the Lord has provided forgiveness of sins — covering with the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

Nevertheless, those who think that purity of heart is an impossibility in the present life are likewise mistaken. Their mistake arises from not seeing a wide distinction between a purity of heart and an absolute perfection of righteousness of all the words and deeds of life. The heart, as used in our text, refers to the mind, the will, the actuating intentions or motives of the individual. With this thought before the mind, it is easy to see that one might be pure of heart, that is of pure intentions, and yet confess himself unable to do and to be all that his good intentions desire and endeavour. He whose heart is pure toward the Lord in Christ is the same one whose eye is single, the same one who is not double-minded but single-minded, whose mind, will, heart, seeks first, last and always the will of God. Hence the exhortation of the Apostle James. — “Purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” (James 4:8.)

But how can this condition of purity of heart be attained? Is this to be our message to sinners — “purify your hearts”? No, the Gospel does not call sinners to purify their hearts; on the contrary it declares it to be an impossible thing for the sinner to purify his heart; a fuller’s soap, which the sinner does not possess, is needed to cleanse the heart and bring it into that attitude of relationship with God and His will which will be acceptable and pure in His sight. On the contrary, sinners are called to repentance — called upon to confess that not only their outward lives are imperfect, short of the glory of God, but that their hearts also are rebellious, impure and in sympathy with impurity. After the sinner is repentant for sin, desiring to come into harmony with the Lord and His righteousness, he is pointed to the great atonement for sin, and is drawn to the great Redeemer, through a desire to be made free from sin and to come into heart harmony with God. When this step has been taken—when the sinner having repented of his sins, and having made restitution so far as possible, accepts Christ and the pardon He offers, and seeks to walk in the way of righteousness, then He is justified—justified freely from all things, from which the law could not justify him — “justified by faith through the blood of Christ”—brought nigh to God, into relationship with Him, and caused to know the joy and peace of His forgiving love.

When this is accomplished, when justification by faith has been established, when the sinner is reckoned and treated as no longer a sinner, but as reconciled to the Father, then his heart may be said to be pure, cleansed from “the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” But now arises a new question with the reformed one; while past sins are graciously covered, weaknesses of the flesh are present, and temptations of the Adversary are on every hand. He

starts to walk forward, but finds himself beset by the world, the flesh and the devil ; what shall he do? A heart searching probably begins here; finding himself incapable of guiding himself, or of keeping himself, his proper course is to accept another offer of divine grace, namely, the second step in our great salvation. He hears the voice of the Lord, through the Apostle, saying—"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (manifested in the covering of your sins), that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

The reformed one, if rightly instructed, realises his inability to stand in his own strength, realises that his only hope of maintaining justification granted to him lies in getting the Lord to take charge of him. At first he may think to go into partnership with the Lord, and to say—"Some of self and some of Thee,"—some of my own will and some of the Lord's will; but rightly instructed he finds that this will not be satisfactory to the Lord; that the Lord will accept him, and become responsible for him, and guarantee him glorious victory and eternal reward only upon one condition, namely, a full and absolute surrender, a full consecration of heart.

It is after the sinner has come through all this process and has made a full consecration of his heart to the Lord, that he is of the class described in our text, one of the pure in heart, under the law of love. But notwithstanding the purity of his heart, his motives, his intentions, his will, to fulfill the Lord's great commandment, which is briefly comprehended in one word, love, — he will find that he has a battle to wage, that the law of his members, depraved through heredity in sin, is a strong law of selfishness, in opposition to the new law, to which he has pledged himself, the law of his pure heart or new heart or will—the law of love.

Hence, as the apostle suggests, (1 Tim. 1:5) we must learn that the ultimate end or object of the divine commandment or law, means LOVE—even though we do not find ourselves thoroughly able to live up to every minute particular and requirement of that law. Yet our inability to live up to the requirements of that law must be through no lack of the will, or intentions of the loyal and pure heart toward the law, and toward the Lord whose law it is. Whatever failure we make, however short we may come of the grand ultimate object before us, it must be solely because of weaknesses of the flesh, and besetments of the Adversary which our pure hearts or wills failed to resist.

And here the Lord's promises are helpful, assuring us that He knows our weaknesses and frailties, and the wiles of our great Adversary, the devil, and the influence of the spirit of the world, which is contrary to the spirit of love. He tells us that we may go freely to the throne of the heavenly grace, and obtain mercy in respect of our failures to live up to the grand standard which our hearts acknowledge, and seek to conform to, and that we may also find grace to help us in every time of need. And, availing ourselves of these mercies and privileges provided through our great High Priest, we are enabled to fight a good fight against sin, to repulse its attacks upon our hearts and drive it off if it shall succeed in invading our flesh. Thus, and thus only, may the Christian *keep himself pure* in heart, preserving his stand as one of the fighters of the good fight, one of the overcomers of the world and its spirit.

There will be a tendency on the part of the flesh, and the mind of the flesh, to deceive us in respect of this commandment of love. The mind of the flesh will seek to go into partnership with the new mind, and will be very ready to recognise love as the rule and law of life, *under certain conditions*. The mind of the flesh would recognise love in words, in profession, in manners—a form of godliness, without its power. Gentle manners, such as love would demand, may be exercised by a selfish heart deceiving itself, and seeking to deceive others; on the lip may be the smile, the word of praise, of kindness, of gentleness, while in the heart may be feelings of grudge, of bitterness, of animosity, which under favorable conditions, may manifest themselves in more or less carefully worded slander, or backbiting or reproaches. Or these, continuing in the heart and rankling, may, under favorable conditions, bring forth anger, hatred, malice, strife and other wicked works of the flesh and the devil, wholly contrary to the proper course of a pure heart, and in utter variance with the commandment of the law of love. How earnestly must the sincere Christian pray the inspired prayer of the Psalmist—"Cleanse thou me, O Lord, from secret faults," and "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

What course should be pursued by those who find themselves possessed of impure minds—minds inclined to surmise evil rather than good, envious minds, selfish minds, which love only those that love and flatter them? Is there any hope for these? Would God not utterly reject such?

God is very pitiful, and it was while all were thus "in the very gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity" that He provided for our redemption. There is hope for all such who see their defilement and who desire to be cleansed.

"His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood avails for me."

But true repentance means both contrition and reformation; and for help in the latter we must go to the Great Physician who alone can cure such moral sickness, and of whom it is written—"Who healeth all thy diseases." All of His sanctified ones, it is safe to say, were at one time more or less diseased thus, and proportionately unfit for His service. True, it is worse for those who were once cleansed, if they "like the sow return to the wallowing in the mire" of sin,—but still there is hope, if the Good Physician's medicine be taken persistently the same as at first. The *danger* is that the *conscience*, becoming defiled, will so pervert the judgment that bitterness is esteemed to be sweetness, and envy and malice to be justice and duty, and the "mire" of sin to be beauty of holiness. Then only is the case practically a hopeless one.

The Good Physician has pointed out antidotes for soul-poisoning — medicines which if properly taken according to directions will sweeten the bitter heart. Instead of envy it will produce love; instead of malice and hatred and strife, love and concord; instead of evil-speaking and backbiting and scandal-mongering it will produce the love which thinketh no evil and which worketh no ill to his neighbour ; which suffereth long and is kind, which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, which never faileth and which is the spirit of the Lord and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Let us all take these medicines, for they are good not only for the violently sick, but for the convalescing and

also for the well. The following are some of the prescriptions:

(1) “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he (the Lord) is pure.” (1 John 3:3.) The hope mentioned is that we have been adopted as sons of God, with the promise that if faithful we shall be like Him and see Him as He is and share His glory. As our minds and hearts expand with this hope and we begin to measure its lengths and breadths, its heights and depths, it surely does set before us the Heavenly Father’s love, and the Redeemer’s love in rainbow colors, and we more and more love the Father and the Son because they first loved us. The divine form of love becomes more and more our ideal; and as we seek to reciprocate it and to copy it, the cleansing and purifying of our hearts follows; for looking into the perfect law of liberty—love—we become more and more ashamed of all the meanness and selfishness which the fall brought to us. And, once seen in their true light as works of the flesh and of the devil, all anger, malice, wrath, envy, strife, evil-speaking, evil-surmising, backbiting and slander become more and more repulsive to us. And finally when we see that those who to any degree sympathise with these evil qualities are unfit for the kingdom and to every good work worthless, we flee from these evils of the soul as from deadly contagion. Our hearts (wills, intentions) become pure at once, and we set a guard not only upon our lips, but also upon our thoughts—that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable to the Lord.

(2) “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and *purify* unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.” (Tit. 2:14.) We might theorize much and very correctly how and when and by whom we were redeemed; but this all would avail little if we forget *why* we were redeemed. The redemption was not merely a redemption from the power of the grave—it was chiefly “*from all iniquity.*” And the Lord is not merely seeking a peculiar people, but specially a people peculiarly cleansed, purified. This medicine will surely serve to purge us from iniquity if we are anxious to make our calling and election sure.

(3) “Pursue righteousness, fidelity, love, peace, with all who call upon the Lord with a pure heart.” (2 Tim. 2:22.) We not only need to start right, but also to *pursue* a right course. We may not follow unrighteousness even for a moment; whatever it may cost, justice and righteousness must be followed. But here a difficulty arises with some; they do not know how to judge righteous judgment. They are too apt to judge according to rumor or appearances, or to accept the judgment of scribes and Pharisees, as did the multitude which cried, “Crucify Him! His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Had they followed righteousness they would have seen the Lord’s character in His good works as well as in His wonderful words of life; they would have seen that so far from being a blasphemer He was “holy, harmless, separate from sinners”; they would have seen that His accusers were moved by envy and hatred.

And it is just as necessary as ever to follow the Lord’s injunction, “Judge righteous judgment,” and whoever neglects it brings trouble upon himself and becomes a sharer in the penalty due to false accusers. For as the Lord was treated so will His “brethren” be treated. And the more pure our hearts the less will they be affected by slanders and backbitings and evil-speakings, and the more we will realise that those who have bitter hearts from which arise bitter words are impure fountains in which is the gall of bitterness and not the sweetness of love.

Next comes fidelity; that is, faithfulness. The Lord declares His own fidelity or faithfulness, and declares Himself a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And even the worldly recognise fidelity as a grace; and by such it is often given first place; for many would commit perjury through fidelity to a friend. But notice that God’s Word puts righteousness *first*. Fidelity, love and peace can only be exercised in harmony with righteousness. This valuable prescription will help to keep our hearts free from the poison and bitterness of roots of bitterness which the Adversary keeps busily planting.

Justice is purity of heart—freedom from injustice. Righteousness is purity of heart—freedom from unrighteousness. Love is purity of heart—freedom from selfishness.

(4) “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit (the spirit of the truth) unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently.” (1 Pet. 1 :22.) This medicine is for those who have used the other prescriptions and gotten clean. It points out that purity came not merely through *hearing* the truth, nor through *believing* the truth, but through *obeying* it. And not merely a formal obedience in outward ceremony and custom and polished manner, but through obedience to the *spirit* of the truth—its real import. All this brought you to the point where the love of the “brethren” of Christ was *unfeigned*, genuine. At first you treated all with courtesy, or at least without impoliteness; but many of them you did not *like*, much less did you love them. But obeying the *spirit* of the truth you recognised that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to our dear Redeemer and seeking to follow His leadings are “brethren,” regardless of race or color or education or poverty or homeliness. You reached the point where your heart is so free from envy and pride and selfishness, and so full of the spirit of the Master, that you can honestly say, I love all the “brethren” with a love that is sincere and not at all feigned.

Now having gotten thus far along in the good way, the Lord through the Apostle tells us what next—that we may preserve our hearts pure —“See that ye love one another with a pure heart *fervently* (intensely).” Ah, yes, the pure heart must not be forgotten, else it might be but a step from pure love into a snare of the Adversary, carnal love. But the pure love is not to be cold and indifferent; it is to be so warm and so strong that we would be willing to “lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John 3:16.)

With such a love as this burning as incense to God upon the altar of our hearts there will be no room there for any selfish, envious thoughts or words or deeds. Oh, how blessed would all the gatherings of the “brethren” be, if such a spirit pervaded all of them! Can we doubt that, if it held sway in one-half, it would speedily exercise a gracious influence upon all—for righteousness and fidelity and love and peace, and against envy, strife, malice, slanders and backbitings?

Let all the “brethren” more and more take these medicines which tend to sanctify and prepare us for the Master’s

service, here and hereafter. “Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace ; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” (2 Cor. 13:11.) “The Lord bless thee and keep thee : The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto, thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” (Num. 6: 24-26.)

“Oh, to be clean, to be pure, to be true!  
Cost what it may, to be Thine through and through;  
Purged from the promptings of evil within,  
Freed by Thy grace from the thralldom of sin!

“Oh, to be simple to that which is ill,  
Wise with a wisdom alert to Thy will;  
Earnest of purpose and single of eye,  
Eager to live and unfeared to die!

“Oh, to be fair, to be just, to be kind,  
Sober in spirit and humble in mind;  
Patient, unselfish, regardful of all,  
Thinking no evil, though evil befall!

“Oh, to be fervent, unceasing in prayer,  
Watching thereunto Thy praise to declare;  
Living or dying, this blessing be mine—  
Always, in all things, to wholly be Thine!”

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

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## Convention News.

THE Convention held at Adelaide during the Easter weekend was once again, by the Lord’s grace, a season of helpful spiritual fellowship. Our hearts are filled with thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for the many evidences of His loving-kindness toward His people.

In his words of welcome our brother was able to extend a very cordial welcome to about 14 brethren and sisters from Melbourne and Geelong. The presence of these dear friends was very much appreciated, and we trust and pray that many blessings may be theirs as they reflect upon the good things provided by the Lord’s grace.

We feel that it is a very great privilege to meet together in the Lord’s name and spirit, whether it be in our weekly gatherings, or in the annual Conventions; the promise is still the same, and earnest faith still lays hold upon it and finds it true—“Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst.” (Matt. 18:20.) The body of Christ is built up by means of that which every joint supplies, (Eph. 4:16), and it will not do for any one member to say he, or she, has no need of the other body members. (1 Cor. 12:21.) As earnest students of our Father’s Word we realise that we are nearing the end of the Gospel Age; soon the full number of God’s elect will have been completed; the Bride will have made herself ready; and the dissolution of the present evil world — heavens and earth — will be accomplished. Peter asks, “What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness”? We want to be “wise virgins,” with our lamps trimmed, and vessels filled with the oil of God’s grace—the spirit of full consecration. “I delight to do thy will, O my God.”

We look forward with earnest longing for the “new heavens and the new earth,” and our hearts are cheered with the signs which indicate the second “presence” of our Lord (see Matt. 24), and we know the full deliverance of His church is near at hand. (See Luke 21:25-28.) This makes us glad, because the time is near when Satan shall be bound, and all evil restrained, and the long night of sorrow and weeping will be ended with the dawning of the glad new day of joy and gladness—the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings. (See Psa. 30:5; Mal. 4:2; Matt. 13:43.)

During the four days of Convention we had some helpful Bible studies on the following portions of Scripture—Jer. 31: 27-34; Rev. 19: 5-9; Luke 17 : 22-30; and 2 Pet. 3: 9-14. The perusal and discussions on these Scriptures brought us many blessings, refreshing our minds, and we do thank God for the encouragement which His precious Word imparts, bringing enlightenment and encouragement to the hearts and minds of the pilgrims who persevere in their

journey Zionwards.

Various brethren offered words of help and encouragement in their addresses, the topics being as follows—  
"Acceptable to God"; "Rejoicing in Hope of our Glorious Home"; "Good and Evil"; "Which is God's True Church?"  
"Sorrow Turned to Joy," and "Blessed are the Pure in Heart."

Another pleasing feature was the showing of some "Dawn" TV films, kindly lent to us by our Brother Crouch of Toowoomba, Queensland. Also it was good to hear a tape recording of a very helpful discourse by Brother N. Woodworth of the "Dawn" on the topic, "God's Great Gift."

It was a pleasure too to receive many letters and messages expressing Christian love and good will, and assurances of prayerful remembrances from many Classes and brethren in various States. These were much appreciated, and to all who so kindly thought of us, as well as to the brethren everywhere, the friends in Convention send their warmest Christian love and the words of the Apostle Peter in 2 Pet. 3 :11-14.

The Praise and Testimony meetings and the "Hymns we Like and Why" session brought opportunity of expressing our praise and thankfulness to God for His blessings which so freely attend us along our pilgrim way.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast, as each shakes the hand of each, at the same time singing, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," and "God be with you till we meet again," and the closing prayer of thanksgiving to the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort for all His blessings; and beseeching His grace and guidance upon each one assembled, as also His blessing upon the Israel of God in every place. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

## Memorial Observances

### Melbourne.

THE anniversary of the sacrifice of our dear Lord Jesus is always a solemn occasion for the followers of the Master, but because the outcome was such a victorious one, the feeling of rejoicing is prominent in our hearts also as we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the gift of our dear Redeemer, and to the Saviour Himself for His willingness to give His life a ransom for all mankind.

The Melbourne brethren gladly gathered to observe the Memorial of our Lord's death again this year, in accord with His request to "This do in remembrance of me." The attendance was quite good and included some elderly brethren who are not able to attend the meetings regularly, but who were pleased to assemble on this occasion for the annual celebration.

Previous studies in Exodus 12 and 1 Cor. 11 had impressed again the importance and necessity for the sacrifice of the "Lamb of God" if the salvation of the human family from sin and death was to be attained, special emphasis being placed upon the passing over of Israel's firstborn on the night of the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, picturing the "passing over" of the "firstborns" of this Gospel Age, for whom this Memorial was especially instituted by our Lord on the night in which He was betrayed.

After suitable hymns, Bible readings, prayers of thanksgiving, and an address covering the subject of the Memorial and the privilege of God's people being invited to associate in the experiences of sacrifice with the Master, that they may also live and reign with Him, we partook of the emblems with solemn and grateful hearts, and asking for the Lord's grace and strength to assist us to "keep the feast" in spirit and truth in all the days ahead.

### Geelong, Vic.

A small company of the Lord's people availed themselves of the opportunity afforded to observe the Memorial of our Lord's death. The simple service of hymns, Bible readings, and an address, with prayers of thanksgiving and petition was blessed of the Lord again to remind us of our Saviour's great sacrifice. This loving sacrifice will ransom all mankind back from sin and death in due time, but now particularly provides all the means of grace for His footstep followers of this Gospel Age, justified and consecrated, to participate with Him in the sufferings of this present time, that they may later reign with Him in His Kingdom of glory.

Previous studies at our weekly Class meetings had impressed the importance of the old Jewish Passover until it was rendered obsolete by the fulfilling of that which it typed — "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" — "Christ OUR Passover (Lamb) slain for us." "This do in remembrance of ME." "As often as ye do this, ye do show forth the LORD's death till he come,"—no more was there necessity for the Jewish Passover observance.

As we partook of the bread and wine at the close of our service we sought to remember Him in the manner and spirit of His request, desiring that He will continue to lead us into ever deepening fellowship with Him until "that which is perfect is come."

### Adelaide.

In harmony with our Lord's request — "Do this in remembrance of Me,"—the friends of the Adelaide Ecclesia met on the evening of March 30th to observe the Memorial of our Saviour's death. We realise that all our hopes of life and blessing depended upon our Lord's faithfulness, even unto death. What an example we have before us, and we do sincerely praise God for the love and devotion and self-sacrificing zeal of our blessed Lord and Redeemer. What a privilege is given to the church of this Gospel Age, not merely to "believe in Him," but also to be called "to sutler with Him," as members of His mystical Body.

After the singing of hymns, and the reading of appropriate portions of Scripture, a brother outlined in type and antitype the deep importance of the great transaction which was consummated at Calvary. With prayerful, humble

hearts, we thankfully partook of the emblems which represent our Lord's body, broken for us ; and His life (blood) poured out as the satisfaction for our sins, and also for the sins of the whole world, (in due time).

We thank our Heavenly Father for this Memorial Service which not only reminds us that all our hopes of life and blessing are centered in the death of Christ, but also revives and renews in our own hearts our pledge of consecration to be "dead with Christ," so that in the everlasting future we may also, by His grace, "live with Him." "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

### **Perth.**

On the 30th March we solemnly remembered our dear Lord's supreme sacrifice for sin on Calvary's cross. A group of ten gathered to celebrate the Memorial of our Lord's death, gladly accepting our Lord's admonition of "This do ye in remembrance of me."

Appropriate hymns and words were chosen for the Service which prepared our minds for the solemn occasion. The blood of Christ cleansing us from all sin enabled us to renew our purpose to follow in the footsteps of our Master and lay down our lives in His service.

By God's grace we symbolized the eating of the Bread from heaven, and having participation in the one loaf, also the drinking of the cup, showing our continued desire to sacrifice our lives unto death, being dead to the world and its desires.

"Love so amazing, so Divine, Demands our life, our time, our all."

### **Sydney.**

On Thursday, the 30th of March, the Sydney observance of our Lord's Memorial was one of solemnity. The elder presiding read a number of Scriptures suitable for the occasion, whilst another elder gave an address dealing with the type and antitype.

The attendance, though comparatively small, was not lacking in an atmosphere in keeping with the occasion. Fortunate indeed are those who are able to appreciate the true significance of the "Broken Bread" and the contents of the cup ; and happy those who are privileged to be co-partners with our Lord in the baptism into death, and ultimately in the rejoicing when "He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

### **Tasmania.**

Three of us Sisters met to celebrate the Passover sacrificed for us and had a real spiritual feast. We meditated on the wonderful privilege beforehand, and read a good article on "Christ Our Passover Sacrificed for Us" from one of the periodicals, and then partook of the emblems.

### **Convention Notes.**

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are now available free from this office.

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## **Some Better Thing.**

IN the early days of our Christian life there is some difficulty in understanding how to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" (2 Tim. 2 :15.) We do not comprehend all at once that God's Plan provides, first, a heavenly salvation for the Church, and then an earthly salvation for mankind in general. The study of the Bible along Dispensational lines clears away all of our difficulties. It shows us that the promise that the redeemed "shall sit every man under his own vine and fig tree," and "long enjoy the work of his hands", (Mic. 4:4; Isa.. 65:22), is God's provision for Israel restored to Divine favour, and for all the families of the earth, but not for the Church. Of the true Church, the Bride of Christ, it is declared that her members shall, in the resurrection, be like unto the angels—heavenly or spirit beings.

St. Paul distinctly says of these, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15: 50.) Jesus tells these that He has gone to prepare a place in the Father's house on high. (John 14: 2, 3.) But the place for man, the earth, already provided from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25: 34), is a very different one from ours, of which we read, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."—1 Cor. 2 : 9 ; Isa. 64 : 4.

Now we understand why it is that from Genesis to Malachi there is not one suggestion of a heavenly or spiritual hope for any natural man. Every promise is earthly. In Abraham's case, for instance, we read, "The Lord said unto Abram, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all this land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."—Gen. 13: 14-17.

St. Paul refers to this difference between the hopes of the spirit-begotten Church, founded at Pentecost, and those of all others. Pointing to the faithful of the past, he declares that although they had God's testimony to their faithfulness,

nevertheless, they “received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect.”--Heb. 11 :38-40.

As soon as we get our “better thing,” our higher reward of “glory, honor, and immortality,” in joint-heirship with our Lord as figuratively His Bride—then the worthy ones of ancient times will get their reward of resurrection to human perfection. Under Messiah’s Kingdom those perfect men will be “princes in all the earth.” (Psa. 45: 16.) Then from the spiritual to the perfected earthly ones the blessings and instruction will descend for the poor, ignorant, selfish and superstitious world to help them, to uplift the obedient to the perfection illustrated in the perfected Worthies.

We have heard of the Sunday School teacher who told her class about heaven, about its pianos, harps, organs, horses and carriages, fruits and flowers, etc. We see that she was merely thinking of the blessings God has provided for the faithful and obedient of the world—“in due time.” She had no conception of the “heaven of heavens” promised to the faithful followers of Jesus in the “narrow way.” The Great Teacher explains that it is impossible to describe heaven with its beauties and charms. He said to Nicodemus, “If I have told you of earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?”—John 3: 12.

In line with this, the Bible makes no attempt to describe heaven itself, nor its inhabitants. We are merely told that “God is a Spirit,” “dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see”—personally. (John 4: 24; 1 Tim. 6: 16.) Men must discern God, in His works — the noblest of which is the perfect man—made in His moral likeness, on the earthly plane, “a little lower than the angels” on the spirit plane.

But while refusing to inform us of the heavenly condition, God gives us a soul-satisfying portion. Through the Apostle He declares (1 John 3: 2), “It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He (the glorified Jesus) shall appear (at His second advent, in power and great glory) we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” Others, not thus changed from human to spirit nature by the First Resurrection power, will not “see Him as He is,” but only as He shall be revealed in His providences and judgments, which every eye shall recognise.

How satisfactory! Beyond all that we could have asked or thought! “Like Him!”—what more could we ask? “Like Him whom God hath highly exalted “Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named!” (Eph. 1: 21.) We stand amazed at such grace! Moreover, we can realise that He who called us to become “partakers of the divine nature” and joint-heirs with the Redeemer in His Mediatorial Kingdom has provided for our every comfort and joy in that heavenly state, the details of which we may not now grasp. Prophetically of these it is written, “I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness.”—Psa. 17: 15.

It is the hope, the desire, the aim of every one of us to make our calling and election sure —to so run that we may obtain that great “prize” of participation in the First resurrection. Of that resurrection we read, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First (chief) 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.) Let us have this in mind, that our participation with our Lord in the glories of the Kingdom is dependent upon our faithfulness here in following Him through evil report and through good report; through honour and through dishonour; in the bearing of the cross along the way of self-denial.

*Instead of repining at the occasional inconveniences we may meet with in our passage through life, we are almost ashamed of the multiplied comforts and enjoyments of our condition, when we think of Him who, though the Lord of Glory, had not where to lay His head.*

*William Wilberforce.*

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## **The Christian's Joy.**

(Contributed Article).

(This article was so well appreciated by the brethren some years ago, that it is now reprinted for the benefit of all readers.)

AS we come to God's Word to examine this matter of Joy and Rejoicing we find there are many quotations made in regard to it. Moses was directed by the Lord to instruct the children of Israel to render their services to the Lord with joy and rejoicing of heart. (See Deut. 12:7; 16:14, 15.) In fact certain punishments came upon the children of Israel if they failed to serve the Lord with joy. (See Deut. 28:45-47.) This shows how important was this matter in the Lord's sight. In the Psalms we find great prominence given to the matter of joy and rejoicing. Turning to Psalm 5:11; Psa. 35:9; 63:5-7; also Psa. 16:11; 32:11; etc., we find some further exhortations to serve the Lord with joyful hearts. Many more references in regard to the value of cultivating the joyful spirit could be found in the Old Testament, but we will content ourselves at this time by referring to Isa. 29:19; and Neh. 8:10.

In Dr. Strong's Concordance we find that the meaning of "rejoicing" is, "to be cheerful", "to be calmly happy". Coming to the New Testament we find our Lord and His Apostles had a great deal to say on the matter of Christian rejoicing. Turning to St. Paul's words we read in Phil. 4:4—"Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say Rejoice!" Surely this represents the very essence of Christian living. Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice always in the Lord must have faith in the Lord—trust, hope, love. Without these we could not so appropriate to ourselves the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused and misrepresented, and when slandered and evilly entreated for the truth's sake. The only ones who can rejoice always are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with Him, and that His protection and care are over them, and that His promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as new creatures.

Others may rejoice today and be cast down tomorrow; only the faithful in Christ Jesus are privileged to rejoice always. The thought of the Lord's favours, past, present and to come, make all the trials and difficulties of such to appear very light afflictions, as but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory, honor, and immortality promised, and the blessed privileges of divine service, both here and hereafter. The Apostle emphasizes the matter by saying, "Again I say, Rejoice." Someone has said that we cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice in the Lord. This rejoicing is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. It implies serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul, however, and does not mean that noisy demonstration is essential, as some seem mistakenly to think.

The Apostle further exhorts that the faithful let their moderation, their forbearance, be manifested, not only toward the brethren, but toward all with whom they have to do. The Greek word here rendered "moderation" seems to carry with it the thought of reasonableness, and of not exacting our rights too rigorously.

Mercy and leniency are certainly qualities required of all who would be members of the Body of the Anointed. We should strive to be faithful in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of us, and mercifulness in respect of all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule, so shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for He is kind to the merciful and to the unthankful.

"The Lord is at hand." The thought seems to be that we who are the Lord's are not living for the present time. We are expecting great changes to be ushered in when our King shall take to Himself His great power and begin His great reign. We are not to be struggling for the last inch, or for the last penny, nor for the extreme of our own rights; but, rather, to be so full of rejoicing in the good things coming and already ours by faith, that it will make us generous as respects the things of the present time in our dealings with the brethren and others. We are not expecting justice from the Lord, for nothing that we have done or could do would justly call for such exceeding great and precious things as He has promised us. And as we are expecting grace or bounty in so large measure we can well afford to be generous and liberal in our sentiments toward others—especially toward the household of faith, because they are our brethren and fellow-representatives of the Lord Himself, from whom our bounty is to come; and toward the world without,

because they have not the future prospects which we possess, and hence set their own hearts upon the things of the present time; and we can well afford to accord them their full share of these or more, since we are so rich through our Heavenly Father and our Heavenly Bridegroom.

That the Apostle did not mean to be understood that the Lord's second advent might be expected immediately, nor before his death, is evident; for elsewhere in his epistles he clearly sets forth his expectation to die, and to wait for the reward, the crown of righteousness laid up for him. Evidently, therefore, his only thought in this exhortation, "The Lord is at hand," was, that we are living in the close of the reign of evil, that the dawning of the day of the Lord is not far distant, and that to the eye of faith it is so near that its influence should affect even the smallest affairs of the present life.

"Be careful for nothing" is the next exhortation, but since our English word "careful" has lost its original meaning, there is danger of getting the wrong thought here. The word originally had the thought of being full of care anxiety, trouble. The Apostle's words correspond exactly to our Lord's injunction, "Take no thought," and signify—Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord's people should be careful, in the meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the Body of Christ accepted in the Beloved, members in the Divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful, all things shall work together for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not.

When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith, and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed "earth-born clouds" and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence, that they are abiding in His love and in His care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the divine promises, and obtaining mercy and help they should grow strong in the Lord and in confidence in Him, and their corroding cares will give place to faith, confidence, peace of heart, whatever the outward conditions.

Such is the counsel of the Apostle—that instead of continuing in the anxious condition, we should lay all of our affairs before the Lord, supplicating His promised providential care, acknowledging our own lack of wisdom, and gladly accepting His wisdom and the provisions of His love we should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which we are, have been supervised of the Lord, and that we are appreciative of His care, and trust it for the future. Thanksgiving for what we have, and a full appreciation of the Lord's leadings hitherto and now, will preclude any anxiety for the future, for the thankful heart will conclude that He who favored us and redeemed us while we were yet sinners, will much more favor and do for us now that we are His, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

The question may arise, Why will not God give us the things which He sees us to need without our making petition to Him and claiming the promises of His Word? Undoubtedly because we need previously to come into the proper attitude of heart to receive His favors and be advantaged by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not discern one-half of our causes for gratitude, as we shall see them by and by, when we shall know even as we are known. It is the same with natural hunger. Unless we were so constituted that the gnawings of hunger would show us our need of food we would probably appreciate it less, even if we ate as much and with the same regularity.

If we have the spirit of rejoicing and trust in the Lord, and make all of our requests, so far as we are able to discern, in harmony with His promise, and accept with gratitude and thanksgiving whatever His providence may send us,—"The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." The thought here is distinct. It is not our own peace that is referred to. We may by nature be more or less indisposed to peace, we may be restless, dissatisfied, discontented, fearful, foreboding or quarrelsome, but, following the counsel outlined in the Apostle's words, we learn to trust God in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God—the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness, and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children—that comes in, to keep us from worry, from anxiety, etc. The thought is that this peace stands guard continually, as a sentinel, to challenge every hostile or worrying thought or fear. It keeps the Christian's mind, so that he at heart has peace with the Lord, fellowship, communion; and it guards his mind also, his reasoning faculties, instructing him and assuring him respecting the divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures us of our standing in divine favor through Christ Jesus—His worthiness, His sacrifice, His aid and strength.

Turning to the 5th chapter of Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, verses 16 to 18, we read, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." One of the striking peculiarities of the Apostolic Epistles is that a large portion of them is devoted to an unfolding of the future high, exalted station that God sets before the consecrated ones of this Gospel Age; and the remainder of the epistles are given to a description of the effects that an acceptance of the call to run in the race for the great prize should produce in the lives of such. This we find to be true in the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonian Christians. It is a fact well known that great truths may be taken into the head, may be intellectually discerned, and yet produce little or no effect in the life. In such cases it is not the truths that are at fault, but it is those who imperfectly receive them.

It is therefore proper and reasonable to conclude that if these wonderful truths did not produce the effects that the inspired Apostles describe ; if they do not effect a change in the everyday life of those professing to be the recipients of the same, then such have not yielded, or are not yielding up their wills, all their ransomed power to the One who purchased them with the pouring out of His life. “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”, are the solemn words of Christ’s chosen Apostle Paul.

In order to know whether we are truly consecrated or not, it is absolutely necessary to have instruction not only concerning the high and heavenly calling itself, but also concerning the effects that a Scriptural reception of these blessed truths have, when received into the heart and life. This Thessalonian epistle, like all the others, has much to say about the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” and the heavenly hope of the Christian. The words, “Rejoice evermore,” are the first of seven exhortations which close the epistle. And how helpful it is to the Christian to be in this condition of “rejoicing always”. In days of sunshine and in days of gloom, in life’s bright scenes, or in life’s dark scenes, in times of peace and quiet, and in times of tribulation and distress, when the heart is bounding and when it is mourning, in times of prosperity, or in times of adversity, it is always possible for the mature Christian to rejoice, to be increasing in prayer, and in everything to give thanks. These characteristics describe one whose affections are centred upon the things above ; one who is closely united to God, and is thoroughly in earnest in his efforts to please Him. They describe one who has a deep sense of his own unworthiness and deficiencies ; but more than all this, they describe a whole-hearted appreciation of the Divine arrangement in Christ to make him acceptable, and to cause him to have fellowship and communion with the infinite God as a loving and kind Father.

In the words “Rejoice evermore” we are reminded that true Christianity is not a gloomy thing, not a depressed state of existence. It is true that pure Christianity does have the effect not only to separate one from the evils of the world, but to a certain extent also to separate from what may be termed legitimate, worldly pleasures, pursuits, and amusements. The thought of this, however, is not that the giving up of these things is depressing to the Christian, or that it is depriving him of pleasure; rather, that he has come into possession of higher enjoyments—pleasures that are eternal enjoyments that have only their beginning in the present life, and continue in a fuller and richer measure.

In whatever the Christian gives up, he suffers no loss of real pleasure that he is not more than compensated for even in this life, in the enjoyment and pleasures of a spiritual kind. The Christian is not exempt from the trials and tribulations, the adversities and perplexities which flesh is heir to, but he has One who is with him in all these circumstances and conditions, and the great ambition and purpose of his heart ever is that he may evidence by his life that this One who is with him lifts him above these trials and adversities, and enables him to bear them all with patience and fortitude. He knows that these earthly experiences that seem from the natural standpoint to work against him are being over-ruled for his development into the likeness of the Master ; he is enabled to see that these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while he looks not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. He is enabled to see that these seemingly adverse things, are providential occasions for him to show what faith in his Lord can do for him, and thus give a witness, a testimony to God’s favor and power in Christ. One has truly said that even “the saddest aspects of a Christian’s daily life are but the showers of spring that usher in the bright and beautiful summer—the everlasting and the heavenly sunshine.”

To many, perhaps to the great majority of those who take the name of Christian, the Christian life seems more like a penance than a life of fellowship with God. The Word of God does not so describe it ; but rather does it describe it as a blessed privilege. It is true, that if it were not for the “blessed hope” that looks beyond this vale of tears, the Christian would not be able to fulfil the exhortation of the text and “rejoice evermore.” The Christian life, therefore, cannot be separated from the hope of the life beyond. The more firmly this hope is laid hold of, the more it becomes a living reality, and the more the Christian is enabled to rejoice in all conditions.

How beautifully the Apostle John describes this “hope” and the effect which a proper appreciation of it has on the consecrated Christian. (See 1 John 3:1-3.) The hope that expresses not only desire, but confident expectation that it will be realised in “due time”, has the effect of causing the Christian to rejoice in tribulation, and even when experiencing bitter sorrow, to “joy in God,” knowing that “all things are working together for his eternal good.”

Hope is an element that to a greater or less extent, exists in all, although to the children of the world, because of not understanding God’s love as revealed in His purposes for them, it does not reach beyond this vale of tears. It does serve, however, to tide them over many of earth’s sorrows and trials. The poet has expressed this in words:

“Soft as the voice of an angel, Breathing a message unheard, Hope with a gentle persuasion, Whispers the comforting word—Wait ‘til the darkness is over, Wait ‘til the tempest is done; Hope for the sunshine tomorrow, After the showers are gone. Whispering hope, O, how welcome Thy voice, Making my heart in its sorrow, rejoice.”

The Christian life is not a reluctant sacrifice wrung from us, but a joyous, freewill offering, gladly and gratefully rendered by us. The Christian’s joy is not in the trials, difficulties, tribulations, and sorrows that he encounters, but in spite of them all, and in the midst of them all, he has a deep and abiding joy. His joy is in God—in thought that he is in union with God, through Christ, that he has been accepted by Him. His joy is enhanced as he remembers that he is a branch in that heavenly vine that the Heavenly Father is pruning that it might be fruitful. “These things (that is, that you are a branch of the vine) have I spoken unto you,” said the Saviour, “that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” The Christian’s secret of a happy life is in knowing and ever keeping in mind that he is a child of God, that Christ is his Elder Brother; that his standing and acceptance are in Him; that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is his Father ; and that it is not by works of righteousness that he has done, but by His own mercy He saves him “by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the holy spirit.”

Why is it the privilege of the Christian to “rejoice evermore?” What is the foundation for his rejoicing? What has he in which to “rejoice evermore?” We answer—So far as he personally is concerned, the Christian as such has much **in** which to rejoice; he has nothing that need make him sad and dejected. God has forgiven all his past sins; in Christ he has redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of **His grace**. We have a throne of grace to which we may approach that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. We are frail and weak, and cumbered with infirmities; but we have a great High Priest who is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” We have received of God’s own spirit, which bears witness with ours that we are His children, His sons. We have the blessed privilege of knowing that the *great* God of all is dealing with *us* as His sons; and while He sees best at times to chasten us, we know that these chastenings are necessary and for our good, in order that we might become a partaker of His holiness. We are made aware of the fact that there is a special providence over us — that all things work together for our good because we love God, and are called according to His purpose. Jesus tells us that the Father loves us, and that He Himself will love us to the end. The inspired Apostle tells us that He that hath begun a good work in us will complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ. Another Apostle tells us that “all things that pertain unto life and godliness,” are freely given to us of God.

If persecution comes to us because of our identification with Christ, or for His sake, He tent us to rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is our reward in heaven. We not only have the spirit witnessing with ours that we are the children of God, but witnessing also that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him. We know that we are no longer under condemnation, no longer subject to bondage, for “we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption (sonship) whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” We have the witness that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. We are enabled as our faith lays hold of these exceeding great and precious promises, to rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit that is given unto us.

As for spiritual blessings, which are the greatest of all blessings, we are told that even now by faith we are raised up and privileged to sit with Christ in heavenly places. We have the blessed privilege of having made known to us by God the mystery of His will, according to the good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that it is His purpose in the dispensation of the fulness of times to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.

We have the promise of Christ that He will come again and receive us unto Himself that where He is there we may be also; that then He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. Furthermore, we have had made known to us God’s wonderful Plan of the Ages—that all mankind are objects of His love; and that He gave His Son to be a ransom for all to be testified in due time; that our loved ones, who in the present life are not able to see His love, will in a due time appointed be privileged to learn of it, and profit by it to the extent of being offered the privilege of attaining everlasting life; in other words, that there is a hope to be set before the world, that of obtaining restitution, or earthly glory. And we are told that nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. “What more can He do for me?” says one, “He has given me His Word to guide me, His holy spirit to teach and comfort me, and the bright promise of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.” And as if to make me sure of all, He has said, “All things are yours, Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas; the world, things present, things to come; life or death—all are yours, because ye are Christ’s.”

There is nothing in the Bible to depress the Christian; but there is much in every page, much in every providential arrangement of heaven to cheer him and make him respond with joyous utterance to the prescription of the Apostle, “Rejoice evermore.”

While the Bible does not teach that the full assurance of faith is an absolute duty, it does teach that it is a blessed possibility. There are unquestionably Christians that can say with unfeigned lips, “I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day,” and there are doubtless others who can say, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee; and when heart and flesh fail, Thou wilt be the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.” As one has said, “Faith believes in Christ for salvation; assurance, which is a step higher, believes that in Christ we already have salvation. Both are saving. The first is saving only, the second is saving and comforting, too.” And an Apostle writing, says, “These things I write unto you (wishing them to have full assurance) that your joy may be full.”

The Christian’s joy may be increased even beyond that of full assurance of joy, on account of his own acceptance and hope of the eternal inheritance in the future. A Christian has something to give to others. If we **wish to retain** and keep this full assurance of joy, we must give out liberally of that good we have received of God; we must remember and practise the words of the Lord Jesus — “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” We do well to ponder the lesson to be drawn from the incident of the four starving lepers recorded in 2 Kings 7: 3-11. At the time of this incident there was a great famine in the land of Samaria. Being leprous they were compelled to live outside the walls of the city. Read the account in verses 3-11 noting particularly the lesson in verses 8 and 9. What is the lesson here for us as Christians? Are we not in a condition somewhat similar to that of the four lepers? As children of Adam we have all been tainted with the leprosy of sin. Yes, and in our needy and undone state we have been guided by the Lord’s good providence, to a wonderful supply of food. Now what are we doing about all this? Let us examine ourselves, dear friends. Are *we* selfishly hoarding the precious truth? Are we inclined to keep it to ourselves? If so, let us correct this tendency. Let us ponder the words of the lepers in verse 9. “They said to one another, We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace; if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief (mg. punishment) will

come upon us; now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household."

We mentioned that a Christian has something to give to others ; and if we wish to retain and keep our full assurance of joy, we must give out liberally of the good we have received of God. The Apostle Peter has said, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Commenting on these words a recent writer has said, "The very object of our being called into this light is that we may let it shine. If we do not let it shine we are unworthy of it, and the treasure will be taken away and we will be left in the darkness. If indeed we have received the light and have consecrated ourselves fully to God, let us ask ourselves, What am I doing to show forth the praises of Him who has called me out of darkness? Am I going forth with these tidings to my neighbours near and far ? Can I truly affirm that I am; 'All for Jesus, all for Jesus — All my being's ransomed powers ; All my thoughts, and words, and doings, All my days and all my hours?'"

In these days when the kingdom message may be had in such handy printed form, it is the privilege of all the Lord's people to be on the alert to grasp opportunities of telling the good tidings to all who have the hearing ear. In all you give to the needy, in all you give to those in distress, whether the giving is of the spiritual food and raiment, or of the temporal necessities, in all you lay on the altar of sacrifice, there is not the slightest ground for boasting, but there is much in it that will increase our joy evermore. The one who gives most, enjoys the most. It is a grand and blessed law in God's holy providence, that if you try to increase your own joy by gratifying your desires and appetites, you find that you stimulate them by indulgence, and the more you give them, the more they necessarily crave. But, on the other hand, if you wish to increase your own joy by denying your own desires and appetites, and giving as a ministry to the wants and necessities of others, you will find that though your desires are thus unstimulated, yet will your gratification increase, and the more you can give, the more you will swell the current of your happiness, and multiply the joys of your heart. To rejoice always, therefore, give always. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

One of the old saints of God when brought under circumstances in which everything of earthly comfort was slipping from his grasp gives utterance to the beautiful words, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat ; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls ; Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Hab. 3:17, 18.

Let the followers of Jesus therefore hear the Apostle's exhortation and "Rejoice in the Lord always." It gives honor to the one who bought you, to rejoice. Indeed, you owe it to God, to show to the world that your Saviour enables you to rejoice. It is in this way that perchance you may draw others to that spring from which you have received the life-giving medicine that makes even the present life one of joy and rejoicing.

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## The New English Bible.

FROM the wide publicity given to the new translation of the New Testament portion of The New English Bible many people may be led to assume that this production is especially good in comparison with former translations of the Word of God. While it may be true that some passages of Scripture are presented in clearer language, yet it is necessary to report some faults in the translation which are important and misleading to those who accept the wording of this new work without question.

Two samples of faulty rendering are found in John 5:29 and 1 Cor. 15 :51. In the former, the wording — " those who have done wrong will rise to hear their doom" — is particularly misleading. The Revised Version, The Revised Standard Version, and many other helpful translations, give the correct meaning—"Those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" — which means a trial period during which the Lord "will judge the world in righteousness." (See Acts 17: 31.) And again, "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26: 9.)

In 1 Cor. 15:51, the new translation reads—"Listen ! I will unfold a mystery: we shall not all die, but we shall be changed." The Authorised Version, the R.V., the R.S.V., and many other versions are very much better with the wording, "We shall not all sleep," which means that true Christians, at the harvest time of the Gospel Age, do not remain unconscious in the death condition when they finish their pilgrimage, but are "changed in a moment" to their heavenly reward. To imply that some Christians "shall not die" is quite erroneous. The truth on this matter is clearly presented in Rev. 2 :10—"Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." It will be seen that the new translation gives support to the erroneous rapture theory; possibly the translators hold this view, and their translation is affected thereby. How important it is that the Lord's people seek to harmonize the Bible by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and not accept any passage of one translation on important matters without careful investigation.

# Church of the First-Borns.

*“The General Assembly of the Church of the First-borns.”—Heb. 12: 22, 23.*

“THE Church of the First-borns” is not to be confounded with the Church of the First Resurrection.

The word “first,” in the phrase “First Resurrection,” signifies better, superior. The First Resurrection includes only the Lord and “the Church, which is his Body” ; in other words, the Bride Class. But in this glorified Church of the First-borns are included all those who are born of the spirit. Those who are to be of the spirit nature will be those who have been developed throughout the Gospel Age—before God’s favour goes to the world. This Church of the First-borns includes all who come into covenant relationship with God before the New Covenant is put into force. Some will have part (inferior part, however, to that of the Church) with the great “High Priest of our Profession” in instituting the New Covenant. They will all have some share with Him in dispensing the blessings of the New Covenant to all the families of the earth—to Israel first, and then to all nations.

This Church of the First-borns is prophetically pictured in the Old Testament in connection with the Passover. In that night when all the first-born of Egypt were slain, all of the first-born of Israel were passed over. These escaped because of the blood on the lintels of their houses and because of their partaking of the lamb within. We know that afterward all of the first-born of Israel were exchanged for the one tribe of Levi ; and that this tribe was separated or divided into two parts — one a priestly class and the other a servant class. The former were called Priests; the latter Levites; though, of course, all were Levites. These two classes were types of the Church of the Gospel Age.

“But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; to the General Assembly of the Church of the First-borns.” (Heb. 12: 22, 23.) More properly we understand this to signify that we have approached—this is that to which we are coming—it is in sight. Some have already reached it. Our Lord has reached the goal. And some others of the First-borns have also reached their goal; and some of us have not yet reached it. But this is what we are approaching. We shall all have come into power and into our place in the Divine Plan, at the close of this Gospel Age. Thereupon will 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-borns, but we shall be ushered into the presence of an innumerable company of angels. These are the angels who encamp around 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 Firstborns 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.

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## Early Morning Devotion.

THERE is no time like the early morning hour for feeding on the flesh of Christ by communion with Him, and pondering His words. Once lose that, and the charm is broken by the intrusion of many things, though it may be they are all useful and necessary. You cannot re-make the broken reflections of a lake swept by wind. How different is that day from all others, the early prime of which is surrendered to fellowship with Christ! Nor is it possible to live today on the gathered spoils of yesterday. Each man needs all that a new day can yield him of God's grace and comfort. It must be daily bread.

All true prayer has a transfiguring influence. It brings us into the immediate presence of God. The holy of holies in the ancient temple, where the Shekinah was, was no holier than where you bow every time you pray. You are looking up into the face of Christ, Himself. John was not nearer to Him, lying on His breast, than you are in praying. One cannot thus look up into the face of Christ and not have some measure of transfiguration wrought in him.

Then prayer is the reaching up of the soul toward God. It lifts the life for the time into the highest, holiest frame. A prayerful spirit is full of aspirations for God. Its longings are pressing up Godward. It is the transfiguring of the spirit which purifies these dull earthly lives of ours, and changes there, little by little, into the Divine image.

Rise earlier to be more alone with Christ in the morning. Let neither the pressure of business, nor the allurements of pleasure, nor the tendencies of the flesh, nor the drowsiness of spirit, keep thee from thy morning interview and converse with the King of kings.—Selected.

## Day by Day and Hour by Hour.

God broke our years to hours and days  
That hour by hour and day by day,  
Just going on a little way,  
We might be able all along  
To keep quite strong.  
Should all the weight of life  
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future rife  
With woe and struggle meet us face to face  
At just one place  
We could not go,  
Our feet would stop; and so  
God lays a little on us every day,  
And never, I believe, on all the way  
Will burdens bear so deep,  
Our pathway lie so threatening and so steep;  
But we can go, if by God's power,  
We only bear the burden of the hour.  
—Anon.



## Volume XLIV. No. 3 MELBOURNE, MARCH. 1961 In Remembrance of Christ.

JESUS was a Jew, and was, therefore, obligated to every feature of the Mosaic Law. He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it. This study points to the fulfilment of one feature of the Law — the Passover — not that it is already entirely fulfilled, but that the anti-type has been in process of fulfilment for over nineteen centuries, during which time the Church of the First-born remains covered by the blood.

To appreciate this, we must have clearly in mind the type : — Approximately 3,500 years ago God delivered the people of Israel from the despotic power of Pharaoh, King of Egypt. Time after time Pharaoh had refused to let the people go, preferring to hold them as chattels, slaves. Time after time God sent plagues upon Egypt as chastisements. Under the influence of each plague Pharaoh repented, and through Moses entreated God for mercy for himself and the people for relief from the plague. Nevertheless, every manifestation of Divine mercy tended only to harden his heart, until finally the tenth plague, the severest of all, was necessary. That plague consisted in the execution of the death sentence against all the first-born of Egypt. But the Israelites in Egypt were exempt from its provisions under certain conditions. Each family was required to have its own lamb, not a bone of which was to be broken. Its blood was sprinkled on the doorposts of the house, and the family, assembled within, partook of its flesh, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, pilgrim-like, with staff in hand, ready for departure out of Egypt in the morning.

When that night the Divine sentence slew all of Egypt's first-borns, the first-borns of Israel were passed over or spared ; hence the name Passover. And this ceremony, as a reminder of the great blessing of the Lord upon Israel, was commended to be observed yearly as a still greater mercy and blessing yet to come.

A little later on those spared first-borns were exchanged for one of the tribes—Levi. Thereafter the Levites were the passed-over firstborns and were specially devoted to God and His service.

Those experiences of the Israelites and their first-borns were very real, and properly very interesting to them ; but they are still more interesting to Christians, who themselves are antitypes now being passed over. By Christians we do not mean all who merely make profession, nor all who attend Church, however regularly. We mean merely the saintly few who are now being called and being tested as to faithfulness to the Lord, and by faith being passed over—from death unto life. These are Scripturally styled “The Church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.” (Heb. 12:23.) As the deliverance of the nation of Israel from Egypt took place after the sparing or passing over of the first-born, so, correspondingly, the Divine blessing will come upon the world of mankind directly their passing from death unto life, by the power of the First Resurrection. If there is a first-born class, it implies that there will be an after-born class. Thus the Scriptures everywhere distinctly teach that the present call, trial, testing, proving and final rewarding of the Church will not be the end of Divine mercy toward humanity, but, on the contrary, will be only its beginning; for since the saintly are spoken of as the “Church of the first-born,” or, as the Apostle declares, “the first-fruits unto God of His creatures” we are assured thereby that after-fruits are equally part of the Divine Programme.

Amongst the Levites were several divisions, representing different ranks and grades of the Church of Christ. But the principal division or section of the Levites was the priestly family of Aaron, just as there is a special class amongst the antitypical Levites, the faithful few, known in the Scriptures as the Royal Priesthood.

In Jesus' day the time had come for the fulfilment of the antitype of the Passover. Jesus Himself was to be the Passover Lamb. By faith the merit of His sacrifice, His blood, was to be sprinkled upon the door-posts of His people's hearts, and His flesh, the merit of His earthly perfection, was to be eaten or appropriated by them in their minds. With it they were to eat the unleavened bread of the Divine promises, and bitter herbs of trials and adversities, and withal they were to drink wine, the blood of the grape, symbolically implying their participation with the Lamb in ignominy and sufferings.

The Lamb of God, Jesus, the antitypical Passover Lamb, was slain over nineteen centuries ago on the exact anniversary of the killing of the typical lamb. The sacrifice of Jesus needs not to be repeated, for by faith we all sprinkle this same blood today, and in our hearts feed upon the merit of the same earthly sacrifice, and have plenty of bitter herbs of persecution and drink of the blood—share the Master's spirit and its reward of suffering for righteousness' sake.

Not many have experienced these privileges during all these nineteen centuries—in all but a “little flock.” Nor are there many who envy them their present experiences ; nor are there many who appreciate how great will be their

reward and blessings in the life to come. Then, instead of suffering with Christ, they shall reign with Him in glory, honor, and immortality.

Jesus, about to begin the fulfilment of this type by dying as the antitypical Passover Lamb (Christ our Passover is slain for us—1 Cor.: 5:7), instituted for His followers an annual remembrance, which, in their minds, would take the place of the type, and continually remind them of the great Antitype. Instead of the literal flesh of the lamb, our Master used bread, and instead of the blood, the fruit of the vine, and instead of a further commemoration of the type, He directed that this be done in remembrance of the antitype — “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the ‘world,’” and the passover coming to the Church of the firstborn, as precedent to the great blessings for Israel and all the families of the earth.

Our Lord, as a Jew, was obligated to keep the typical Passover, eating of the literal lamb, etc., first; but subsequently, after the ‘Passover supper, He instituted with the bread and fruit of the vine His substitutionary memorial ‘of Himself, saying, “Take eat, this is my body. And He took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And he said, . . . Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God” — until His second coming in power and great glory to receive the Church as His elect Bride and Joint-Heir in His kingdom, and to shower blessings richly upon Israel, and through Israel upon the whole world of mankind.

The hour for betrayal was drawing near. The Master knew by some power unknown to us who would betray Him, etc. Breaking the matter to the twelve, He said, “One of you will betray me.” Each said, “Is it I?” Even Judas brazenly challenged the Master’s knowledge of his deceitful course and said, “Is it I?” The answer was, “It is as you have said—you are the betrayer.” The Divine programme was carried out by the traitor, and the Scriptures were fulfilled, which declare that Jesus should be sold for thirty pieces of silver ; but the coincidence marks the Divine foreknowledge without implying that God in any manner instigated the traitorous conduct, hence the state-men, “Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed.” From this standpoint we are to understand that there is no hope for Judas in a future life. His sorrow and anguish before his death were such as found no compensation in any happiness he had enjoyed in previous days.

In giving the disciples the bread which represented His flesh, and the cup which represented His blood, the Master pictorially offered them justification and sanctification, and, as St. Paul explained, He did more than this --He offered them a participation with Himself in the sufferings of the present and in the glories of the future (1 Cor. 10:16, 17; Matt. 26:29). The antitype of the cup in its higher sense will be the new joys of the kingdom which all the faithful in Christ will share with the great King of Glory, when He shall take unto Himself His great power and reign.

“Lord, I would keep Thy Holy feast, Like Israel when His bondage ceased; And safe beneath the sprinkled mark, His every home became an ark.

Only the lamb which Israel slew  
I need not to make Heed anew:  
Because the blood which stained the Cross  
Is mark of which there ne’er is loss.

I’d keep the feast with bread from heaven,  
Free from all taint of earthly leaven:  
Yet find some sad resemblance glide,  
Which sets the bitter herbs beside.

I seek the feast with upgirt mind,  
As for immediate work assigned;  
And eat like one en passing stay,  
Impatient to resume the way.

That sprinkled blood hath had the power  
To hold me safe is judgment’s hour;  
But still for me a task remains,  
To haste and flee from Egypt’s plains.

With Thy refreshing viands fed,  
I shrink not, Lord, wherever led;  
And still with pilgrim’s staff in hand,  
Plod firmly tow’rds the promised land.” —Selected.

## Passover Memorial, 1961

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 30th March. It is for the brethren to arrange their observance in accord with the spirit of the occasion, and in response to our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me."

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early March, stating the number of persons to be served.

### Memorial Services.

MELBOURNE.—Sunday, 26th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 251 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street.)

ADELAIDE.—Thursday, 30th March, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 68 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

SYDNEY.—Thursday, 30th March 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

PERTH.—Thursday, 30th March, at 7 p.m., at 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth.

### Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, March 31st to April 3rd, in the Masonic Hall, 68 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 60/-. *Same* Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

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## The Times and Seasons.

(1 Thes. 5:1).

THERE has been, particularly over years past, 'so much written regarding Bible Chronology and date-fixing in connection with events expected in the closing of •this• dispensation, that it would seem reasonable to *suggest* that such matters are not the most necessary things to spend our time and thought upon.

The Bible evidently was not written, and prophecies were not given in order that Christians should be able to show superior wisdom in being able to declare dates for events prior to their occurrences. It would seem rather that, as with symbols and types which are not understood until the reality appears, time prophecies are given that when the prediction is fulfilled the faith of the watchful, prayerful Christian shall be so increased and strengthened that he may be enabled to endure the greater trials that may still come along.

One thing seems sure, i.e., that God has not provided us with a certain connected chronology. Again we find that *we* are not dependent upon Bible Chronology in order to know how near we are to the end of this age and the setting up of the kingdom of God—the dethronement of Satan as the prince of this world, and the beginning of the reign of peace and righteousness under Christ and His Church.

All the time prophecies of the Bible have their beginnings within the recorded years of secular history, and these also have had their fulfilment. These time prophecies comprise: —The seven times of punishment upon Israel, which began to count when Nebuchadnezzar subdued Israel in B.C. 606, or 604, and ended with 1914 or 1916 when the Great War resulted in establishing Palestine as the national home of Israel — Jerusalem is no longer "trodden down of the Gentiles." Daniel's 2,300 days (years) began B.C. 454, and ended in 1846. The 1,260 years, 1,290 years and 1,335 years all began in A.D. 539 and found fulfilment in 1799 when the persecuting power of Rome was broken, and the Pope was taken prisoner to France by Napoleon; in 1829 by the proclamation, particularly through the Millerite movement regarding the second advent, and 1874 by the promised' feast which the Lord had foretold He would provide when He came again (Luke 12 :36) .

The fulfilment of these prophecies and also the evident signs promised by our Lord in His great prophecy, Matt. 24,

and in Luke, are quite sufficient to assure the watchers of the Lord's presence—that *we are* actually living “in the days of the Son of Man.” The Lord clearly indicated, that just as Noah was present as a preacher of righteousness, declaring the calamity impending, so He would be present and sending out His messengers, gathering His saints into His garner.

How great is our privilege thus to know the workings of God's great plan, and while it *is* our part to especially declare the message among Christian people everywhere and witness to all men as we have opportunity, yet we must never forget that the special work of our day is the preparation of the Bride of Christ for the great Marriage. Then, while we must all help one another, our each particular work is the preparation of ourselves. We are assured by the Apostle that we might have faith to do wonderful things, and though we had all knowledge and understood all mysteries, yet if we have-not the Christian grace of love, we are nothing. We must daily keep before our vision the beauties of the character, the disposition, the qualities of His heart and seek to do as He would do and be just like him. That is the best way of preaching, our light will then shine to the glory of God and the edifying of those about us.

It was in this way that Jesus “preached to the spirits in prison” — the angels, who, in Noah's day, had left their own habitation and committed folly with the daughters of men ; instead of instructing the human family they corrupted it. Jesus gave them a lesson in obedience—He became obedient to death—and preached to them by His death and resurrection. Quite possibly some of those angels have profited by the lesson.

## Radio on 2VM Moree

Through the zealous and generous co-operation of one of our friends, the Frank and Ernest discussions on the Bible are to be heard over 2VM Moree, in Northern N.S. Wales, from Sunday, 5th March, at the very suitable time of 8.45 a.m. We pray for the Lord's blessing to attend this witness in this new area, in harmony with **His** good will.

## The View from Mt. Nebo.

(Convention Address)

AFTER forty years' wandering in deserts, seeking green pasture, cool water, and shade from a merciless sun, the sight of any land promising protection and stability would be like waking from unpleasant dreams. Pisgah's Mountain is Mt. Nebo, the highest point in a range or ridge of mountains about fourteen miles east of the Jordan River. After their incredible journey, Israel had come to the plains of Moab with one remaining obstacle separating them from the Promised Land.

Their leader had prepared them for this great event. Forty years previously he led them from abject slavery ; 600,000 men, besides women and children. The night they left Egypt a nation was born, Israel. The growing-up period, welding them into a unified community, took forty years. The experiences of those forty years are written indelibly upon the pages of history.

The new generation of the new nation awaited the last order in the desert—the order to go forward and possess their land. Although their remarkable leader was strong and well, a new leader would issue new orders for the new land. Provoked to exasperation by his people, Moses had on one occasion forgotten God's specific instruction. This deflection excluded him from entering the land. Could any leader of Adam's race have done better than “this Moses?”

Many love stories capture the World's imagination and esteem. Possibly many have loved as much, but few could have loved more than did Moses. Time and time again he stood between God's wrath and his beloved people. Moses rejected the proposal to honour *his* descendants at the expense of Israel, preferring to suffer with and for them. When people suffer together they are welded together. Enduring the perils and rigors of -the desert, and even more than this, experiencing God's wrath among them, Moses and the children of Israel had arrived at their goal, fused into a unity through the furnace of adversity. The fruits of victory are at hand, but before any may taste, the leader and his people must separate. This was no ordinary, no casual or natural break ; this is a love story with a sad ending. Could any tongue or pen, however fluent, describe this separation?

The deliverer had rescued his people from the iron furnace of Egypt; brought them through desert and tribulation ; saved them from themselves and idolatry. More than this, he had infused them with hope, faith, loyalty, devotion and unity. Ahead of the people is victory, joy, rest, peace, security, but for Moses is defeat, separation and death. He assembles the leaders, reminds and encourages them with Divine promises (Deut. 8:7-10), as preparation is made to enter “that good land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.” At the same time he tells them it is not for him; he is unable to accompany them, to share their triumph: “The Lord thy God was angry with me for your sakes and swore that. I should not go over Jordan and go into that good land.” Ponder these meaningful words and tears will fill your eyes. Man of iron that he was, his throat must have welled with grief and sorrow, so deep, as he repeated — “I cannot go over Jordan to that good land ; the Lord was angry with me for your sakes.” If ever a cause existed for “righteous indignation,” here it is.

Most men have their big moments. Great men have great moments. Moses was no exception, but unlike others, he had many great moments. Some would say his greatest was when he enjoyed the splendour of the Egyptian court, heir to the throne; others would favor his greatest as the day he forsook that glory. Many would say his greatest moment was that eventful day he took the people out of Egypt; while others would see in the wilderness journey the greatest achievement ever accomplished, especially as the Feast of Tabernacles will perpetuate forever that epic journey. We

feel that the greatest moment in the life of this remarkable leader was the day he said “Farewell” to the people he loved more than life; the day of his humiliation; the day he paid the penalty for others. The Psalmist declares, “They angered him also at the waters of strife so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes, because they provoked his spirit so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.” (Psa. 106: 32,33.) He surely must have typed for another great Leader’s loving submission to God’s will, which later David set to words of music—“I delight to do Thy will, O God.”

Bidding them farewell, he began the ascent to Mt. Nebo to *view* the Promised Land—this was his “reward” for loyalty and consecration. Setting out on this sad journey, everything was a last—the last assembly, the last farewell, the first and last view of the glorious, longed-for inheritance promised so long ago. For Moses it was journey’s end, and he knew it. Did he ascend that Mount light of heart and foot, excited with the prospect of seeing something that previously could but be imagined? Was he excited with the expectation that Nature would soon reveal her glorious vistas, as a tourist or naturalist expects to discover he knows not what in new fields of study? Or were his steps heavy, leaden, weary, with a fatigue not born of physical exertion? As he reached the top, was he jubilant, or did he gladly sink wearily on mother earth, to gather strength to enjoy his last portion? Maybe he ascended the Mount like a robot, mechanically, without feeling, not being subject to like passions as other men?

As you consider all these things you will be convinced his view would be influenced by these many experiences, and for that reason it would differ from all others who could have stood at Nebo’s peak this day. What did he see? At the top of Nebo is a broad, barren plateau, 2,500 feet above sea level. Southwards one would see the broad silvery waters of the Dead Sea. On the far side of it the long, brown Judean Hills stretched away into the distance. Westwards, towards the Mediterranean, Jerusalem would appear as a small white dot. In the same direction was the Jordan River twisting like a snake on its way towards the Sea of Galilee. Between the Jordan and Pisgah’s Range is a barren plain, but on its further banks fertile green pastures. Northwards, rises the high country of Samaria, past Galilee to the majestic snow-capped Mt. Hermon. While at the foot of Nebo was the camp of Israel. Was that all there was to see?

You know how people seek with costly competition a block with a view. You see from such a vantage point the course of development; the city’s changing face. In a few, short years old scenes give way to modern ideas, and civilization unfolds many changes from your block with a view. You may see the ravages of war — desolation and destruction, from your elevated site; you could look upon scenes of revelry and jubilation, or sadness with its sighing and dying. All this is possible from a block with a view. But Moses had a Mountain with a view. What did he see? Whatever it was must have affected him so much, that he died in this Mt. Nebo. What killed him? He was in good health, strong, with not even a defect in his eyesight. Remember, the desert takes toll *first* of the eyesight. With his keen perception it could be that what Moses saw from his Mountain with a view was more than human frame could bear. Instead of the death certificate reading “Heart failure” we think it would have read, “This man died of a broken heart.”

How the tension relaxes, how fear gives place to faith and peace when you gaze into the heavens on a clear moonlight night. The same emotions come over you when you quietly consider Nature’s grandeur. Strangely enough, though, we grow accustomed to natural beauty; in fact, when it is burdensome to eke a living from the soil, one has little or no time to relax with Nature. The common earth and ordinary lakes have no specific appeal. We have mentioned Moses looking out over the lovely river country connecting the two seas. All do not see this view in the same light. The prophet Elisha told Naaman to bathe seven times in the River Jordan to be rid of his leprosy. Naaman was wroth, asking, “Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?” It seems clear that Moses, from his view on Mt. Nebo, saw more than common earth, ordinary lakes, etc. True, he was looking at the Promised Land; more than this, he was viewing the *Land of the Promise*. His attention is backwards, to confirm his faith regarding the precious promises relating to the land, the people, and the future. The Abrahamic promise, confirmed with Isaac and Jacob, that “in thee and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,” bright though it was, seemed clouded with all the experiences that belonged to Moses.

Without looking very far in either time or distance he saw Balaam devise a trapping of Israel into sin and degradation that cost 1,000 chiefs and 24,000 others. A little further back he could see his beloved people murmuring against the food God had been pleased to supply — manna, — and the toll the fiery serpents took at that time. Like us, he no doubt would have liked to forget some of the unpleasant things belonging to the past. One of the most unpleasant he was not allowed to forget—the contention because of lack of water, that provoked this remarkable leader to desperation to incur God’s displeasure. He could see clearly, from his vantage point, all the implications of that disagreeable experience. It was all too easy, and disturbing, to see the connection of one unpleasant experience with the succeeding one.

The further back he looked, it was easier to see; the rebellion of Korah & Co. cost them 250 lives; his own sister, Miriam, who sang praises at the Red Sea, later opposed him and suffered leprosy as a penalty. No field glasses were needed to reveal the upheaval due to lack of flesh to eat and the dreadful scourge that followed. The broken tables of the Law spotlighted rather than clouded the revolt when the golden calf was erected. The people who claimed his affection, for whom he pleaded and interceded, again and again provoked him and threatened to stone him. The faithful leader of Israel was insensible to their ingratitude—to him they were Israel, “prevailing, with the help of the Lord.”

The retrospective view, bright though it was with God’s pillar of fire, was also clouded with Israel’s deflection. Would things alter now, with the entry into the Land of Promise? Do people change as conditions change? Could all the past be wiped off the slate of remembrance and hope for the best for the future? To do so would mean setting aside of Divine Law—the law of sowing and reaping. The more one thought of this, the more foreboding loomed the new

sunrise over Israel. Instead of doubts and fears being stifled they came to the surface with renewed persistence. If Moses had suffered any travail of soul with his people in the wilderness, it must have been as nothing compared with the anguish now endured for them, as alone on Mt. Nebo he views the future. He will not be there to help, to stand between them and God, as he so often did. And now it must dawn on him that excluding him from entering the land was not only his penalty, but their punishment.

Frustration! When so much needs to be done, more than at any other time, and all you can do is idly stand by; when the advice and help you know could be so valuable and beneficial, and all you can do is inactively watch loved ones hurt themselves—this stings deeper than any other lash. The more you love, the less you can do, the deeper the sting. When Moses wrote the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy he may have consoled himself that such dire calamities might be possible under extreme conditions, hoping the meanwhile all would be well. In the quiet with God on Mt. Nebo he could now see that what was threatened as a deterrent in Deut. 28 was not only a possibility for Israel, but a certainty. Moses died! Who could have endured that view?

Instead of looking *from* Mt. Nebo, let us now cross the river and look *at* it from another mountain, close by Jerusalem. Jesus, with but a few remaining days before Him, wearily rests at the top of Mt. Olivet. A tourist would see the lovely city beneath him, the city that could not be hid, as it basked continually in the sun's rays. Every hour of the day there would be a beautiful and contrasting view, with perhaps the last view of the day, resplendent with gold of the setting sun, the best of all. It was at this hour, after the day's work, that Jesus rested on Mt. Olivet. He, too, has a mountain with a view, a view that seems to duplicate Moses'. Looking back He saw the glorious city guilty of the blood of all the prophets. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Looking forward, His view, like Moses', was full of dark forebodings for the future. His disciples asked Him in detail regarding this forward view. His reply is in Matt. 24 Moses saw the first dispersion and Jesus saw the second. Both saw God's people suffering the unspeakable miseries of Deut. 28. Among many dire distresses was "Ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it, and ye shall be scattered among all people from one end of earth to the other." "Weep not for me," said Jesus on the way to the cross, "but for yourselves. If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry." History has recorded to the everlasting shame of mankind what "dry" Gentile nations have meted out to the "green," or God's favored people. Jesus, like Moses, saw what was coming. "Weep for yourselves" was His sad and only complaint.

Much water has gone down the river that feeds two seas since Moses took his first and last view from Mt. Nebo. History written long ago, as well as that written in our time, confirms the views of Moses from Nebo and Jesus from Olivet, that Deut. 28, not once, but twice, has been fulfilled to the letter.

It is now our turn to ascend either Olivet or Nebo. Let it be prior to 1948. Our panorama embraces the same land, ordinary lakes and rivers, etc., but something else arrests our gaze. It matters not in which direction we look, nothing but ruins and desolation, debris upon debris. Is this the Pleasant Land? Are hallowed memories and unfulfilled promises the "pleasant" part of it? Nothing but a miracle could reclaim the title deeds and the fertility of this "pleasant" desert. Nothing short of Divine intervention — "restitution" — could rescue it. Yes, prior to 1948 we'd come down the Mount with leaden feet.

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast." Let us take another peep, in 1960. Our view, encompassing the same boundaries, cannot be true? The same sky, hills, rivers, lakes, etc., are there, just as Moses saw them, but a change is sweeping the country — life, fertility. The shadow as from a sheltering cloud protects God's ancient people—Israel. Wonder of wonders, promises dormant so many centuries, so short a while back seemed impossible of imagination, now actually unfolding. The Fig Tree in tender leaf—a nation reborn; the coming out of Egypt re-enacted. Incline your ears towards the Pleasant Land. Is that Rachel mourning for her children, or is it the mirth of children singing in the streets?

Jesus said, Blessed are your eyes and ears, for they see and hear those things which many righteous men and prophets have desired to see, and have not seen them. What a view. We see not only the things of the Spirit, but the view from Mt. Nebo today suggests that, ere long, the season of *figs* will be here, for the blessing of all the nations. "Redemption draweth nigh."

Moses must be one of those righteous prophets who desired to see what we see actually coming to pass in our day. Do you think the view now possible would have killed Moses? Never! It would have renewed and enthused his faith, energy and zeal. He never doubted God in the blackest of nights—how could he doubt Him now?

When you really get on to a good view, how hard it is to tear yourself away. You just want to feast your eyes and wonder on the glories around you. You like to ponder God's "handiwork." There is no need to lose or forget our view from Mt. Nebo. It is growing better and better every year—the plan is clearer, brighter. "When ye see these things, when the 'Fig Tree' is in tender leaf . . . and putting forth its leaves," Jesus said that summer was nigh,—the Kingdom is near, even at the doors." What a view!

## Breaking the Winds.

(Reprinted from "Christian World"—by Dr. James Black in 1936.)

AT the near end of my little garden there is a gully that sends the cold north winds sweeping between the gable of my house and a high wall that separates my neighbour's place from mine. Try as I would, I found it almost impossible to grow anything worth while growing in this abandoned corner. The blasts of January, but even more so the chill winds of late Spring, simply mowed down any green shoots that were foolhardy enough to appear. So I planned what

some people call a “windbreak.” I put up some good solid planks and nailed or tied them to even more solid poles. Now, I said, let the wild winds do their worst; I have saved my plants from the blasts of Boreas !

Had I? Not one little bit. In fact, my elaborate wooden wall only seemed to make things worse. For, as I discovered to my cost and sorrow, the cold icy winds swept hard against my barrier, then were deflected and driven upwards, only to fall with increased intensity and malice upon the poor plants on the other side.

I went with my tale of sorrows to an old gardener. After I’d told him all I had done, he looked at me with a sort of droll pity. “Ach, you learned folk—there’s an awfu’ lot in this wand ye dinna ken. Now what ye ought to do is just to knock down your fine big solid wall and stick up some thin dry branches or even a bit o’ wire netting. One-inch mesh will do fine. You try that, sir, and see what happens.”

I’m afraid I laughed at him, and certainly I doubted the value of his advice. If a solid protection like my “wooden wall” was of little or no good, of what possible use could pea-sticks or wire-netting be? However, in despair—not, let me frankly confess, because I was in any way convinced—I was driven to try the old man’s suggestion. I put up a thin trellis of criss-cross wood which seemed to me at the moment to be only a ludicrous protection. But I gladly eat dust, for the thing worked. I find that I can grow plants in the old desolate corner with more than passable success. My grand solid wall failed ; the thin trellis does the trick.

Why? The reason, as I know, is this. My former solid wall only threw the cold winds up, and then sent them swirling down on the top of my wretched plants. But the thin trellis breaks up the wind, jumbles it together, sends it back on itself, and so acts as a finer protection for the flowers than the solid bulwark. A hedge, for instance, that breaks the wind and lets it through in moderated fashion is a better protection than a thick wall.

You can apply this to anything, you like, and you will find it true. What is the best way to protect and shield your children? Build a high strong wall around them, as so many fond people do? But that sort of thing can never save them from the driving winds of life. Discipline, sorrows and trials, against which no human device can ever seclude them, are only deflected to be thrown down on their heads with greater force and devastation. It is far better and saner to let the winds of our common experience play around them, moderated only by such natural protection as love and common sense alike can provide. Sheltered lives are never really sheltered—I mean, against the inescapable things of decision and conflict. If we do manage to build a high wall of selfish exclusion around them, that generally does one of two things—it either softens them into flabbiness or leaves them a prey to the double swirl of the sweeping blasts. Let the winds through, tempered by the natural hedge of love, care and wisdom. Give every good natural protection—love, care, counsel, warning and brave advice. But don’t be fool enough to think that walls of wood or walls of gold can save your beloved from the inescapable winds. I saved my flowers by a modest trellis. Temper or break the winds, if you like. But let them through. Wooden walls bring their own special kind of disaster.

“**Israel in History and Prophecy**” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

## Making Pearls

IN the last book of the Bible we are shown a vision of the City of God with its twelve gates, every gate a pearl. Every road into the Holy City, every entrance into the heavenly life, is through a gate of pearl.

What does it mean? It all becomes plain enough if we learn how a pearl is made. And here is the story, as science tells it.

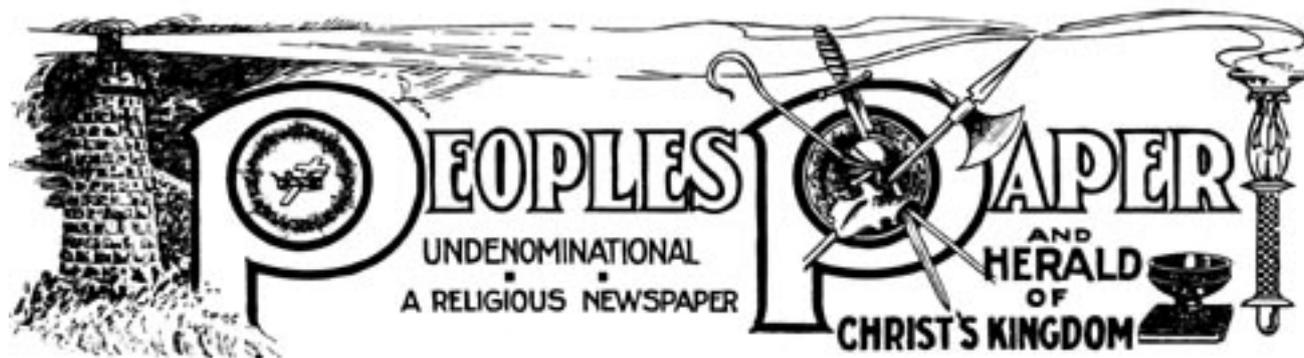
A wound is made in a shell, and a grain of sand, perhaps, gets embedded in the wound. At once all the resources of repair are rushed to the place of hurt. The wound may be made by any of the thousand accidents and vicissitudes of the life of the shell. But when the hurt has been healed, a softly tinted pearl is found closing the wound.

In other words, the Gates of Pearl, by which we enter the City of God, are made by our defeats, injuries, hurts, losses and heartaches on earth; every gate a Pearl. There is no easy way to the highest life, no rosy road to clear insight and understanding. If to us life sometimes seems to be too hard, it is because we do not know what we are saying.

But, it may be asked, does suffering always ennoble us? Manifestly not. In suffering as such, there is no value or meaning apart from the way we take it. The natural reaction to pain, suffering, defeat, is resentment, rebellion, and if it is long continued, bitter despair if not degradation. That is to turn defeat into disaster.

There is another way of facing the worst that can happen to us, without letting it make the worst of us. There is a way of finding in our own souls a faith, a courage, a power by which we may endure and triumph over anything that life or death can do to us, turning darkness into light, making a hurt into a gem.

It is not a pious theory; it is a matter of observable fact. Look into the lives of those whom you must admire for their worth and beauty of character, and you will find that each of them has faced loss, difficulty, pain, disappointment—and won out. God knows it is not easy to do, but it can be done, it has been done, and we can do it, too, by His grace.—Selected.



Volume XLIV. No. 2      MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY, 1961      “Lord,  
“Increase Our Faith.”

(Convention Address)

WHEN we read and meditate on such portions of God’s Word as the 11th chapter of Hebrews, we begin to realise something of the value and importance of faith. It is very precious in the sight of God. (See Heb. 11: 1,6.) Dr. Strong’s definition of faith is—”persuasion, i.e., credence, conviction of the truthfulness of God (which implies acceptance of His Word of truth), reliance upon Christ for salvation; then constancy in such profession; then assurance, belief, fidelity.”

In His dealings with the children of Israel, God revealed, in a measure, His glorious attributes. God’s perfect standard of righteousness — holiness — was held up before the people in the Law Covenant. The children of Israel were told that if they would keep God’s Law perfectly they would gain life. But because of inherent sin and imperfection not one of Adam’s children could measure up to the standard of perfection required by the Law. This is clearly shown by Paul in Romans 3 :9-28.

This provision of God’s grace to justify repentant believers in Jesus Christ is indeed glad tidings. Paul said in Rom. 1 :16,17—”I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For the righteousness of God by faith is revealed therein in order to faith, as it has been written, But The righteous by faith, shall live.” (Diag.) In our Lord’s day some of the people said to Him—”What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sect.” (John 6:28,29.)

So that we may have an enlightened and intelligent belief in Christ as our Saviour from. sin and death, and that we may have an ever increasing faith in God, we need first of all some knowledge. “Christ is made unto us (first) wisdom (which implies knowledge, enlightenment) ; then righteousness (justification), then sanctification, and redemption (de-liverance).” (1 Cor. 1:30.) In Romans, 10th chapter, Paul explains that some knowledge is necessary before faith can be exercised intelligently. (See Rom. 10 :8-15,17.)

Faith may be said to have in it the two elements of intellectual assurances and heart-reliance. Both the head and the heart — the intellect and the affections — are necessary to the faith without which it is impossible to please God. With some, faith is all emotion; with others, it is all intellectuality. But neither of these elements alone can withstand the fiery tests to which faith is subjected. Both must be present and remain, if our faith be that which will endure to the end, and be found unto praise, honor and glory at the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The trial of our faith to which our Lord and the apostles refer, is a trial not only of our intellectual knowledge of divine truth, but also of our heart-reliance upon God. In both respects, the true child of God will find himself severely tried. Let him see to it that he has a “Thus saith the Lord” for every item of his belief. Let him study the doctrine and get a clear understanding of every element of the truth. Let him become rooted, grounded, settled and established in the doctrines of God, and give earnest heed lest at any time he let them slip. (Heb. 2:1.)

When he has his faith well grounded in the fundamental principles of divine truth, let every consecrated child of God see to it that he also continues to cultivate heart-reliance in the “great and precious promises.” The Apostle Peter tells us that a faith which has stood the tests of fiery ordeal and had come off victorious is very precious in the sight of the Heavenly Father. Whenever we pass through a fiery trial and still retain, not only our faith in the doctrines, but also our confidence in God, our reliance in His promises, our integrity of heart and purpose, and our zeal for truth and righteousness, the., our characters have grown more Christ-like, and hence more pleasing to God, who subjects us to discipline for this very purpose.

The Apostle Peter tells us that the faith of those called throughout the Gospel Age will receive a sever, testing. He says “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” In the present time, when gold is comparatively a rare metal, it has a special value. Therefore the apostle compares it to the faith of the little flock, to whom alone, of all humanity, will be given the glory, honor and immortality promised to those who overcome.

Hence the trial of the faith of this class is very important. None will be admitted to membership in the Body of Christ who has not been tested and proved by the Lord. But let us remember that our testing is not to see whether

we are perfect according to the flesh. On the contrary, God knows our frame; **He** remembers that we are dust. (Psa. 103:14.)

What God is seeking in us is the development and perfection of faith. We are tested to see whether we believe in Him as a faithful, wise, loving and true God, and in His Son as our Redeemer, who purchased us with His own precious blood, and as our Advocate who now covers our blemishes, past, present and future, with the robe of His imputed righteousness. These are the elements of faith which He will test thoroughly and which must grow stronger as time goes by. Without strong, well-tested faith in God and His promises, we cannot please Him and become members of the elect class which He is now selecting.

The trial of our faith is not left to chance. It is supervised by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is represented by the prophet Malachi as a refiner and purifier of gold and silver, that He may purify the antitypical House of Levi, and separate the dross from the precious metal. (Mal. 3:3.) In one sense of the word He came as that refiner at the first advent. During the entire Gospel Age He has continued that refining work in His people, that the offering to the Father might be an acceptable one.

First of all, our Lord laid down His life in fulfilment of the types of the Law, thus demonstrating His absolute trust, loyalty, and faith in God. The church of Christ must be similarly tested and proved in respect of their obedience, trust, loyalty to the Father. They must be willing, not only to trust God when things are favorable, but trust in His providences when they cannot see the outcome. To attain this degree of faith, they must pass through manifold trials and testings, that they may demonstrate their faith and loyalty.

The question arises, Why should God test faith rather than works? The answer is that all kinds of works are dependent upon the ability of the worker, and that the whole race of Adam has become unable to do perfect works, on account of the fall of their first parents. None can be perfectly just, perfectly wise, perfectly loving; to be so in our present imperfect condition is impossible.

Therefore, in His wisdom and love, God avoids making His test along those lines in which we are absolutely incompetent, and makes it along the line of faith in His wisdom, His love, and His promises. To doubt any of these would be to weaken the basis of our hope. We realise that *we* are in a fallen condition; that we are dying like the remainder of the race. We have heard through the Word of God that He has provided a Saviour, but we see that things continue much as they were, despite all that God and Christ have done. Our faith, however, assures us that God, who knows the end from the beginning, is working all things according to the counsel of His own will, and that in due time He will establish righteousness in the earth. (Eph. 1:11; Psa. 72:1-7.)

What a splendid example of faith we find in Abraham. Our respect for his faith rises higher and higher as we behold the various manifestations of his confidence in God, and his obedience to the divine command. We say to ourselves, O that we might have in fullest measure this abounding faith, this willing obedience, this trust, resting securely in God—this assurance that He is able to accomplish all that He has promised, even though the accomplishment of it should make necessary a resurrection from the dead! For the apostle assures us that Abraham philosophized upon this matter—respecting the fact that Isaac was his legitimate heir and had been so acknowledged of the Lord, saying, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” He could see no other way that God’s Word could be true; yet so strong was his faith that he trusted that the Lord was able to raise his son from the dead in order to fulfil the promise. (Heb. 11:19.)

This is exactly the kind of faith that the Lord desires in the spiritual seed of Abraham—the Gospel Church—a faith that will trust Him even where it cannot trace Him; a faith which recognizes His perfect wisdom, perfect love and perfect power. It is not a faith, however, that is a spontaneous growth, under present fallen conditions. It requires years •for its development. Abraham had not this degree of faith when first he entered the land of Canaan as a pilgrim. It was a faith that had grown through His continued intimacy with his Almighty “Friend.” His previous trials had already contributed to the development of this, his finished faith; the long waiting and frequent disappointments in respect of Isaac had been beneficial; the attempt to assist the Lord in the fulfilment of the promise, in the begetting of Ishmael, and the subsequent rejection of Ishmael as not being of the Lord’s arrangement, had no doubt helped to establish the patriarch in his confidence that God’s purposes are immutable, and His power unlimited.

So it is with the spiritual seed of Abraham, the Christ, the Church. Our faith-development also is a work of time and patient endurance of trials and testings, which, rightly received, work out for us an increase of knowledge, an increase of faith, and an increase of fellowship with God, until, by the Lord’s grace, we later on reach such a development of faith in Him as sometimes surprises ourselves, and assures us that we have made some progress, because at the beginning of our way we could not have endured the same trials successfully. Thus we see that in many respects even our faith is a gift of God—that while we exercised some faith in the beginning of our experiences, yet the development of it to such a condition and degree as will be acceptable to God is of God’s grace, through His providential leadings, dealings, instructions. To Him, therefore, we must render the praise, not only for the glorious results, but also for the faith and the works of this present time, which fit and prepare us for the coming glory and blessings.

Our Lord’s teachings were contrary to the spirit of the world and so adverse to its policy that His disciples felt that to adopt His methods and principles and discard their own really involved a revolution of their former ideas. In yielding themselves as true disciples, they felt the need of a stronger, firmer faith than they had yet been called upon to exercise. They were quite persuaded from the purity and nobility of His character, and from His miracles and His teachings, that He was indeed a teacher sent from God; yet remembering the requirement of discipleship—“Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath (all his own ideas and will and possessions and earthly prospects), he cannot be my disciple,”—they felt that to continue in this attitude of acceptable discipleship would require a growing faith which would rise to every emergency of His requirements. Hence their request—“Lord, increase our faith.”

They were quite right in their reasoning, for the Lord also clearly shows that the true disciples make progress in the school of Christ toward the full overcoming of the spirit of the world; and this progress can be achieved by faith only—by such full, implicit confidence in His teaching and training as will keep them continually as earnest, diligent pupils under His guidance and instruction. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4.) This, by the way, is very *suggestive* of what is signified to be an “overcomer,” to whom pertains all the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel of Christ. It is simply this—that day by day we attentively heed and patiently carry out the instructions of our infallible Teacher and Guide in full, unquestioning faith in His wisdom and love, no matter how heavy will be the daily cross or how severe the discipline. It is indeed a tedious, life-long process, but the end will be glorious; and even the daily discipline, patiently and meekly borne, will bring the present rewards of conscious progress in the great work of overcoming and of a nearer approach to the goal of a ripened Christian character. All of this is implied in the beautiful words, so expressive of the faith and fervent devotion of true discipleship

“Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee,  
E’en though it be a cross that raiseth me.”

We observe that our Lord made no direct answer to this request of His disciples, but that He dwelt upon the power and desirability of faith. He showed that even a weak, but genuine faith could so lay hold, upon the power of God as to instantly root up and replant a tree, and on another occasion He said it could remove mountains into the midst of the sea. Is the suggestion preposterous? No, not to faith, for, bear in mind, faith is not imagination, nor self-will, nor ignorance, but it is a reasonable thing founded upon good and substantial evidence; so that our Lord’s teaching here implied what on another occasion He clearly stated; namely, that the request be made according to the will of God. (John 15:7) Thus, for instance, if the least disciple were assured, on good evidence, that the removal of such a tree or mountain would be a part of the divine will, and that it was his duty to do the commanding, he should have equally strong faith in the results. Thus it was when our Lord caused the barren *fig* tree to wither. This, observe, was not to satisfy mere idle curiosity, but like all of His miracles which God wrought by Him (Acts 2:22), it was for a definite and wise purpose, to teach an important lesson, and also to convince His disciples of His divine recognition and authority.

However, since there is no basis of evidence for faith that the will of God is to remove literal trees or mountains in answer to any idle, or self-willed, or ignorant commands of men to do so, a genuine faith in His willingness to do it now is an impossibility. But, regarding the tree and mountain as symbols of difficulties and obstructions in our individual Christian course, or in the general course of God’s work, we know that “miracles” are wrought for those who exercise faith ; and they, going forward in the strength of the Lord, are thus permitted to overcome difficulties and to work righteousness otherwise impossible.

While the Lord made no direct answer to this request for an increase of faith, His whole subsequent course with the disciples was a fulfilment of it. And so it will be with us if, in a similarly true spirit of discipleship, we pray —”Lord, increase our faith.” The increase of faith will come, not by a miraculous infusion, but in the natural process of the Lord’s leading and training. In the school of experience, in following His leading and in the blessed results of each step of the way, faith develops and grows.

Verses 7-10 in Luke 17 show that it is in the Lord’s service we are to look for the rewards of faith, the special manifestations of divine favor, in the removal of obstacles and difficulties found to be in the way of our progress in His service by cultivating Christian character in ourselves and others, and in ministering generally to the furtherance of the divine plans. We may not expect these rewards of divine favour except as we prosecute the service. And when they are received we are not to regard them as evidences that we have done any more than it was our duty to do. As servants of God we owe Him the full measure of our ability; hence, we may not feel that we have merited or earned the great blessings of heavenly inheritance and joint-heirship with Christ. We have merely done our duty; but God, with exceeding riches of grace has prepared, for those who lovingly serve Him, rewards far beyond that for which they have asked or hoped. We can do no works beyond what duty requires; even at our best our service is marred by many imperfections, and could never find acceptance with God except as supplemented by the perfect and finished work of Christ.

Verses 11-16 of this chapter show how the rewards of faith, which are of God’s free grace and by no means earned by our faith, should be gratefully received. The samples given illustrate the fact that the rewards of faith are not always gratefully received. There were ten lepers cleansed, and only one returned to give thanks and worship. So also of the many who receive justification by faith, the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God through Christ, how few return to present themselves living sacrifices, thank-offerings, to God, their reasonable service!

In order that the Christian may be strong in faith, God has provided a protection and urges us to “take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” (See Eph. 6:10-18.) We are exhorted to have our “loins girded about with truth,” implying that we are servants of the truth ; and we are to “have on the breastplate of righteousness,” implying faith in the righteousness of Christ as the ground of our acceptance with God. It is also implied that we love righteousness, and seek to conform our lives to the principles of righteousness and truth as revealed in Christ and in the Word of God.

In 1 Thes. 5 :8 Paul speaks of the “breastplate of faith and love.” Our feet are to be “shod with the preparation of the glad tidings of peace.” We are to be ready always to speak the Word of the Gospel in the spirit of our Lord, with meekness and reverence. Then we are to have “the shield of faith” — confidence in God—faith in His power and wisdom and love; it is faith in God—the use of the shield that will quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Then

we must have the “helmet of salvation”; the knowledge of the truth respecting God’s plan and purpose is important. Paul calls “the helmet,” “the hope of salvation.” Then he mentions the “sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God.” We must depend in the struggle of this “evil day” upon the Word of God,—“It is written.” We must use no darts like Satan’s—anger, malice, hatred, strife. And “the sword of the spirit” can be possessed only by careful study and leading of the spirit after consecration—after enlisting in the Lord’s army. In verse 18 the apostle urges upon us the importance of prayer,—“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Faultless in His glory’s presence!  
All the soul within me stirred,  
All my heart reached up to heaven  
At the wonder of that word.

Able to present me faultless?  
Lord, forgive my doubt, I cried;  
Thou didst once, to loving doubt, show  
Hand and feet and riven side.

O! for me build up some ladder,  
Bright with golden round on round,  
That my hope this thought may compass,  
Reaching faith’s high vantage ground!

Praying thus, behold, my ladder,  
Reaching unto perfect day,  
Grew from out a simple story  
Dropped by someone in the way.

Once a queen—so ran the story  
Seeking far for something new,  
Found it in a mill, where, strangely,  
Naught but rags repaid her view

Rags from out the very gutters,  
Rags of every shape and hue—  
While the squalid children, picking,  
Seemed but rags from hair to shoe.

What then, rang her eager question,  
Can you do with things so vile?  
Mould them into perfect whiteness,  
Said the master with a smile!

Whiteness? quoth the queen, half doubting;  
But these reddest, crimson dyes  
Surely nought can ever whiten  
These to fitness to your eyes?

Yes, he said, though these are colors  
Hardest to remove of all,  
Still I have the power to make them  
Like the snow-flake in its fall.

Through my heart the words so simple  
Throbbled with echo in and out;  
Crimson—scarlet—white as snow-flake-  
Can this man? and can **God not?**

Now upon a day thereafter,  
(Thus the tale went on at will),  
To the queen there came a present  
From the master at the mill.

Fold on fold of fairest texture  
Lay the paper, purest white;  
On each sheet there gleamed the letters  
Of her name in golden light.

Precious lesson wrote the master,  
Hath my mill thus given me,  
Showing how our Christ can gather  
Vilest hearts from land or sea.

In some heavenly alembic,  
Snowy white from crimson bring;  
Stamp His name on each, and bear them  
To the palace of the King.

O what wondrous visions wrapped me!  
Heaven's gates seemed opened wide,  
Even I stood clear and faultless,  
By my dear Redeemer's side.

Faultless in His glory's presence!  
Faultless in that dazzling light!  
Christ's own love, majestic, tender,  
Made my crimson snowy white.

#### PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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### **Convention News**

IT is with much thankfulness to the Lord that this brief report is presented on the four-day Convention, sponsored by the Melbourne Berean Bible Class, and held over the recent Christmas season. A few words from one of our visiting brethren—"It has been a lovely Convention, and we give thanks to our Father for all His supervision"—seem to sum up the sentiments of all able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name.

There was much pleasure for the Melbourne friends in welcoming visiting brethren from five of the Australian States, a nice company being present from Adelaide, and the assistance to the programme, given so freely by these visiting friends, helped greatly in making the gatherings so profitable, by the Lord's overruling.

Each day of the Convention commenced with praise and prayer, and on three days Bible studies were conducted on the passages of Scripture—Psalm .91 :1-11; Rev. 14 :13-16; and Phil. 4:4-9. Each of these studies provided much help, encouragement and instruction on various phases of the Christian life, and together enabled a balanced presentation of doctrinal and devotional truths to be gained from these helpful portions of God's Word. Notes on these studies, as well as on all other sessions of the Convention, will be found in the "Convention Notes" now also available for all desiring copies.

Various brethren contributed helpfully with addresses throughout the Convention days, the variety of subjects providing a wide coverage of many important truths for the benefit of all in the assemblies. The chosen topics for the addresses were as follows—"Faith That Works"; "Zeal Toward God With Understanding"; "Obeying God"; "Be Patient Until"; "Lord, Increase Our Faith"; "This is the Life"; "Consider the Lilies"; "Glad Tidings of Great Joy"; "Of God or Not"; "Thoughts on Psalm 4 :4"; "Thoughts on Bible Miracles"; "Kept By the Power of God," and "The View From Mt. Nebo."

The screening of some "Dawn" TV sound films by one of our brethren, who had travelled 1200 miles from Queensland to attend the Convention, was much enjoyed by a good number of the friends and a few outsiders. These

films are really an excellent means of presenting the truth to those who have ears to hear, eyes to see and hearts to appreciate the glad message of the kingdom, and our Brother and Sister in Queensland are to be commended for their initiative in procuring these films and equip-men, necessary, and warm appreciation is also recorded of the work of our brethren in U.S.A., in making these present-day inventions available, in the service of the Lord.

Another interesting session was the presentation of illustrated slides on Israel by another visiting brother from Adelaide. Together with an appropriate commentary these views helped to impress again the importance of the land of Israel in its preparation towards the time when “. . . the law shall go forth of Zion (the heavenly phase of the kingdom), and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Mic. 4:2.)

Fellowship Meetings also had their place during the Convention, and on the first day a number of messages with greetings were gladly received from brethren who had brought them personally from friends in other parts of Australia. Other greetings were received through the mail, some coming from overseas. Also during the gatherings some brethren had just arrived in Australia from Poland, and also conveyed greetings from the many Bible students in that land. All these messages were warmly appreciated, and the message from the Convention assembly, with warm Christian love to all our brethren in every place, is found in Phil. 4:4-7.

Opportunity for praise and testimony to the Lord's goodness and favors received was also taken by a number of the brethren, and it was encouraging to hear of the Lord's care and blessing being experienced on the part of the friends throughout the year just closing. The "Hymns We Love" session was also refreshing, when a full hour was devoted to the singing of favorite hymns, the selections being made and commented upon by each one contributing. The sentiments in many of the hymns sung lifted our minds and hearts very truly to the presence of the Lord, and we give thanks to God for the ministry in song of many of His servants over many years past.

The closing session of the gatherings came all too soon; though the many good things received could not be retained in the mind, the stimulating influence of feasting together around the Lord's table remains with us in these after days, and we lift up our hearts in praise to the Giver of every good thing for a blessed season of refreshing provided through His people at the close of 1960. The Love Feast, during which each one shook hands in farewell with all others present, while singing "Blest Be the Tie", followed by the farewell hymn—"God Be With You Till We Meet Again"—and prayer of gratitude to our Heavenly Father, with request for His protection and guidance upon His dear people everywhere, brought our gatherings to a fitting and successful conclusion.

### **Convention Notes.**

Notes covering the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free upon application to this office.

## **Where Light Is Needed.**

UNDER the heading, "Mormons to Extend Work to Other States", the following newspaper report appeared in the Melbourne "Age" of December 20th, 1960—"Micro-filming of church records and other public documents by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) will be extended from Victoria to four other States next year.

"The president of the Southern Australian Mission (Mr. J. O. Simonsen) said this yesterday. 'We are spending many thousands of dollars in Australia on this work,' he said. 'The micro-filmed records were stored in an underground vault in Salt Lake City, U.S.A., for all posterity,' Mr. Simonsen said. 'Eventually, the names of dead parishioners in records of other churches might be baptized by proxy. We are not baptizing souls into the Mormon faith,' he said, 'but we believe that a soul must be saved by full immersion.'

"Mr Simonsen said his church was providing a service to mankind in this work of baptism by proxy for the souls of the dead, as mentioned by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:29."

The above is surely one of the most amazing statements ever made by any person claiming to understand the Bible in this enlightened age. How strange it would be if God left the salvation of millions of human beings who have died on the possibility of some "Good Samaritan" church system collecting their names and having them baptized by proxy. What an opinion Mr. Simonsen must have of the Almighty God, who so loved the world as to give His Son for their redemption, and yet He depends upon the organization of Mormons to save multitudes of people, after death, by a form of water baptism by proxy !

The plain truth of the Bible is that all who have passed away in death are actually dead until the resurrection, and no amount of water baptism, or other ceremonies of men can in the least alter their destiny in the future. But God has provided for the resurrection of the dead, as declared by Paul—"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust," because "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man." (Acts 24:15; Heb. 2:9.) And again, "God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth that Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:4-6.) When the testimony that Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all is made to mankind in the resurrection day, they will have the opportunity of accepting Him and living forever on the restored earth, as declared by the prophet Isaiah—"For when thy (God's) judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa.26 :9. See also Acts 17:31.)

The following explanation of the text in 1 Cor. 15 :29—"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all ?"—quoted by Mr. Simonsen, is from the study "The New Creation" and should prove helpful to all desiring to harmonize this verse with the Bible as a whole.

A misapprehension of the Apostle's meaning in 1 Cor. 15:29 led, during the "dark ages," to substitutionary baptism:

Christian people, whose friends had died without baptism, were baptized for them representatively. Correct views of what constitutes the real baptism quickly shows us the inconsistency of such procedure. One person could no more consecrate himself for another person than he could transfer either his natural or his spiritual life to another person. This misapprehension of the Apostle's words, however, has led to confusion in the minds of many, who fail to recognize how great a falling away took place shortly after the death of the apostles, and how wild and unreasonable were many of the theories and customs then introduced.

The apostle's topic was the resurrection of the dead, and he is here sustaining and elaborating that doctrine. Evidently assaults had been made upon the faith of the Church at Corinth respecting the resurrection of the dead. As a part of his argument, in the verse under consideration, he calls the attention of the Church to the fact that they had all been baptized, and that their baptism signified or symbolized death. He then, by way of showing them the inconsistency of the new position, inquires wherein would be the wisdom or value of such a consecration to death, as their baptism suggested, if the new theory that the dead rise not at all were true. They had consecrated themselves to be members, to die one with the other, and one for the other in fellowship with Christ, and thus to be dead with Him, and as members, of His body, members of the great atonement sacrifice on *behalf of the dead world*, because they hoped in the promised resurrection.

The Apostle's argument is that the whole Christian position stands or falls together. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then those who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished, as well as the remainder of the world; and if such be the case, and there is no future hope either for the Church, or for the world through the Church, why should we consecrate our lives unto death? We are baptized into death with Christ, baptized for the dead, to the intent that we may by and by be associated with Him as the Life-giver of the world—the Seed of Abraham.

### **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, March 31st to April 3rd, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's names. The address for the Convention will be stated later, and further particulars may be obtained from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

### **Passover Memorial, 1961**

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 30th March. It is for the brethren to arrange their observance in accord with the spirit of the occasion, and in response to our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me."

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early March, stating the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

MELBOURNE.—Sunday, 26th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street.)

SYDNEY.—Thursday, 30th March 7 p.m., at 87, The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

"Israel in History and Prophecy" is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

## **“Words Now Out Of Date”**

LONDON, January 11.—The Archbishop of Canterbury said today that he hoped his recent visit to the Vatican had shown that the words “Catholic” and “Protestant” were completely out of date.

“They mean nothing at all,” the Archbishop (Dr. Geoffrey Fisher) said. “They are almost always used now purely for propaganda purposes. That is why so much trouble is caused by them.”

The Archbishop went on: “I have heard a good deal about these two words. I hope that by going to visit the Pope I have enabled everybody to see that the words Catholic and Protestant as ordinarily used are completely out of date.”

The above news item appeared in the Melbourne “Age” and reveals the complete ignorance on the part of church leaders today concerning the great “falling away” from the truth which our Lord and the apostles warned would take place during the Gospel Age.

Our Lord very clearly warned His disciples against the great Papal system when He declared—“When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth, let him understand.” (Matt. 24:15.) The teaching and practice which is particularly abominable in the Lord's sight is the Papal doctrines of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass—the taking away of the daily (continual) sacrifice of Christ, by the institution of this abomination which maketh desolate.

The Apostle Paul declared that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work” in his day, showing that he foresaw the development of the great Papal system which would deceive all nations, “whose coming is with the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” (2 Thes. 2:7-9.)

No wonder the Lord revealed to John in the Revelation the great corrupting influence of this “Mother of Harlots,” and of course the implication is at once realised that the “daughter” systems are of similar constitution, adhering to

many of the corrupting teachings and abominations of the “mother.” • (Rev. 17:1-6.) So much so, that John was given a vivid description of “Babylon”—mother and daughter systems of Christendom—and shown how all nations had been intoxicated with “the wine of the wrath of her fornication”—false and true doctrines mixed with worldly affiliation. The clear call to God’s true people—“my people”—is also given,—“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.” (Rev. 18:1-5, etc.)

The fact that Dr. Fisher feels it is now “out of date” to protest against any of the Papal doctrines, shows how near may be the fulfilment of Rev. 6 :14—“And the heaven (nominal church systems) departed as a scroll when it is rolled together.” The symbolic heavens are certainly “rolling together” in preparation for their “passing away” to make way for the “new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:10,13.)

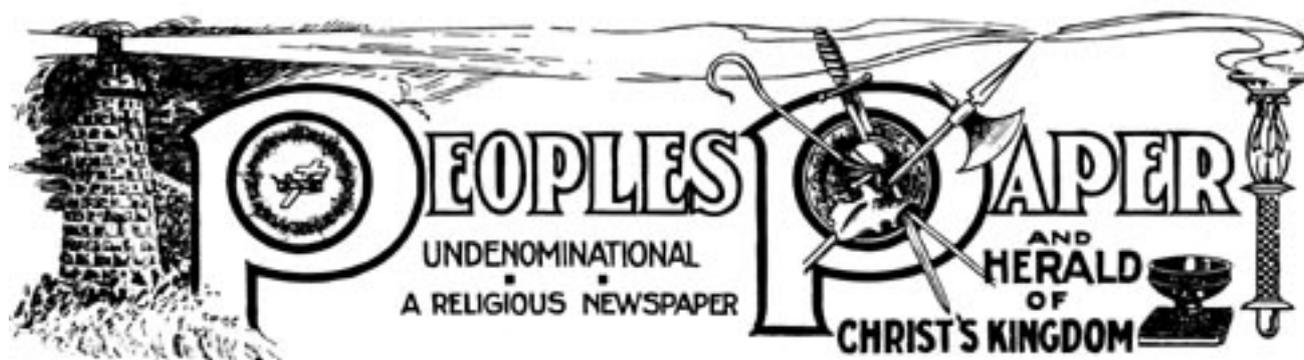
## Pilgrimage Ended.

WHILE the recent Christmas Convention was in progress, one of our friends, Sister Bailey of Geelong (Vic.), finished the earthly way on the evening of Monday 26th December. Our dear Sister Bailey had been looking forward to the Convention gatherings for some time, but a severe heart turn a few days previously had laid her aside in hospital after some years of severe physical suffering, during which our Sister manifested a most patient and cheerful disposition which was a wonderful example of Christian trust and endurance, by the Lord’s grace.

Responding to the Frank and Ernest broadcasts over eight years ago, Sister Bailey at once showed quick and decided appreciation of the message of the kingdom, and after attending a lecture or two in Geelong grasped the opportunity of attending regularly at the Bible Class in that city. It seemed that our Sister was just ready for the truth message, as she appeared to have no difficulty in accepting the truth rather fully ; having been studious in her former life was no doubt of good assistance in her study of the Bible and truth literature which she used to good advantage.

Ever ready to attend Class meetings and Conventions, often far beyond her physical strength, thus manifesting a love for the truth and fellowship with kindred minds, it was evident that our dear Sister Bailey had found the truth satisfying her longing as nothing else could do, and we rejoice that the last years of her earthly life of weariness and physical pain were supported and sweetened, so that she continually manifested a smiling face, which was surely a good witness to the Lord’s keeping power and comfort in every time of need.

Sincere sympathy is extended to our Sister Bailey’s daughter and son, who will greatly miss their dear mother. The members of the Geelong Class will also keenly feel the loss of Sister Bailey at their Bible studies and also in having the oversight in taking Sister to the meetings and generally attending to her needs in various ways from time to time, as unto the Lord. However, as the Apostle exhorts the Lord’s people, we “sorrow not as others who have no hope.” No, indeed, we give thanks to God that our dear Sister to all who love Him supremely.



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### “The Fig Tree, and all The Trees.”

*“And he spake to them a parable ; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees. When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” —Luke 21 :29-31. (Read Luke 21 :5-33.)*

SPECIAL interest to Christians today is centered in this parable of our Master’s. We find that our Lord, after describing in a general way the events covering the whole of this Gospel Age—nation rising against nation and so on—gave His disciples this parable so that they would record it for the particular benefit of similar disciples when it was due to have fulfilment.

It is well to remember that a parable means, as the dictionary explains it—“A comparison ; a similitude; specifically, a short fictitious narrative or story of something, by means of which a moral or teaching is drawn; as the parables of Christ.” This parable about the fig tree, and all the trees, is descriptive of springtime. In a matter of a few weeks, the

whole aspect of the trees changes. When you see the buds and leaves spreading forth, you know that summer is nigh. That is the picture, and we want to find out the meaning of that picture. When Jesus said—"Likewise ye"—He could not have referred to those very disciples before Him, but rather, they represented the Lord's disciples who would benefit from this parable at the time of its fulfilment; and we note the time of its fulfilment would be just prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth, or in the words of Jesus—"know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Springtime points forward to summer-time, — the summer-time of God's favor,—just as the winter-time represents the wilderness condition through which mankind has been passing throughout Many centuries.

That our Lord did not leave His disciples of His first advent in doubt about the long period intervening before the Kingdom of God would come, is evident by another parable He gave in Luke 19:11-13. "They thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear," so He gave them the parable of the Pounds, instructing them to "Occupy till I come." In other words, our Lord meant—Be my representatives, take the Truth forth throughout the length and breadth of the world, as generation after generation of disciples would succeed each other, until the Second Advent, when the time would come to deal with His servants. That parable shows us that the Kingdom was a long way off when it was spoken by our Lord.

So many times our Lord taught by stories and illustrations, truths concerning realities. What does this parable of the fig tree really mean? We believe the first part of this parable is well revealed in another parable in Luke 13: 6-9. "He spake also this parable : a certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard ; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none ; cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground ? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well ; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

It does not take much study for us to understand that this parable of the fig tree was referring to the Jewish nation, to whom our Lord came and presented Himself as their **Messiah**. For three years He came looking for fruit, and in the parable it says, What is the use of it; cut it down. But No, says the dresser, Let it remain another year ; if it does not produce fruit, cut it down then. Our Lord was 31 years during His ministry expecting some fruitage from Israel. They were chosen by God hundreds of years previously; the succeeding generations should have been appreciating the words of the Lord, and this generation should have been ready to receive their Messiah. John the Baptist called them to repentance, and told them this wonderful One was coming; but so few were able to appreciate the Son of God, their own Messiah. This parable undoubtedly depicts the Jewish nation. As a nation there was so little fruitage manifest. Even after well into the fourth year there was not the fruitage the Lord expected at that time.

Following through the records of our Lord's first advent we find in Luke 19:28-44 a helpful account of Jesus' entry into the city of Jerusalem as a king, and His statement respecting this Jewish nation which should have accepted Him as their Messiah and Deliverer. Our Lord had a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, as the common people hailed Him as their King, but Jesus knew that the religious rulers were going to stir up strife against Him. He was coming in to go through most terrifying experiences, and shortly would be crucified. That is why **He** wept over Jerusalem. They should have rejoiced and said, Here is our Saviour, our Messiah. But instead, He said to them (verse 42), "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." If only they had been in a true heart condition —if they had not been misled by the Scribes and Pharisees! But Jesus had to declare —"Thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." What a pathetic situation for our Lord on that occasion ; truly, "He came unto his own, and His own received him not."

Shortly after the events of verses 45-48 in the 19th chapter of Luke, we have a most revealing incident recorded in Matt. 21 :17-20. It seems that the Lord, after riding into Jerusalem, had gone out to Bethany overnight, and returned next day into the city. "Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the *fig* tree withered away."

Here we see Jesus again picturing to His disciples that this fig •tree represented the Jewish nation. There was no fruit on the *fig* tree, so He cursed it. The disciples noticed how soon the *fig* tree withered away. We cannot mistake these signs that Jesus *gave*. He pointed out that that generation was not worthy of the blessings they could have received from His wonderful teachings at that time. There is no doubt that here is another picture of the withering condition of the Jewish nation, because of their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah and King. The "withering away" of the Jewish nation was revealed further in Matthew's Gospel, with the declaration of Jesus—"Your house is left unto you desolate," (See Matt. 23:34-39; also Paul's record in 1 Thes. 2:14-16.)

Does this mean that the Lord had cast off the Jewish nation for all time, when He said —"Your house is left unto you desolate"? Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70, and Israel scattered throughout all nations. Does it mean they were cast off forever? The Apostle Paul answers our question in Rom. 11 :1,2.—"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid . . . God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew." It is a mistake, then, to conclude that Israel was cast off forever because they did not accept the High Calling. God's call went to the Gentiles •to make up the required number for the heavenly calling, which Paul explains—"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for ; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." A comparatively few amongst Israel grasped the privilege of the heavenly invitation by accepting Jesus as their Saviour, and the rest were blinded. The Apostle Paul continued—"Have they stumbled that they should fall"?—without any further hope—"God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." And further, Paul declared—"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?" Not only life from the dead for Israel, but life from the dead for all nations. Here we see the two phases of the Kingdom revealed. If the casting away of •the Jews from the High Calling be the reconciling of some from the Gentiles for the Bride of Christ, what shall the receiving of the Jews back into favor with God mean, but something on a still wider scale—life from the dead! (See Rom. 11:7-15.)

After describing the necessity for humility in thankfulness on the part of the Gentiles received into the Lord's spiritual family (Rom. 11:16-24), we come to Paul's wonderful explanation in verse 25—"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." "Blindness in part,"—Israel is not fully blind. They still hold to the Old Testament promises of God. The Messiah cursed the fig tree, and said,—"Your house is left unto you desolate." They are blind "in part" only, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in—until the required number from the Gentile nations is called out for the Bride of Christ.

Another of our Lord's parables explains the blindness of Israel, especially the religious leaders, in the words of Matt. 21 :33-46.—"The kingdom of God (the opportunity of becoming members in that kingdom) shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." It may be asked, What nation is this, that is going to bring forth the required fruits? Is it the British nation, the French nation, or any other of the nations on earth down through the centuries? No; not one nation conforms to the requirements. But there have been some of mankind, here and there in all nations, who could qualify. The Apostle Peter tells us about this wonderful nation to whom God is going to give the kingdom which was taken away from Israel, in 1 Pet. 2:7-10. "Unto you therefore that believe he is precious . . . Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained, mercy."

So, the members have been taken from here and there from different countries, kindreds and tongues. Some from Britain, from America, China, Russia, Africa, Australia, etc., making up this "nation," all down the Gospel Age. In all, it is but a "little flock," for few have appreciated the privilege of walking in the footsteps of Christ. The fact that blindness is still upon Israel is a proof that the fulness of the Gentiles has not yet come in—the calling to the heavenly kingdom is still operative to those whom the Lord our God shall call.

The Apostle Paul explains, however, that when the fulness of the Gentiles has come in, then—"All Israel shall be saved ; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob ; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Rom. 11 :26,27.) In view of this clear statement from the Apostle, who would claim that Israel has no part in the promises of God? Who would be foolish enough to claim that all the promises to Israel belong to their own earthly organisation of people? It may surprise some people to know that there is an organisation today which claims all the promises of Israel for themselves. It is a most amazing thing. They say, We, and we only, are God's chosen people; this shows how some who previously had much of the truth can be deceived.

And what about the covenant God is *going* to make with Israel? Looking at Heb. 8:8-12, we see how the apostle explains this from the prophet Jeremiah. We see what kind of people with whom this covenant is made—not with the Israelitish fathers, who, when they left Egypt came through the Red Sea and the Lord gave them the Law Covenant. No, but these *are* the same kind of people with whom the Lord is to make the New Covenant. They are not Christians of the Gospel Age. This new' Covenant has to do with Israel, natural people, on the earth, after the Bride has been completed; the New Covenant does not operate until "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," as we have seen from the Apostle in this 11th chapter of Romans. (See also Rom. 11:28-32.)

In Luke 21 :30, we read—"When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand." Did Israel shoot forth? We all know the answer, for the greatest re-establishment in the history of the human family has taken place in Israel. First think of the conditions existing about the period 1914-1918. Palestine was a desert country; but a miracle occurred. The Turks were driven out ; ever since, progress has been made step by step, until Israel became a State in 1948. They became an established nation. Could there be a more appropriate term used than that given by our Lord in His words about the *fig* tree putting forth leaves?

It is wonderful to see how Israel has reacted according to what the prophets foretold. Looking at Jeremiah 16, from verse 14 we read—"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them ; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." So there was the fishing; that is, the enticements, and also the hunting. Six million Jews were persecuted to death under Hitler's regime. Why did God permit that? Those Jews are going to come up in the resurrection; they will remember what happened. They are going back to Israel, too, in the resurrection ; they will inhabit the land, and say, We were not worthy in our previous life. We did not acknowledge our Messiah. But they will be recompensed, along with all mankind, when they respond to the Lord in their time of favorable opportunity. (See also Amos 9:8-13.)

Now, what about the Lord's further reference in His parable to "all the trees"? If the fig tree represents Israel, do "all the trees" represent the nations generally? That would seem to be correct. What is happening to all the nations of earth today? Has there ever been such an awakening or "shooting forth", a coming to life amongst the nations as we

have seen in the last quarter of a century, or the last ten years—or even the last twelve months? One Scripture seems to have special reference to this awakening; that is 1 Thes. 4:16, relating to the “days of the Son of Man.”—“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.” What has that got to do with the nations at large? The word “shout” comes from a Greek word meaning a shout of encouragement, or incitement. That has been *going* on amongst the world of mankind for a number of years now. There has been a stirring up to what they claim are their rights. The dark-skinned people are saying, We will no longer be the servants of white men. The time has come for the darker races to come into their own rights; both true and fancied rights are being shouted all over the world.

The following newspaper report of September 30th last, is to the point: — “Nigeria emerges tonight as Africa’s numerically largest independent State in the biggest transfer of power by Britain since she granted independence to the 400 million people of the Indian sub-continent in 1947.

“The 36 million people of Nigeria, on the west coast of Africa, comprise nearly one-sixth of the population of the entire African continent. Nigeria’s population is considerably greater than the combined populations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and is increasing by about one million every year. Until the middle of last century, Nigeria was known mainly as a major source of slaves for West Indian and American plantations.

“With the granting of full independence to Nigeria, fewer than 40 million people remain under British colonial control—mostly in Africa, Asia, the Mediterranean (Malta) and the Caribbean. Thus, the British Empire has shrunk from a total of nearly 500’ million people at the end of the second world war. And the pull-out process in Africa—which the British Prime Minister (Mr. Macmillan) has described as ‘the wind of change’—continues.”

The British are wise in wishing to pass over independence to these people peacefully. The poor people of the Congo have not been so fortunate ; they thought that gaining their liberty would be everything, but there are too many who want to be Prime Minister in that land, and they have not obtained the happiness they sought. But the point is that God’s time has come for all the nations of the world, “all the trees”, to become aware of their rights, and in their selfishness they are going to precipitate a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. From Nahum 2:3, we read—“In the day of his preparation (preparing for Christ’s Kingdom) the fir trees shall be terribly shaken.” Yes, but after that, all mankind will be ready to listen to the Lord,—“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” (Psa. 46:8-10.)

Looking at Rev. 7:1-3, we have a picture telling us that God is holding back the winds so they shall not hurt, amongst other things, “the trees.” This is the day that God has planned. He is holding back ‘the onslaught of trouble until a very special time,—’till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.’ God’s plan runs to a timetable. These angels are given the authority to let loose the winds of trouble when the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. Then the whirlwind will be allowed to blow. There is to be a great levelling process so that all humanity will be thoroughly humbled, and then they will cry to the Lord, and be ready to receive His blessings. “The desire of all nations shall come.” None will be disappointed; all shall be fully satisfied. There will be no United Nations in the sense in which we have it today; but the great Administrators on the earth will be Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the Ancient Worthies. The power of Christ and His saints will come down from on high, and nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all the Lord’s holy kingdom. (See Ezek. 17:22-24; Isa. 55:8-13; Isa. 25:6-9; Isa 52:9,10.) These prophecies tell us about the great reconstruction time with the establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth.

In Luke 21:12-15 we have a message especially for Christians. While these words were addressed particularly to the disciples of Christ who faced the persecutions which followed His death and resurrection, the same principle applies to God’s people in this end of the Gospel Age. Some Christians may be called upon to go through some of the trouble coming upon the world. “Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate for a testimony: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist,” —do not be anxious. “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.” Be confident of Him. “Stand still, and see the salvation of our God.” Do not be mixed up with the struggles of this present evil world. Keep your hearts true and devoted to the Lord. The Lord’s people have a wonderful over-ruling providence working on their behalf. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” We must be true Christians. We must be fully yielded to the Lord to be worthy of God’s keeping and blessing. We can do this, by His grace. May it be so with us in all the days ahead!

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## Pleasing the Lord.

ONE of our brethren has written recently concerning the verses of Scripture in. 1 Cor. 11:14-16, as follows:— “I have always felt somewhat mystified regarding the matter of men and the mention that it was proper that their hair should be short, yet in all the pictures of Christ that we have, and more or less of men generally in that day, we find them pictured with hair to the shoulders.”

Possibly other friends have wondered about this matter also. While we cannot be sure that the pictures of Christ are absolutely true representations of Him, when, He walked this earth, it is quite evident that to keep men’s hair of a length approaching the shoulders it would be necessary to cut it two or three times a year, from boyhood. It would seem, then, that hair cut from time to time would be considered short by the Apostle Paul in his explanation to the Corinthian Church. On the other hand, hair allowed to grow its full length, without cutting, would fit the Apostle’s

description of long hair, which he stated—"is a woman's glory; for her hair is given her for a covering."

A lovely incident during our Lord's ministry is revealed in Luke 7:37,38. "A woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an 'alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment." Here we see that the woman's hair, full length, would be like a towel, and the lesson drawn from this incident is that of humble repentance and adoration of the Saviour in the use of that which was the woman's "glory" being brought into service in this spontaneous manifestation of love for the Lord.

The Apostle's statement in 1 Cor. 11 is intended no doubt as a picture, to teach that the sisters represent the church, and the brethren represent the Lord in the assemblies.

How often is the statement made with reference to the Lord's disciples, that they are *in* the world, but not *of* the world. Our Lord stated repeatedly—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14-16.) Could it be that the sisters by refraining from cutting their hair, contrary to worldly custom, would be more pleasing to the Lord and a better witness for Him, by showing they appreciate the honor of representing His true Church during its earthly sojourn? Yes, that is so.

The fact that the great Apostle Paul, concerned as he was with the deep things of God, took the opportunity to mention what may seem a rather small matter to some people, shows that the significance is not at all small. The words of Jesus are also applicable—"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." (Luke 16:10.) The apostle shows however, that this lovely picture of the sisters' long hair is not a command to be followed—"If any seem to be contentious (dispute his advice, desiring their own will in the matter) we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." No, such advice is for those who love to accept it for the Lord's sake.

### **Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper."**

A helpful article in booklet form, entitled "Knowing God," is taking the place of the "Peoples Paper" for January, 1961, and is being posted out to all subscribers with this issue of "Peoples Paper." It is not possible always to supply all friends on the free list with booklets, but those desiring copies of this particular booklet are invited to apply for same.

### **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

Some one has well said—"The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One of the great difficulties with Christianity today is that it has admitted the strangers, the "people of the land," and recognized them as Christians. It does injury, not only to the Christians, by lowering their standards (for the average will be considered the standard), but it also injures the "strangers," by causing many of them to believe themselves thoroughly safe and needing no conversion, because they are outwardly respectable, and perhaps frequently attendants at public worship.

## **God's Best Gift.**

WE are approaching another anniversary of the season of the year kept generally to celebrate the birth of Jesus as the babe of Bethlehem, and while it has often been stated that our Lord did not ask that his birth be especially remembered, though He did particularly request that His death be commemorated, yet there is something very inspiring in the record given by Luke respecting the birth in the city of David of our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

That our Heavenly Father could have sent Jesus into the world as a fully grown man, had this been His will, cannot be doubted, so there must have been some very good reason why an earthly mother was selected, and Jesus was born as a babe. Perhaps it was helpful for Jesus to become acquainted with members of the fallen human family over a period of thirty years, prior to entering upon His life of sacrifice. As a perfect child He must have felt the difference between other children and Himself, even as the -scuffs and scourgings that He received from sinful men, in later years, would inflict great anguish upon His heart and mind—in subdued sympathy for their waywardness. From this standpoint our Lord could well appreciate the sentiment of Paul's statement long before it was formulated in the Apostle's mind—"God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom.5 :8.)

The fact that an angel of God proclaimed the birth of Jesus to a group of shepherds "watching over their flock by night," is also of great interest to us. They were lowly, good-hearted men, no doubt, and while they were afraid of the heavenly visitor at the outset, the message proclaimed would no doubt calm their fears, and give them confidence and assurance that this event in Bethlehem was of the greatest importance since the creation and fall of man in the Garden of Eden.

To be told that they should "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," was enough to thrill their hearts, even though the full understanding of it would be so imperfectly grasped. Would that people today would meditate more upon this lovely message from the heavenly servant to those shepherds, for even a partial appreciation of these "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" has a marked effect upon the minds and hearts of people generally, even though, from the worldly outlook today, there is so little to give hope and joy for the future.

For Christians, however, this angelic message is the basis for all future hopes and aims, for having accepted Christ the Lord as their Saviour, and having responded to the call to gladly walk in His steps of sacrifice, these “good tidings of great joy” are a continual inspiration to strive for a closer walk with the exalted Saviour, while at the same time seeking to find others to whom this joyful message has appeal. And then to know that the further message of the heavenly host “praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men” is soon to be fulfilled amongst all the inhabitants of the earth who have ever lived, in the grand resurrection day of Christ’s Kingdom, truly exhibits God’s great love for all His human family, in His provision of His Best Gift of Jesus, so long ago, as the babe of Bethlehem.

## Things The Lord Hates.

(Prov. 6:16-19.)

(Contributed Address.)

IN a general way we acknowledge that the Lord hates evil, but what really constitutes evil? We are apt to think of evil men as those who rob banks, commit murder and who live licentious lives. We think, Of course the Lord hates that, and we feel self-satisfied that we hate that kind of thing too.

However, the Lord’s hatred of evil is more intense and far-reaching. In Proverbs 8:13 we read that the fear (reverence) of the Lord is shown by our hatred of evil, but we see that the verse goes on to especially mention pride, arrogance and evil speaking as things that the Lord hates. More clearly still is the position explained in Prov. 6:16-19. (Please read.)

We have to an extent learned of God’s character, and to love the things that He loves —righteousness, truth, equity, etc. But not only must we love the things that the Lord loves, but we must hate the things that He hates. Let us see if we hate them as we should.

First, the Lord hateth a proud look —”Haughty eyes” is the literal rendering of the Hebrew. It refers largely to self-exaltation. In the Bible we have two outstanding contrasting examples; one in the spirit world and one amongst men. We have Lucifer, the archangel, son of the morning, and our Lord Jesus in the beginning as the Logos. One self-exalted himself and with haughty eyes said— “I will be like the Most High.” The other never meditated any usurpation to be like God, but was ready to humble Himself in assisting to work out God’s designs. The contrasts amongst men are found in the self-righteous Pharisee and the poor publican. One, with a proud look, thanked God that he had not fallen as low as other men; the other, conscious of his guilt, cried, “Lord be merciful to me a sinner.”

We should not fail to rightly rejoice in the position we enjoy in Christ Jesus, for verily He has placed our feet upon a rock and given us a solid foundation. He has lifted us out of the miry clay upon which our fellow men are still treading vainly in an effort to maintain a standing. We do have something over which to rejoice, but nothing about which to be proud. As we observe the lower standards of the groaning creation around us, our reflection ought to be — But for the grace of God, there go I. Such a spirit enhances appreciation of what the Lord has done for us, and makes us sympathetic and desirous to lift others up to our own position, if they will. (Gal. 6:10.)

Next, the Lord hates a lying tongue. If we analyze this correctly, we fear most of us will take a rap. A lying tongue is not only that which speaks deliberate falsehood for any reason, but would include the loose speaking to which we seem to fall a prey at times. In the company of others the flesh seems especially prone to err along this line. How often we may have to reflect — Was what I said today, before so and so, strictly correct, or did I romance somewhat; we have felt bad when we realised that it was not ; therefore, it was a lying tongue. Not for nothing does the apostle warn that the tongue “is a word of iniquity . . . that sets on fire the cycle of nature . . . and that it is set on fire of gehenna.” (James 3:6.) Tongues unchecked stir up deadly strife and can eventually lead us to second death.

When men of mature years and good character are particularly observed as speaking with a strict guard upon their lips, it is a sign that they have profited by experience and learned of the remorse that follows a lying tongue. The writer of Ecclesiastes must have written from experience and observation when he said, “A fool’s voice is known by a multitude of words . . . therefore be not rash with thy mouth . . . but let thy words be few.” (Eccles. 5:3, 2.)

Next, the Lord hates hands that shed innocent blood. It has been helpfully pointed out that this is a symbol of murder, and murder in its refined form is assassination of character. Defaming others, or belittling them in any way, is tantamount to shedding innocent blood, and must bring retributive justice upon our own heads in due time, for it is one of the things the

Lord hates. Jealousy often plays a part in this sin; we run people down because we are jealous of them. Jealousy has often led to literal murder, and more often has it led to its symbolic refined form — assassination of character. Let us beware.

Further, the Lord hates the heart that deviseth wicked imaginations. We are assured that the Lord hates those who deliberately devise evil things, but more than that may be implied here. In reading 2 Cor. 10:5 we observe that the margin renders the word “imaginations” as “reasonings,” and most translations so render it. The Douay translation is interesting — “We cast down reasonings and every high place that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and we lead captive every intent of the mind till we bring it where Christ is obeyed.”

From the concordance it is noted with great interest that the word rendered “deviseth” in our text in Proverbs is far more often rendered “hold peace,” “conceal,” “keep silence” and similar. A seemingly permissible translation could be, “The Lord hates the heart that conceals (keeps silence concerning) wicked reasonings.” Many things traditionally believed, the light of present truth has revealed to be but “imaginations” — beliefs or reasonings not supported by the

Scripture. The Trinity, Immortality of the Soul, and Eternal Torture in hell-fire are notable ones, and there are others. Do we use the “sword of the spirit” (which is the Word of God) to combat these high-sounding arguments which are not supported by the Scripture; or do we, for fear of mortal man, hold our tongues, keep silence and help conceal the fact that these are Satanic reasonings?

Jeremiah 8:14 is an interesting verse. The context has to do with a prophecy of judgment coming upon God’s people because of backsliding and apostasy. Maybe it had a minor fulfilment in Jeremiah’s day or soon after, but we think we see in this, much that pertains to the judgment that comes upon Babylon, God’s professing church in the end of this age. It is virtually the stand the majority take as they discern the impending and coming judgments. While seeking protection in the fortresses of the church-state powers, God puts them to silence and compels them to drink the cup of their own mixing. We find numbers today who reveal that they know that many long-accepted doctrines are false. They show sympathy and even encourage us to continue the good fight in defence of truth, yet they will not personally identify themselves with the truth or its messengers. However, those who hear and OBEY God’s call to “Come out of her, My people,” (Rev. 18:4), will not conceal the wicked reasonings that have covered the earth with gross darkness for so long, but will continue to let the light shine for the blessing and assistance of others who “hate the things the Lord hates.”

A verse by J. Russell Lowell is appropriate

“They are slaves who fear to speak  
For the fallen and the weak.  
They are slaves who will not choose  
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,  
Rather than in silence shrink  
From the truth they needs must think.  
They are slaves who dare not be  
In the right with two or three.”

Next, the Lord hates feet that be swift in running to mischief. The word “mischief” is really “evil” and is so translated an overwhelming number of times. While all these abominations mentioned are hated by the Lord in a general way, we would understand them to have special reference to those who practise these things while professing to know God. The Lord hates the spirit that rushes into things without seeking His counsel. Our course may seem to be correct on the surface, yet lead us into evil. Twice does the writer of Proverbs warn us “there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, yet the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov. 14:12; 16:25.) Also please note Prov. 12:15. The Lord is pleased to have us wait upon Him and seek His guidance, instead of running into ways that are contrary to His will. It is not good to be wise in our own conceits, but to remember that the fleshly heart is desperately wicked and we continually need the Lord’s spirit to guide us.

Again, the Lord hates a false witness that speaketh lies. We are reminded of one of the commandments given to God’s ancient people, the spirit of which surely is still to be practised by His people now,—“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.” Much tittle tattle engaged in is often false witness against our neighbor, if only we realised it. Evidence we have against persons is quite often hearsay only, to which a little is added each time it is repeated. How unbecoming that God’s people should indulge in such. Another aspect of false witness, speaking lies, is found in Jeremiah 23:31,32. Also read verses 21,22 in the same chapter. So we want to take special care that we prophesy truth, do we not? We would not like to find the Lord against us for declaring falsehood in His name.

The seventh and last thing that the Lord hates is he that soweth discord amongst brethren. In how many ways can we do this? It is essential at all times to remember that none of us is perfect in the flesh. We often fail to do what we should, and we say the things which we ought not. We can often and easily make excuses for our own indiscretions, while we regard those of others unforgivingly. If we believe we have been wronged, or we consider another is taking an erring way, instead of following Scriptural injunctions in seeking to right matters in the spirit of the Lord, what do we sometimes do? We start a whispering campaign that tends to spread the discord and separates and hinders the fellowship of God’s people.

Surely it is good to reflect upon the things that the Lord hates and endeavor, with His help, to keep ourselves free of them. By so doing, we will keep ourselves in the love of God, and we will hold richer fellowship with each other.

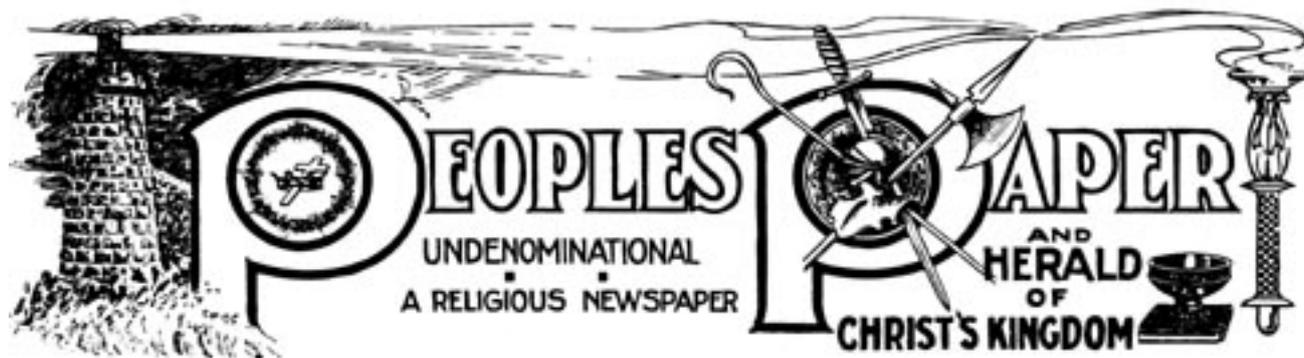
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## Palms of Victory, Crowns of Glory.

(Contributed Address.)

THE Bible speaks of sporting events; so we are going to look into the Olympic Games, especially the parts which the Apostle Paul mentioned. He was always alert to take advantage of the environment in which he found himself, and he alluded to things with which the people were well acquainted. Jesus did likewise. When the Master wanted to put across a great lesson, He referred to something the people saw and understood, and drew a spiritual lesson by making reference to the things about Him. We want to throw a little more light on some portions of the Apostle Paul's writings, and give you the background of certain portions of Scripture. We are not going to discuss Australian Rules, but the rules of the Greeks and Romans in connection with the Games of their time.

The Greeks and Romans had many sporting events, because they had great strong armies, and the way to have a strong army in those days was to have strong men, because mortal combat was involved. They had to meet their combatants hand to hand, and the result was that the strongest people were the victors. The only way they could train and prepare men for battle properly was to have them involved in some physical exercise, so they pushed the idea of sport.

Timothy was caught in this environment as a youth, and apparently he was an athlete. 1 Tim. 4:8 reads: "For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Paul did not say to Timothy, Now listen, what you are engaged in is all humbug, there is no good in it. He said, It does profit little. He admitted that. But he urged Timothy to reach for something greater—godliness—and put on the fruits and graces of the spirit, which would not only benefit Timothy in this life, but in that which is to come as well. As a youth, Timothy was looking to the future. All young people do. They look ahead. Paul was urging Timothy, Remember that while you are engaged in athletic contests, you may get some profit, but it is only for a little while. What I am trying to encourage you to do is to reach out and grasp godliness. So it was good advice to Timothy, and Paul was very careful and tactful how he approached the matter. Timothy must have been no more than 21 years of age when he went with Paul on his first journey; so he was really a young man. Especially, amongst the Jews, a person was not a man until 30 years, so Timothy was but a youngster.

We have to grasp what was behind Paul's statement. Let us turn first to Matt. 5:41. This is not directly on the subject, but it is indirectly related to what we wish to talk about. Here we read something that on the surface does not convey all that was meant. Here Jesus is addressing the Jews. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain." Now it was not a case of being a good sport. That is not what the Master had in mind. If it was just that, it would not have been so hard to take. But this was a bitter saying for the Jews to grasp. The Jews were the subjects of Romans. According to Roman law, a Roman soldier could compel a subject to carry a burden one mile. When the Jews were chafing under the Roman yoke, Jesus told them, If someone says to you, Come a mile, then go with him two. It was bad enough to have to go a mile. Jesus said to go two miles. Such sayings of Jesus were hard for the Jews to accept. He urged them to go one better than was required. When the Master was carrying the cross, Simon was pressed into service in this way.

In Luke 15:8, 9 we get another point. We read there about the lost coin. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found, it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost." Why was this? The finding of lost coins is not usually a cause for merriment of this sort. Was it because this coin was so valuable in itself? Not at all. In those days a girl who was engaged to be married did not get a ring, but a string of coins like a necklace. This she had to maintain faithfully until the day of marriage. If she lost it, or one or two pieces from it, it would indicate carelessness, indolence and so forth, and her husband-to-be would say, Well, if this is the sort of woman I am to marry, I will have nothing to do with her. So when this woman lost one coin, she looked in every nook and cranny to find it. When it was found, she called all her friends to celebrate. If she had

lost the coin, it may have meant the wedding would not take place. So the young lady was very concerned about this matter ; and that is the background to this account. You do not find that on the surface. It is only when you get to know the customs of the land that you see the significance of some of these things. So it is important, we believe, to know the customs that prevailed back there in those days.

For instance, certain words were used that meant a lot more than the translators were able to convey to us in our English rendering. If you quote an Old Testament passage in English, to an Israeli, he will say, "Ah, but you should read it in Hebrew !" It is difficult to convey the proper depth of meaning unless you can speak two or three languages. In each of these other languages there are certain words which are difficult to translate into English. They have a certain background that is very difficult to convey into another language. It is often impossible to get the true meaning across without going into great detail. So the sayings of Jesus are more understandable in the light of the customs that prevailed.

We are going to discuss the Olympic Games of the time when the Apostle Paul wrote, bearing in mind that the Apostle Paul was an Apostle to the Gentiles. When he wrote to the church at Corinth, at Galatia, at Ephesus, he wrote primarily to the Gentile churches. These Gentiles were acquainted with Gentile customs and practices. The Apostle Paul was very well versed in them. Tarsus was north of Palestine, so Paul was acquainted with many of the things that took place in those days. There was to be found in the Roman cities a hippodrome, a stadium or something of the kind. Paul saw about him these various contests. From a boy he was acquainted with these things. When he wanted to get a spiritual lesson across to the brethren at Corinth or other places, he alluded to the Games quite often. In those days the athletic preparations were associated with preparations for war. So when Paul spoke of our "race", you will note that his writings are dealing with the warfare a Christian wages, and how we must prepare for battle and wage war, not against physical forces as much as against unseen powers.

We understand from history that these contests were held periodically, for instance in Corinth, sometimes every four years, or every two years. Your memory is fresh on the Olympic Games held here some time ago. We were amazed at the beautiful white marble stadium at Athens. When we visited various parts of the world where these contests were held, we could not help thinking of the times when Paul made reference to these Games. They were so popular that they engaged the attention of all the people. It was a great honour to qualify for one of the races. Today it is mostly young people, 17 or so years of age who compete, but in those days even some of the Roman Senators qualified in competition with young men to engage in these contests.

The preparations were very rigorous. Sometimes we have wondered why these people thought it was worth it. At Athens it was required of the contestants that they were to train for ten months before the contest. Just think—a man who was going to run one race had to train for ten months, every day under careful scrutiny. They were subject, as well, to certain rules and regulations. One of these rules we read about in 1 Cor. 9:25; where the Apostle says, "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." He was referring to the contestants in the Games. How temperate were they? They could not drink any alcoholic drinks. Not only that, but according to the rules of these contests, these men were fed on coarse meal bread. They had to eat specially nourishing foods, and they could not go out and eat meats and other savoury things that they may have been accustomed to. They had to go on a diet. According to the rules, these men had to live fully under the scrutiny of the judges. They were watched. Each city wanted its representatives to excel in the contest, so they made rigid rules and regulations. Anyone not abiding by the rules was disqualified. So the Apostle Paul tells us here, "If any man would strive for the mastery, he must be temperate in all things." They had to have plenty of rest and so forth. We had at home an old Bible Encyclopaedia, over 100 years old. It was a rich source of information. It emphasized the importance of diet for the contestants.

After they had qualified as far as the training was concerned, then came the contests themselves. The Apostle Paul in the same chapter, v. 24, tells us, "know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." The Apostle Paul was referring to the races held in his day, and even to this day the races play a very important part in the Olympic Games. He was not speaking of a foot-race as far as the brethren were concerned, but the prize of their High Calling. Run to obtain the prize, run with the same fervour as a man running to obtain an earthly prize. These men ran with real fervour, each one was out to win the prize. So the Apostle was urging the brethren to run in like manner, determined to obtain that prize.

Turning to Gal. 2:2, we see what Paul had in mind when we think of the Games. "And, I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." He was careful to qualify in his ministry. He did not want to preach in such a way as to have run in vain. The runners back there had to qualify in every respect, so Paul in his spiritual race wanted to make sure he did not fail and be disqualified. He was careful lest he should have run in vain. He turns the tables on the Galatians when he puts the shoe on the other foot ; "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that you should not obey the truth?" Just because someone tried to trip them up, they gave up the race. But the one who tried to trip them would himself be disqualified. Paul tried to set them a good example in this race.

In Heb. 12:1 we have a reference to the games or contests held. The Apostle tells us, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Do you know what they did in practising? The men engaged in the foot race used to tie weights to their feet. This added weight to their whole body. It slowed them up. But when the day of the contest came, they threw off these weights, and their feet felt like feathers. The Apostle Paul, knowing how they prepared for the race, said, "Let us cast off these weights which beset us." If a man ran in the contest with the weights, he would certainly lose. Let us cast off our weights ! He was referring to certain sins that beset us. Run with patience the race set before us. So it is wonderfully helpful to get the

proper background to these various statements.

It is also of interest to turn to Phil. 3:14. There the Apostle Paul is again alluding to the race. He says, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Another rendering is, "I press down upon the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In this race, according to what we read in the historical records, they had a post. Today we have a line across, and everyone tries to reach that and hit the line with his chest before the others do. In those days they had a post, a mark. When they started their course, at the beginning of the race they put their eye on that place, and they would "press down on the mark" for that goal. In addition to this goal-post, around the rim of the stadium at the end of the course, they would have the crowns displayed. The runners would see the crown they wanted. This spurred them on to reach the end of their course. We can see the spiritual lesson there. Press down on the mark for the prize that is also set before us. So with Jesus, it was said of Him that He suffered gladly "for the joy that was set before him."

As part of these ancient contests, there were also wrestling matches. In Ephesians Paul makes reference to the wrestling contest. He says (Eph. 6:12)—"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." These wrestling matches were not for show. They meant business. If you were thrown by one of these men, you felt it. You had to be prepared. Sometimes one of the wrestlers would suffer death itself. It was a very strenuous event indeed. The Apostle Paul said, Brethren, we have some drastic foes that we wrestle against. But our foes are not visible to the human eye, in many cases. So he urges the brethren, Fight a good Christian fight.

If the wrestling was difficult, boxing was even worse. In 1 Tim. 6:12 Paul refers, to the boxing matches of those days. He says, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." Notice the wording here—"fight the good fight of faith", "before many witnesses." Turning now to 2 Tim. 4:7, the Apostle says, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." In Heb. 10:32 he also speaks of waging this good fight. "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." Back in those days, the boxing matches were no soft stuff. Today when a boxer goes into the ring he wears big, soft gloves. But back there they used to have a "cestus," made of leather, tied around the fist and studded with nails. You know what that meant. It meant on many occasions that men died in the ring. Today, once in a while we hear of a boxer dying after a boxing match, but back there it was a very common thing. These boxing matches were for tough fellows. The Apostle Paul speaks of this event as a "fight of faith". He urges the brethren to wage a good fight. He urged Timothy to do the same — "not as one that beateth the air."

What is our fight? We do not fight the people of the world, but the spirit of the world. We fight our own failings and weaknesses, and human shortcomings. In many cases we do not see our enemies, so to speak. Sometimes our adversaries are very subtle; and it is difficult to fight something you cannot grasp.

Our adversary goes around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. It is a difficult proposition to fight the good fight of faith. In those days, just as today, boxers used to beat what they called the "windbag," bags filled with air. They used to practise by punching them. But Paul said that this was just beating the air. This is not the way we should fight.

Another point to note is that when the judges were selected to supervise these matches, they were selected because of their great integrity. When Paul writes to Timothy, he makes reference to the great Judge— (2 Tim. 4:8). "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." Paul knew that Timothy knew well the earthly judges in the matches never showed partiality toward one contestant or another. They were very fair. Therefore you could not win just because you knew so-and-so. You had to win strictly on merit. We, too, have a righteous Judge. We are told we have a judge who knows no partiality. He will give unto each one, that which he has earned. He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. The Lord will not withhold from us that which He has promised. If we qualify, the crown is ours. In the contests back there, one man got the prize; but insofar as the Christian course is concerned, more than one gets the crown of life. Paul reminds us that the crown was not only for himself, but for all those who love the Lord's appearing.

Those men did not engage in contests just privately. They were not performing simply before the judges, but in the stadium which accommodated thousands of people. Some stadiums were built in the form of a horseshoe, so the contestants were surrounded by spectators. The Apostle in Hebrews refers to this when he says in Hebrews 12 that we have what he calls a "cloud of witnesses." "Wherefore, seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Many people witnessed the contests. We, too, are engaged in a contest, and we also have witnesses. The angels desire to look into these things which are revealed to us. Not only that, but we have our neighbours watching us. They expect a lot from us. Why? We say we are followers of the Master. People naturally are watching us. Some people say they do not like to live in a fish bowl. We are living in a fish bowl as it were, with angels looking down from above, people around us always observing our conduct, whether we are living up to our profession. So we should be careful of the way we run. The Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11 refers to great heroes of faith who had gone on before and set us a noble example. He goes on to tell us what we should do to be faithful. In the races, the victory was not always certain. Why? A man might finish in the race ahead of everyone else; but he was never sure of victory until the judges pointed a finger at him, and pronounced his name, then he would step forward and they would declare him the victor. Why was an apparent victory never sure? Because in the course of the race, he may have done something to disqualify him. He could have interfered with another runner, or he may not have observed some of the

rules. He may have been too anxious to start, “jumped the gun”. There were other factors. So with us. The Apostle Paul said that he feared lest he should become a castaway. A man who was disqualified was called a castaway. So Paul feared. There is the possibility with us also, that if we do not run well we may be castaways. We can be assured of the Lord’s great mercy. We have a great power positively on our side only by asking for it. Far greater blessings than we could think of, await us. We are human and in the flesh. We are called to put away the things that would hinder us in the way set before us. We have our weaknesses, our besetments, our shortcomings. One of us has one thing, another has something else. We need this same strength that the Apostle had to carry on and succeed in the race set before us.

Now let us refer to the crown as used in those days. You would be surprised—in one of the games they gave the victor a laurel wreath placed on his head. This is the crown they got, and the best one was given at Corinth. It was a wreath of parsley. How long would it last? Is it any wonder the Apostle Paul said, “They do it & obtain a corruptible crown”? Their crowns did not last very long. But we are promised an “incorruptible” crown. It helps us to appreciate this Scripture when we know the type of crowns they received in those days. The Apostle makes the contrast. What a difference! Those brethren knew the nature of the crowns the athletes were given back there.

We have a reference again to crowns in 1 Pet. 5:4, where I think we will get another thought in connection with the crowns that the Lord’s people receive as a result of their faithfulness in their race. Here the Apostle says, “And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” In a couple of days, the crowns which those athletes received were gone. The crowns the faithful are to receive fade not away.

When the victor was pronounced by the judges, and they indicated before the whole audience that here was a man from Athens, or Rome, or elsewhere who had won the race, what happened? It is interesting to read that they first sent a herald around the stadium in a chariot. This herald shouted, not the name of the victor, but the victor’s father’s name and the city where he was born. When you think of it, you can see how in our Christian course we are to honour our Father. That should be our prime object. Is not this just what Jesus did? He delighted to honour the Father. He did not say to His Heavenly Father, Now I have done all this, give me the very highest reward. He asked only to be restored to that same position He had before. He asked for no reward. His delight was to do the will of the Father. So these athletes also delighted in honouring their fathers. What they were was due to a good extent to their fathers, and maybe they inherited certain physical powers from their fathers, so they honoured the father first. Then the herald would go round again, announcing the victor’s name. Finally, they would place the victor in a chariot, in his right hand a palm branch, symbolic of victory, and with the crown placed on his head. Then he would be driven around to great acclaim. But this was not the end of the triumph. If the victor was from Athens, when he returned to his own city, before he entered, a herald was sent on ahead of him. The people of the city were ready. The victor was not permitted to go through the gate, but a hole was broken in the city wall, and he entered through that. All the inhabitants would acclaim their great son, who was so great that he triumphed over all the others in that part of the civilized world. He returned to his own city in a triumphant procession. Flowers were strewn in his pathway.

We also are promised an “abundant entrance”—“An entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Any ancient city that had such a strong son considered itself very fortunate, even as not to need walls. That was just a symbolic gesture.

So you can see how the Apostle Paul frequently referred to these contests in one way or another to illustrate the spiritual lesson he was trying to convey to the brethren. So we hope we will be able to appreciate more the value of some of these passages, and how very strong these words were in the minds of the brethren to whom Paul wrote. No doubt they read with full meaning and appreciation, knowing what was behind these words. We must remember that 2,000 years have slipped by, so our customs are different today. So with the Scriptures written so many years ago, meanings were known to those to whom letters were written, but may be obscure to us.

So may God bless us as we continue our study of the Word of God, that we do not study just to impress the brethren with our knowledge, but to apply the lessons of the Word to ourselves. It is so easy to give a discourse as to how we should live, what we should do, and so on. It is quite another thing to practise these things. But if we do, we may be assured of an “abundant entrance” to the Kingdom. He loved us first, and was willing to die for us. We are enjoined to walk in His steps.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

*Melbourne, Victoria Australia*

## **Broadcasts Continue on 2KY**

SINCE reference was made in last month’s “Peoples Paper” that the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts would be discontinued on 2KY Sydney on October 9th, mainly on account of the great increase in broadcasting fees, several expressions of regret were at once received from the area covered by 2KY. As some further assistance to the work came along from another source at the same time, it was decided to continue with the witness to the truth over 2KY Sydney for some time ahead at least.

Most of our friends will know that no appeals for funds are ever made in connection with any feature of the work carried on by the Institute, but if the voluntary assistance to the radio work continues, especially from the area covered by 2KY, then this will be a guide as to how long the message over the radio should continue in that locality. The following are some of the messages received with reference to the broadcasts over 2KY Sydney.

“Dear Brother, it is with much disappointment that we are not to hear Frank and Ernest after next Sunday. I was wondering if I could contribute, say, £100 towards paying the extra cost to keep it on the air for a little longer. I would

like you to consider it seriously.”

“We were very distressed to hear on Sunday that the Frank and Ernest Session was to be temporarily discontinued ; I do hope it is only temporary—we would miss it so.”

“Please send me your 2KY broadcast copy for Sunday, 2nd October, and today’s, 9th October. I will miss you as I always listen in.”

“This letter is long overdue. I was so pleased to hear that you would be continuing to broadcast on Sunday mornings as the only fault I find with your talks is that they are not long enough. I have been a student of Biblical subjects, coupled with their archaeological proofs, for some 25 years. Could you please send me a copy of your last broadcast, also the booklet mentioned and any other literature you have available on the subject? I am sending you herewith a small donation to use as you wish, as your work must be costly. Wishing you success and a long term of broadcasting.”

## Water of Life.

(John 4.)

(Contributed Article).

THE term “water of life” is used in the Bible to describe the Word of God. It is a very good description because everywhere we can see how much pure water is appreciated. We have only to look around us today to see how mankind depends on water for progress and life. Here in Australia, as well as in all other countries, huge water projects are being constructed to conserve water. Everywhere that man lives he must have water.

While life is capable of being sustained without food for some considerable time, it is not possible without water—a few days at most without water and death will result. Water, then, becomes a symbol of life. Thirst is another symbol indicating desire—a craving. Physical thirst is said to be very painful; it continues and intensifies hourly until the very last breath. Water satisfies the demand of nature, and there is also soul thirst and a water of life which alone can quench it, satisfy it.

Every ambition and desire is a thirst. In our every-day language we say that an ambitious person thirsts after knowledge. Those who are drawn to Jesus by the Father, thirst after knowledge also, but it is a knowledge that will lead to everlasting life. All the knowledge of this world’s arrangements one can store up in his mind will not lead to everlasting life, but a greater understanding of the Word of God and His will for His people during this present time acted upon, will bring everlasting life.

It seems that the water of life of which Jesus spoke was the truths recorded in the Word of God. By the Word of God, however, we are not referring to the paper and ink with which the Bible is printed, but rather the thoughts and purposes of God conveyed to our minds by these means. The printed page may perish, but God’s thoughts will not perish, nor will His purposes fail.

At the first, the Gospel was preached by word of mouth only, but it was none the less the power of God unto salvation to all who believed it. It was just as much water of life to thirsty souls, just as much the Word of God, as later, when it came to be expressed in printed form.

When we speak of the Word of God and remember how our Lord described it as the “water of life,” we have in mind the message of the Gospel of Christ, wherein is revealed God’s purposes and plans, not only for our salvation now, but also for all mankind in due time. This message of salvation is based on the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus. It is the partaking or embracing of this message that gives one the desire for greater understanding of the plan of God.

We call to mind the words of our Lord to the woman at the well—”Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever shall drink of the water I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water I shall give him shall be a well of water springing up unto eternal life.” How wonderful this statement must have appeared to the woman at the well, and how wonderful it appears to us, even after we have learned its real meaning. We are continually learning more and more from this “water of life,” appreciating it more each day we live, and finding still greater refreshment in it, as we continue to partake of it.

Those who have truly found Jesus and who have made a full consecration of their hearts to God have found the happiness which the world is seeking in vain in other directions. They have found a heart satisfaction which is able to offset trials, sorrows, difficulties and disappointments, and to glory in the realization that their experiences are working to their advantage, proving them, and preparing them for still greater riches by and by.

For one to gain eternal life during this Gospel Age, the teachings of God’s Word respecting His plans and purposes must be fully embraced. As we read in John 17 :3,—”This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

Other Scriptures also refer to the value of the Word of God. In John 6: 67-69, we read —”Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Again, in 1 Pet. 1 :23-25, the Apostle Peter speaks of believers as being begotten again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Then he goes on to say, “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever. This is the *Word* which by the gospel is preached unto you.” This passage indicates the great power behind the Word of God—so great that it is life, *water of life*, for it can and does lead one to the

position where he becomes begotten of the spirit.

Further, in Phil. 2:15,16, the thought of “holding forth the word of life” is spoken of those who have partaken of the water of life—the truths revealed in the Word of God—and have consecrated their lives to God. The important thing about this is that they desire to pass this good news of the Word of God on to others. The Apostle here expresses it as “holding forth the word of life.”

The water of life is always refreshing to the Lord’s people. No matter how often we turn to the Word of God, it is always the same; it does not lose its refreshing taste. For instance, we turn to Psa. 23; we all know the Psalm, but verse 2 is appropriate here,—”He leadeth me beside the still waters.”

In Psa. 119:105 we read—”Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” We can always turn to appropriate Scriptures to suit the occasion of our needs, for, as in past times, the Word of God today is indeed the water of life to the Christian.

At the beginning of this Gospel Age our Lord gave out enough truths to satisfy the needs of His followers at that time. He told them that He had many things to tell them, but they could not bear them. Now, at the end of the age, God’s Word has been revealed to us, giving us a knowledge of His plans and purposes, not only for the church during the present time, but also for the world of mankind in the Millennial Age.

It is interesting to note that in the Millennial Age God’s Word is spoken of as the water of life also. “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” (Isa. 55:1.)

In Rev. 22:1, 2,17 we also read—”And he showed me a pure river of *water of life*, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 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. And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the *water of life* freely.” So, whether it is now, or in the next age, salvation can come only through partaking of the water of life, of which Jehovah Himself is the fountain.

***The presence of God calms the soul, and gives it quiet and repose even during the day, and in the midst of occupation—but we must be given up to God without reserve.***  
—Fenelon.

### **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, **Persian** Morocca binding, is now available at 60/- . Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at ‘70/-.

Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 26/- post paid.

### **Pilgrimage Ended.**

ON the evening of October 19th, the pilgrim way of our dear Brother Gibson, of Melbourne, was brought to a close after a life of upwards of forty years as a devoted follower and servant of the Master.

A native of Scotland, our Brother Gibson had come to Australia in the early years of this century, and also visited Canada from time to time since first coming to Australia. In the year 1922, while in Canada, the truths of the Bible having been fully accepted, and consecration to the Lord having been fully entered upon, the symbol of baptism was gladly taken as demonstrating his delight to serve the Lord in spirit and truth throughout the earthly pilgrimage, in hope of gaining the heavenly inheritance to which the Lord invites all His dear children to aspire, by His grace and strength.

Returning to Australia with our dear Sister Gibson about the year 1924, various parts of Australia were visited as they felt led in serving the Lord’s cause to the best of their ability. In the course of years some changes in association with other Christians were found necessary, and it was a pleasure to hear our dear Brother declare, some years ago now, that he felt very happy and delighted to assemble with us at the Berean Bible Class in Melbourne for fellowship and study in the Lord’s name and spirit.

This happy association with our dear Brother Gibson continued over some years at the regular gatherings in Melbourne, and his assistance at the Bible studies and with addresses at various times was very helpful and profitable in the service of the Lord’s cause. Our dear Brother possessed a notable talent for explaining the Scriptures at the Bible studies, and he did not spare himself when often physical strength was much reduced. Over the past twelve months in particular ill-health prevented him from attending the gatherings, and our Brother was much missed by us all. The last occasion when our Brother Gibson joined the gathering was for the Memorial of our Lord’s death, in April this year, at which time it was evident that our dear Brother’s strength was failing greatly. However, he always presented a brave and cheerful outlook, and it was always a pleasure to visit him in his home and to note his readiness to converse on the truths of the Bible which were always his delight. In accord with the Lord’s promise to His faithful followers, we have every confidence in our dear Brother Gibson gaining an abundant entrance into the heavenly

kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the first resurrection.

Warm and loving sympathy is extended to our dear Sister Gibson in the loss of such a devoted Christian husband, but we feel sure her heart response will be that the Lord does all things well, for He knows best the time and manner for the closing of each earthly pilgrimage, in the hope of the glorious reuniting beyond the vale of all members of the Bride of the Lamb, to the praise of God.

“For ever with the Lord!”

Amen, so let it be!

Life from the dead is in that word,

‘Tis immortality.

“For ever with the Lord!”

Father, Thy blessed will

We’re learning daily through Thy Word,

And seeking to fulfil.

And when our latest breath

Shall rend the veil in twain,

Through merit of our Saviour’s death

We hope this bliss to gain.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

**Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sydney, 2KY, 294 N. Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 N. Maryborough, 4MB**



**Volume XLIII. No. 10 MELBOURNE. OCTOBER, 1960**

**Price— Sixpence**

## **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”**

But 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 foreview 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 beheaded 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. And 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!

### **God's Character, Long Traduced, Now Understood**

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 realise 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.

### **Door To High Calling Still Open**

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 enthroned." 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.

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

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

## Pleasing God.

*"I do always those things that please God." (John 8:29.)*

WHAT a glorious motto for a man—"I live for God!" It is religion's truest definition. It is the essence of angelic action:—"Ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure." The Lord of angels knew no higher, no *other* motive. It was, during His earthly life, the regulator and directory of His daily being. It supported Him amid the depressing sorrows of His woe-worn path. It upheld Him in their awful termination in the garden and on the cross. The thought of "pleasing God" upheld Him and nerved Him. "Not my will, but *Thine* be done."

It is only when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, that this animating desire to "please Him" can exist. In the holy bosom of Jesus, that love reigned paramount, admitting no rival—no competing affection. Though infinitely inferior in degree, it is the same impelling principle which leads His people still to link enjoyment with His service, and which makes consecration to Him of heart and life its own best recompense and reward. "There is a gravitation," says one whose life was the holy echo of his words, "in the moral as in the physical world. When love to God is habitually in the ascendant, or occupying the place of will, it gathers round it all the other desires of the soul as satellites and whirls them along with it in its orbit round the centre of attraction." Till the heart, then, be changed, the believer cannot have "this testimony that he *pleased God*." The world, self, sin—these be the gods of the unregenerate soul. And even *when* changed, alas that there should be so many ebbings and flowings in our tide of devotedness! Jesus could say, "I do always those things that please the Father." Glory to God burned within His bosom like a living fire. "Many waters could not quench it." His were no fitful and inconstant flames and feelings, but the persistent habit

of a holy life, which had the one end in view, from which it never diverged or deviated.

Let it be so, in some lowly measure, with us. Let God's service not be the mere livery of high days—of set times and seasons; but, like the alabaster box of ointment, let us ever be giving forth the fragrant perfume of holiness. Even when the shadows of trial are falling around us, let us "pass through the cloud" with the sustaining motive—"All my wish, O God, is to please and glorify) Thee! By giving or taking —by smiting or healing—by the sweet cup or the bitter—Father, glorify Thy name!"

"I don't want to be weary of God's dealings with me," said an earnest believer, on his death-bed ; "I want to glorify Jesus in them, and find Him more precious." Do I shrink from trials—duties—crosses—because involving hardships and self-denials, or because frowned on by the world? Let the thought of God's approving countenance be enough. Let me dread no censure, if conscious of acting in accordance with *His* will. Let the Apostle's monitory word determine many a perplexing path—"If I please men, I am not the servant of Christ." "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."—Selected.

## Radio Changes.

Through the efforts of two of our brethren at Maryborough, Queensland, the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts were commenced on 4MB Maryborough, on Sunday morning, 18th September, at 7.15 a.m. While this time is rather early, it is hoped that the message may reach some listeners in that area who will appreciate the Plan of the Ages, and respond accordingly, by the Lord's overruling.

On Sunday, 25th September, the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts terminated on 6KY/NA in Western Australia. After almost 17 years of witness on various radio stations, the friends in Perth feel that it is wise to try some other form of presenting the message of the kingdom, as they have opportunity.

The Frank and Ernest Broadcasts are also to terminate on 2KY Sydney on Sunday, 9th October. Greatly increased costs of over 100% is the main reason for discontinuing on this station after over 14 years of witnessing to the kingdom. message. In fairness to the management of 2KY it should be stated that no extra costs had been charged for many years, but the increase to £10/14/10 per 15-minute session is considered too great. It has been a pleasure to find a number of very interested friends in the area covered by 2KY over the years, in the Lord's providence.

"**Israel in History and Prophecy**" is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/8 post paid.

## "Blessed are the Dead Who Die in the Lord."

EARLY on the morning of September 4th our dear Sister Davis, of Sydney, finished the pilgrim way after upwards of fifty years of service and devotion to the Lord and His cause.

At an early age our dear Sister entered the colporteur service and rejoiced to be able to witness to the wonderful Plan of the Ages in the Lord's name and spirit, and no doubt was blessed in using her talents in this manner, by the Lord's grace.

Settling in Sydney at a later time, and making her home there, Sister Davis became associated with the Class meetings in that city, and together with our dear Brother Davis has been closely linked with the Lord's people and cause to the close of her earthly way. Of a meek and humble disposition, our dear Sister possessed the lovely graces of the spirit which only the Lord's power could produce, and it was always a pleasure to converse with her respecting the spiritual truths pertaining to the heavenly calling, and the hope for the whole human family in the age to come.

In recent years a physical disability caused a loss of memory which could not be arrested, but she was cared for so lovingly in her home by her devoted husband and daughter till, in God's own good time, we feel she has received His words of commendation—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Sincere sympathy is extended to our dear Brother Davis, and son and daughter, as well as other relatives, in the passing of one mellowed and sanctified by the truth and its spirit. We feel sure that they in turn will fully realise that the Lord does all things well, and will give thanks for the overcoming life of the dear Sister, manifest for so many years by the Lord's grace and strength.

ANOTHER of our dear friends completed the earthly way, quite unexpectedly, early on the morning of September 17th, when our dear Sister Tainton, of Forest Hill, near Melbourne, we feel sure entered upon her heavenly reward, after a most outstanding and rejoicing Christian experience with which we have been greatly privileged to associate over recent years.

Almost six years ago Sister Tainton responded to the broadcasts from 3GL Geelong, having been attracted by the weekly messages of God's Plan of the Ages for poor, fallen humanity. Receiving the literature, including the broadcast copies, booklets, "Peoples Paper" and the study "Divine Plan of the Ages," it was some time before the truth message was grasped. However, our Sister began at ending periodical lectures at the Class gatherings, and at the same time continued association with the local church in her district, having been devoted to church work for many years previously.

About three years ago, during a further study of the "Divine Plan of the Ages," the light from God's Word shone through to her mind and heart, thrilling her with a joy unknown before, as she realised for the first time just what God's plan of salvation really meant, not only for Christians of this Gospel Age, but also for all the families of the earth who have ever lived, in the wonderful Kingdom Age to come. All this, because our Lord Jesus "by the grace of God tasted death for every man."

Thenceforth began a life of prayer, study, devotion and witnessing for the Lord and His truth in a quiet, yet enthusiastic manner. We surely rejoice that the spirit of the Lord took full control, and her consecrated life of some years' standing was now illuminated and energized as the harvest message of present truth was assimilated, and her joy knew no bounds.

It was quite natural that the members of Sister Tainton's family, who loved her and were loved by her, could not understand when she wished to attend the Class studies regularly, miles away, each Sunday, to partake of further spiritual food,—”whosoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together”—at the same time declaring that she was being starved in the church, near at hand, to which she was previously attached. In this connection our dear Sister declared on one occasion, without the slightest reflection upon her loved ones, that if ever she was required to choose between her closest ties and the Lord and His truth, she would forsake the former—the Lord must come first in all things.

Attending with us at the Memorial Services, and the Annual Conventions, as well as the regular Sunday gatherings, added to our Sister's progress in spiritual things. She always sought to look up the studies and contribute something helpful, and could rarely speak of anything else than the wonders of the ever-expanding wealth of treasures to be found in the Bible, with the assistance of the various Bible helps which she gladly used. The matter of water baptism, as a symbol of heart consecration,—to be dead with Christ—also came up for consideration. After a time this also was seen to be the Lord's will for her, and she gladly requested that she take the lovely symbol, picturing her complete immersion into the will of God, the reality of which had been sealed between herself and the Lord long before.

At a Question Meeting early this year, the text in 1 Cor. 11 :14,15 was brought up for consideration, and it was explained that the Apostle was exhorting the sisters in the church to appreciate having long hair—”It is a glory to her ; for her hair is given her for a covering.” That is, to denote that the sisters picture the church, and the brethren picture the Lord, in the assemblies. From that time onwards, Sister Tainton decided that she would not cut her hair again, as she wished to please the Lord in this manner also, and not to follow any of such worldly fashions which came into vogue earlier this century. Truly, this also was an example that others who love the Lord supremely would do well to follow.

So full of the Lord and His goodness was our dear Sister's heart and mind that she would not listen to gossip of any kind. Also, anything of a worldly nature, such as television or other pleasures were considered far beneath the aspirations of one enjoying the privileges and favours of the Lord's family, as well as being a misuse of consecrated talents in the purchase of such things.

It seemed fitting that the closing hymn, following the lecture on the last Sunday our dear Sister was present with us, was the “Consecration Hymn”—”Take my life and may it be, Lord, acceptable to Thee”—the words of which so fully express the heart's desire of our dear Sister in the Lord. We feel sure that the few short years we have known and fellowshiped with our dear Sister Tainton will be a lasting inspiration to the members of our Melbourne Class, especially to all who really knew her, and we thank the Lord that He was pleased to bless and so fully sanctify, by His spirit, one in our midst in these days, thus enabling her to preserve her “first love” to the close of the pilgrim way.

Warmest sympathy is extended to the members of our Sister's family who will feel so keenly the loss of such a loving wife, mother and grandmother ; yet her devoted example will be a sweet and hallowed memory in their lives in all the days ahead, and as they realise that their loved one has passed from this “present evil world” to be forever with the Lord, this will compensate to some extent their own great loss, and they also shall learn of the Lord's great love for them, if not at present, in the grand kingdom age to come.

The words of the poem—”The Rose”—seem so aptly to express the life of our dear Sister, who so fully and willingly submitted her whole being to the influence of the Lord's spirit, hence it can be truly said, she was daily “dwelling with the Rose”—the Lord Himself.

Within my hand I gently hold the Garden's Queen, a rose

The softly-sighing summer wind about it faintly blows, And wafts its wondrous fragrance out upon the evening air.

And as I gaze upon the rose, so perfect and so fair, In memory's halls there wakes, the while, a legend, quaint and old,

How once upon a time, one day, a sage picked up, we're told,

A lump of common clay, so redolent with perfume rare,.

He marveled, and the question wondering asked, “Whence dost thou bear

Such fragrance, O, thou lump of clay?” In tones of deep repose

There came the sweet reply, “I have been dwelling with the rose.”

The while the legend stirs my soul, within my hand still lie

The petals of the rose, and from my heart of hearts I cry,

“Thou lovely Rose of Sharon, may I ever dwell. with Thee,

So closely that the fragrance of Thy love shall cling to me.

Oh, fill me with the spirit of Thy sweet humility,

Then all shall see and know, dear Lord, that I have learned of Thee;

And let mine earthly pilgrimage, until its blessed close,

Each day and hour bear witness, I've been dwelling with the Rose!”

“For ever with the Lord!”

Amen, so let it be!  
Life from the dead is in that word,  
'Tis immortality.

## Correspondence.

Dear Brother—Thanks for your letter; also for September “P.P.” The article on the “Harvest, Winter, Sabbath,” is good to have before us; it seems we are approaching the end of the harvest period; there are indeed some dark clouds of trouble hovering around the world today. The winds are being restrained until the harvesting work is completed. Then, of course, the night-time of trouble will humble the hearts of men, and prepare for •the blessings of the Sabbath Day of rest and restitution.

The article from the “Herald” is also interesting; it has some good thoughts. While we would not belittle the value and importance of correct meanings of words, etc., yet how glad we are that the wholesome and beautiful teachings of our Lord are so understandable, even by the common and uneducated sort of people. How valuable are the Volumes of Scripture Studies which have arranged the grand system of truth under topical headings and chapters. The Body of Christ is edified by means of the various helps, and we do well to appreciate the various services of the different members—”proving all things, and holding fast to that which is good.”

Am enclosing cheque to renew my subscriptions to “Dawn,” “Herald,” “P.P.” and “Jews in the News”; remainder to Tract Fund. Must now close with warmest Christian love to yourself; also to Sister and all the friends. Yours in service of Christ, by His grace.

(The article in September “P.Paper”—”The Christian Duty of Discrimination”—by one of our American brethren, was presented to show that the Greek language should not be used in a rigid manner, as is done by some teachers presenting certain theories. It was felt that it is helpful for our readers to know that the Lord has amongst His people scholars whose talents should be appreciated to guard against the misuse of words in the original languages •of the Bible. We surely rejoice, also, that the Lord’s truth is not restricted to those capable of scholastic attainment, as we read—”The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way”—irrespective of educational qualifications, as the Lord sees good.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Brother—Enclosed you will please find £2 which I wish you to use as you think best to help •the good news of our dear Lord.

I listen to your 3GL broadcasts regularly, and the books which I have are indeed a storehouse which one could never exhaust; I have been blessed more in the last few years than I can express in words. I have a different outlook on the Lord’s plan for His people, and how earnestly we can pray, “Thy Kingdom Come.”

If you don’t mind I would like you to send me a copy of “Hope Beyond the Grave” and “God and Reason.” I feel they would help in an approach to my friends. With Christian greetings; yours in Christ, by grace.

Dear Fellow Christians—Today, readdressed, I have received two copies of “P.P.” So very pleased, as I do love this paper; all I had I brought with me and read over and over. They are so helpful, but I have never had anything more helpful than the “Divine Plan of the Ages.” It’s solved all my problems. I read it through, being “hungry.” Now, I am taking it and studying every word.

I have come here to care for my aged mother, and have not met one person here (my home town) who believes in the earthly kingdom that I believe in—kingdom in two *parts*, sons of God and servants of God. I have studied for several years, and in the “Divine Plan” have at last found what I have been searching for. It has solved my problems on restitution, that no one seemed able to help me with. The Jehovah’s Witnesses believe a lot that the church does not •teach, but then are those poor people muddled; Judge Rutherford surely led them off the right path.

Now I am back in my own town where I was a member of the Methodist Church for 30 years, and they are so busy that they haven’t time for study. But I have found one old friend who has been searching, and found a lot of light; he is preaching, and like myself alone and not popular. So he is willing to study with me; I •thought to give him some reading first. Please send me — “Hope Beyond the Grave”; “God and Reason”; “Divine Plan of the Ages”; “Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”; “Manner of Christ’s Return”; “Christ’s Return”; “Some of the Parables,” and “Peoples Paper” for the year. I will enclose a cheque and don’t send change; keep it for the Master’s work. Thank you; your Sister in Christ.

Frank and Ernest, E.4, Victoria. Dear Sirs —Have received the copies of your discussions of 24th and 31st July, also the copies of previous discussions, and other literature which you forwarded to me, for which I thank you most sincerely. Would like very much, copies of 21st and 28th August, please; if you have any other interesting literature I should be very glad of it, too, thank you.

Since the sad loss of my dear husband I did not know how I should be able to go on; I felt so lost, no interest in anything, nothing to live for any more, but gradually through some very kind friends I started studying the Bible. Now I do not know what I should do without it. I like to be perfectly quiet to be able to really concentrate and absorb all I study; I feel so strongly I am truly communing with God. Now all your heaven-sent literature and discussions of the Scriptures, so understandably explained, are giving me stronger faith and hope of God’s wonderful plan of salvation, through Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and I pray earnestly always, in God’s own good time, of meeting again my dearly beloved husband.

Through all your wonderful help, you, perhaps, may not be able to realise just how much hope and comfort you have given me. I begin to feel a different person; things material seem to have lost interest to me. Still I understand we

must, while in this life, continue on, but now it will be with a stronger faith and hope for God's new kingdom to come. As Paul, the Apostle, says — "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

God's wonderful plan of salvation for mankind is a precious treasure to await patiently, and earnestly pray for, and hope to be accounted worthy, as in Luke 21 :36; 2 Pet. 3: 15-18. I could never have believed such a change the Bible has wrought; one hears so many people in all walks of life say about reading the Bible, they do not seem to understand—just reading is accomplishing nothing, one could just read any book. I have come to know through my sad loss, the Bible must be studied earnestly, to even begin to understand God's truth. As mentioned earlier, your discussions and literature have helped me tremendously; so much so, that I will gladly receive more whenever available.

I would like now to ask a favor of you, please, as to whether I would be able to procure two sets each of all the previous copies and literature which you have forwarded to me, one for my sister, the other for a friend. Also would like "Peoples Papers" for May, June, July, 1960; "Israel as I Saw It," and "Israel Today"—two booklets of August, 1960, thank you. My friend was very interested when I showed her my copies.

Would like for myself, please — "Israel in History and Prophecy"; "The Divine Plan of the Ages"; "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"; "Manner of Christ's Return"; "Christ's Return"; "Some of the Parables"; "Hope Beyond • the Grave," and "God and Reason." Would you please advise me the amount, and I will forward same. Per medium of God and 4KQ Brisbane, thank you again for all your kindness and help. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Yours sincerely, by grace.

***"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."—1 Pet. 5:7.***

*When any petty annoyance or heavier worry threatens to mar your peace, in the flash of a moment, hand it over to Jesus, saying, "Lord,*

*I am oppressed; undertake this for me." Ah! you sigh, I wish indeed I could live like this; but in the moment of need I forget to look. Then do this — Trust in Christ to keep your trusting. Look to Him so to abide in you as to keep your abiding. In the early morning entrust to Him the keeping of your soul, and then as hour succeeds hour, expect Him to keep that which you have committed unto Him.—F. B. Meyer.*

**"Our Most Holy Faith."**—This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A. Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/. post paid.

***People who keep their ear to the ground are likely to pick up a little dirt.***

## **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

## **Greeting Cards.**

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows

- (1) "Just for To-day,"
- (2) "One Here and There,"
- (3) "How Readest Thou?,"
- (4) "The New Leaf,"
- (5) "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,"
- (6) "Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
- (7) "My Bible and I,"
- (8) "Love's Victory,"
- (9) "The Touch of the Master's Hand,"
- (10) "Some Worthy Attainments,"
- (11) "Come Unto Me,"
- (12) "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
- (13) "The Secret of His Presence,"
- (14) "Watching and Praying,"
- (15) "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,"
- (16) "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,"

- (17) "Hitherto and Henceforth,"  
 (18) "The Lord My Shepherd,"  
 (19) "Into His Marvellous Light,"  
 (20) "Right was The Pathway,"  
 (21) "This is My Will for Thee."  
 (10) "Are Ye Able ?"

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## The Christian Duty of Discrimination.

*"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—(1 Thes. 5:20, 21.)*

SINCE the word discrimination has more than one meaning, we should state at the outset in what sense we are using it now. Like some other words, discrimination is used in both a good sense and a bad. In the latter usage it means to make an unfair distinction. Needless to say, that sort of discrimination is no part of Christian duty. The dictionary gives another definition of this word, namely, "distinguishing accurately," and it is in this sense that we use it in this article ; to distinguish accurately as the result of close, careful, competent scrutiny.

In the first part of our text we have this admonition : "Despise not prophesyings (or prophecies)." To what prophecies does St. Paul refer here? Were they the prophecies of the Old Testament, or perhaps the things foretold by our Lord and His Apostles, which they spoke by inspiration? We think not, for the connection shows that the "prophesyings" of our text were to be critically examined and sifted, and only what was found to be "good" in them was to be received and retained.

We understand that by prophesyings the Apostle is referring to the utterances of those in the Church who were endowed with that special, miraculous gift of "prophecy," which is one of the nine so-called "spiritual gifts" enumerated by Paul in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians. These special gifts (bestowed through the spirit) called in the Greek "charismata," that is, grace-gifts, were a part of the heritage of the Apostolic Church, and passed away with it. But, you say, "why was it necessary to prove or test these prophesyings, since the holy spirit could not inspire any one to speak anything but what was right and true and good ?" The Apostle John (1 John 4 :1) gives the answer to the question: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." This warning was especially needed at that time, for if we infer correctly from what we read in 1 Corinthians 12, all the seemingly spirit-inspired utterances heard in the Christian assemblies were not of God, and one might even be heard shouting, "Jesus anathema."

The gift of prophecy was one of the most valuable to the Apostolic Church, but in view of what has just been said there were grave dangers connected with it. The Lord provided a safeguard for the Church in another of those spiritual gifts, called "the discerning of spirits." Those endowed with this special power were able to test the spirits and to discriminate what was really from God, and what was dross, or worse. This seems to the writer the true application of our text to the Church of the Apostolic Age. But we are far removed from that Age and its miraculous spiritual gifts. The

gift of prophecy is no longer with us; the corresponding gift of discerning of spirits also has departed. Has our text, then, no application to our times, and to conditions now existing in the Church? We believe the Apostle's words are still important to us, a forceful reminder of our Christian duty of discrimination, and we shall attempt a present-day application of them for the benefit of our readers.

The first exhortation "despise not prophesyings," or its lesson for us now, might be expressed thus: "Give, those who minister the Word a respectful hearing." From ancient times "public teaching" was one of the meanings of the Greek word rendered "prophecy," and in that sense, of course, prophecy has always been practised in the Church. Though preached in human weakness, the Word of God has been powerful to accomplish the will and purpose of Him who sent it forth. (Isa. 55 :11; Act 15:14.) There are reasons why we ought to give a respectful audience to ministers of God's Word. The Lord Himself instituted the ministry for the edification of His Church: "He gave some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:11,12), and we must not "despise" (literally, set at nought) His provision. We know, too, that we are not yet perfected in knowledge, and therefore still have need of attending to teachers and can learn something of value from any who preach the Word in the spirit of its Author.

Now, the second admonition of our text: "But prove (or test) all things." Here the word "but" is inserted by most editors on good manuscript authority, and it connects up this statement with the preceding. The first exhortation told us to listen, but this one puts us to work, sifting and testing what we have heard. There are obvious reasons why it is necessary to test the teachings that are being promulgated. The Lord warned: "Take heed that no man deceive you," and added that many would be deceived. A second reason is that because of imperfect knowledge, or faulty judgment, many godly men, even outstanding teachers, have held and taught error, or have been mistaken in some of their reasonings and conclusions. The piety or position of a teacher is no guarantee that he is correct in everything that he teaches. The words of our text still apply: "Prove all things." This statement is to be taken in connection with the preceding. The "all things" do not, of course, include every line of teaching and every theory that may come to our attention. We are to prove those prophesyings (teachings) which commend themselves as worthy of our consideration and study, holding forth a promise of "good." The substance of these teachings may be "new," or it may be "old."—Matt. 13:52.

How are we to prove the teachings? The Apostle does not say. Our only infallible touchstone is the Bible; by it we must test every doctrine. While this might seem a rather simple matter, it is not always so in practice. It is true that often the Scriptures are so plain and definite that there is not room for two opinions. We could wish that it were always so. But it is evident that our Heavenly Father has not given us that kind of Bible. For it is true that sometimes teachings are based on *interpretations* of Scripture, rather than a simple "Thus saith the Lord." Now, an interpretation of a Scripture may be based on a number of things, for example, the meaning of a word where it may be taken in more than one sense. Or, it may rest upon a point of grammar, or the relation of the Scripture to its context, or perhaps to some other passage. The interpretation may rest on punctuation alone, for that is the simplest form of interpretation, as may be seen in Luke 23:43 (the position of a comma).

Interpretations of Scripture are to be tested with reference to certain generally accepted sound principles of hermeneutics — the science of interpretation. First, the interpretation must be grammatical, not violating any rule of grammar or syntax. Second, the meaning assigned to words must be in harmony with their usage at the time the Scripture was written. Third, there must be a sound discrimination between literal and figurative or parabolic uses of language. Fourth, a Scripture must be explained in harmony with its context, or the general teaching of the Bible on the subject. In the main it is by these four rules or principles that we are to "test all things" presented—not alone interpretations of Scripture, but sometimes translations of it also. Does this sound simple and easy? We think not. It is scarcely necessary to add that if two (or more) interpretations of a Scripture pass the tests, they must be considered equally possible.

It will be generally admitted that the most difficult things to prove or test are statements and arguments concerning the Scriptures in the original languages, which are (chiefly) Hebrew and Greek. And how much of that sort of discussion there is in these days, when almost every writer who has a different thought to offer, appeals to the Greek or Hebrew text in support of it! Among such interpretations there may be something of value to the student, but if he lacks a working knowledge of the original languages, how shall he separate the wheat from the chaff? He may turn to a good concordance for help (Strong's, Young's, or The Englishman's), and there find sufficient information (in many cases) to enable him to intelligently test the argument under consideration. In other cases this source of help will fail to provide the answer, for often in determining the true meaning of the original text it is not enough to know *what* word is used; it is important to know *how* that word is used—such grammatical details as case or tense or mood. These latter things belong to grammar and syntax, and are beyond the scope of a concordance like Dr. Strong's. Knowledge of the numerous idioms found in the original Scriptures, which is sometimes indispensable to the student, is to be obtained not from the concordance, but from standard works on the Greek and Hebrew languages—the larger lexicons and grammars, which presuppose some knowledge of those languages on the part of the student. "It is painful to reflect upon the slow progress which this qualification has made in public estimation. Judging from the conduct of many, they appear to deem it wholly unnecessary to aim at such an acquisition. And yet without it, they must acquiesce in received modes of interpretation or trite elucidations, without the ability to assign any reason except that they are held by a favorite commentator, or found in a certain system." (Samuel Davidson, LL.D., in his "Sacred Hermeneutics," page 18.) The words quoted above were written over a hundred years ago, and since then the acquisition of a working knowledge of the sacred languages has been made much less difficult by the abundance of excellent helps now available (particularly for beginners), and ignorance on the part of those who handle the Greek or Hebrew is less to be

condoned.

Above we have pointed out the method to be followed in proving “prophesyings” which are based on particular applications of Greek and Hebrew words or phrases. It remains to illustrate it by an example. The Greek noun *Aion* (pronounced “I own”) and its derivative adjective *Aionios* occur frequently in the New Testament, and are also of great importance from the standpoint of eschatology (doctrine of the last things). Moreover, there is found to be much difference of opinion even among prominent scholars and translators on the correct rendering of these Greek words into English. In the Common Version they are rendered mostly by such terms as “for ever,” “eternal,” and “everlasting.” Some other translators (and writers) deny that *aion* and *aionios* can be properly so rendered. They assert that *aion* properly means “an age” and that the adjective derived from it can mean only “age-lasting,” (not everlasting or eternal). Accordingly, Rotherham translates *aionios* “age-binding,”

Young renders it “age-during,” while the Emphatic Diaglott does not translate the word but merely transliterates it from the Greek. On the other hand several versions made in modern time (including the Revised Standard Version) retain “everlasting” or “eternal” and “for ever.” Whom is the student to follow? Which school of Bible translators appears to have the soundest approach to this moot question?

Now, this writer realises that any attempt on his part to answer these questions will appear presumptuous. More than once he himself has asked, “Where the best scholars cannot agree, what can the ordinary Bible student do?” Nevertheless, in what follows we shall endeavour to answer that question. At the outset we are impressed with two or three things. First, the scholars who disagreed regarding the proper rendering of *aion* and *aionios* all had before them the same information, the same important facts concerning the etymology of these words (so far as can be known), and their usage—in the *New Testament*, in the Septuagint, and in classical Greek. Second, from the same facts the various translators drew their own conclusions, having used their best judgment in the matter. It is quite apparent that sometimes translators have found difficulty in maintaining a truly objective attitude in their work ; whether any of those whose work we are trying to judge were influenced in their decision by doctrinal prejudice, we cannot know. Third, we are impressed with the thought that the information regarding *aion* and *aionios* to which our translators had access, is in a substantial way available to us also, in the large Greek and Hebrew lexicons, in the *New Testament* and Septuagint Greek, and in the original Hebrew of the Old Testament.

Now let us summarize the information which these generally reliable sources yield, bearing on the question under consideration. (1) Lexicographers are not agreed as to the primary meaning of *aion*, many of them following Aristotle, who derived the word from *aei*, which means forever, while some believe it comes from a word meaning to breathe, and it has in it the thought of life. (2) In the earliest of extant Greek writings, those of the poet Homer, *aion* does not denote an age or eternity, but the lifetime of a man. (3) In the classical period also the word is sometimes used of the duration of a human life, but it has taken on other, broader meanings as an indefinite period, an age, and eternity. (4) In the Septuagint (where it is used mostly as a translation of the Hebrew word *'olam*) *aion* has in general the same meanings as in the Greek writers, the context indicating which meaning is intended. The first occurrence of *aion* in that ancient version is in Genesis 3:22 for *'olam*. Here the Greek phrase is usually rendered “for ever” ; for *l'olam*, Rotherham gives “to times age-abiding,” and Young has “to the age.” While such phrases are based on “age” as one of the meanings of *aion*, it is obvious that they are vague and raise questions in the mind of the reader, such as : “To what age?” Since in Genesis 3 :22 and its context there is no thought that eating of “the tree of life” would enable man to live only to some particular period or age, we are compelled to give *aion* in this passage its broadcast significance : “forever.” And from a linguistic standpoint there can be no valid objection to that rendering, as we have shown above. That *aion* and *aionios* can denote everlasting or eternal (and often do) is proved beyond any question by their application to Jehovah and His attributes, for example, Genesis 21 :33; Isaiah 40 :28 ; Psalm 9 :7; Psalm 119:142, etc. On the other hand, in many occurrences of these Greek words the context definitely limits their meaning to: the lifetime of a slave (Exod. 21:6), the duration of the Aaronic priesthood (Exod. 40:15), the keeping of the Passover (Exod. 12:14), etc. (5) The writers of the New Testament follow the usage of classical Greek and especially the Septuagint, using *aion* in a variety of phrases, often reduplicated for emphasis as “forever and ever.”

A study of those various phrases in the original reveals the difficulty of translating them literally. For if we render *aion*, by “age” (as some attempt to do in every instance) some of those phrases would literally be : “to the age” (1 Cor. 8:13), “to the ages” (Rom. 9:5), “to the ages of the ages” (Gal. 1:5), “to the age of the age” (Heb. 1 :8), and “to a day of an age” (2 Pet. 3:18.) Most scholars agree that these and other similar phrases were not intended to be construed literally, but are idiomatic expressions—expressions peculiar to a language and having a meaning apart from their literal translation. It is evident, however, that in the New Testament *aion* is sometimes used of an age or dispensation (in many passages mis-translated “world”), for example, “this (Gospel) age” (Matt. 24:3), or “the age to come (Millennial)” (Matt. 12:32), and other ages to follow that one. (Eph. 2:7.) But this use of the word must be clearly distinguished from the idiomatic usage or confusion will result.

From the facts which our study has yielded, we form our conclusion concerning the true meaning of *aion* or *aionios*. In Biblical as in secular Greek those words have *more than one meaning*, and in each occurrence the sense in which the word is there used must be determined from the connection, and usually this is possible. The several diverse phrases with (don, which do not lend themselves to literal translation, are usually best rendered “forever” and “forever and ever,” as in our common English versions. The adjective *aionios* may denote “everlasting” or merely “lasting,” according to the context. In that important and much-discussed text, Matthew 25:46, the parallelism between *aionios* life and *aionios* punishment, apart from the teaching of other Scriptures, favors the rendering “everlasting.” The practice of some who instead of making an attempt at translating *aion* and *aionios*, merely transliterate them in the Greek or

Latin spelling, would seem to have little to commend it. It may leave the reader with the erroneous impression that the Greek words are not translatable into English.

The third exhortation of our text, "Hold fast that which is good," reminds us that in our hearing and sifting of teachings our interest is ever in the good they contain — "that which is good to the use of edifying." (Eph. 4:29.) In this connection good is practically synonymous with truth, for it is only truth that edifies and sanctifies.—John 17: 17,19.

He who seeks to prove all things by the Word learns that the Bible itself has suffered at the hands of men, and not always at the hands of its enemies. That priceless Book has been "wounded in the house of its friends" — by well-meaning but misguided Christians, who, due to doctrinal prejudices, have fallen into the error of "wresting the Scriptures" (2 Pet. 3:16) by mistranslating or misapplying them. The lesson of our text has been an important one for the Church even from its earliest days (2 Tim. 2:15-18), and is not less so now especially for those who as teachers occupy positions of greatest responsibility.

The writer would say in closing that the "all things" of our text include the thoughts set forth in this article. Conclusions based on judgment must of necessity have a tentative quality (even scholars have been known to change their minds) • it is otherwise with well-established facts. It is with the latter that we have been mainly concerned in preparing the present article.

"Truth how sacred is the treasure! Teach us, Lord, its worth to know..."

(By W. A. Eliason. Reprinted from "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom.")

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## Harvest, Winter, Sabbath.

THE harvest work of which our Lord speaks so fully in Matt. 24 is the culmination of the selection of His "Little flock" of consecrated followers, which began at His first advent in the calling of His little band of disciples. All down the Gospel Age numbers have been added to this "people for God's name," and in the time of harvest "the dead in Christ" are raised, and the remaining members on earth are gathered into the heavenly garner, in preparation for the reign of peace which is to follow.

It is important that the harvest work be clearly understood, and the Lord has given ample instruction for all who will prove their value as true "wheat" and be gathered into the garner within a certain period of time. As in the case of the Jewish harvest those who were in the religious systems of the day and failed to respond to the Lord's message were burned up as "chaff" (Matt. 3:12), so in the close of the Gospel harvest, those in the religious systems who do not respond to the harvest message must go through "great tribulation," a fiery time of trouble with which this age will end, and be revealed as "tares."—Matt. 13:30; 24:21.

It is to this wheat class—"My people"—that the Lord has been calling through His Word and by His spirit for many years now, to flee from the present systems of Christianity, which have become worldly institutions and have been cast off from favor.—Rev. 3:14-22; 18:1-5. This "flight" from Babylon (mother and daughter systems) must be undertaken before the "four winds" are let loose (Rev. 7:1-3), by all worthy of the name "My people" —"that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Flight is to be made not from one denomination to another, but the instruction is "flee into the mountain," i.e., the kingdom of the Lord (Matt. 24:16), and being translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, He has provided the harvest feast for all such—"For whosoever the carcase (the food, meat in due season) is, there will the eagles be gathered together."—Matt. 24:28. And so it is, God's people are found gathered together in twos or threes or larger numbers rejoicing in the truths provided only for this class by their Lord who has returned, unseen by human eyes, to conduct this harvest work before the great time of trouble and later the bringing of peace to the earth. (Rev. 14:14-16.)

The importance of making flight from the systems of Babylon during the harvest of the Gospel Age is impressed again by the Lord in His exhortation—"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." (Matt. 24:20.) These terms "winter" and "sabbath day" are not to be taken literally, but rather our Lord was referring to periods of time which would be very unfavourable, yea, impossible for flight from the systems He has cast off.

The "winter" would refer to the great time of trouble, when the "four winds" of Rev. 7, are let loose, bringing about a great tempest amongst the restless masses of mankind—"the sea and the waves roaring" (Luke 21:25)—resulting in "the heavens" (ecclesiastical systems) passing away with a great noise . . . the earth also (present order of society) and the works that are therein being burned up." (2 Pet. 3:10.) No wonder the Lord exhorts His people to flee to Him, to His Kingdom, before the "winter." During a literal harvest time there is plenty of food obtainable as the grain is gathered into the barn, but how different it is when winter sets in. So in the harvest of this Gospel Age there is abundant provision of spiritual food for the sustenance of all the Lord's people who are courageous and answer His call to leave the lukewarm Laodicean systems of to-day, but with the coming of the winter period the opportunity of feasting on the harvest truths will be past. "The harvest is past, the summer (time of favourable opportunity) is ended,

and we are not saved (as members of the Church)" is recorded by the prophet Jeremiah 8:20, as representing the Great Company, who, though unworthy to be of the Bride of Christ, receive a lower spiritual inheritance following the washing of their robes through great tribulation. See Rev. 7:9-17.

The term "sabbath day" would not refer to a twenty-four-hour, seventh day of the week, but rather to a period of time, typified by the Jewish sabbath day. This period is generally understood by Bible students as referring to the seventh millennium during which Israel and mankind as a whole will be blessed with lasting rest and peace, which the term "sabbath" signifies. How fitting, then, that our Lord should say—"Pray ye that your flight be . . . neither on the sabbath day," implying that when this period is ushered in, flight from the Babylonian systems would be out of the question, inasmuch as Babylon will have been thrown down during the "winter" time, which precedes the "sabbath day."—"Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." (Rev. 18:21).

If this be the correct understanding of our Lord's words (our readers are exhorted to prove all things for themselves from the Scriptures) it will be seen that the harvest, winter and sabbath day refer to three distinct periods of time.

The harvest is for the complete gathering of the Gospel Church during the "days of the Son of Man," corresponding to "the days of Noah" prior to the Flood. There would seem no doubt that we are at present very near the close of this period, and how important, therefore, that any of the Lord's people still in Babylon, in any of its forms, should act quickly and flee from all such associations, ere the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) cut off all opportunity of being gathered into the Gospel garner, as "The plowman overtakes the reaper." (Amos 9:13.)

The winter time is for the purpose of ridding the world of everything out of accord with the Lord and His righteousness — the man-made systems, ecclesiastical, financial, political and social—"the removing of those things that may be shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." (Heb. 12:27.)

The sabbath day, following the severe winter time, is the period during which the elect Church shall be "priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6), bringing peace and happiness—"the desire of all nations"—to the chastened world of mankind, for their uplift and progress to perfect human life on the restored earth. Of this time the Apostle Peter says—"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens (Christ and His Church) and a new earth (new social order) wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Pet. 3:13.

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## **The Spirit of the Stranger.**

(Contributed Article).

IN Exodus 23:9 we read—"Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart (soul) of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." The reference to the heart would point to the matter of feelings, and it would seem that God is allowing us, through events, to feel the reality of our strangership. Every true believer is a stranger in this world; our destination is heavenly, so that the Christian does not belong to this scene and condition at all. Our eternal condition is different from this condition of mortality. As we know, this is a provisional condition in which we live, so that we are sojourners, in that sense, and yet it is right we should feel it.

David speaks of this condition in that wonderful address of praise and worship. He says in Psalm 69 :7,8—"Because for thy sake I have borne reproach ; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children." We know there is hope of life, and that we are part of this groaning creation, and "even we, who have the firstfruits of the spirit, we also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." We are, of course, all strangers in this world. The Scripture in Exodus alludes to this; we are not only sojourners in relation to our mortal condition, but we are strangers and foreigners in this world, the Christian's Egypt.

God consistently reminded His people that they were strangers in Egypt, hearing a language that they know not. It was very real, this matter of strangership, being in a strange land, hearing a strange language, having to do with different customs and ways. It is a very real matter to us to realise that we are not only sojourners but aliens; that is, we do not belong here at all. It seems that the Lord is allowing associations and other matters that are causing exercise in our public relations to remind us that really this is not our resting place. We are only just passing through, and we cannot expect to settle down here, to be fitted into "Egypt's" structure, because we are aliens; we do not belong to this world's system.

The greatest delusion current is that Christianity fits in with the world system; that it is something devised to improve the world. There was no thought when Israel went down into Egypt that they were to improve Egypt. Think of those persons who went down to Egypt, Jacob and those with him, who had the promises of God. They went down

into that strange land, and yet it was not purposed by

God that they should settle there. When they prospered, Pharaoh soon became concerned and oppressed them, so that they felt their bondage, their strangership, the spirit and soul of the stranger. So we, as Christians, are to feel it. The Lord, in circumstantial and other ways, is allowing us to feel that we do not belong in this world, and it is right that we should feel it; that is what is true of the Christian.

That is the spirit in which the Lord Jesus went about here. How strange men were to Him—their motives, their actions, being entirely foreign to His thoughts! Man was moved by selfishness, ambition, cruelty — everything opposite to what was in Jesus. He found everything strange; what a foreign place the world was to Him! Jesus said—”The foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.” (Luke 9:58.) So we have to learn that we do not belong in Egypt, and God will challenge every attempt to hold us there.

God challenged every attempt of Pharaoh to hold the people. Pharaoh would gladly have mixed them in ; he destroyed the male children, but would have liked to have mixed the rest in Egypt and retain them there. The same applies now, for Satan would like to keep the believer. He is set against the true bearing of the Gospel; that is, that the believers are to be called out from the world to be with Christ in the future blessing of mankind. So, it is right that we should feel that we do not belong to this world, and men will soon allow us to feel it as we confess the name of Jesus. Our home, our destiny, is above, so it is impossible that we should, be fitted in here.

Joseph knew what strangership meant. He was not only separated from his brethren, but he was the object of his brethren’s enmity. He suffered because of his standing for the truth. Think of Joseph’s position when he went to his brethren ; how they hated him! He was hated first of all because he was loved by his father, and when he stated his dreams they hated him the more. So, as we seek to hold the truth, the truth of separation, the truth as to the claims of Christ, what comes about is this animosity, not just from the world, but from what is closer than the world.

Our Lord Jesus was hated by His brethren; think of what that meant to Him. The quotation in Psalm 69 was no doubt prophetic of Him—”I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s sons.” This Psalm is quoted in John’s Gospel, where the Lord Jesus went into the temple, and raised issues with the Jews as to what was going on there. He said—”Make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise.” (John 2:16). That is what Christendom has become; that kind of thing has come into the realm of what belongs to the Father—My Father’s house. “And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.”

That is the position now. It is the question of the zeal of God’s house—what is due to Him, the holiness of it. Issues that are being raised indicate that we are not only aliens in Egypt, but aliens, also, in Christendom. We are made to feel that we do not fit into the religious world, not only the Egyptian world, but the Babylonish world, for Israel was captive there. Israel knew what it was to be captive in Babylon. They said, “How should we sing a song of Jehovah’s upon a foreign soil.” It is right that we are to feel it in this setting, and it comes very close, as many of us know.

How testing it is! It is all part of this spirit of strangership that we are to feel, and yet it is because the Lord has indicated that path. It says of Joseph in Genesis 49:23 — “The archers have provoked him, and shot at, and hated him.” That is what is going on ; the truth is under attack, and if *we* defend it, we will come under attack. If you stand for the truth, you can expect to suffer for it. If we are to be strangers and aliens in relation to the earth and in relation to Christendom, and in relation to those who do not recognise the claims of Christ, then God is prepared to have us in His house. The compensation for strangership is to be in the Father’s house, and that will be our eternal portion.

If we are in this position we can count on the sympathetic support of Christ, because He has been in it. He has shown what it was because His Jewish brethren and His natural brethren did not believe on Him ; they were sarcastic and ridiculed Him. He was betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, and forsaken by them all. He knew what it was in an outstanding way to be left alone. There is nothing so cutting as to be ignored, to be left alone. It is an awful thing to feel hated. We are to be ready to be outcasts, but we find in Isaiah 56 One who gathers the outcasts of Israel,—”The Lord Jehovah who gathereth the outcasts of Israel.” It is a wonderful service of God that He is gathering the outcasts.

In John 9 *we* read of a man who was an outcast. The Son of God took a personal interest in him; He was interested in that one man who was prepared to stand for the truth as he knew it. He said, “One thing I know.” He would not come down to the level of his accusers, but simply stated — “One thing I know, that being blind before, now I see,” and he was able to overthrow all the opposition.

Yet they cast him out, which was really admission of defeat. But if they cast him out, the Son of God sought him out. He was the gatherer of the outcasts, and He has been gathering others ever since. If we are prepared to be aliens in relation to the religious world that has been unfaithful respecting God’s truth, we can count on being gathered. If the world has no place for us religiously, or any other way, God has His place, and the best place for us.

Although Joseph was hated and cast out in a strange land, his was a fruitful bough. So the Lord Jesus is the fruitful bough; His branches have spread over the wall, as it were. As we read in Ephesians—”He has preached the glad tidings of peace to you who were afar off.” So, here we are, Gentiles, without any claim on the blessings, and yet God has brought us into the very best place. “Keep ye judgment and do righteousness,” and that is the basis for it all, with no compromise as to the truth.

In 2 Tim. 2:19-22 we read of withdrawing from iniquity, separating from vessels of dishonour, and doing righteousness. — “Pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.” Again, in Ephesians we read—”That ye were at that time without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” That is where we have all been once. “But now in Christ Jesus ye (Gentile believers) who once were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” (Eph. 2:12,13.) The fact that Jesus was rejected by the Jews has meant our salvation for the heavenly calling;

we owe it all, in that sense, to the fact that the Lord Jesus came to His own and was not received—He was here as a stranger. However, “through him we both have access by one spirit to the Father.” That means we are quite at home, not only in the house, but we have all the liberties of the house. The Son has set us free ; we could not have any more profound sense of nearness and blessedness ; this is in contrast to the spirit of the stranger, that we now have access to the very presence of the Father.

Further, in Ephesians we read, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” This is to assure us that we belong to the family. We are not on a lower grade, so to speak, but fellowcitizens and of the household of God, “being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.”

Then, we are not only in the house, but of it. The saints comprise the house, are built into it. “In whom all the building fitted together increases to a holy temple in the Lord ; in whom ye also (Gentile believers, built into the structure) are builded together for a habitation of God in the spirit.” How wonderful it all is ! Instead of being strangers, now we are a dwelling place for God in the spirit, brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and having this wonderful access, “built together for a habitation of God in the spirit.”

**“Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”—Acts 14:17.**

*The gentleness with which it (the rain) falls is one of the most perfect processes of nature. Even so God does not let loose His truth in overwhelming torrents upon our souls. It is here a little and there a little that His Word reaches our hearts. Each holy word falls softly on the spirit, and there is not a thought or emotion or hidden power in our being that does not drink in the refreshment. One after another, the revelations of His love, and power, and purpose, and of Himself, follow and follow, still sinking deeper and deeper as we eagerly receive them; and of very necessity, every grace is quickened from its deepest root into new vigour of life.—Sarah Smiley.*

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## The Anvil and the Hammers.

Last eve I paused before a blacksmith’s door,  
And heard the anvil ring, the vesper chime,  
And looking in I saw upon the floor  
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.  
“How many anvils have you had,” said I,  
“To wear and batter all the hammers so.”  
“Just one,” said he, and then with twinkling eye,  
“The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.”  
And so I thought, the anvil of God’s Word  
For ages sceptic blows have beat upon  
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.  
—Anon.



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## The Value of Knowledge.

(Convention Address)

*"We have received . . . the spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. 2:12.)*

THE desire for knowledge was awakened very early in the mind of man, but the cost of obtaining this from unauthorized channels has been heavy. The wise man said—"For in much wisdom is much grief ; and he that increases knowledge increases sorrow." (Eccel. 1:18.)

This was experienced by mother Eve in the Garden of Eden. The tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9), in the midst of the garden, was observed by Eve as possessing a quality to make one wise. There are right and wrong channels for learning wisdom and knowledge, and our first parents learned this early in the experience of life ; the Lord permitting this in order to teach valuable lessons.

Taking the Biblical account of the early history of man, it is stated that Satan enticed and deceived mother Eve to obtain knowledge the forbidden way. God had said—"Ye shall surely die," if disobedient (Gen. 2:9), but the serpent (Satan) said—"Ye shall not surely die." Whereby it has since been proved that by hearkening to the commands of God is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom, as expressed in later times by the sages of the past. "The fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge," (Prov. 1 :7) ; a knowledge that will lift out of disaster to eternal life, through the way God has appointed.

But man from earliest times sought out many inventions, as a wise man observed—"Behold, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions," (devices), (Eccel. 7:29.) Now we live at a time in the history of mankind when these, inventions and devices are increasing at an alarming rate, filling the hearts of those who invent them with fear and apprehension.

Only recently (Jan. 25th, 1960) the Professor of Physics at the University of Sydney (Professor Messel) on T.V., is reported to have said—"Remember this, In one decade man has learned and achieved as much as his forbears in the previous history of mankind." That is saying something; yes, and this knowledge has come suddenly into the life of mankind.

Another great man—a sage and prophet—foretold this of our time, and tells us also when this would happen in the history of mankind, and the effect of it upon the world. (Dan. 12:1-4) The prophet Daniel, after having in previous chapters traced the prophetic history of mankind through the power of inspiration, is instructed in verse 4—"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Verse 9—"But go thy way, Daniel; for the words are sealed till the time of the end." Verse 10—"The wise shall understand."

Professor Messel is corroborating a fact, whether he is aware of it or not, that Daniel foretold more than 2,000 years ago — the present, sudden increase of knowledge, quick travel and invention; and with it will come (and has come—is now present) trouble, distress, sorrows. Truly Eccel. 1:18 is again applicable — "He that increases knowledge increases sorrow," not having the wisdom and power to apply it to the best advantage of all concerned. This is especially located at the time of the end of the age.

This increase of knowledge has brought along with it trouble and distress, as Jesus also foretold—"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:25,26.) But happy are those who know that beyond this acute distress of nations, the power of the Lord will intervene and bring deliverance to distressed and despairing mankind. He will bring peace and security to all who submit to His righteous control; His kingdom shall rise upon the ruin, of the old order, and shall increase to the uttermost parts of the earth, and His will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

The prophet Daniel said—"At the time of the end," of the age "the wise shall understand." These know and appreciate the revealed plan of God and the glorious things reserved in heaven for the followers of the Lord, and the happiness and harmony which will be established on a perfected earth among mankind, when national boundaries cease to exist, and when love, justice, and truth shall prosper.

This "knowledge is pleasant to the soul," (Prov. 2:10.), and naturally all faithful Christians want to know of this knowledge and instruction which has brought comfort and joy into many lives, as the proverb says—"Wise men lay up knowledge." Wisdom also declares —"Receive my instruction, and not silver ; and knowledge rather than choice gold." (Prov. 10 :14 ; 8:10.)

The knowledge of God and His Word is of primary importance; it is the basis of faith and obedience. A living faith must have a foundation in the Divine revelation, the Bible. It alone shows what righteousness is and that there is none righteous, no, not one. It alone shows how sin came into the world, and that personal faith in a personal Saviour is the only ground for a hope of a personal salvation.

Knowledge is the lamp which guides the way and shows the will of God, as the Apostle Paul says—"We do not cease praying on your behalf that you may be filled, as to the exact knowledge of his will, with all spiritual wisdom and understanding; to walk worthily of the Lord, pleasing him in all things; bringing forth fruit by every good work, and increasing in the exact knowledge of God; being strengthened with all strength according to his glorious power, for all patience and endurance with joy." (Col. 1:9-11, Diaglott.) Here the Apostle Paul twice emphasizes the importance of an *exact knowledge* of God's will.

It is important to increase and be filled with an exact knowledge of the Lord's will, accompanied by thorough wisdom and discernment in spiritual things. Although the apostle says. in verses 4 and 5 that the Colossian Christians had faith and love, and also hope, these things were not the burden of his prayer, but the increase of exact knowledge, wisdom, understanding, patience and endurance. This evidently gives proper balance to the exercise of faith, love and hope. Much wisdom and spiritual discernment is necessary after we have received knowledge, for there are many mixtures of truth and error presented in large and small parcels. Even love needs directing by knowledge. Hence the Apostle Paul prays for the Philippian Christians — "And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and More, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ." (Phil. 1 :9,10, R.S.V.).

A knowledge of God's will means more than the knowledge that God has a will. It means an experimental knowledge, acquaintance and fellowship with the spirit and character of God, which invigorates us and causes us to do the things God does, in the measure that lies within our power or position. The influence of this tends to perfect the new creature, into closer and closer conformity to the Pattern, Christ Jesus. The apostle gives this thought of intimate association and fellowship with Christ when he says—"That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death (Jesus' sacrificial death) ; if by any means (or in any way) I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3:10,11.)

In Col. 3:10, the Apostle Paul again shows the importance of knowledge—"Put on the new man, being renewed by knowledge, according to a likeness of him who created him." (Diaglott.) The new creature, or "new man" is refreshed, renewed, invigorated by knowledge after the image of God who created Christ. The apostle tells in this third chapter what things to put off, and what things to put on. The former customs and works of the old, natural man are put off and new characteristics put on, which begins at consecration, when we yielded. to God and righteousness and the supreme aim of development we see to be love. Without knowledge we could accomplish nothing; knowledge shows us the will of God on the one hand, and the selfishness and vanity of our fallen human nature on the other. It shows us what things to put on; it shows us the Lord's characteristics and principles, what His spirit or disposition is which we are to imitate — renewed by knowledge after the image of God who created it. A new creature is being created, not a renewing of the old nature.

We have the new will from the beginning, but it requires some time to transform our minds, for our minds tend to continue to bend earthward ; gradually we see things more and more from the Divine standpoint, and faith and obedience increases. The new man is God's workmanship. Although this creative work is not yet completed, nevertheless we are assured that God is able and will complete this by various means and experiences of His own choosing to suit each individual. It is for us to respond—"Thy will be done"—and grow in grace and knowledge.

Furthermore, it is the power of this knowledge of God and the application of it that enables us to escape the pollutions of the world, (2 Pet. 2:20) ; and strengthens the determination to walk worthily in the Christian way which is pleasing to God, and we are thus able to bring forth fruit by every good work. In other words, the right use of this knowledge encourages us in the work of character development, leading to praise and giving of thanks to God, our Father, for His glorious power through this knowledge, which stimulates us in every direction. The strong conviction of this strengthens us to endure cheerfully all things that God permits to come into or touch our lives, thus producing also patience and longsuffering, endurance. So great is this change in our lives, and in its pursuits, hopes and aims, etc., that it is referred to as a deliverance from darkness to light; indeed the truth of God is always represented as light, and His people as children of light.

The Apostle Peter says that grace and peace are multiplied unto us through the knowledge of God, and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "and through his divine power he has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness." (2 Pet. 1:2,3.) If we had no knowledge of these "all things" they would be valueless to us ; likewise, the precious promises which are another means to an end—the attainment of the divine nature—would not accomplish their purpose if we had no knowledge of them, for no knowledge means no faith in them.

The Apostle Paul also says that a knowledge of the promises cleanses us "from the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7:1.) What would be our position and character if we had no knowledge of these? God gives knowledge for a purpose; He establishes our faith by granting us knowledge, and then faith takes hold upon things eternal and invisible. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," Jesus

said. (John 8:32.) This knowledge of the truth also gives freedom, liberty.

The increase of general knowledge is greatly stirring the world, filling many hearts with fear and foreboding. Knowledge, enlightenment, is causing especially the backward nations to throw off the shackles of oppression, bondage and ignorance, and to claim the liberty which is theirs by right — the liberty to live decent lives and receive a share of the common bounties and blessings enjoyed now by more advanced nations. This diffusion of knowledge is symbolically referred to as lightning flashes,—”His (God’s) lightnings enlightened the world ; the earth (society) saw, and trembled.” (Psa. 97:4.)

It has been truthfully said that knowledge is a means to an end, and the ultimate end is eternal life. Jesus said—”In this consists the life of the ages, in knowing Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3, Weymouth.) Increasing in the knowledge of God is another way of pleasing Him ; He is pleased with those who desire to understand what He is, what He does, and what He purposes and commands.

God does not always give us complete understanding of all details of a given instruction or experience, but the outline merely, at times as in the case of Abraham. God told Abraham of His purpose to bless all nations through him and his offspring, but many details were omitted, and thus in Abraham’s experience much room was left for the exercise of faith, and gradually his faith was strengthened and perfected by experience and contact with God. It was a *developed* faith, and earned for him three titles—”Friend of God,” “the father of the faithful,” and “heir of the world,” because he showed his faith by his works.

The opposite of knowledge is ignorance and foolishness. Prov. 15:14 states—”The mouth of fools feed on foolishness.” Psalm 32:9 reads—”Be not so as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding,” and Isaiah said, speaking for God—”My people are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge.” (Isa. 5:13.) Jesus also accused the scribes and Pharisees,—”Ye have taken away the key of knowledge.” (Luke 11: 52.) The people were famished for a proper knowledge of God and correct interpretations of His requirements. The religious leaders had plans and theories of their own which they considered better and wiser than the dispensational truths proclaimed by Jesus and the apostles. Even so, now, as then, ignorance, rather than enmity, is the cause of opposition to the Present Truth of God’s Word and advancing purposes. It was in ignorance that the Jewish leaders crucified the Lord of glory.

Ignorance is the excuse of much of the wrong that had been done in the world amongst the Lord’s followers all down the age. For instance, the Apostle Paul said, before his conversion, that he ignorantly and in unbelief blasphemed, injured and persecuted the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. (1 Tim. 1:13.) Millions of people are in bondage to Great Babylon for the want of knowledge. “My people are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge,” is still true, as it was in the days of Israel. Truly, spiritual life is quenched because of fear of men and their organisations. “Where there is no vision the people perish.” (Prov. 29 :18.)

What would be our position today except for the “vision” of Present Truth? The knowledge of this has delivered us from the bondage of Babylon the Great. The truth has made us free, giving freedom and liberty in Christ, freedom from fear, freedom from formalism and sectarianism, freedom to think for ourselves, freedom to believe that truth is revealed to all faithful Christians without the medium of a clergy class, or self-appointed priesthood organisations. Only as each member enters into the freedom of the truth, and is separated from every other head but Christ can there be unity of one faith and one hope, for “One is your Master, and all ye are brethren.” This unity is characterized by one eternal spirit, the spirit of love, which dwells in God and Christ and is being created in every member of the Body of Christ.

What would we be doing today without Present Truth? Where would we be if we had no knowledge of the light for the last days—dispensational truth? Even the best and most enthusiastic work that is being done apart from the Present Truth movement must and does fall far short of that full satisfaction and spiritual discernment and transforming power in the life, which only truth can accomplish, and which can be seen now in the revelation of the harmony of the Bible. But one missing this great boon and continuing to embrace the mixture of truth and error must still have a certain amount of perplexity, uncertainty and dissatisfaction in the mind and, outlook concerning the destiny of mankind as a whole. But knowledge of Present Truth has given us freedom from this—the freedom of sonship. As Jesus said, in John 15 :15,—”I have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” Therefore, “search the Scriptures.”

### **Booklet for August’s “Peoples Paper.”**

A booklet entitled—”Israel As I Saw It” will take the place of August “Peoples Paper,” being an address given by Brother Lanowick while in Australia. This should be appreciated generally, and serve also as helpful to pass out to all interested in God’s promises to Israel.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 6/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.  
*Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia*

### **The Institute’s Work**

AT the close of April another year’s work for the Berean Bible Institute has been completed, and we desire to express gratitude and thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for His blessings and favours bestowed upon the efforts to serve His cause in association with our brethren throughout Australia and overseas. Appreciation is also expressed to all dear friends who have co-operated in various ways in connection with the work of the Institute, as unto the Lord.

Our brethren will understand that the efforts in the service of the Lord are carried on each year on well established

lines, and are mainly directed to encourage all who are walking in the narrow way of the Gospel Age calling, to which they have been invited through an understanding of God's Word, and the drawing of His spirit. The proclaiming of the message of the kingdom is also a witness to others who are feeling after the truths of God's Word—desiring something substantial upon which to base faith and hope for the future. Our monthly "Peoples Paper" provides a means of contact with all the brethren and a considerable number of other interested people, and the appreciation of the "P. Paper" expressed over the past year has been most encouraging.

To all who have contributed to the pages of the "Peoples Paper" sincere thanks is extended, and should other friends have helpful articles appropriate for publication, they are invited to forward them along. Our desire has been to provide a helpful variety of Bible subjects in the little periodical from month to month, dealing with the harvest message of Present Truth, of a devotional nature, and also containing the Plan of Salvation as a whole.

Early this year it was necessary to increase the subscription of "Peoples Paper" to 6/- per year, but with the increase in postage charges and production costs generally, a deficiency is still required to be made up from the General Tract Fund. As in past years, considerable numbers of the "Paper" were distributed free amongst the interested during the past twelve months, so it is felt that the expense to the General Fund is well used in the service of the Lord. All subscribers are welcome to extra copies of the "P. Paper" for passing out where good may be done, and those friends who supply subscriptions for others who are interested in Bible truths are helping very well in the work. Of particular assistance is the proof reading of the monthly "Paper" on the part of some of our friends and which is greatly appreciated, as also is the folding and wrapping ready for the post.

Tracts are available for distribution where good may be done, and it is a good plan for the friends to have a good supply on hand for passing out on all suitable occasions, these tracts being provided by the General Fund. Consolation Cards are also being forwarded to the bereaved by some of our friends, and in this way a message of comfort from God's Word is supplied to those who respond.

Throughout the past year public lectures have been continued from time to time, and appreciation has been manifest by the brethren who have encouraged others to attend. By this witness to the Divine Plan of the Ages some are prompted to examine the Bible with renewed interest, and also attend the regular studies on the Scriptures. Reference to the lectures on Israel by one of our brethren from U.S.A., was made in last month's "Peoples Paper."

The witness to the kingdom message through the use of the radio has also continued over the year past, and the blessing from the Lord has also been realised in these efforts, for which we thank and praise our Heavenly Father. Appreciation is also expressed to the numerous friends who have assisted in this feature of the work, all done as unto the Lord.

Some very good enquiries have been received during the year through the radio witness, and considerable literature has been supplied with benefit to a number of these friends. The same radio stations have been used in Geelong (Victoria), Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, and in the case of the last mentioned, the brethren in that area continue to meet the cost of the broadcasts direct. To all who respond to the discussions over the air, copies of the printed broadcasts are supplied, also numbers of the "Peoples Paper" and other appropriate literature. Friends who are in a position to make the broadcasts known to others are invited to co-operate in this work of witness, in the service of the Lord.

The financial side of the work generally, and with the radio witness is revealed from the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund presented below. The voluntary contributions from our friends have enabled the work to be carried on, in the Lord's providence, and all the loving sacrificing with assistance in this way is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord Himself. We may not know how much longer the opportunities and privileges of serving the cause of truth shall remain with us at this end of the Gospel Age, but so long as the "holding back of the winds" continues (Rev. 7:1-3), we may be sure that the Lord is pleased with the efforts of His people to encourage one another in the Christian way, as well as sounding forth the glad message of the kingdom to all who have ears to hear. The prayers of the brethren are requested that the Lord's blessing and guidance may be upon the efforts to serve His cause of truth in this part of the harvest field, as well as in all other areas, to His praise. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal ; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (John 4 :36.)

#### GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/59	233 10 6
„ Donations ..	.. 742 11 11
	£776 2 5
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples	£97 18 0
Hall Rents, Advertising Circulars, Con-	
solation Cards, etc. ..	37 12 0
General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	54 12 8
PP Assistance Israel Lectures ..	68 4 3
PP Towards Personal and House Expenses	350 0 0
„ Postage ..	46 1 0
PP Free Books and Booklets ..	4 7 6
Travel and Sundries ..	80 0 6
PP Credit Balance ..	37 6 6
	£776 2 5

## RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/59	£85 10 6
• Donations ..	.. 870 17 6
	£956 8 0
By Radio Stations 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ	£785 0 6
„ Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY	.. 55 4 7
• Freight Charges ..	.. 9 15 9
• Printing Dialogues ..	18 17 8
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## Approved Unto God.

*“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.—2 Tim. 2:15.*

THIS Text does not say, “Study the Scriptures,” but “Study to show thyself approved” — study to know what God would approve. And yet it means, first of all, to study the Revelation He has made. Then, after having come to some knowledge of the Scriptures, we must meditate upon them and consider how the Word is applicable to all of life’s affairs. Thus we would study the nature of everything with which we come in contact, as to whether it is good or evil. The word “study” here is used with very much the same thought as when the Apostle says, “Study to be quiet.”

Evidently the central thought of this expression is the approving of ourselves to God, not to men. It is proper enough that we should have the approval of all good men and good women. But our study, primarily, should not be along this line. First, we should study to please God—to be approved of God. We notice that there is a contemplative study, such as David speaks of when he says, “I meditate upon thy Law day and night”—to see how that Law would work out its height and depth, its length and breadth of influence upon himself. And so the Apostles thought here is that it should be our chief aim to please God.

“Rightly dividing the Word of Truth” would signify the proper application of the Word of Truth; the understanding of how and when and where it should be applied and what was the purpose and thought and Plan of the Divine Mind in the giving of this Word of Truth, the Word of God’s Message. Up to the advent of our Lord, God’s Message had been given chiefly through the Old Testament Scriptures. Then God’s Message was attested by Him who came from heaven. Additionally, our Lord left twelve chosen Apostles to be His special mouthpieces, to increase the Word of Truth, to increase the Word of knowledge, to increase the Word of explanation of the Divine Plan. Everything, therefore, that Timothy could recognise as being the Lord’s Message he was to give heed to. For instance, one part of God’s Message applies to the past, a part applies only to the Jews, still another part applies to Christians in the present life, and yet another part to their future hopes.

And so, as we get the matter rightly divided before our minds, we get the true understanding, the special enlightenment needed in our day, and we are enabled to rightly divide the Word better than did our fathers, so that today we can see, as our fathers did not see, the teaching of God’s Word respecting the “high calling” and “restitution” — the spiritual portion of blessing for the Church and the human portion of blessing for the world. We also see something about the times and seasons—which apply to the Church and which to the blessing of the world.

Thus, in our day, to rightly divide the Word of Truth necessitates the taking cognisance of everything that seems to be of the Lord and that throws any light upon the Word, and thus we may be able to “rightly divide” it. We must always bear in mind that in the Scriptures of the Old Testament “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit,” and that the Lord also said of the Apostles : “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

We are not to forget that the Lord promised that He would guide His people in the way of the Truth and show them things to come. We are to “study” to show ourselves approved—study the doctrine and endeavour to have our course of conduct harmonise with it—study to perform faithfully the duties of a loyal soldier of the cross of Christ.

The Christian soldier must study to perform even the smallest duty in a manner creditable to his calling; he must not permit himself to become entangled with other things which do not relate to his duties as a soldier and thus be side-tracked. The Christian soldier who turns aside to seek some personal, temporal advantage to the detriment of his duties as a soldier is to that extent an unfaithful soldier and likely to be drawn out of the ranks entirely.

“Study to show thyself approved.” Study the Word ; study yourself, that you may become well acquainted with yourself; that you may know your talents for service—in what direction they lie, and what are your weak points and how they may be guarded against — that you may know both your abilities and your shortcomings. Then study to avoid error and to shun all foolish questions and profane and vain babblings. Remember that only “the foundation of God standeth sure” • that all other foundations are worthless and that all other theories must come to naught. But “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, ‘The Lord knoweth them that are His.’ And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”—2 Tim. 2:19.

There is much significance in the word “study” and it is important to note that this Divine injunction is given to the Church, to those who are believers in Christ and who have consecrated their lives to His service. Having been reckonedly cleansed from sin, we are to give all diligence to the work of studying to make this reckoned cleansing, this imputed righteousness, an actual thing, to the extent of our ability. It is purely of Divine grace that we are reckoned righteous before we are actually so. Looking at our hearts and seeing in them not only our good and honest intentions, but also our desire for righteousness, and our efforts to become righteous in the way He would approve, God accepts the will for the deed. Accordingly, He counts us as righteous now and treats us as His children, since we have been redeemed from the curse and have accepted His gracious provision for reconciliation.

Let us, then, study our hearts to see that we are striving daily to cast out all the old leaven of sin; to be sure that we are not content to allow it to remain in us and work in us; otherwise we prove by our course that our love for righteousness is growing weaker. Happy are those who find that they are not merely working down the leavened mass occasionally and allowing it again and again to ferment, but are casting it out, by constantly resisting sin, by cleansing their thoughts, words and deeds with the Truth and cultivating the blessed “fruits of the Spirit”—love, joy, peace, etc.

Only the studious find the way to Divine approval and acceptance. Let us study to see that our lives are an honor to the cause we have espoused; that we abstain from even the appearance of evil; that we are circumspect in all our conversation, in our conduct—watching our thoughts, our lips, our lives. Let us study to be diligent in every duty, performing it with a ready mind and with joy and gladness of heart. Let us never lose sight of the fact that we are soldiers, and that as true soldiers we are to learn to “endure hardness.”

A soldier has many trivial duties to perform and he is as really doing his duty as a soldier when he is polishing his armor, foraging, cooking his meals, cleaning camp, or building bridges for the army to pass over, as when he is fighting the enemy. Such things are incidental work, but are necessary and entirely consistent with his commission as a soldier and should not be regarded as entanglements and hindrances. These duties cannot be disregarded nor carelessly done without a measure of unfaithfulness.

So with the Christian soldier. The routine of life—housework, shop work, daily toil, anything, everything, incidental to a proper and honest provision of “things needful” for ourselves and those dependent upon us for support as well as for provision for the prosecution and care of the Lord’s work—all this is a proper part of our engagement as soldiers of the Lord.

The Apostle Peter was as truly serving the Lord when catching the fish from whose mouth he got the coin with which to pay his Master’s taxes and his own, as when proclaiming, on the day of Pentecost, the “raising up” and ascension of the Lord. The Apostle Paul was as truly a soldier of the cross and doing his proper work as such when making tents (rather than be chargeable to any) as when at Mars Hill he preached Jesus and the resurrection. Whatever is done with a view to the glory and honor of the Lord, the Captain of our salvation, or for the benefit of any of our fellow-soldiers, or for our own preparation for this warfare, or in the discharge of obligations which our Captain has recognised and approved, is proper work for us as soldiers and is not entanglement in the affairs of this life.

### **“Godliness with contentment is great gain.” —1 Tim. 6: 6.**

*There are few temptations more common to ardent spirits than that which leads them to repine at the lot in which they are cast, believing that in some other situation they could serve God better. If each such man had the spirit of self-surrender, the spirit of the cross, it would not matter to him whether he were doing the work of the mainspring, or one of the inferior parts. It is his duty to try and be himself—simply to try to do his own duty.*

*F. W. Robertson.*

**Books Available.** “Most Holy Faith”—£1.

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“Christ’s Return”—1/- “Some of the Parables”—1/- “Hope Beyond the Grave”—1/-.

“God and Reason”—1/-.

## **The Great Salvation.**

*“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” Heb. 2:3.*

THIS question is addressed to Christians, and not to the unconverted, as is often supposed. This the context proves. The writer of the epistle addressed it to the church. It seems particularly adapted to converted Jews, who were familiar with the writings of the Old Testament. We have in this epistle some of the most earnest exhortations to be faithful to the Lord, and the very best reasons and motives given for our encouragement. The text and context are of this





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Sixpence

**“And Jesus Saith . . . .”**

(Convention Address)

TO be able to listen to advice is a good thing; a reasonable person will generally weigh advice given ; he may accept or reject it finally, but it is only the fool who does not consider advice. Most of us can recall varied experiences concerning advice tendered to us. Some we did not accept and in time to come wished we had ; other advice we did esteem and act upon, but later came to doubt the wisdom of so doing. There are times when we do better by acting upon our own initiative, and there are other occasions when we do better to allow ourselves to be guided by advice from others.

A person with self-confidence and arrogance has no desire to be advised ; the humble and meek are more likely to seek it. Knowledge is a factor largely determining the desire for advice. A man who has been a life-long farmer in one locality can often hide a good-humored smile at the lectures of some young government expert fresh from his college training. Long, practical experience has taught the farmer more along some lines than the young college student has learned from his theory classes. On the other hand, science plays its part today in aiding the man on the land, and so the wise farmer listens intelligently to his young college cousin. To still further improve his returns it pays the farmer to heed well all modern increase of scientific knowledge from his more youthful theoretical companion. On the other hand if the young student, on leaving his college surroundings, intends to take up practical farming, he would be wise and benefited to listen to advice from one who has had long experience on the practical side, in extremes of climatic conditions, etc. Similar application can be made to all walks of life; a business man of long standing will not be as likely to need or seek advice along that line, but if a man should come off the land and go into business, there will naturally be some desire for advice.

The known qualifications of a person govern the value of his advice to us; that is why we are so selective in our choosing of a medical doctor or a legal adviser.

Probably no one is more conscious of need of advice than a true Christian ; the more mature, the deeper the realization of need. Perhaps Christians have never felt in greater need of it than they do at this end of the age, though at all times it has been needed. That is why the Lord has so miraculously preserved the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. He knew what His people would. need.

The Bible is full of advice; indeed, it can furnish the Christian with all he needs ; the pity is that we forget that so often. (2 Tim. 3: 16,17). It would take many sermons to expound even a portion of all the advice we could, glean from God’s Word. The advice given in the book of Proverbs alone is colossal, but it is our intention now to dwell on just a little that came from the very best source imaginable—the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ. The scope is great but brevity is necessary, so we shall choose what may seem of special importance.

Today, Christians are often perplexed regarding doctrine. There are so many theories abroad; there are so many churches, and sects standing apart from the churches that some exclaim, Where shall we begin in our search for Truth? It is interesting to look at John 14: 1-10. Jesus was addressing His disciples clustered about Him, just before His arrest that led to His crucifixion. The disciples were perplexed at events happening about them, and doubly’ perplexed at some of the things Jesus was teaching them concerning it all. A few verses earlier, in the precious chapter, Peter was remonstrating with Jesus because He said He was going to leave them, and Peter could not go with Him. Then in chapter 14 He tells them that in His Father’s house are many mansions and that He was going to prepare a special place for them, also that they should know where He was going and the way to get there themselves. This was too much for them, and the role of spokesman transfers from Peter to Thomas, (Read verse 5) “*And Jesus saith, unto them,*” see verses 6 and 7. For any in doubt it is still the same wonderful, powerful answer—“I am the *Way, the Truth, and the Life.*”

Life is the essential thing, but :the natural man’s conception of it and methods of seeking it are extremely sad. It all ends in vanity of vanities because he does not know the truth. The truth alone can lead to life and only so if truth is

obeyed. Merely to assent to truth is not enough, but acted upon it opens up the Way. Jesus is the complete answer—"In Me ye shall have life." "Jesus saith unto them . . . he that followeth me . . . shall have the light of life." (John 8:12). There is a difference between recognition of Jesus as the bread of life or the light of the world, and appropriation. (Read John 6:51-55.)

Referring back to John 14:6,7, we note the effect of Jesus' further words upon the disciples—"If ye had known me, ye should have known the Father also." This prompted still another spokesman in the little company of unconvinced and still dissatisfied disciples. (Read verse 8.) "*And Jesus saith* unto him."—See verse 9. How many have there been, who, like these disciples, have sought God, the great supreme Being, yet have overlooked the means of His manifestation and revelation to them. Has Jesus been known and taught so well, so long, and yet His true mission has been unperceived?

In the 8th chapter of John we have some pertinent verses spoken to Jewish unbelievers in Jesus, yet they claimed to know God—Read verses 19, 42, 47 and first half of 59. According to 1 John 5:11,12 the divine record is set that God gives life to men only through His Son, and that he who knows not the Son as his personal Saviour, Exemplar and Sustainer does not yet know the true God, His character or power.

We know that many other salient points of doctrine are defined and clarified by what Jesus said, but we content ourselves with these first essentials. The main thing is to follow Jesus, to hearken to what He says—it will prove a light that shines more and more. Next we shall consider something helpful in relation to the bustling times in which we live. In all the situations that meet us, no doubt we would often be calmed by reflecting and asking ourselves the question, What would Jesus do? In

Luke 10:38-42 we have one of the best-known stories of the New Testament, that of Martha and Mary. We all get the picture in mental vision—Mary sitting quietly at the Lord's feet listening to His teaching (perhaps it would not be wrong to substitute "advice"), while Martha rushed about attending to the temporal needs of the home. Disgruntled, she appeals to the Lord for what seems to her to be justice—that Mary arise and help her. "*And Jesus saith* unto her, Martha, thou art troubled and anxious about many things"; we know the rest. According to the concordance the word "troubled" carries the thought of "tumultuous." Martha was not merely moving about quickly and thinking quietly about any preparation that could have been legitimate, but she was as we say "getting in a stew" about it. Commotion never does any good anywhere, anytime. The word has the same meaning when it is used in reference to the end of the age. "When ye hear of wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled,"—be not tumultuous. In other words, keep calm and continue to live orderly lives. Despite the fact that we are aware of the abnormal times in which we live, it is still true that there is no need for all the unrest, haste and anxiety which we exhibit. Haste and anxiety are foreign to the Creator's character, and we ought to seek divine assistance to quieten and restrain our lives—to seek to live orderly lives, to be calm.

Sometimes we have exasperating experiences but in them there are often lessons of helpfulness. Though folk may act in kindness and desire to help, they can sometimes hinder and obstruct. In one such personal experience, during momentary impatience, the thought flashed through my mind—I wonder if we ever get in God's road? Later in the evening, when I had time for quieter meditation, I recalled incidents where I believe I could have done so; not purposely; no, but so anxious to serve, so sure we must get things done and said for God.

It is a beautiful trait of Christian character—waiting upon the Lord. In Isa. 64:4 is a text which in the Revised Standard Version reads—"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides thee, *who works for those who wait for him.*" "*And Jesus saith*, Mary has chosen the good part." In our haste for bread of material needs, let us be on guard that we do not miss out on the better part. Our Lord knows we need these things, and if we seek the things pertaining to His kingdom, whilst an opportunity presents, we shall not be the loser.

How many of the beautiful things that "Jesus saith unto them" were spoken to people rushing about? All we can think of were in quiet scenes—to Mary sitting at His feet; a woman at the well-side; to folk on quiet mountain slopes, etc. It is no fault to consider well our modern "assembling together" in conventions and the like. Let us do what we can to try and keep the tumultuous strain out; if we can cut out needless rushing about during convention days we will be the better for it. Even when we meet for the programme proper, let it be as orderly as possible. All can contribute; the programme preparation committee has a responsibility to see that too much is not crowded into the allotted time; to see that there are the proper interim breaks, while speakers should pay good attention to frame addresses to the point, and within time limits, so that another's time is not encroached upon, causing them to hustle unduly.

One could go on, for Jesus touched upon so much in His sayings, but we must be brief. However, there is another subject that concerns everyone—death. Periodically, some of our friends and relatives pass away; every day, somewhere, the sorrow of parting from loved ones goes on. As Christians, what can we do; what should we say in our condolences. We think of Martha and Mary again, when they lost their brother. The record is in John 11,—" *And Jesus saith*, Thy brother shall rise again." Simple words and outspoken truth. It is still the main message we can take to the bereaved. The condolence card, no matter how nicely framed and worded, seems to carry about it an air of formality these days. If the atmosphere is right, some try to console with thoughts of heaven's bliss, and even if remembrances of the departed, would urge caution here; most everyone will try and comfort the sorrowing by recalling all the good points of the character of the departed. But all are fallen humans and tainted with sin, and those who have known the deceased best will remember also the faults displayed. True, they will not speak about it, but in their minds it balances against the good recalled, so that our best efforts to comfort along such lines are measurably nullified. But the words of Jesus, how beautiful—Thy brother, sister, father, mother, wife, husband, son, daughter, very good friend, esteemed or casual neighbor, or whoever it be that is mourned—"shall *rise again.*" Probation has not ceased. The mourners will

see their loved ones, and behold again those traits of character they had particularly admired; and during the times of restitution there will be opportunity for overcoming the blemishes still unconquered. Dear friend, sound this message forth on every suitable occasion, for it is the truth for the circumstance. A few written lines setting forth resurrection truth will accomplish more in God's providence, now and in time to come, than the mass produced condolence cards of the day.

We could go on, but leave a parting thought—How shall we face each day? The majority of mankind commend the practise of the Law —"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." *But Jesus saith—*"Love your enemies . . . do good to those who ill-use you . . . Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." To what extent are we taking this advice?

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## Shaking the Earth

THE collapse of the Summit Conference last month before it began came as a great shock to world leaders and the common people alike. Many had thought that this proposed conference may be the means of easing tension in international affairs ; indeed, church leaders throughout the world had publicly declared that special prayers were being offered to God for the success of this Conference. One minister of religion was reported as saying that the holy spirit may even guide the world leaders to a conciliatory attitude toward world problems, and thus establish peace on earth in this enlightened twentieth century civilisation.

What a strange outlook it would be if we should expect the Almighty God to be willing and waiting to bestow His holy spirit upon political leaders of the nations in order to preserve the peace of "this present evil world!" Bible students are well aware that even if there had been full agreement on all the outstanding problems of the world at the Summit Conference, the peace of the world, as it now exists, could not be maintained. Even if there had been a declaration of "peace for our time," it would be like the proclamation in 1939 after the Munich Conference, for the Scriptures declare—"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden (unexpected) destruction cometh upon them." How glad we are that the Lord has provided in His Plan for the reorganization of world affairs when mankind has learned the necessary experiences that "the way of the transgressors is hard." (Prov. 13:15.) Yes, Christ's Kingdom shall indeed be, "the desire of all nations" when the Lord's mighty shaking has done its work, in preparation for making "all things new." (Haggai 2:6,7; Rev. 21: 3-5.)

The literal great shaking that has taken place recently with the disastrous earthquakes and tidal waves throughout the Pacific area may be taken as a pointer to the world-wide symbolic earthquakes which will shake this "present evil world" to its foundations. We sympathise with the thousands affected by such upheavals of nature, but we are glad to know that all shall be abundantly compensated when the blessings of Christ's Kingdom are being distributed throughout the world in the glad new day, the resurrection day of the Lord. Maybe the permission of these earthquakes and raising up of great volcanoes is all part of the freeing of the explosive forces which need to be expended prior to the Millennial reign of Christ, when we know that nothing "shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy kingdom."

## Lectures on Israel.

IN the February issue of "Peoples Paper" reference was made to the proposed series of lectures expected to be given in New Zealand and Australia by Brother Lanowick, of U.S.A., following his visit to these parts with Sister Lanowick after spending fifteen months in Israel up to last December.

A letter from Brother Lanowick, while still in New Zealand, appeared in the April issue of "Peoples Paper," from which our friends would see the interest shown in the Israel lectures in that land. It was quite an encouraging time to have reached so many people with the message of the restoration of Israel going on in these days, by the Lord's overruling, in preparation for their lasting establishment in the Land of Promise when they are fully delivered through their "Jacob's trouble" in the not far distant future.

Brother and Sister Lanowick returned to Australia the first week in April, to engage in the same lecture work in this land as seemed good. While it was stated in the February "P.Paper" that it was hoped to give a general outline of the proposed lectures in the Eastern States in later issues, we are sorry that this proved impossible, for the reason that the arranging of halls, etc., was carried out often just a few days prior to the lectures being given. However, as many as possible of our friends were advised by- circulars and letters, giving the locations and dates for the lectures on Israel.

It is now a pleasure to report that the Israel lectures in Australia by Brother Lanowick, with Sister Lanowick assisting with the films and slides, were warmly appreciated by the brethren, with good interest also being manifest by the public, particularly the Jewish people in some cities. After attending the Adelaide Easter Convention with the brethren in that city, during which the Israel programme was much enjoyed by all present, a public lecture and film showing was presented to about 275 persons, with good interest being manifest.

Returning to Melbourne, arrangements were made for the lectures to be given in both Melbourne and Geelong. A good, comfortable hall was procured in the main city area of Melbourne, and with reasonable advertising a crowd of about 400 or more attended, thoroughly enjoying the presentation, at the close of which 119 names were handed in

for literature. Of this gathering it was evident that a good proportion were Jews, and they greatly appreciated hearing and seeing the progress going on in their Homeland. Maybe these lectures will assist to encourage some of Israel's posterity to migrate to the Land of Promise in the days ahead.

The lecture in Geelong was also encouraging, especially to the friends in that area, and also because on a cold and showery night upwards of 100 listened appreciatively to the Israel message, after which 16 copies of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" were gladly purchased by those attending.

Two lectures were also arranged in Queensland, at Toowoomba and Brisbane. At the former, the number attending was similar to the Geelong gathering, in the vicinity of 100, while at Brisbane about 150 attended and showed very good interest, purchasing quickly the 9 copies of "Divine Plan of the Ages" on hand, and ordering more to be supplied.

Lastly, Brother and Sister Lanowick came to Sydney, and conducted the last lecture presentation of their Australian tour, at which we understand about 75 or more attended, though details are not yet to hand. The following day, May 26th, our Brother and Sister left Sydney on their homeward way to U.S.A., expecting to remain for a period at Hawaii, as seems good in the service of the Lord.

We feel sure that the visit of Brother and Sister Lanowick has added encouragement to the Australian and New Zealand friends in the Christian way, and certainly has provided a wonderful witness to God's dealings with the present generation of Israel's posterity in preparation for the time when "all Israel shall be saved,"—not only the living of Israel, but all the past generations that shall come up in the resurrection day. Not only all Israel, either, with the "building again of the tabernacle of David," but also—"that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." (Rom. 11:26; Acts 15: 16,17.)

While the message of Israel's restoration to their Homeland, now well under way in this preparation for God to use them as the principal nation of earth in the Kingdom Age, is part of the Bible truth respecting the "restitution of all things," yet it does God's spiritual children good also to be reminded of this feature of God's plan fulfilling before our eyes. The spiritual hopes of the Lord's people are increased as we "Behold the *fig* tree (Jewish nation) and all the trees" (nations of the world) fulfilling prophecy in our day. (Luke 21 :29-31.) We are thankful, then, to the Lord, and to Brother and Sister Lanowick and others who have made this visit to Australia and New Zealand possible, feeling sure that the words spoken and the films and slides shown have contributed helpfully for the benefit of the brethren, and will continue to do so also to a goodly number of the public, if not at present, then later "in the day of visitation."

## Christ's Kingdom at Hand.

IN studying the matter of the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth, of which so much is stated in the Scriptures, it is well that an understanding of Biblical predictions be first of all gained, and then the events transpiring in the world may be viewed in the light of such Scriptural authority. That we are at present, and have been for some time, living in a period of extraordinary happenings throughout the whole world, most people will admit, but the Lord's people are not dependent only upon worldly conditions—"men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth"—in arriving at right conclusions, for they have "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." The fact that "men's hearts are failing them," at the present time, is merely a confirmation of our faith in the sure Word of Prophecy.

Taking, then, "Thy word as a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway," we are led to see at least four or five important and clearly marked signs or indications which would necessarily need to be in evidence and completed before the Lord's Kingdom would be established on earth. One of the first of these signs, given us by the prophet Daniel, is the increase of knowledge. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased . . . in the time of the end." Dan. 12:4. It is needless to elaborate upon these words; our daily papers testify to their fulfilment. The fact to be noted is that it would be in "the time of the end" when this fulfilment would take place, and the record of many being "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"—"in the last days." (2 Tim. 3:1-5)—seems so closely linked with "running to and fro."

A second sign revealed from God's Word is to be found in Christendom, nominal Christianity, indicating the Lord's favour withdrawn. The message in Rev. 3:14-22, to the Laodicean Church, undoubtedly refers in its historical application to the days in which we are living—the last or seventh period of the church's history. How sad a state is revealed by the words—"These things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness (the Lord Himself who sees all things) . . . I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Christendom as a whole, Roman Catholic and Protestant, is surely rich in wealth of this world, possessing beautiful cathedrals, churches and institutions, but yet she is poor indeed concerning the real riches of Christ—"The light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee." Rev. 18:23, 1-3.

Another sign to be observed and one of great importance, closely connected with the previous one is that of the presence of the Lord and harvest work—the calling out of the Lord's people from the various systems and their testing as to faithfulness and loyalty, even unto death. Our Lord's parable (Matt. 13:30) clearly explains the position—"Let all grow together until the harvest" and as "the harvest is the end of the age" (Matt. 13:39), that is the time for the separating of the wheat from the tares. Our Lord indicated that this important work would take place "in the days of

the Son of Man” (Luke 19:12-15; Rev. 3:20), so that He could supervise the gathering of the “wheat” into His barn, by His angels—messengers— (Matt. 24:31), who are exhorted to “gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.” (Psa. 50:5). Other Scriptures, such as Luke 17: 33-37, explain the harvest work at the close of this Gospel Age and which must all be accomplished before the Kingdom can be established on earth. The question was asked, “Where, Lord?”—where are these taken who are divided from others — “and He said unto them, ‘Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.’ “. In other words, those desiring the truth of God’s Word, those who hunger and thirst for it, shall be truly supplied with meat in due season, as they assemble together with others of like precious faith or through the printed page. (Luke 12: 37). See also Rev. 18:4; Acts 15:14, etc.

Further signs clearly in evidence and pointing to the closing down of the present order may be summed up in the distress of nations, mentioned previously, and the progress of natural restoration in Israel. With regard to the former, there never was known a time of such instability in worldly affairs as today. Luke 21: 25, 26 explains this very condition, which will culminate in the “great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time,” and to which our Lord added, “No, nor ever shall be.” (Matt. 24:21). It is grand to know that this severe trouble will never need to be repeated, for “the day of the Lord will come . . . in the which the heavens (ecclesiastical systems) shall pass away . . . the earth also (social and financial order) and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” (2 Pet. 3 :10). Then the Lord’s Kingdom shall be established, for we read—”Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens (Christ’s reign begun) and a new earth (new order of society), wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:13).

Concerning the latter of these two signs, that our Lord intended us to understand the restoration of Israel to be of importance preparatory to His Kingdom reign, is shown in Matt. 24:32. The term “summer” is used to denote the time of God’s favour, which will be manifest so fully towards Israel under the New Covenant and extend to “all families of the earth,” just as the term “winter” gives the opposite thought, representing the dark, troublous times with which this Age will close, before the “summer” (Matt. 24:20). While, then, the Lord’s people recognise that God’s time of favour is near at hand, as demonstrated by the “*fig tree*” (Jewish nation), “putting forth leaves” (restoration progressing), there is also to be “a time of Jacob’s trouble” first, corresponding to the “great tribulation” upon the world. The prophet Jeremiah assures us, however, that “he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:7), and other Scriptures, such as Zech. 14: 1-3, show that Jehovah will mightily deliver Israel from the hands of their enemies, as He did in past ages. See also Rom. 11:26, 27, etc. Then all Israel will recognise the Lord in control of earth’s affairs, their summer-time of favour will have fully come with Christ’s Kingdom established and which shall gradually extend throughout the whole world, “that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” (Acts 15:16, 17). “Thy Kingdom Come, Thy :will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

## Faithful Daniel

(Daniel 6.)

AT the time of this event, we are to consider Daniel was an old man. He had been long in service, wise and faithful in his administration of the government entrusted to him. He had seen the Babylonian Dynasty perish. In its place came the empire of the Medes and Persians. By these also Daniel’s grand character was recognised — his loyalty to principle, his faithfulness as a public servant, his obedience to God and the principles of righteousness. The new Universal Empire was divided into one hundred and twenty provinces with one hundred and twenty governors. Over these there were three presidents. Over these presidents was King Darius, above whom, as chief emperor, Was Cyrus. Daniel was one of the three presidents, made such because of his recognised integrity and ability.

What a compliment was thus paid to this noble, consecrated Jew, and how the recognition of his ability marks the breadth of mind of some of the rulers of the past! Their desire to have such a man in high repute and authority seems to evidence their good intentions in respect of the governing of the world. Indeed, we believe that this is true also of many noble-minded, modern monarchs — that they *give* to their subjects the best government of which they are capable, according to their own imperfect judgments.

That which will specially mark Messiah’s Kingdom will be that it will not only have perfect ideals in respect of human government, but that it will be backed by Divine power, before which every knee shall bow and every tongue shall eventually confess.—Phil. 2:10,11.

From all that we know of the governments of the Orient, present and past, they have been full of dishonesty, of what in our day is designated “graft.” A man like Daniel, in so important a place as that which he occupied as one of the three presidents or supervisors of a great empire, was sure to be in the way of grafters—a hinderer of their schemes. Realising that he could not be deposed, the first step was to find some fault with him which would secure his removal; but the man’s integrity and uprightness in general gave no hope in this direction.

Finally a scheme was conceived. They knew that Daniel’s religion lay at the foundation of his entire course in life. They must involve him along the line of his devotion to God or not at all. King Darius, like every other man, was approachable through flattery. It was a custom of the East to closely associate the *king* with religion. He was supposedly a favourite with his god, else he would not enjoy so high a station.

Working upon this theory, the conspirators, high in office, approached the king with a project which they assured him would help to make strong and united the various parts of his empire. It was this : that the king should be

recognised for a month as the only channel of mediation between his subjects and their god or gods. The claim was that such a recognition would elevate the dignity of the throne in the minds of the people. King Darius, of course, felt flattered and at once agreed to the arrangement and issued an order to that effect—never for a moment thinking of what might be the result in the case of Daniel; and never for a moment suspecting that his counsellors were seeking to entrap him and to legally accomplish the death of his most trusted officer.

Daniel heard of the decree, but altered not his usual custom of praying three times every day before a window of his house which looked out towards Jerusalem. Morning, noon and night he remembered his God and remembered his vows of faithfulness to Him and called to mind the gracious promises respecting the Holy Land, that it would yet be the centre of the whole earth and of God's holy people; that eventually, through these, Divine blessings would be extended to every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

Some one has remarked that, as the sharpening of scythes in harvest time does not mean lost time or energy, so also time spent in prayer is not lost as respects the affairs of life. Unquestionably the best men and women in the world are those who pray, and pray regularly, who bow the knee, as did Daniel. Unquestionably the moments thus taken from earthly affairs are well spent and bring more than commensurate blessings upon the worshipper and all with which he has to do. Unquestionably it is impossible to live a consecrated life in neglect of prayer. What would Daniel have been without his praying time? How would his faith in God have persisted in that heathen land? How would his loyalty to principle have maintained itself in the midst of corruption had it not been for his communion with his Maker? To the Christian this privilege is still further enhanced by a realisation that "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous," in whose all-prevailing Name we may approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. — Heb. 4 :16.

The conspirators were on the lookout for Daniel. They had witnesses ready to testify, not that they had seen Daniel do anything wrong, but that he had violated the edict which the king had been entrapped into making and signing. The matter was laid before the king and he was reminded that it was one of the principles of the empire that even the king himself could not change or alter an edict once sent forth. King Darius felt himself bound hand and foot and ensnared—trapped. All day he sought means whereby he could avert the consequences of his royal mandate, but he found none. He explained the matter to Daniel, assuring him that he believed that his God was able to deliver him. What a beautiful testimony to the uprightness of Daniel's life!

Daniel was cast into the lions' den and the stone for a door was secured with thongs, the knots of which were sealed with the king's signet, a safeguard against it being tampered with. That night, we are told, was one of great distress to the king. He could think only of his faithful officer, the noble man so unrighteously treated. He was ashamed of the part which he felt compelled to take in the matter. He was abroad early in the morning, after a sleepless night, to call to Daniel, to learn whether or not he were still alive. His joy of heart was great when he learned that he was still safe, that his God had sent His angel to stop the lions' mouths. Daniel was soon lifted from the pit! Daniel was vindicated! His God was vindicated! And the king now made another decree — that those counsellors who had thus sought the life of a faithful man should themselves be put to the test by being cast into the same den of lions; and this, in their case, meant destruction, as the result proved.

Oh, that every Christian could and would live as high above the world's standards as did Daniel, so that their enemies might see clearly that they have no ground for charges except those to their credit; that their God whom they serve is indeed the true God.

### **Convention Notes.**

Notes covering the 1960 Adelaide Easter Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free upon application to this office.

**"Daily Heavenly Manna."**—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/6

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## **Thankfulness..**

A THANKFUL spirit pervaded the entire life of Jesus, and surrounded with a heavenly halo His otherwise darkened path. In moments we least expect to find it, this beautiful ray breaks through the gloom. In instituting the memorial of His death, He "gave thanks!" Even in crossing the Kedron to Gethsemane, "He sang an hymn!"

We know in seasons of deep sorrow and trial that everything wears a gloomy aspect. Dumb nature herself to the burdened spirit seems as if she partook in the hues of sadness. The life of Jesus was one continuous experience of privation and woe—a "valley of Baca," from first to last; yet, amid accents of plaintive sorrow, there are ever heard subdued undertones of *thankfulness* and joy!

Ah, if He, the suffering "Man of Sorrows," could, during a life of unparalleled woe, lift up His heart in grateful acknowledgment to His Father in heaven, how ought the lives of those to be one perpetual "hymn of thankfulness," who are from day to day and hour to hour (for all they have, both temporarily and spiritually) dependent on God's bounty and love!

Do let us cultivate the thankful spirit; to those who do so it becomes a perpetual feast. There is, or ought to be, with

us no such thing as *small* mercies; all are great, because the least are undeserved. Indeed, a really thankful heart will extract motive for gratitude from everything, making the most even of scanty blessings. Paul, when in his dungeon at Rome, a prisoner in chains, *is* heard to say, "I have all, and abound!"

Let us guard, on the other hand, against that spirit of continual fretting and moping over fancied ills; that temptation to exaggerate the real or supposed disadvantages of our condition, magnifying the trifling inconveniences of every-day life into enormous evils. Think rather how much we have for which to be thankful. The world in which we live, in spite of all the scars of sin and suffering upon it, is a happy world. It is not as many would morbidly paint it, flooded with tears and strewn with wrecks, plaintive with a perpetual dirge of sorrow. True, the "Everlasting Hills" are in glory, but there are numberless eminences of grace, and love, and mercy below; many green spots in the lower valley, many *more than we deserve!*

God will reward a thankful spirit. Just as on earth, when a man receives with gratitude what is given, the donor is more disposed to give again; so also, "the *Lord* loveth" a cheerful "receiver," as well as a cheerful "giver."

Let ours, moreover, be a *Gospel* thankfulness. Let the incense of a grateful spirit rise not only to the Great Giver of all good, but also to His blessed Son our dear Redeemer. Let it be the spirit of the child exulting in the bounty and beneficence of His Father's house and home! "Giving *thanks* always for all things unto God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

While the sweet melody of gratitude vibrates through every successive moment of our daily being, let love to our adorable Redeemer show for *Whom* and for what it is we reserve our notes of loftiest and most fervent praise. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!"—Selected.

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## **Noah's Ark a Figure of Christian Baptism**

*"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 3:21.*

WE see from the context that the Apostle Peter has in mind the great Deluge. He reminds his readers that all mankind perished in the Flood save eight souls, who were preserved from a watery grave by means of the Ark which God provided them. That Ark, though submerged in water, was their salvation. St. Peter declared that this is a "like figure to baptism." We are to notice that those who were saved in the Deluge were not saved from, eternal torment, and that a like figure of salvation would not indicate that the Church is saved from eternal torment by their baptism into Christ. Noah and his family were saved from death ; and the Church of Christ are likewise saved from death through their baptism.

As the whole world perished in the great Flood, so the entire world of mankind now is a dead world, a perishing world. The Church class were of that world until they got out of it through Christ. As Noah and his family were saved from death by coming into the Ark in obedience to God, so the Church of Christ are saved from Adamic death by obedience to God, by accepting His offer of salvation (John 17:16, 15:19). Noah's Ark represented Christ. Whoever comes into Christ comes into safety and salvation, out of danger and destruction. All who come into this relationship to God in Christ are said to have "passed from death unto life."—John 5:24.

Only a very limited number come into Christ and fulfil this picture. It does not include those who merely say, "I wish to live a better life." To do this is commendable, but it does not constitute a coming into Christ; for as the Apostle says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Just how much is comprehended in the words, "a new creature," even true Christians come to see only gradually. A new creature is one who has died to his human nature, who has new hopes, new ambitions, new affections, who has the precious promises of God and the prospect of a spiritual existence in the future instead of a human existence. He is an exception to others in that he has been begotten of the holy spirit. From the Divine standpoint, he is no longer a human being; a new life has begun in him.

This new creature is at first a babe, and must take spiritual nourishment and grow up into Christ more and more. God has provided the "exceeding great and precious promises" of His Word that this class may be stimulated, strengthened, developed, thereby becoming firmer for righteousness and in opposition to whatever is sinful. The Church is indeed a new creation, as the Apostle says.

### **Two Like Figures of Church's Salvation**

We notice that St. Peter says, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us." Salvation through the Ark was one figure of the salvation of the Church through baptism into Christ; baptism in water is another. There is a correspondence between these two figures. Noah and his family were submerged in literal water. Candidates for baptism are also submerged in literal water. But in neither case was it the water that saved. It is not the outward baptism that saves us. It represents the real. But the figure is not in washing away the filth of the flesh (the body) in water. And the filth of the flesh as new creatures can be washed away only by the grace of God in Christ, "by the washing of water by the Word" ; it is a gradual process after we become new creatures. So neither of these is what is pre-figured in water baptism.

Our text is pointing out to us a peculiar baptism,, not a baptism that washes the flesh clean, either literally or figuratively, but "the answer (the response) of a good conscience toward God." What has God said to which we should respond? We reply that our Heavenly Father has called us, invited us, to a wonderful heavenly inheritance, and we respond by accepting His proposition. He has invited us to be a separate people. Just exactly as God said to Noah and his family that they should be saved by gathering into the Ark, so He says to all who are invited during this Gospel Age, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." —Psalm 50:5.

Let us notice to whom we are to be gathered. Serious mistakes have been made here. Some have thought that we were to be gathered to Luther ; some to Calvin ; some to Wesley, etc. Not so! "Gather My saints together unto ME," saith Jehovah. He did not tell us to gather together into the Church of Rome, into the Church of England, into the

Lutheran Church, into the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, or any other man-made organisation. Millions are gathered into these various denominations whose lives manifest that they know not God.

### **The Covenant of Sacrifice**

Only a very few have made this covenant of sacrifice with God, have presented their bodies a living sacrifice with Christ, in response to God's special call during the Gospel Age. God is not trying to attract the world now. He tells us that they are blind and deaf. As Jesus said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Again, He said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear" (Matt. 11:15; 13:16). We thank God on behalf of those who have the seeing eye and the hearing ear. It is a great privilege to see and hear.

The Apostle Paul tells us why the great majority of mankind cannot hear the glorious Gospel Message. He says, "The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan is this God. He is in violent opposition to every feature of God's great Plan. He has been God's adversary ever since his deflection from righteousness. He does all in his power to thwart Jehovah's arrangements. He knows that if men could see the light of God's goodness and hear the glad Message of God's grace, it would have such an attraction that the great majority would surely respond. Hence he tries to keep them from seeing and hearing. He has multitudinous devices for blinding men. Fair earthly prospects, ambitions to be some great one, selfish schemes for gaining advantages over their fellows—all these and many other things of like nature are held up to keep them blinded to the things of real and lasting value.

Those who are hungering for God, Satan endeavours to draw away into various reform movements, such as socialism, prohibition of the liquor traffic, etc. This he does to keep them from hearing God's special Call. These are all, perhaps, good for the worldly. These movements are probably more or less awakening thought and developing sentiment along lines of restitution for the next Age. But none of these is the work for the saints of God on this side of the veil. Satan would delight to deceive these, however, and entice them into some of these movements to prevent them from seeing and doing the real work of the Church of Christ, and thus to prevent them from making their calling and election sure.

The real Gospel is the most wonderful story in all the world! There is nothing like it—that God is now inviting a certain class to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven" for the Lord's faithful, an inheritance "that fadeth not away" (Rom. 8:17; 1 Peter 1:4). Truly "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him."—1 Cor. 2:9.

### **"The Answer of a Good Conscience"**

Our surrender to the Lord was "the answer of a good conscience toward God." When God invited us to become living sacrifices through Christ, to be saints and follow Jesus, the answer of our conscience was, "Lord, we respond, we accept Thy gracious invitation." Was not that the answer of a good conscience? It was, indeed. What could a good conscience toward God say except to be glad to do the Heavenly Father's will? He made a most wonderful proposition to us, providing a Redeemer to open up the way to all this glory and honour with Christ. The only answer of a good conscience could be, "Here, Lord, I give my little all to Thee!" That is what baptism means; and it is surely our "reasonable service," as the Apostle says (Rom. 12:1). It is the most reasonable thing that could be imagined. Therefore we should carry out our covenant of consecration even unto death.

If our Lord Jesus, after He had made this Covenant of Sacrifice with God and had begun the work of carrying it out, had said, "Father, I know that I came to earth to do Your will; but I find that so many of the people misunderstand Me and speak evil of me that I cannot go on in this way. They misrepresent all the good I try to do; and I cannot accomplish anything." What would the Father have replied? His answer would have been, "If you prefer the approval of man to My approval, take Your choice. I cannot give You the glorious reward which I have offered to You unless You meet the conditions. You must love My will more than all else or I cannot accept You and use You."

So it is with the followers of Jesus. We receive the same tests that He did. The Father does not permit the trials to press us too hard, and He supplies His grace for every time of need; but we must have a heart that fully responds to the will of God, or we cannot be acceptable; we shall lose the prize, and be accounted unfaithful servants. We are to be willing that loyalty to God shall cost us something, yea, even the loss of earthly friendships and earthly prospects.

The heart-attitude that says, "So long as right is as easy as wrong I will choose the right, but if wrong is easier than right I will choose the easier way," is disloyal to God. Such a heart would be unworthy of the glorious high calling. Indeed, it would make even an unworthy human being. We are to be loyal to the very core, or God will reject us. The Lord Jesus puts the matter in just this light when He says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38). Jesus would be ashamed to have such an one in His Kingdom.

The Father and the Son are watching to see how true we are. If we are faithful under present unfavourable conditions, when loyalty to the Truth brings much reproach, when people point the finger of scorn at us, then the Lord will say, "These are the ones that shall reign in My Kingdom. Those who so delight in My love and approval as to serve Me through evil report, misunderstandings, persecution and sufferings, will be true when exalted to positions of glory, when the sun of prosperity will shine upon them."

### **Death with Christ the Gate to Glory**

Such faithful children of God "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." To these the Lord Jesus will say, "I take pleasure in saying to you, Sit down with Me in My throne" (Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:12, 21). In Rom. 6:3 the Apostle says,

“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ (into the Body of which Christ is the Head) were baptized into his death?” These become with Jesus The Christ of God, The Anointed of God; for the word Christ means The Anointed. God has never counted any in as members of the Church of Christ except those who have fully surrendered their wills to Him and become dead to the world.

This is our baptism into death as human beings and into life as spiritual beings. Our spirit nature is only begotten as yet, but we shall be born spirit beings at our “change” in the First Resurrection. We are now raised, as new creatures, “to walk in newness of life,” but not yet raised in the complete sense. We have not yet received our new bodies. Our new mind is in process of development. We have said that we gave ALL to God. If we continue in this attitude and fulfil our covenant faithfully, we shall abide in His love, and in due time be associates of His Son in glory. The giving up of our will in consecration is only the beginning of the matter. Day by day, week by week, month by month, we are to carry out the terms of the covenant. We are to have no thought of turning back. Having put our hands to the plough, we are not even to look back. “He that looketh back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.”—Luke 9:62.

When Jesus was here in the flesh, on a certain occasion He made some very strong statements (John 6:50-69) ; as it is written, “From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.” They said, “This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? Then said Jesus to the twelve, “Will ye also go away?” Simon Peter—impulsive, noble Peter—answered, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

There is no other Message of eternal life open during the present *Age* than the call to joint-heirship with Christ, suffering unto death with Him that we may share His glory hereafter. This is the only way by which we can get into the Ark and be preserved from the general death all around us. Jesus is our Ark of safety. “By the resurrection of Jesus Christ” our baptism is made possible, as our text declares.

It is this same Simon Peter who tells us in our text that the Ark of Noah was a symbol of saving power, a likeness or figure of our being saved now through baptism into Christ. What a refuge is this Ark of Safety. As Noah and his family were in the world, but not of the world, and were carried to safety through the engulfing waters in which the whole world were dying, so it is with those who are in Christ. Everybody around us is in death, as the Bible says: “The whole world lieth in the Wicked One” (1 John 5:19, Diaglott). The Church alone has escaped the condemnation which is upon the world.

We who were children of wrath even as others, were sentenced to death with the rest of the world. But the Lord our God has graciously brought us into the relationship of sons, through our faith in Christ and obedience to the Divine arrangement in Him. And as Noah and his family, after their deliverance, started the world afresh, so Christ and His Bride will by and by give life anew to all of the race of mankind, who will accept the gracious provision for them in Christ.

The dead world are soon to have a resurrection, with the opportunity to fully live again. Christ is to be the Everlasting Father of the race (Isa. 9 :6,7) ; and the Church will be the mother. Grand and glorious as are the blessings in reservation for the world of mankind when they shall have learned their lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, far greater and grander still will be the reward of the faithful Church, who so love the Lord as to be willing and glad to obey and follow Jesus under the trying and painful conditions of the present time.

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## Convention News from Adelaide.

THE Annual Convention held over the Easter holidays once more proved a season of blessing appreciated by all attending. Friends journeyed from far and near, representatives attending from Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria, New Zealand and U.S.A. A programme full and varied promised good fare for the four days of assembling together. Provision was made for fellowship meetings, praise and testimony, addresses, Bible studies and illustrated addresses with the aid of films and slides.

The chairman extended a sincere and hearty welcome to all, after which a Bible study was reviewed from that lovely portion of Eph. 4: 1-12. The first day included three addresses, reminding the gathering of the “Opportunity” to “Be Ye of One Mind” while enjoying the privilege of being “Workers Together With Him.”

On the Saturday the Convention considered that timely and prophetic portion of Isa. 40: 1-11, after which a visiting Brother spoke on the subject of “And Jesus Saith.” The ever-popular spiritual song session, “Hymns We Like and Why,” afforded all an opportunity to sing with heart and voice many beautiful hymns proposed by folk who reciprocated the poetic sentiments of particular hymns. A visiting Brother from Victoria discussed many thoughts connected with Rom. 11: 33,34. Then followed a new and apparently successful method of presenting the Truth to newcomers and reminding others of Present Truth. A Brother from Toowoomba, Qld., after travelling nearly 2,000 miles, presented sound films used in America over the TV stations. Many expressed admiration and joy at both the method and presentation, requesting an additional and impromptu screening another day. Our visitor gladly complied, screening in all six 15-minute reels.

Easter Sunday included addresses from three brethren, one from Victoria reminding us of the reasons “Why God Will Create New Heavens and a New Earth.” The old heavens and old earth, belonging to the first world, perished with the Flood. The “cosmos” of the present heavens and earth is freely prophesied as passing away with commotion

and the great time of trouble, while the new heavens and new earth reserved for the Millennium will distil blessings for all the families of the earth. A local Brother then briefly summarised “The Book of Job,” bringing out many excellent thoughts associated with the principles of righteousness. The concluding item for Sunday was an illustrated address by a Brother and Sister from U.S.A., who lately had been living in Israel. Films and coloured slides portrayed life and miraculous development proceeding apace in Israel today. Emphasis was laid on how God’s Word was actually in the process of fulfilment in Israel at the present time. Confirming our faith with such evidence, hope is very bright and buoyant for the future regarding not only the full redemption of Israel, but of all the nations.

Arriving all too quickly, the last day of the Convention opened with studying the prophetic coronation ceremonies of Psalm 97, after which our Brother from Israel exhorted us concerning the many blessings surrounding so many people in their daily living. Use to the praise of God, of things surrounding us was preferred to continued bemoaning the ill-use misappropriated by society in general. One could hardly blame the equipment because it was abused by unregenerate people. Brother suggested it is easy to forget that God is responsible for most of the blessings available today because of the “increase of knowledge” promised for the time of the end. The spirit of a sound mind needed direction and guidance. The concluding address for this last day. “The Value of Knowledge,” stressed the importance and necessity of knowledge without which all would surely err. Then followed the parting ceremony—“The Love Feast” with “Blest Be The Tie That Binds” and “God Be With You Till We Meet Again.” Eph. 4:1-3 was selected, as a greeting from the Convention to all who so kindly remembered the gatherings in their prayers and good wishes.

“Daily Heavenly Manna.”—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/6

“Israel in History and Prophecy” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

## Earthly Course Finished.

“She hath done what she could” ON the morning of April 18th the earthly course of Sister Martin, of Adelaide, was concluded to the praise of God. Sister had not enjoyed good health for a number of years, but had patiently and graciously borne all these hard experiences associated with the decline of natural health. As a young woman at the age of 19 years, she embraced Present Truth with ardent thanksgiving. The clouds of confusion accompanying superstition and ignorance were dispelled with the light of the true Gospel long years ago, and Sister whole-heartedly accepted the invitation of the Word to be conformed more and more to the Heavenly Pattern of the Saviour. To discuss the precious principles of Truth and Righteousness with others of like faith never wearied her, however frail and tired the natural strength.

Sincere sympathy is extended to her relatives. Sister was one of a large family, who, before her marriage with Brother R. J. Martin was well known as Miss May Barrie. To the members of her family, to her devoted husband, to all who will miss a staunch friend, we comfort with the assurance of God’s Word that “He doeth all things well,” and as so many of God’s dear children have found, “He makes no mistakes.” “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.”

“E’en sorrow, touched by heav’n, grows bright  
With more than rapture’s ray,  
As darkness shows us worlds of light  
We never saw by day.”

## “Be not conformed

*... to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” — Rom. 12 :2.*

Therefore strive to be unworldly. Be not buried in the present. It is a distinct duty to use life while we are here. We are citizens of the world—we may not shrink from it. We must share its duties, dangers, sorrows, and joy. But then it is a duty, equally distinct, to live above the world. Unworldliness is the spirit of holding all things not our own in the perpetual conviction that they will not last. It is to have the world, and not to let the world have you; to be its master, not its slave. To have Christ hidden in the heart, calming all, and making all else seem by comparison poor and small.

—F. W. Robertson.

## Memorial Observances

### Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled on the evening of April 10th to observe the Memorial of our Lord’s death, with thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ for the wonderful salvation provided

through the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer as the “Lamb of God.”

Previous studies in Exodus 12 and Matthew 26, had impressed the type and antitype of the Passover ceremony, and we were thus refreshed in mind and heart respecting the wonderful outworking of God’s plan covering centuries of time, from the passing over of the firstborn of Israel in Egypt, to the final selection of the “Church of the firstborn” at the end of this age, all in preparation for the deliverance of the human family across the “Red Sea” in the “morning” of the new dispensation at hand.

After the singing of appropriate hymns, the reading of Scriptures bearing on the institution of the Lord’s Memorial and His sacrifice on the cross, the offering of prayers of thankfulness to our Heavenly Father, and an address by a visiting Brother on the importance of the annual observance, we gladly partook of the emblems in solemn remembrance of our Saviour’s sacrifice and demonstrating our own participation in the sufferings of Christ, **in** hope of association with Him in the Kingdom, by God’s grace.

### **Geelong, Vic.**

On the evening of April 10 a little company met again here as in former years, glad to conform to the request of their Lord and Saviour to “do this in remembrance of Me,” who fulfilled in reality that which had been typed or pictured in the old Jewish Passover observances. Although without a peer as a Teacher and Exemplar, Christians regard Him most for His obedience to the Divine will, His readiness, yea, His delight to become the “Lamb of God” to take away the sin of the world.

Previous studies had quickened again our perception of the cost, and assisted to the appreciation of all that has been done on our behalf by the Ransomer of all mankind. Four brethren assisted in the service consisting of hymns, readings from the Scripture and an address, at the close of which we partook of the emblems.

### **Adelaide.**

On Sunday evening, April 10th, the Adelaide Class met to observe the Memorial of our Saviour’s death in obedience to His request—”Do this in remembrance of Me.” Our hearts are filled with thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for the wonderful gift of the Son of His love to be the Redeemer of the fallen race of mankind. Also to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ we give all thanks and praise for His willing sacrifice of Himself to be “the satisfaction for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” We praise God for His wondrous grace which enables us at the present time not only to believe in Jesus, but also to share in His sufferings as members of His mystical body.

After reading the Scriptures in Matthew 26th and 27th Chapters dealing with till, *all*-important matter, one of our brethren outlined the significance of the Memorial in type and antitype; and we partook of the emblems with prayers of gratitude to God for all His goodness and grace; we also sang hymns of praise to His Name for all the benefits bestowed upon us. It was our privilege also to remember at the throne of grace the fellow members of the body of Christ, known and unknown to us throughout the wide world. “Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift.”

### **Perth.**

On the 10th April, at eventide, we observed our dear Lord’s Memorial. We had our minds refreshed again with the thought that man’s salvation was dependent upon being redeemed by human life. After tracing how the blood of animals was used typically to cleanse sin, we had our minds directed to the real Lamb of God that is to take away the sin of the world—our Lord Jesus, who, in the days of His flesh, offered up His perfect humanity as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Thus, we remembered again our dear Lord’s sacrifice, how He poured out His soul unto death, and made His soul an offering for sin.

We saw how the emblems our Lord used and offered to His disciples was an invitation to them to follow in His steps, and therefore go the same path of self-sacrificing the interests of the flesh. This was heart-searching to us all who partook, reminding us to be “dead with Christ,” for “if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection.” (Rom. 6:5.) Surely God is testing us all to see if we individually are set apart from this world, and, are followers of the Lamb in this great offering for sin. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

### **Sydney.**

It was with mixed feelings that participants approached the annual celebration of our Lord’s Memorial. As we awaited the event the radiation of a full moon shining through the trees inspired thoughts befitting such an occasion.

At its inauguration she seemingly untoward events transpiring doubtless mystified the disciples, but later, enlightened by the holy spirit, they, with expectancy, awaited His return.

The gathering, though few in number, appreciated the simple service, conducted by the Sydney elders ; both the chairman and speaker carrying out their duties in an able manner.

With the prevailing unparalleled conditions in the world around, happy are those who, await “the consolation of Israel,” and with the Master, “drink the new wine in the kingdom.” Then the Scripture will be fulfilled—”He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied,” with the glorious climax.

E’en through harsh noises of our day,  
A low, sweet prelude finds its way;  
Through clouds of doubts and creeds of fear,  
A light is breaking calm and clear.

## Tasmania.

Four of us met to celebrate our Lord's Memorial, in response to His request "this do in remembrance of Me," and had a very lovely time, and were greatly blessed and felt the Lord was truly in our midst.

## 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, St. 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 St. Paul said, "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:5.) How courageous were the Apostle's 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."

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 knowledge 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."

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 still a 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."

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."

## 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". **H**e 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, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10: 10.) We may say that to live righteously is one of the best ways of proving our obedience to the Lord. Yet there are some who try hard to live pleasing to the Lord, who might be restrained from making a confession of Him. There are reasons for the blessing which we receive 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.



Volume XLIII. No. 4 MELBOURNE, APRIL, 1960

## The Memorial Supper.

THE Jews will celebrate the Passover as a “feast” beginning April 12th (at 6 o’clock p.m., April 11th), the 15th of Nisan. For the Memorial Supper we do not celebrate the feast-week, but the day previous, the 14th of Nisan, beginning on the evening of April 10th, 1960, which is the anniversary of the proper date for killing and eating the Paschal lamb—the anniversary of the death of our Lord Jesus, the true Lamb of God, because of whose sacrifice the “church of the first-born” passes from death unto life—to be completed in the first resurrection. The antitype of the Passover Feast-week is found in the rejoicing of heart of all the first-born of true Israel—the seven days signifying the perfection or completeness of the joy and the salvation.

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. 11:24-26, declared—”For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you — that the Lord on the night in which he was delivered up took a loaf, and having given thanks, broke it and said, ‘This is that body of mine, which is broken on your behalf; this do ye in my remembrance.’ In like manner also, the cup, after the supper, saying, ‘This cup is the New Covenant in my blood; this do ye, as often as ye may drink, for my remembrance.’ For as often as you may eat this bread or drink this cup you declare the death of the Lord till he come.”

There is no necessity for discussing with honest minds what is and what is not meant by the expression—the Lord’s death. The Apostles declare that He spoke of the death which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. This one and only death of our Redeemer is what is symbolized by this remembrancer—His body, His flesh, broken for us, and of its merits and life all who would have life everlasting may partake.

But as water-baptism is not the important baptism, but only the symbol representing the real, so partaking of the emblematic bread and wine is only the symbol of the more important feast — our appropriation of the merit of Christ, which secures to us eternal life through His broken body and shed blood. Thus by faith accepting His finished sacrifice, and by similar faith, as instructed by Him, appropriating to ourselves all the merits and perfections and rights which the man Christ Jesus possessed and laid down in death for us, we really feed our hearts upon the Bread, of everlasting Life, the Bread which God sent to us from heaven. This is the true Bread, the eating of which gives everlasting life. This is, primarily, what the literal bread symbolizes and signifies to all who partake of it rightly and intelligently. It is a memorial of the ransom of Adam and his family from the bondage of sin and death.

### The Bread and the Cup

Another thought: the bread was unleavened. Leaven is corruption, an element of decay, hence a type of sin, and the decay and death which sin works in mankind. So, then, this symbol declares that our Lord Jesus was free from sin, a Lamb without spot or blemish, “holy, harmless, undefiled.” Had He been of Adamic stock, had He received His life in the usual way from an earthly father, He, too, would have been leavened with Adamic sin, as are all other men; but His life came unblemished from a higher, heavenly nature, changed to ‘earthly conditions; hence He is called “the Bread from heaven.” (John 6:41.) Let us then appreciate the pure, unleavened, undefiled bread which God has provided, and so let us eat of Him—by eating and digesting the truth, and especially His truth — appropriating to ourselves, by faith, His righteousness; and let us recognise Him as both the Way and the Life.

The Apostle, by divine revelation, communicates to us a further meaning in this remembrancer. He shows that not only did the loaf represent our Lord Jesus, individually, but that after we have partaken of Him (after we have been justified by appropriating His righteousness), we, by consecration, become associated with Him as part of the one, broken loaf—food for the world. (1 Cor. 10:16.) This suggests the thought of our privilege as justified believers to share now in the sufferings and death of Christ, the condition upon which we may become joint-heirs with Him of future glories, and associates in the great work of blessing and giving life to all the families of the earth.

This same thought is expressed by the Apostle repeatedly and under various figures, but none of them more forceful than this, that the church (which is Christ’s body, see Col. 1 :24), with their Head, is the “one Loaf,” being broken, during the Gospel Age. It is a striking illustration of our union and fellowship with our Head. We quote: “Because there is one loaf we, the many (persons), are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf. That loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the body of the Anointed One?”—1 Cor. 10 :16,17.—Diaglott.

“The fruit of the vine” represents the sacrificed life given by our Lord. “This is my blood (symbol of life given up in death) of the New Covenant, shed for many, for the remission of sins.” “Drink ye all of it.”—Matt. 26: 27,28.

It was by giving up of His life as a ransom for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a right to

life may come to men generally through faith and obedience, under the New Covenant in the Millennial Age. (Rom. 5:18,19.) The shed blood was the “ransom (price) for all,” which was paid for all by our Redeemer Himself ; but His act of handing the cup to the disciples, and asking them to drink of it, was an invitation to them to become partakers of His sufferings, or as St. Paul expresses it, to “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1: 24.) It was the offer to us that if we, after being justified by faith, voluntarily partake of the sufferings of Christ, by espousing His cause, we will be esteemed by God members of the body of Christ, as well as sharers in the sufferings of Jesus. (2 Tim. 2:12, Acts 9:1-5.) “The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a participation of the blood (shed blood—death) of the Anointed One?” (1 Cor. 10:16—Diaglott.) Would that we all might realise the value of the “cup,” and could praise God for an opportunity of sharing with Christ His “cup” of suffering and shame! All such may be assured that they will be glorified together with Him.—Rom. 8:17.

Our Lord also attached this significance to the “cup,” indicating that it signified our participation in His dishonor, our share in His sacrifice—the death of our humanity. For instance, when asked by two of His disciples for a promise of future glory in His throne, He answered them: “Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of ?” On their hearty avowal He answered, “Ye shall indeed drink of my cup.” The juice of the grape not only speaks of the crushing of the grape till blood comes forth, but it also speaks of an after refreshment ; and so we who now share the “sufferings of Christ” shall shortly share also His glories, honors and immortality—when we drink the new wine with Him in the kingdom.

### **“Till He Come”**

What is the full significance of this expression? Since our Lord who instituted the Memorial Supper placed no limit upon its observance, this expression by the Apostle is not to be understood as limiting the length of time in which it will be appropriate to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus, our Ransom-sacrifice, and our consecration with Him to sacrifice. Rather, he is showing that it was not to be considered a limited arrangement, for a few years, but was to be continually observed until the Lord’s second coming. Looking down to and speaking of the second coming of our Lord, the Apostle includes in his expression the gathering and exaltation with Christ of His church, or kingdom, to rule and bless the world. This is even yet a common and proper way of speaking of matters so closely identified and so dependent one upon the other. The Christ, Head and body is coming to rule the world in power and great glory. The presence of the Lord or Head is necessary first; then comes the change of the sleeping members of His body, the sifting of the living members, and their gradual gathering together unto Him.

It is true that the kingdom will not be “set up,” in the full sense of the word, until the last member of the kingdom has been changed or glorified—until the breaking of the Loaf, The Christ, Head and body, is completed. While one member suffers, the body suffers; while one member is unglorified, the kingdom is not fully come into power and dominion.

It is the coming of Christ, and including the full exaltation of His church or kingdom, that the Apostle evidently meant when He said, “As often as you may eat this (Passover) bread and drink this cup, you declare the death of the Lord (as your hope and confidence) till he come.” The same thought of the kingdom glory being the end of the symbol may be gathered from our Lord’s own words on the occasion of the institution of the Memorial—“I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom”—Matt. 26:29.

And surely, if it were ever proper and expedient for those who believe that our Lord’s death was the Ransom-price to confess it—to show it forth as the basis of all their hopes—it is now, when this foundation doctrine of God’s Word is being traduced and misrepresented.

### **Appreciating the Privilege**

It is urged that none neglect this annual privilege, for any reason. There is a special blessing in its observance. If we are inclined to feel discouraged, we should partake of the broken loaf, asking the Lord for a fresh realisation of our justification, and a fresh appreciation of our consecration to be broken (sacrificed) with Him, as members of the one loaf—His church, His body.

Let us not forget that the Memorial is meaningless or worse unless accepted and appreciated. But let nothing hinder us—neither sins, nor coldness, nor feelings of unworthiness. We should go to our brethren, or any whom we have wronged — make full acknowledgment, whether they acknowledge faults towards us or not. Getting ourselves right with the Lord, and so far as possible with every man, we may then eat—yea, feast upon the rich provision the Lord has made for all who accept, now or at a later “due time.”

Such a heart-searching and cleansing, we remember, was shown in the Passover type given to the Jews. Before they gathered to eat their Passover lamb they searched everywhere throughout their habitations, for anything containing leaven or putrefaction, bones, crusts, everything. These all were burned—destroyed. So must we fulfil the antitype, and “put away the old leaven” of anger, malice, hatred, strife.— Cor. 5:7,8.

But remember that this kind of leaven of sin cannot be thoroughly put away unless it be burned; and only love can burn it out —heavenly love, the love of God. If we have that love shed abroad in our hearts, it will consume everything of the opposite character—jealousy, hatred, evil speaking, etc. Put off all these, urges the Apostle, and put on Christ and be filled with His spirit. Do not be discouraged. But learn the lesson and start again with fresh resolutions and increased appreciation of the fact that of yourself, without the Master’s aid, you could never gain the prize. He knows this better than do we, and says, “Without me, ye can do nothing.” It was because of our need that the Father thus arranged for us. “Be of good courage!” is the Master’s words to all who are longing and striving to be of the class called “conquerors.”

## Passover Memorial, 1960

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 10th April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me."

### Memorial Services.

MELBOURNE.—Sunday, 10th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street.)

ADELAIDE.—Sunday, 10th April, 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

SYDNEY.—Sunday, 10th April, 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

PERTH.—Sunday, 10th April, 6 p.m., at 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).

### Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 15th to 18th, in the Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

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## The Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant.

THE Abrahamic Covenant is not the New Covenant, even as it is not the law Covenant. The New Covenant is the name of that arrangement which God will make with Israel and all mankind who, during the period of Messiah's reign, desire to become "Israelites indeed." That New Covenant will be inaugurated as a measure for carrying out the blessings purposed in the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant relates especially to the seed of Abraham, which is to be made glorious and powerful, with a view to the blessing of the world. The New Covenant relates to the arrangement by which the anti-typical seed of Abraham, when glorified, will accomplish the honorable work assigned to it in the Abrahamic Covenant.

The fulfilment of the Abrahamic Covenant began in the person of our Lord Jesus, not when He left the heavenly glory, nor when He was born a babe at Bethlehem, but when God accepted His consecration and begat Him to a new nature at the time of His baptism, perfecting Him in the new nature at His resurrection. The man Jesus, before being begotten of the holy spirit, was not the seed of Abraham according to promise, capable of blessing mankind; for so long as Jesus was in the flesh, even though perfect, the blessing of the world through Him was impossible. The world lay under a death sentence and could not be blessed until provision should be made for the lifting of that death sentence.

The provision of the ransom, therefore, was necessary for the world. Jesus in the flesh, in providing the ransom-price, would have had no life for Himself that He might become the King of Glory and Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:10) unless God had begotten and quickened and raised Him to the higher, spirit nature. Hence, although Jesus, through His mother, was of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, He did not inherit this Abrahamic Covenant according to the flesh, but as the new creature.

In order, therefore, to attain this higher nature, in order to be the spiritual seed of Abraham and bless all the families of the earth, it was necessary for Jesus to enter into a special covenant of sacrifice. The church, members of His body, must share all His experiences and lay down the earthly life also; for whether Jews or Gentiles it would still be true that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom. Hence the privilege of the church is to enter into the covenant of sacrifice with Jesus. Thus we read, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."—Psa. 50:5.

It has required the entire Gospel Age for the gathering of these saints and, the making of their sacrifices. Those sacrifices must be accomplished before they can attain to the heavenly nature—before they can be members of the spiritual seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. Thus the Apostle declares, “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for (to be the spiritual seed of Abraham) ; but the =election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”

The election obtained this blessed state through the covenant of sacrifice, in which Jesus acted as their Advocate. The first members were accepted at Pentecost. The last members, we trust, will soon finish their course with joy. Then =the spiritual seed of Abraham will be complete and ready to serve the world as the great antitypical Mediator—of •the New Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant was God’s own covenant or promise. Because it was unconditional, it has no mediator (Gal. 3: 19,20), neither did it need •to be sealed with blood. Rather, we might say that God sealed it with His oath. (Heb. 6:16-18.) The Law Covenant needed the blood of bulls and goats as an offset to •the sins of the people, who were to be blessed typically. The New Covenant needs the blood of better sacrifices as satisfaction for the sins of the people, who are to be blessed actually. These two covenants could not go into effect without the shedding of blood and remission of sins.

But the Abrahamic Covenant centers itself :n the new creatures. From the first, God meant primarily the spiritual seed of Abraham, the new creation, which has never known ‘ sin. Jesus Himself was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and needed not any atonement for sin in order to enter into that covenant relationship and become Abraham’s spiritual seed and heir. Those accepted as His members would have had no such standing or worthiness except as He adopted them as His members, imputed His own merit to them and offered them sacrificially as His own flesh.

Hence, strictly speaking, we cannot say that the Abrahamic Covenant has ever been sealed with blood, or that it will ever be sealed. This does not alter the fact, however, that not without blood (death) could Jesus have become the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King; and not without blood (death) could we, His members, be accepted through Him. Only in this indirect way can it be said that the Abrahamic Covenant is sealed with blood. The Apostle Paul intimates that it was sealed by the oath of Jehovah.—Heb. 6:13-18.

## Our Unseen Helpers

(Convention Address)

*“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear (reverence) him, and delivereth them.” (Psa. 34:7.)*

THE Scriptures give us considerable information concerning the ministry of angels and the part they have played and are playing in assisting the human family generally, and the Lord’s people particularly in this age in making their calling and election sure. We learn that they are of a higher order of creation than man. Psa. 8:5 informs us that man was made “a little lower than the angels.” In Heb. 1:4 we read that when Jesus was raised from the dead He was “made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” This teaches us that angels are higher than men, but lower in nature than the highly exalted Jesus.

Paul writes further concerning Jesus—”Of the angels he (God) saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever, and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” (Heb. 1: 7-8.) We learn also that as there are different planes of life on, this planet earth—bird life, fish life, animal life, up to the human — so we gather from the Scriptures that there are various planes of being also in the spiritual realm. 1 Cor. 15:39 tells of the earthly bodies, and in verse 40 we read — “And there are heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly indeed is one, and of the earthly another.” (Diaglott.)

The Apostle describes the variety in the spirit world, using the sun, moon and stars to illustrate his meaning. We are informed, too, that there are angels that have higher positions than others. Satan, in his perfection, before he fell because of his ambition and disobedience, is described in Ezekiel 28:14 as “the anointed cherub that covereth,” and again in Isa. 14:12 as “Lucifer, son of the morning.” In Luke 1:19 we are told of the angel Gabriel “that stand in the presence of God,” indicating a high and privileged position. Jesus, when speaking to Nicodemus about spiritual beings, said in John 3:6, 8—”That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cant not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit,” thus telling of their invisibility to human eyes and their great power.

Jesus also referred to these angels in their role as servants, ministering to God’s people here, and tells of the intimate relationship between them concerning the care of His people. He said in Matt. 18:10—”Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” This shows clearly that nothing would be allowed to hinder the admittance to our Heavenly Father’s presence of anything concerning the care for His people in shaping their providences and knowing exactly what sort of experiences will accomplish the divine will in them. Paul writes concerning this in Heb. 1:14. He says—”Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Evidently there are some who have a charge, a watchcase over the members of the body of Christ, perhaps one guardian angel to each, or over more than one, but we have the Lord’s assurance that His provision is sufficient.

In 2 Kings 19 we are given a revealing picture of the power of these messengers of God. Hezekiah, king of Judah,

was besieged by an Assyrian army sent by Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. These threatened to destroy the nation unless they agreed to surrender to them, scornfully pointing out that it was impossible for their God to save them from their mighty army. Had they not conquered all the surrounding nations, including Israel and Samaria, and were now before Jerusalem threatening their very existence? Hezekiah took the matter to God in prayer, seeking His guidance and help, and received the following assurance from God's prophet, Isaiah.—"Then Isaiah the son of Amoz, sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard ... Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria. He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. . .

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four-score and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." (2 Kings 19:20, 32,35.) Thus, a single angel in one night was able to destroy a mighty Assyrian army!

This gives us some indication of the protection that Jesus could have had had He so desired, for when Peter drew his sword in an effort to prevent Jesus' arrest, the Master said to him—"Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:52,53.) A Roman legion was six thousand, so Jesus was telling Peter that His Father would send more than seventy-two thousand angels for His protection should He ask for it, but He did not ask for it, for He said—"How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt. 26:54.) He knew it was the Father's will for Him to die as the world's Redeemer, and He delighted to do His Father's will.

Then, again, we read how an angel spoke to Abraham at the time when he had his knife raised to slay Isaac as a sacrifice in keeping with God's instructions. The angel said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." (Gen. 22:12.) God had severely tested Abraham's faith and loyalty, and now an escape had been provided. It was through an angel also that the promise of a seed was first made to Abraham in Genesis 12:3. He waited many long years for the birth of Isaac, and there were additional years of waiting while he grew to manhood, so it was a severe test when the Lord asked him to give up his only miracle child.

The Lord's people are also tested in similar ways when the terms of discipleship include willingness to give up those things that we love most. Severe trials develop along other lines. Often we are confronted with situations which to the flesh seem insurmountable, but we need not fear, for we have His promise that He will provide a way of escape, for God's providences are in the hands of His ministering angels.

The experiences of Balaam are illustrative of the way the ministering angels are able to place hindrances in the way when those to whom they are assigned to serve are taking a wrong course. Balaam was not an Israelite, but apparently he had respect for Israel's God. Jude's reference to him indicates that he was a man who could be influenced by the offer of material reward for his religious service. The account in Numbers 22 bears out this point. Israel had defeated and destroyed the Amorites. Balak, king of the Moabites nearby was fearful of what might happen to his own people. So he sent to Balaam to request him to place a curse upon the Israelites, which, as he supposed would prevent them from continuing their victories. With this thought he sent messengers to Balaam, to ask his service, offering a very high reward.

Apparently Balaam was noted for being able to place curses upon people, but when asked by the elders of Moab and Midian to do this he hesitated. Instead of accepting the reward at once, which he would have liked to do, he asked them to remain the night, promising them an answer in the morning. This was his undoing; in allowing the temptation to remain he found it harder to remove later. Then the Lord instructed Balaam, probably through an angel,—"Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed." Balaam then passed this message on to the messengers whom Balak had sent, and they returned with this information to him. But this did not satisfy Balak; he decided to send greater messengers—"princes, more, and more honourable than they." He increased his offers of reward, saying—"Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me; for I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me." (Num. 22:16,17.)

The offer of position and money is often a test to the Lord's people, and it was also to Balaam, for he still hesitated. Again he asked the messengers to remain overnight, so that he might find out from the Lord what he should do. The Lord again spoke to Balaam and said he should go with the messengers, with the instruction—"The word that I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do." This word again turned out to be one of blessing, but Balaam thought at this time he had received permission to curse the Israelites. So he started the next morning on his ass with the princes of Moab. The Lord knew what was in Balaam's heart, and so we read—"God's anger was kindled because he went." He had not gone far when the ass upon which he was riding "turned aside out of the way, and went into the field." Balaam smote the ass and tried to turn him back into the road. When he turned out of the main road, the ass was in a vineyard, between two walls serving as climbing places for the vines. Balaam again smote the ass in an attempt to make it return, and the animal then lunged against one of these walls injuring Balaam's foot. Balaam then smote the ass a third time, and the ass, unable to go forward, fell down under Balaam. By this time, Balaam was really angry, and struck the ass again. Then the ass started to talk to Balaam, and asked if he had not always been faithful in his service. Balaam admitted that this was so, and then the Lord opened his eyes and he saw what the ass had been seeing; he saw—"the angel of the Lord standing in the way." The angel allowed Balaam to continue with the messengers, but warned him only to say what the Lord gave him permission to say. Balaam's selfish desire for reward had read into the Lord's instructions more than had been intended, hence the angel's interference.

In our Christian lives we are prone to decide that we want to do certain things. We may, like Balaam, presume that the Lord's instructions mean our own interpretation of them, but in our endeavor to proceed with them we find hindrances in the way, and like Balaam we blame the "ass," or something else, for hindering us, instead of seeing the "angel" whom the Lord has sent to prevent us from taking a wrong course. These and many other lessons may be gleaned from the manner in which God used the angels during Old Testament times.

The narratives of the New Testament were introduced, as it were, by the announcement of the birth of Christ by an angel, with a whole host of them singing "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2: 9-14.)

The New Testament also introduces the age of faith, when, following the days of the early church, angels no longer appear in human form, but nevertheless their ministrations are none the less effective. They are mentioned after Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, when "angels came and ministered unto him." Angels also delivered the apostles from prison, Peter being brought forth from bondage the night before he was to be executed. Acts 12: 7 says—"And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself .... and follow me." The climax of this wonderful experience came when the iron gate, which stood between Peter and freedom, opened of its own accord, or so it seemed to Peter. Actually, it was the angel who opened it.

So it is with us. Quite often we are confronted with "iron gates," situations which seem to stop all progress, often with doubts and fears, only to find that the Lord's angel is ahead of us, as it were, and clearing the hindrances from our paths. These experiences are not accidental, but are allowed to test our faith, but we can rest assured that all these experiences are working for our good.

Sometimes the angel of the Lord is present with us and grants sustaining strength to endure a trial from which we are not delivered. Such was our Lord's case, for we read that an angel appeared unto Him and strengthened Him, and the same is true of many of the Lord's people who have been upheld in their hour of trial. How it enlarges the confidence of a Christian to realise that whilst earthly powers may be in opposition, and he may be really of himself powerless to resist adversaries, and in addition to the flesh and blood adversaries he may realise that he battles with spiritual wickedness in exalted places, against Satan and his minions of darkness, yet, on the other hand, greater is He that is on our part than all that be against us, and that all the heavenly hosts are subject to the divine will and may be employed for the advancement of the divine cause according to divine wisdom.

Often when thou'rt faint and weary in the struggle and the strife,  
And thy heart nigh sinks within thee, 'neath the strain and stress of life:  
When thou'rt tempted, tried and fearful, and thou canst not see the way,  
And each night looms black with shadows from thy sorrows in the day;  
I would ask thee still to trust Him, He who sees all in the light,  
For He guards thee by His angels, though they're veiled from thy sight  
Yea, He guards thee by His angels, though they're veiled from thy sight.

Oh, be watchful, oh, be sober, for the Adversary tries,  
To allure us to destruction by his subtly fashioned lies.  
He would sift us, he would tempt us, he would claim us for his prey,  
And his legions ever watch us *as we* tread the Narrow Way:  
But we know of his devices, and we trust Jehovah's might,  
For He guards us by His angels, though they're veiled from our sight  
Yea, He guards us by His angels, though they're veiled from our sight.

There is One who knows thy weakness, and thy failings, and thy tears,  
Thy burdens and thy sorrows, and thy tremblings and thy fears,  
And thy heart-cries always reach Him, and are answered in His way,  
Though thou canst not see His workings as they shape thy path each day.  
Sad disaster had o'erwhelmed thee, had He not put forth His might,  
Through His angels that surround thee, but are veiled from thy sight  
Guardian angels that surround thee, but are veiled from thy sight.

Ah, believe me, when the Day breaks, and we know as we are known,  
In the sunlight of the glory that surrounds our Father's throne,  
He will tell us how He led us: we shall see the pathway clear,  
The way we trod that led to God through failing, fault and fear.  
And we'll see those guardian angels who were veiled from our sight,  
We shall understand the workings of the Power put forth in might:  
Yea, and with those guardian angels who were veiled from our sight,  
We shall see our Saviour, and our God, in Heaven's Eternal Light.

(Sidney Smith).

## Correspondence.

Wellington, N.Z., March 20th, 1960.

Dear Brother.—The warmest salutations in His precious name !

We have been exceptionally busy since February 1st. Our lecture work here has been very fruitful. In these seven weeks we have reached over 2,000 people in public lectures alone, the most successful one having been held here last Wednesday in the Dominion. Museum Lecture Hall in Wellington, where 350 people packed this auditorium, taking up every one of the permanent theatre-type seats, and a few had to stand. In each one of our meetings we have noted a keen interest in the subject matter of Israel's restoration in the light of Bible prophecy, and it has been gratifying to see the response of the audiences. By the way, we have had three radio interviews here on the North Island, the last one running about a half hour.

Tomorrow we leave for Christchurch where a well advertised meeting has been arranged for next Thursday at the Canterbury Museum Lecture Theatre. It will be of interest, too, to mention the fact that we have attended numerous home gatherings to which we have been invited by Jewish people and these have granted us many opportunities of discussing the Scriptures with Jacob's posterity. So, all in all, it has been a profitable experience since we arrived in this country on December 30th.

Brother Rowe has arranged his affairs so that he will be able to fly with us from Christchurch on April 6th, the Lord willing, and we intend to stay in your city for about a week. On the 13th of next month the three of us will be taking the train to Adelaide, and have just written a letter in response to the invitation of the brethren there to address the Convention.

Sister joins me in conveying Christian greetings to you and Sister. Yours in the best of bonds—the bonds of Christ.  
Bro. Casimir Lanowick

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U.S.A.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren—My sincere Christian love and greetings to all!

Today an International Money Order has been sent to you for ten dollars, for which please send one copy of Bible Students Hymnal (Music) containing 462 hymns to above address. The rest of the money to be used in the Lord's service as you see fit.

I also want to express my deep appreciation and thanks for sending me copies of the "Peoples Paper," and hope you will continue sending them, so that I may be in contact with the Lord's people in Australia too.

The brethren here, to whom these issues have been given, have also expressed their gratefulness for this message, and we continue to pray for you. May the Lord continue to richly bless your sincere endeavors to serve and please him. Your brother in Christ.

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"The sacrifices of God . . . are a broken spirit ; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."—Psa. 51: 17.

Humility, if genuine; is the sweetest flower which grows in the garden of God, and any opportunity of cultivating it should be highly prized and carefully improved. Welcome, then, little temptations, if they discipline us in this grace. No one but those most intimate with us—and not always even they—know how we meet them. It flatters our vanity to demean ourselves well in a great crisis ; but there is no dignity in resisting sins of temper or of the tongue.

Goulburn.

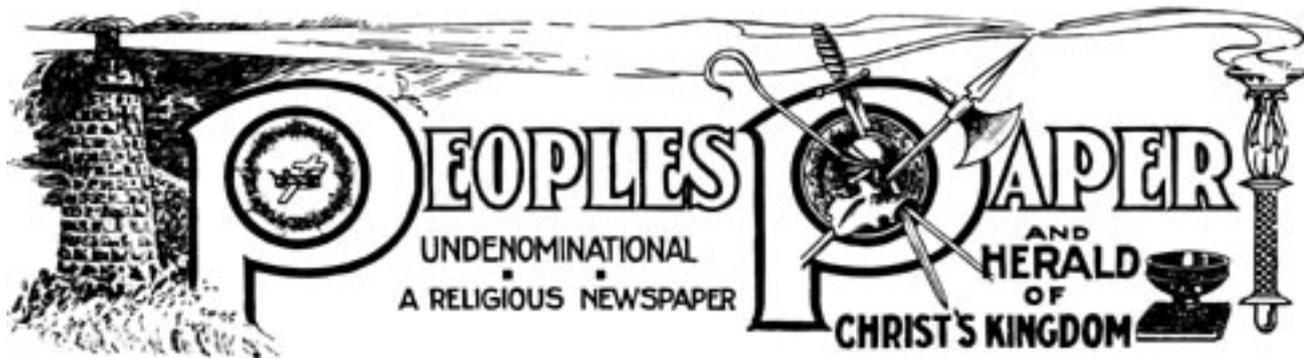
FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

**Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.**

**Sydney, 2KY, 294 M.                   ,, 8.15 a.m.**

**Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M.               ,, 9 a.m.**

**Perth, 6KY, 227 M.                   ,, 4.45 p.m.**



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## Israel Today.

(Convention Address)

WE would teach you today one word of the Hebrew language — the beautiful word “Shalom,” which means, “Peace be unto you!” In Israel it is heard a hundred times a day or more, because in the Holy Land they not only use it to say “Hullo,” but also to say “Goodbye.” It is evident that the Master used this word Himself, and when He said, “My peace I give unto you,” and when we read of the “peace of God,” it is the same word “Shalom.” It is a good word to know. One of the most precious things we have is the peace that comes from the heart. It is especially inspiring to hear it used so often in the land of Israel, because if we have the correct interpretation, when peace comes to Israel peace will come to the world also.

Not so long ago a tourist reached Israel, and as he journeyed about the country he was surprised to hear the Israeli using the word “Shalom” so often. He asked, Is your language so poor? Why do you use only the same word as a greeting, and to say goodbye? They told him, “It is not that at all. Only you see, most of the time we do not know whether we are coming or going.” This little bit of Israeli humour illustrates for us the tremendous problems which the tiny state of Israel has had to cope with since May, 1948. If we think we have problems, we have not seen anything yet.

Quite a few Australians, both inside and outside the Truth, have told me about the 11 million people you have taken since the war. But we would like to tell you that Israel has taken in almost that number. But they had only a population of 650,000 to begin with. They have taken well over one million immigrants, and integrated them quite well in eleven years. To give you some idea of what it would involve, it would be as if you had more than doubled your population in eleven years. Can you begin to comprehend what that would involve in this country? We give you these statistics simply by way of comparison.

So we have lived to witness a miracle. First the restoration of the Jewish State after more than two millenniums of desolation, which in itself we believe is one of the greatest miracles of all time. Have you ever considered—sometimes we forget this—what a miracle has been performed by God in the preservation of the Jewish people? When the Romans in the first and second centuries dispersed the Jews into all the then known world, these Jews wandered from one nation to another, so that we have Jews in every land even to this day, all over the face of the earth. They are found in southern India, in China, and to the furthest corners of the earth. Many Jewish communities trace their families back for 2,000 years or more. The Yemenites claim to trace their ancestry for 4,500 years. All this time the Jews have been kept intact, a distinct, homogeneous people in spite of all the Hamans and the Hitlers who have arisen in history. If there is no other tangible proof that there is a God, the Jew is a proof that there is a God.

We would like to read you one passage from Jeremiah; and if we can lay hold on these Scriptures we will be so convinced that we will go on our way rejoicing. Jer. 31: 35-37—”Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar ; the Lord of hosts is his name; if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.” The Lord says it is His responsibility. Has this nation departed from the Lord’s favour? You can answer! You and I have lived to see the redemption of the people of Israel. And what a joy! What does it mean to us to entertain high hopes for natural Israel? It means *we* are reaching a wonderful point in the history of the human race, when not only our redemption will come, and the redemption of Israel, but also that of the whole human race. It is all tied up with the prophetic writings regarding Israel’s restoration. It does not involve just a few people known as the Jews, but embraces the redemption of the whole human family. So it is very vital; and furthermore, it will be the first consideration of those who shall have the blessed privilege of reigning with the Messiah in glory, to deal with this despised people, the Jews, for the blessings will go through Israel to all the families of the earth, and this is going to be a bitter pill for many people to swallow. We can imagine how the Nazis will react. It will be difficult for some to accept the blessings the way God is going to give them.

In God’s arrangements there always have been tests. There were tests to father Adam; to the patriarchs; to the nation

of Israel when God chose them as a special people. He dealt with them as He did not deal with any other nation. Because of this great light, a great responsibility fell upon the Jewish people. When they failed to live up to the light granted to them, we know what happened. The bloodiest conflicts in the world took place in Israel. When they were dispersed among the nations, they suffered such as no other people suffered in the history of mankind. But at last we believe the Jewish people, restored in the land, are beginning to see some of God's great mercy and love. They have seen His severity such as no people have seen in history. Today we are happy that the prophecies regarding their uplift are beginning to be fulfilled, in a most remarkable way. We hope we can in some measure impart to you the true events taking place in Israel, the true developments that are welding this people into one. people.

We would like to refer you to Jer. 32. Here we find what God's intention- is regarding this people. He is not going to be harsh with them for ever. God is not a God who delights in punishment, but He is a God of justice and means what He says. If that is true, what is recorded in the 37th verse of this chapter is going to be fulfilled in a glorious way. Note the wording very carefully. There is not a word here that is superfluous. "Behold I will" —God identifies it. "I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath"—there is no question but they have experienced the severity, because of their disobedience, but now, "I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. For thus saith the Lord: Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them."

Isn't that a beautiful passage of Scripture? Can you conceive of anything that could be worded in a more beautiful way, or could we have a more beautiful message to give Abraham's natural seed? Reading these words from Jeremiah would give a tremendous uplift to any one of Israel's posterity.

Not only in Jeremiah, but in so many prophecies the Lord says "I will." When you read it, you come to the conclusion that this is something God takes a very personal interest in, something He is going to do. He uses agencies, we know, but nevertheless God takes the credit for it. "I will do it." We can be just as sure that it is going to happen as anything that could be done. It does not make any difference if all the nations in the world combine against them, they will fail. In Zechariah we are told that God will drastically deal with any nation that endeavours to hamper the work that goes on. So it is not a very pleasant prospect for some nations who want to delay God's programme. What we have before us in the case of Israel's restoration is the fulfilment of vital prophecies.

Turn now to Amos 9:11, where we have another beautiful prophecy regarding Israel's restoration. Maybe you have not noticed a couple of things here. "In that day will I raise up" (again the Lord says He will do it) "the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old." Are the Jews doing it? Well, that is what the human mind would say. But the Lord says, "I will do it." Then v. 14, "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, said the Lord thy God."

Has the plan of God ever been beyond human co-operation? No! If so, Moses would have been left out, David would have been left out, the Apostles and you and I would have been entirely left out. The plan of God, as we see it, has always been within the realm of human co-operation. When Nebuchadnezzar responded and turned to the Lord, did God not use that man? He took a man like Cyrus and used him, because he brought to pass the things God desired to be fulfilled. So through the ages God has used men. Some were very intelligent, men of God, the prophets, who knew God was using them and the power of God was outpouring through them. They spoke and wrote the things God inspired them, for the benefit of God's people throughout the centuries since.

So today we can accept the fact that the Jews have gone out to that land entirely on their own initiative. But God has led them to that land; they would plant the gardens and the vineyards, for why should God do something for us which we can do ourselves? If Gabriel came here and did all the work for us, we would always be idle. That is not the way God is operating. God has always in the past and present aided His people and helped them where they could not help themselves. I am sure but that for the intervention of the Lord I was lost. You may have had similar experiences. The powers that are against us are greater than we can cope with. So with Israel. Except by the power of God, the state of Israel could not have been established in May, 1948.

We talk about miracles in the past; but we have seen miracles in our time, and the children of Israel have seen miracles. Do we have to think that all that has been foretold is in the future? I feel very strongly that we do not realise how far we are along the stream of time. In Israel today you will hear from the lips of Israeli stories that will give you the chills up and down your spine, because you do not accept it. But it is happening! Before we left Israel, in Jerusalem, my wife and I were entertained in the home of a Mr. Reuben, and we learned that this man was one of the commanding officers in the struggle for Jerusalem. To our amazement, this business man started to relate to us what they experienced in the siege of Jerusalem. The things he said would just have given you the thrill of your life. He referred to the deliverance of Jerusalem as a miracle from God. He was not a Rabbi, did not profess to be an orthodox Jew. There were many sieges of Jerusalem in the past, but this happened in 1948. There is a very large structure, Notre Dame de France, with 140 rooms, which is just outside the old city walls in the new city of Jerusalem, and in Israeli territory today. When the British were about to leave in May, 1948, the commanding British officer told the Jews that

the army that captured this building would have control of the place. He told the Arabs the same thing. As soon as the battle began, Jews and Arabs sought to capture this huge building. It **was** in a strategic position. A mere handful of Israeli soldiers got there first. In all Israel they had only 10,000 rifles, no field guns, no aeroplanes, no navy. What can you do with 10,000 rifles against aeroplanes, armoured cars and tanks? These Jewish boys had a few guns between them and some home-made bombs which could not do much damage. When they moved into this building, the commanding officer had to think what to do. Wisdom was given; in order to give the Arabs the impression that they were holding the whole building, shots were fired from one window after the other. They had very little to combat the enemy; it was like one against a thousand. The commanding officer saw the battle was hopeless, and ordered the men to retreat. However, one man did not hear the order. He was busy running from one window to the next, firing from each in turn. He peeped out and saw the first armoured car right up against the building. He dropped a home-made bomb. It did not go off. He dropped another, and it exploded on the Arabs. Now, the Arabs are superstitious. They thought it was some secret weapon, and they retreated! So the Israeli Army came back. They saw this man still running around; when he realised he had been alone in the building, he fainted. But one man had held back the whole Arab army!

Actually, in some places the Arabs saw thousands when there were no thousands to be seen. There were 200 Jews in a community settlement fighting against thousands of Egyptian soldiers, and suddenly the Egyptians retreated. Some of the prisoners taken by the Jews asked, Where are you all? They were told there were only 200. They said, "We saw thousands." You will hear such stories from commanding officers all over Israel. In 1956 when the Israeli army moved down the Sinai Peninsula, they expected to have a terrific battle, because there were 2,000 to 3,000 Egyptians there. When they got there, no Egyptians were to be seen. Why? It may be that God showed them in a vision thousands when there were no thousands to be seen. That happened centuries ago. It has apparently happened again in our time. I am sure that if God had not intervened, Israel would not be here today.

So we rejoice in these miracles. It is hard for us sometimes to accept them, because we thought the age of miracles is past. But if you were to have the privilege of going to Israel and hearing these accounts, you would have to believe it. The Israeli do not boast about these things; it is rather, "Since you have asked me I will tell you." We had 13 brethren on a tour of Israel. These Truth brethren asked a Jew in Haifa to tell them anything that happened in 1948 that bordered on a miracle. He said, "I was in the Israeli army in 1948. I was in a contingent fighting on the Lebanese border. Ten of us had three guns. We entrenched ourselves in the hills, and hundreds of the enemy approached. We determined we would fight to the last man. We began to fight, and the Arabs were on the offensive. We kept resisting, but finally it was hopeless. Suddenly we saw hundreds retreating. We took up a wounded Arab and asked him, 'Why is it your men retreated?' The Arab said, 'What do you mean, didn't you see?' We told him that we didn't see anything. He said, 'We saw three men with white flowing hair, fiery eyes and flaming swords approaching.' "The man who told us these things is a Christian, and a very straightforward man. He said, "If I had not heard and seen this thing, I would have doubted it. You asked about it, and I have told you. I experienced it myself."

This happened in 1948. We thought you would like to hear of it. We heard at first-hand from the men involved, and you get it from us. Some of the stories seem miraculous when related, because of the way in which these things were accomplished. It really was a struggle that we believe God had in His hands. So we are happy that He delivered Israel in our time and brought about the establishment of His nation in a miraculous way.

Ben Gurion said he was the most fearful man in the world on 14th May, 1948. The Jewish people in Israel, or Palestine as it was called before that date, felt that maybe the British troops would not pull out. They thought, Who knows? They have been here for thirty years, maybe they will not go. When the hour came the British did pull out; but the greatest miracle that happened was that on the heels of the British troops a half-million Arabs fled. There were 650,000 Jews in Palestine, and 650,000 Arabs—man for man. When the British troops pulled out, half a million Arabs fled. Why? Because the Jews threw them out? No. In Haifa the Jews were going round broadcasting to the Arabs to stay and live in peace with them, and all would be well. But there were other broadcasts, telling these Arabs that if they remained they would be collaborators, and that when the Arab armies moved in, they would push the Jews into the sea. They were confident that this would be the case; so they fled, with the intention of joining with the Arab armies, hoping to overthrow the Jews and take their possessions. But it did not work out that way. The enemy that was within the camp, within about 48 hours moved out. Not the British troops, but the Arabs. Was it just because their leaders told them to do so? Their leaders had other plans, but those plans were foiled. Behind it all was the hand of God. He brought about in various ways the establishment of Israel. No doubt He used the angelic powers to help bring about the establishment of a Jewish state in our time. That was the miracle of Israel. Let us never credit it to human beings. From the beginning to the end, it is something the Lord will do. Of course He will use various human beings to accomplish His plans and purposes.

We would like to trace a few historical events to show how God is bringing about His plan and purposes regarding Israel. Let us go back to 1878; in that year the Berlin Congress of Nations was held, called after a struggle between the Turks and the Russians, the Ottoman Empire and the Czarist regime. These great powers were shaken by their experiences. The Turks had very stringent terms imposed on them. The treaty was ratified by the great nations of the world. You may recall that a small clause was inserted which changed history; the Turks would maintain their independence, but they were to provide civil and religious rights to the Jews within the Ottoman Empire. In that year in the city of Tel Aviv the first Jewish colony was established — that was in the year 1878.,

So the work began. But notice, it was after a struggle between two great world powers who were badly shaken by it. The Berlin Congress of Nations decreed something which was a small favor to the Jews; they were to have civil and

religious rights, at least on paper. But enough Jews got in to settle on their land, and the work began. To the Lord, 70 or 80 years is nothing. What is a thousand years in God's sight? The Lord is not in a big hurry, like we are. He does His job perfectly. In that year 1878 the first step was taken.

Then time moves on, and we come to 1914, when many more great powers of the world were engaged in conflict. We do not have to tell you what a great shaking took place. The outcome of that was the Balfour Declaration, and this declared that there was to be a Homeland created for the Jews. It went beyond civil and religious rights. The British were appointed by the League of Nations to have mandatory control. But it was after another great struggle between the giant nations of the world that this was brought about. Because they loved the Jews? We do not think so. If we were behind the scenes we would *see* that God, in one way or another, brought these things to pass.

Then came World War Two. Another great sifting down of the world powers took place, until today there are only two great powers left. You can name them. All the others are in some way dependent upon these two. The only really tangible thing which came out of this struggle—and many statesmen have declared it—was the creation of a Jewish state. The Gentile powers were sifted down, and the Star of David continued to ascend. Another group of nations convened the United Nations, and on November 27th, 1947, they decreed that there was to be established in the land of Palestine a Jewish State, and they gave the boundaries of it, and the nations voted in favor of this. Did this all just happen? Remember, from 1878 to 1948 when the State was created, was 70 years. From the time when the Jews moved into Palestine until the establishment of the Jewish State was 70 years.

So “the kings have had their day.” They are being sifted down, and the Lord in His providence has seen to it that the nations are extending recognition to Israel step by step. First civil and religious rights were granted, then a Homeland, then a State. On looking back, we can see they were instruments that performed God's purposes.

So we see in our time the redemption of Israel. There are three restorations taking place. First, the restoration of the Jew to his own land, as clearly foretold in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos and other prophets. Second, the restoration of the land to the fertility which it formerly enjoyed — and so today the land is being redeemed. Third, the restoration spoken of by God through the prophets when He says they would turn unto Him with their whole hearts. This, we believe, is in the offing. As a matter of fact, we can tell you very safely that it is beginning. How is it beginning? It is happening in a very natural way. We must not think that everything God does is bombastic. Distance lends glamour. We visualise Gideon with his 300; we stood where he met the opposing army. What happened was the natural thing, when you think about it. God gave them the wisdom and instructed them. What is happening today in the spiritual realm? Something we do not dream of. We used to have very hazy ideas of how God enlightened His people. When the Jewish people moved into Palestine, they started to build. They did not know anything about building, but they started to build. The strange thing is that every time they moved to some place and started to construct a settlement or city, they would come across something old. We have seen a bulldozer ram into the earth, and strike an old pillar which stood on some ancient site. There is a law in Israel that whenever an ancient site is unearthed, building has to stop. The Archaeological Department is called in, and they begin to clear away the debris. So if building is commenced in such a place, it must stop immediately; some other place must be found for the proposed new building. These ancient edifices are to be preserved for posterity. So every year in Israel the archaeologists are uncovering ancient sites. They all confirm the authenticity of the Bible.

We would like to refer to a statement by Nelson Gluck, one of the foremost living Bible archaeologists. This man knows what he is talking about. He has worked extensively in Israel. He says, “The Bible's almost incredibly correct historical summary has many times been validated by the progress of discovery. No archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Bible reference.” This man is telling us that there is not a thing that the archaeologists have discovered that has disproved any portion of the Bible. The Bible stands true. How does that affect the Israeli? In Israel archaeology is important. In Israel today there is hardly a Jew who would question the authenticity of the Bible as an historical work. There was a time when they would say, Who knows, Abraham may be a fictitious character. But no more. The spade has turned up so much evidence to prove the historical truthfulness of the Scriptures that there is no questioning it any more. Do you know what a foundation that **is**?

The children in Israel study the Bible four classes a week. Four days a week they have a Bible class in the public schools. A fourteen-year-old girl told us she was going through the Old Testament for the fourth time since she began school. What effect will such study have on this young generation? Their mothers and fathers knew nothing of the Scriptures. They had forgotten the Book. But the young generation today in Israel is steeped in the Bible. They know the Bible is true historically. What is the next step? To accept it prophetically. If it is proved historically, why question its accuracy prophetically? This will

be the next major step in Israel. When you quote a Biblical prophecy to an Israeli and support it with historical evidence, he listens with all his hearing. And what is prophecy? It is history written aforetime. But we would say that prophecy is God's story of human events. Yes, God, writing through these men of old, foretold what is to happen. So Israel is coming up. The people of Israel will be enlightened step by step, and finally there will be a climax in their experiences. When they are brought back from the land of their enemies, the Lord will not leave them in the lurch. He is bringing about conditions which are opening their eyes gradually to see and understand these wonderful things. When His time comes for them to be fully enlightened, we can be sure it will happen. The land shall be no longer desolate; it shall be like the Garden of Eden. The Word of God is coming alive in the land of Israel today.

## “Under His Wings.”

“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust.” (*Psa.* 91 :4.)

THE 91st Psalm very clearly applies to the church, and would seem to be especially applicable to the church in the end of this age. But since it is addressed in a personal way, as though to one person, it may be The Christ as a whole that is referred to, from the Head to the last member of the body. Our Lord Jesus had trials and difficulties, and needed protection and care. He went to the heavenly Father and sought the necessary aid. And so with all the Lord’s people continually.

But the Psalmist seems especially to refer to our day : “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.” Of course, there have been times in the past when thousands have fallen through persecutions, etc., but the falling away mentioned here seems to be the falling away from God’s people. Many will be turned aside, injured, wounded, if not killed, in the great battle pictured.

This battle, we understand, is at the conclusion of this Gospel Age. The powers of darkness are now specially arraying themselves against the consecrated people of God, and all associated with them. There never was a time when God’s people, as a whole, had so large opportunities or so great success as Christendom has had in the past century. Under the attacks of Satan that have been in progress for the last fifty to one hundred years, many have fallen into unbelief, Higher Criticism, infidelity, the various features of which are represented as a great pestilence. We see that there is a pestilential infidelity abroad in the land. Its votaries are misled by the adversary—quite probably without any such intention on their part.

Very probably in the future, as they see the truth, many of these will acknowledge their error ; but for the time being there is a great drouth in Christendom. Many of the ministers are preaching what they themselves doubt. They have fallen from grace, fallen from divine favor, fallen from an appreciation of the Word of God.

This Scripture points out, too, the “feet” of this Christ class living in our day. “He shall give his angels charge over thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” All the members have a relationship to the Head and to one another. These “angels” we understand to represent divine promises and helpful assistances of the saints. These “angels” are represented as bearing up the feet, that they may not stumble over the stone of stumbling at this time. (*Isa.* 8:14.) Instead of stumbling over this stone, they will be lifted up by it to greater appreciation and higher conditions. The feet shall not be moved.

In the figure of our text, these who are to be covered represent all who are of this one class. As a hen gathereth her brood under her Wings, so God will be as a mother-hen to His people, and •will gladly gather them close to Himself and give them the necessary protection—under His wings. They may fully trust that all things shall work together for their good, because they are His, abiding “under the shadow of the Almighty.”

The Almighty here represents Himself as a mother-bird. The patience of the mother-bird with her young is remarkable, and she would sacrifice her own life for her little nestlings. So the Lord represents that He is ready to do anything for the protection of His own, who are under His care. Jesus would have received the Jews thus under His protecting care; but the people as a nation did not appreciate their need, and hence were overthrown in a great time of trouble. Jesus said to them, with weeping, “How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !”

We might exercise a particularity of inspection of our text, and say that the word feathers might carry a little further thought than the word wings. “He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust.” The soft, downy feathers under the mother-hen’s wings serve to keep the little chicks warm and to shield and hide them from enemies that would attack them. Not only the strong sheltering wings, but also the feathers of the mother-hen’s breast are used to protect her young. We have seen alarm on the part of a mother-hen at the approach of danger, and heard her cluck to her little ones. Then they would run to her, nestle under her wings, and seem perfectly satisfied and free from fear in their place of safety. Presently you would see the little heads or eyes peeping out ; but the chicks felt perfectly secure.

And so with us. Our heavenly Father’s love and care and protection are His wings and His feathers, shielding us from all harm, keeping us warm and safe. He is able to make every experience in life work out for our good. We are, however, to remember that the promise that God will make all things work together for our good is a promise to the new creature, not to the old creature. Oftentimes the interests of the new creature and of the old creature are diverse. God has an interest in all that concerns us, but He overrules our temporal affairs for our best spiritual interests. If we were too prosperous, it might not be of advantage to us as new creatures.

Our temporal affairs may be permitted to go awry. We are not wise enough to know what is for our own best interests as new creatures, and what would help us the most in our fight against the world, the flesh and the devil. We are, therefore, to flee to the Lord and accept whatever experiences may come, as those which will be best for us; and we are to seek to get the designed lessons of faith and obedience from them.

### Passover Memorial, 1960

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 10th April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord’s request —”This do in remembrance of me.”

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by middle of March, stating the number of persons to be served.

## Memorial Services.

MELBOURNE.—Sunday, 10th April, at 6.30 p.m., at 1'1.2. sonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street.)

SYDNEY.—Sunday, 10th April, 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

PERTH.—Sunday, 10th April, 6 p.m., at 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).

## Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 15th to 18th, in the Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocca binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

## The 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 towards 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."*—Zech. 14 :4.

THIS 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 symbolic earthquake. No doubt the Israelites will be gathered at Jerusalem at this time, and no doubt the Lord's favor will be manifested to them there. This will be at the close of "Jacob's trouble," from which the Lord will deliver them. It would seem 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 favor 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 symbolized 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 shall eventually come under its blessed condition.

"Daily Heavenly Manna."—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/

Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 26/- post paid.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages".—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

"Israel in History and Prophecy" is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

**Books Available.** "Most Holy Faith"—£1.

"Tabernacle Shadows"—6/-.

"Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages-10/6.

"God's Promises Come True"—£1.

"Emphatic Diaglott" — New Testament —18/-.

"The Book of Books"—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages"—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—1/-.

"Manner of Christ's Return"—1/-.

"Christ's Return"-1/-. "Some of the Parables"-1/-. "Hope Beyond the Grave"-1/-.

"God and Reason"-1/.

## FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

## **Pride of Heart Abominable.**

Pride must take its stand with the other reprehensible qualities of the fallen human mind, character. The Scriptures recognise two conditions of the heart, the right and the wrong. The one that God approves is called Love; the other, the one that He disapproves, is Selfishness. All selfishness is opposed to God's Law. Anything selfish is contrary to the Divine purpose. The quality of pride is specially abominable to the Lord, because there is not a creature in the Universe that has anything of which to be proud. Everything that anyone has is a gift; it is not of his own manufacture or creation. God gives the blessing. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." (James 1: 17.) It is of His fulness that we have received. Everyone, therefore, who is proud, is certainly very reprehensible in God's sight, for he has been only a recipient of favour, blessing. All God's creatures are dependent upon Him.

Worldly pride challenges faith in God and obedience to Him. Only those of the Lord's people who are of good courage and full of confidence in the Lord can overcome this giant of pride. It is necessary that the victory should be made complete. Pride, in its every form, should be so thoroughly humiliated, killed, that it can never rise again to destroy us. This battle each one has to fight; and the only proper weapon with which to overcome is the "Sword of the Spirit," showing us what is pleasing and acceptable in God's sight. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke 18:14.

## **The Gospel of Christ.**

Let us not be ashamed of the true Gospel, nor of any of its agents or agencies. He who is ashamed of the brother or sister, or tract or book through which God was pleased to send him the truth, shows clearly that had he lived in the days of our Lord's humiliation, he would have been ashamed of Him, and of the humble men whom He chose and used to promulgate His Gospel in the beginning. The truth is not intended for the proud or the dishonest. God hides His truth from the worldly wise and prudent, and reveals it unto babes. (Luke 10:21; 1 Cor. 1:19.) By candor and humility and zeal let us keep ourselves in the love of God and continue to walk in the light of His truth.



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Price—Sixpence

## Working Out Salvation.

(Convention Address)

*“Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12,13.)*

*“By a new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.” (Heb. 10:20, R.S.V.)*

THIS latter text declares that since the first advent of Christ a new and living way has been opened for us through the ransom sacrifice of our Lord.

The Church’s salvation, which is called a “high (upward call) or heavenly calling” (Phil. 3:14) to a heavenly inheritance, is now in progress, and has its beginning in the “hearing of faith,” and seeing with “the eye of faith,” and each faithful Christian will be rewarded according to his or her faith. Perfect works are not required of these; that is an impossibility. Nevertheless, they are urged to “work out their salvation.”

The Apostle Paul, in answering the Philippian jailer’s question (Acts 16:25-32) —“What must I do to be saved?” says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.” This is a salvation through faith from inherited sin and its condemnation, but to experience that complete rescue the Christian must work out his salvation, which is a lifelong work through the power of the holy spirit. No doubt the jailer became a member of the church at Philippi to which congregation Paul wrote, urging the members to work out their salvation. You see there are two parts to one salvation, and only a few can exercise the great faith that is necessary to a place in the heavenly kingdom, and share with Christ the great glory, honor and immortality to which the narrow way leads. Matt. 7:14—“Narrow is the gate, and difficult the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

The Master said, “Many are called, but few are (finally) chosen.” These, through faith, receive the benefits of the common salvation from sin and condemnation, even as the world will in the next age, as the Apostle John declares—“Christ is the satisfaction for our sins (the church’s sins), and also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2:2). Even though “we were children of wrath, even as others,” yet, by believing in the atoning work of Christ, and accepting His terms of discipleship we become, by a full consecration, the sons of God, because God has begotten us. by His holy spirit at the moment we consecrate our all to Him. Through this union with Jesus as our Saviour, and God as our Heavenly Father, we receive the spirit of sonship. There is now no condemnation upon those who walk after the spirit (Rom. 8:1) ; God works in them to will and to do, as Phil. 2:12,13 says — “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh (is energizing) in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

These words are addressed to the true Church, to those who are God’s consecrated people, and not to nominal Christians; neither is it addressed to the world in general. The world is not on trial for salvation, and it is still true, as it was in the Apostle Paul’s day, that Satan is the prince of this world. The world is still waiting for salvation. Heb. 9 :28—“Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin (i.e., a sin-offering) unto salvation.” (See also Rom. 8:19-21.) During the present dispensation the Apostle John says, “the whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 John 5:19), but with the coming of Christ’s kingdom Satan shall be bound, and will deceive the people no more until the thousand years are finished..

The consecrated Christian, however, is spoken of as a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), and God works for these and in them, but we are to remember that the personality is still maintained; it is the same ego, the same personality as before. These were “bought with a price,” before they became new creatures. But God did not work in you when you were “bought with the blood of Christ,” but it is evident that from before the time of your spiritual begetting and quickening He has done so, as the Scriptures declare we are drawn of God. “No man can come unto me,” Jesus said, “except the Father draw him,” and we were also called of God before our consecration.

He draws us before we became Christians at all. Truth and righteousness appealed to us. “The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to every one who believeth.” (Rom. 1 :16.) It urges us on to full consecration, complete salvation—a salvation we must work out. But before we can do this, we must first be drawn of the Father, cleansed and justified. God has appointed one way only, as Jesus said—“I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” (John 14:6). And again—“If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take

up his cross daily and follow me.” (Luke 9:23.) That is the way for those who believe. Those who make this full consecration of their lives to God, through Christ, come into vital relationship with the Father.

This love for righteousness and holiness is a powerful working. To whatever extent the natural man loves righteousness and truth and mercy and goodness, he has something that is approved by God, and can be drawn unto Him. Jesus said—“If any man willeth to do God’s will, he shall know of the doctrine.” (John 7:17.) God thus first works in us *to will*, and we willed to do God’s will. We did not see clearly all the complete will of God at first, but we learn as we receive the power of His holy spirit, which gives us understanding and transforming power, as the Lord promised the first disciples — “Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49.) God works in us now *to do*. The willing is first, then the quickening, the energizing, the doing. We can will perfectly, but cannot do perfectly, for the flesh has inherited weaknesses and imperfections.

It is as new creatures we must work out our own salvation. We cannot work out our justification, which is received without works, as a gift. In the full, complete sense, this salvation will be brought unto us only at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1 :13.) Now we are on probation, we have the pledge and witness of the spirit, and we must work out our salvation. It is a good hope, for now there is no condemnation upon us. What kind of salvation is this, referred to as “your own salvation” that has to be worked out? It *is* not the common salvation in the general sense. This initial or common salvation was, and still is, the gift of God, springing out of grace (favour) for all who long for peace with God. This faith in the gift cometh by hearing the message of salvation, through the ransom sacrifices of our Lord. This salvation is a free gift.

Why this is so much emphasized in the Scriptures *is* that for centuries the Jews were commanded to work out their salvation through the means of the Law Covenant; unto that end they were first typically cleansed from condemnation once a year by blood of animals. They agreed to keep the Law, and God’s promise was that “he that doeth these things (fulfils the Law perfectly) shall live by them.” But that gift salvation which was announced after the death and resurrection of Christ was purely faith in this great fact — that Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification (Rom. 4:25). Thus justification is received by faith without a law of works — not of ourselves — except works of repentance which show faith to be genuine.

Why then does this same apostle say that salvation must be worked out in each believer? Paul used such expressions as—“So run as to obtain”; “so fight I as to keep under my body”; “I have fought a good. fight”; “put on the whole armor of God,” etc. Wasn’t the free gift enough for salvation? No! If we stop there we shall receive the grace of God in vain, for justification does not change our character, but our standing before God. At this point the opportunity to run for the prize of the high calling is open to us by full consecration, and following the instruction—“work out your own salvation.”

This faith — i.e., faith justification — must be used to the end of our Christian course. We do not discard the letters of the alphabet when words or speech are framed; the alphabet is the foundation for these. So is the faith in the atonement the foundation with which to build a character, a sanctified life, a superstructure of gold, silver and precious stones, as the Apostle Paul says in 1 Cor. 3:10-15. He also exhorts us not to build with wood, hay, or stubble, for the fire of this day will destroy such a character built with such material, leaving only the foundation.

The Apostle Peter, in 2 Pet. 1:5-7, exhorts along similar lines,—“Superadd to your faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience piety, and to piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness love.” (Diaglott.)

But when the apostle says “your salvation” he is particularizing, and refers to that great salvation spoken of in Heb. 2:3, — “So great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” This is a special favor offered to the church during this Gospel Age; theirs is a salvation to glory, honor and immortality, to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, sharing in His exalted name and position throughout the ages to come. As we come to see this more clearly, we are filled with amazement that we should be thus called and honored. We are also filled with fear, for what if we should come short of such a high calling? “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,”—with great earnestness and carefulness, zeal and diligence, lest we should come short of that full reward. It is a great personal responsibility ; it suggests that it is something that is difficult; that requires time and patience.

We have made the decision; we have consecrated all to God ; that which we have undertaken lies before us. We are happy though, that God’s will is being done in us, and we are urged to consider Christ as our great example in devotion and self-sacrifice, the Author and Leader of our faith. We know *tit* means painstaking care, that we work out our great salvation. God has provided the way, made all the arrangements for us. There is nothing lacking; He has I given unto us “every spiritual blessing.” (Eph. 1:3). God has begotten us by His holy spirit and given us all things that pertain to life and godliness through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:3.)

The result is in our hands. It is for us to use the means that God has provided; He is ever present with His aid, and His angels are ministering spirits to all those who are heirs of salvation. He has also set various ones in the Body — the Church — for its edification. As an eminent Christian writer has said —“There is not another person in the universe responsible for my success or failure. Now it is for us to work out; surely we should have fear and trembling.” But we know that it is God that is working (energizing) in us; He has begun the great work, and has promised to complete it, for He knows we cannot do perfectly, hence—“It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it (the new creature) is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:43,44.)

At the present time these also have a work to do for God. He “hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation,” (2 Cor. 5:18,19), to bear witness to His truth to those who have ears to hear the message. The Lord knew that riot many

would choose to take up the cross and tread the narrow way. Many turn back when they see the stringent conditions of the call to discipleship. Jesus Himself desires that all who would follow Him into death should first count the cost. (Luke 14:28-33.) He does not command us to follow Him. The call of this age is a favor and a privilege, an invitation or calling. Those who respond get a special blessing; those who reject miss the blessing.

We must not think of those who refuse to take up the cross as condemned to eternal torment. These, as we were, are condemned already. (John 3:18.) The Adamic death sentence is upon them even before they were born. The Lord has a plan for these, and under His Kingdom arrangement these will repent, and come to a full knowledge of the truth in the next age. For these the "common salvation" is provided to which the Apostle Jude refers—Jude 3. These will have the blessings of salvation open to them—the -restitution blessing to human perfection upon the earth. These favors have been purchased for them by the sacrifice of the Redeemer.

Associated with Christ will be His glorified Church. These have had their judgment day and worked out their salvation, represented in the Scripture as the fruit of the holy spirit, and as robes of glory and beauty. The glorified Church is represented as preparing her bridal robes before she is led along to the palace of the King. The 45th Psalm gives a beautiful description of her glory and beauty in symbolical language. Verses 13-17 from the Revised Standard Version read — "The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes; in many-colored robes she is led to the king, with her virgin companions, her escort, in her train. With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king. Instead of your fathers shall be your sons; you will make them princes in all the earth. I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations; therefore the peoples will praise you for ever and ever." Beautiful language, isn't it? The reality will be more so. The glorious, triumphant Church, Christ's own treasure, is indeed a princess—the daughter of Jehovah, for He has begotten her through the word of truth. (James 1:18.) Another translates verses 13,14 — "Princess of glorious veil, with gold embroidered robes approach the king with grace."

May our Lord grant that all the spiritual blessings, lessons, exhortations, studies and fellowship we have had during these days of Convention be a further means of lifting us higher in our Christian life and experience, and find the joys of the Lord are indeed our strength and sanctifying power until the day when this mortal shall put on immortality, and thus approach the King with grace.

"Souls, for the marriage feast Robe and prepare  
Holy must be such guests; Jesus is there!  
Saints, bear your victory palms,  
Chant your celestial psalms,  
Bride of the Lamb, thy charms  
O! Seek to wear."

## Peoples Paper Subscriptions

In the booklet—"How are the Dead Raised Up? With What Body do They Come?"—which took the place of January "Peoples Paper" reference was made to the annual subscription price for "Peoples Paper" being 6/- commencing with this year 1960. Our readers will understand that increased costs for paper, printing and postage have made the increase necessary. The posting of two issues of the "Paper" at one time, which has been the procedure for some time past, will be continued, as this method does assist with postage costs. Samples of the "Peoples Paper" are gladly supplied free, and extra copies are also provided to subscribers for passing out where good may be done. We shall be pleased to hear from all friends who wish and are able to make the "Peoples Paper" known to others.

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### Memorial Services.

MELBOURNE.—Sunday, 10th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street.)

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 6/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.  
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## Convention News.

*THE* four-day Convention, sponsored by the Melbourne Class and held over the recent Christmas season, proved to be a most profitable and encouraging time of spiritual refreshing. We are very grateful to the Lord for all His favors bestowed throughout the gatherings, realising that His overruling and blessing was essential for the success of the assemblies.

The Melbourne brethren gladly welcomed friends from four of the Australian States, a good company attending from Adelaide, as well as a representative from New Zealand, and two visiting friends from the U.S.A., who had recently arrived from Israel after an extended stay in the Holy Land. These visiting brethren assisted very helpfully with the programme, and the attendance of the local friends also being quite good, the gatherings were well attended throughout.

At the Fellowship Meeting on the first day of Convention, messages with greetings from classes and other brethren were received with pleasure from friends in attendance as well as through the mail, some greetings coming from the other side of the world. Thus it was manifest that these gatherings were being remembered before the Lord by fellow Christians in various parts of the harvest field, and this was warmly appreciated.

On each of three days a Bible study was taken, the Scriptural passages being — Rom. 5:1-10; Rom. 8:31-39, and Luke 17:28-37. These studies brought out some of the most precious truths concerning the Christian's call and invitation to the high calling, and the hope of gaining the heavenly inheritance by the development of the Christian graces through the indwelling of God's holy spirit. In Rom. 5:1-10, the progressive steps in Christian development were well revealed, verses 1 and 2 showing the happy condition of justification by faith through acceptance of Christ as our personal Saviour, which, followed by full consecration brings one into the favor of sonship in God's family — "wherein we stand" — says the Apostle to his Roman brethren, "and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

The following verses 3-5 translated from the Revised Standard Version are most encouraging — "More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope; and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the holy spirit which has been given to us." Verses 6-10 also revealed the condescension of God in providing Christ as our Saviour "while we were yet sinners" in contrast with the best motives of humanity whereby some may even dare to die for a good man. How appealing, then, is the Apostle's reasoning in verse 10—"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." Yes, indeed, now that we have been accepted into the family of God, surely the love of God will be manifestly greater on our behalf than when we were enemies, provided we co-operate with Him in "this grace wherein we stand."

The study in Rom. 8:31-39 provided a continuation of the thoughts on God's goodness arising from the gift of Christ, for "He that spared not his own Son . . . how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Yes, the provision is full and complete for the benefit of all whom God has justified. Who, then, shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth? Christ died for all who are justified by faith, and He also intercedes at the right hand of God on behalf of all who have consecrated their lives to God's service. Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ? Surely all the things enumerated in these verses are not able to divide the truly devoted servants of the Master from their Lord and Head—"Nay, in all these things *we* are more than conquerors through him that loved us." This confident assurance in the Apostle's answer to his question has no doubt been a wonderful inspiration to the saints all down the Gospel Age, and continues to be such to all in our day who are devoting their lives to the Master's service, and who feel that "God is for us,"—that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

From the passage in Luke 17:28-37 we gained valuable information respecting God's dealings with certain of His people in the days of Abraham and Lot, with the context revealing similar experiences in the days of Noah. We were reminded of the difference in the characters of Abraham and Lot, Abraham trusting more in God and yielding up his life in full devotion, while Lot exercised more of the selfish outlook, and sought more of the good things of this present world which brought him much more in contact with the unregenerate of his day, and which vexed his righteous soul. (See 2 Pet. 2:7,8.) The lesson gained was that the Lord's true people should have no ambitions that would take them into ungodly company, whether it be in business or other activities; rather, they would touch as lightly as possible the things of this present evil world, and thus while being in the world to be not of the world. Those who are of the world will be so absorbed in eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting and building, that they will be overtaken in the time of trouble "in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Thus, in verse 31, those who may be termed housetop saints — those who have their hearts and minds exercised and are alert to the spiritual outlook—should not be concerned about the "stuff in the house" which may represent, attachments of various kinds to this world and worldly religious systems. Rather, those seeing further off, housetop saints, are exhorted to "flee into the mountain" (kingdom) of the Lord. (Matt. 24: 16-18.) Whereas Lot seemed to picture those requiring to be "pulled out of the fire" (Jude 23), and may thus represent the Great Company, Lot's wife, suffering destruction because of wilful disobedience, may picture those who suffer total loss by wilfully rejecting the grace of God received through the benefits of Christ's sacrifice. Verse 33 seemed to confirm this thought, while also adding encouragement to "whosoever shall lose his life" in sacrifice for the Lord.

Verses 34-47 were seen to contain an outline of the effect of the Lord's truth upon those in right heart condition during the harvest of the Gospel Age. "Two in one bed,"—the creed beds of Christendom. "One shall be taken, and the other left." Yes, the truth has a vitalizing effect upon certain ones only; the others slumber on and are not affected

by the message of the kingdom at the present time. However, they are not condemned on this account; all these will have their opportunity in the kingdom age. The same lesson is shown in verses 35 and 36—a selection according to worthiness — “one shall be taken, and the other left.” The solution of our Lord’s words was seen to be well revealed in verse 37—”Where Lord?” Where are these taken, from the various walks of life? “And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body (spiritual food) is, thither will the eagles (alert, sharp-eyed Christians) be gathered together.” Truly we have seen these words of our Lord’s fulfilled over and over again,, and we surely rejoice when one and another of the “eagles” are found, and their desire to feast upon the heavenly food is manifest ‘as they gather around the “carcase” (Matt. 24:28), with others of like precious faith.

Addresses by various brethren also contributed helpfully •throughout the Convention days, each subject providing some encouragement from the Lord’s storehouse. The subjects chosen by the brethren for their addresses were—”Making Room in the Garden” ; “Neglect” ; “Victory Through Christ” ; “Cast Not Away Your Confidence”; “Life Unto Life” ; “Shining Lights” ; “Rejoice in the Lord” ; “The Love of God” ; “The Rule of the Rod of Iron”; “Our Unseen Helpers” ; “Address on Israel,” and “A Vision for an Appointed Time.” Another address—”Working Out Our Salvation” — was unavoidably held over, as the speaker was unwell on the final evening, and we were all sorry on that account. However, the main part of this address is appearing in this issue of “Peoples Paper” for the benefit of all readers. A brief outline of each of these addresses will also be found in the Convention Notes, now available.

The address on Israel by our visiting Brother Lanowick, of U.S.A., was of special interest to some outside friends as well as the brethren, and the attendance for this address on the Sunday evening was very good, practically filling our meeting hall. It is hoped to print this address in the “Peoples Paper” shortly, and thus more of our friends will be able to read firsthand accounts of the wonderful happenings in Israel, all overruled in the Lord’s providence, in preparation for the establishment of His Kingdom in the near future. The showing of colored slides of the progress throughout the land of Israel today, with explanation of these, was also much appreciated, following this enlightening lecture.

The Fellowship Meetings for Praise and Testimony were also helpful sessions as a number of the brethren expressed thankfulness to the Lord for the opportunity of attending the Convention, and also for His blessings and overruling providence in their lives especially throughout the year just drawing to a close. Others felt that the happy and helpful association together throughout the Convention days would be a means of stimulating faith and confidence for the new year, and expressed gratitude to the Lord for all the good things He had provided through these assemblies. The time set aside for the Hymn Service was also well used, as a number of the friends, as well as quite a few children entered in heartily with their selections and singing the words of praise and devotion to the Lord.

The Melbourne friends selected the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:35-39 as a Convention message to be conveyed with the warm Christian love of all present to the brethren who had sent messages to the Convention, as well as to all others of the Lord’s people in every place.

With the conclusion of the last address, the brethren circled the hall to participate in the Love Feast, the’ closing feature of our Convention, during which each of the brethren shook hands in farewell with every other member present, while partaking of the symbol of cake, and singing “Blest Be the Tie.” The closing hymn — “God Be With You Till We Meet Again”—and prayer of thanksgiving for all the Lord’s blessings and favors, and seeking His continued guidance and care over all the members of the family of God, concluded our 1959 Convention gatherings with praise and thankfulness in our hearts.

### **Convention Notes.**

Notes covering the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free upon application to this office.

## **Lectures on Israel.**

Those of our friends who attended the Christmas convention in Melbourne and heard the lecture on Israel by our visiting Brother Lanowick, of U.S.A., as well as many others of our friends throughout the Eastern States of Australia, will be pleased to hear that Brother and Sister Lanowick expect to return to Australia (D.V.) towards the close of March or early April, and undertake a lecture tour commencing in South Australia and extending through the Eastern States to Queensland.

At present Brother and Sister Lanowick are in New Zealand and expect to commence a lecture tour there early this month. Having been resident in Israel for 15 months prior to last December, Brother Lanowick is well informed of the wonderful progress taking place in the Holy Land, and how the prophecies are being fulfilled in preparation for the setting up of Christ’s Kingdom on the earth.

It is hoped to give a general outline of the proposed lectures in later issues of “Peoples Paper” and friends especially interested to hear these lectures on Israel in the Eastern States are also invited to contact our office for further information.

## **Baptized into Christ’s Death.**

IT is always a great joy to the Lord’s people to find others becoming interested in the truths of the Bible, especially when this interest leads to consecration to God, to walk in the steps of the Master in the narrow way of sacrifice, even unto death.

One of the most impressive occasions in the life of our Lord Jesus was undoubtedly at the commencement of His ministry on earth, when He reached the age of thirty years, He came to John the Baptist who had been baptizing

amongst the Israelites for six months previously, and made the special request that John should baptize Him in the waters of the River Jordan. As John had been baptizing for the remission of sins only, we can well realise his amazement that Jesus, whom he knew to be perfect and holy, should make this request of him; naturally, he queried the matter with Jesus, but when he saw that the Lord wished him to go ahead with the request, he probably concluded that there was some hidden or additional meaning in Jesus' baptism of which he was unaware. If that is so, he was certainly correct, for Jesus' baptism was a symbol of His baptism unto death, denoting that He had, prior to taking the symbol, consecrated His life to the Father to die as the ransom sacrifice for the human family, condemned in Adam. We see how our Lord's begetting of the spirit is revealed by the outward signs manifest, as recorded in Matt. 3:16,17—"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he (John) saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

As with our dear Master, we can be sure that the Father is well pleased when those who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour feel the urge to lay down their justified humanity on the altar of sacrifice also. They feel the urge to do so, because, having been drawn of the Father to Jesus, they come to see in Him the One altogether lovely, and they wish to serve and honor Him who has done so much for them. Truly, as the Apostle Paul declared—"The love of Christ constraineth us," (2 Cor. 5:14), and there is surely a loving response on our part to yield ourselves, fully and completely, to the service of the Master, and symbolize our consecration also in the waters of baptism.

A very happy occasion of this kind, was witnessed here in Melbourne last year, a few weeks prior to the Convention, when two Sisters joyfully took the opportunity to symbolize their consecration to God, to be dead with Christ. One of these sisters had heard the broadcasts some years ago, and while the message of the kingdom appealed at the time, the full meaning was not realised at once, which is usual with most of the Lord's people. Gradually, the full import of the glorious truth was revealed to her heart and mind by the Lord's grace, and full acceptance and a yielding of her life to God quickly followed, and we rejoice that the blessing of the Lord is being realised more and more as the deepening of the spiritual life is experienced. Our other young sister had grown up in recent years with the influence of truth in her home, and had attended the meetings from time to time. A deepening of interest in the Bible and its appealing message had been in evidence for some time past, and the decision to give her life to the service of the Lord, to leave the world with its pleasures and gaiety, to be dead with Christ, to give the years of youth, as well as all the years ahead in service for the Master was gladly undertaken as the greatest privilege for Christ's sake.

These occasions are very stimulating to the brethren, and we rejoice that the Lord continues to find and bless the ones here and there with. His truth, and give them the urge to yield fully to His loving invitation to walk in His steps of sacrifice—"if so be that we may suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together," by His grace.

The lines of the poem, based on the words of Jesus in Luke 9:23—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily*, and follow me"—seem so fitting.

Would ye be My disciples? Consider again;  
Can ye follow My footsteps through trial and pain?  
Can ye throw away pleasure, and glory, and fame  
And live but to honor My cause and My name?  
Can ye turn from the glitter of fashion and mirth  
And dwell like a pilgrim and stranger on earth,  
Despising earth's riches, and living to bless?  
Can you follow the feet of the shelterless?  
Can ye ask from your heart the forgiveness of men?  
Can ye list to reproaches, nor answer again?  
Can ye pray that repentance to life may be theirs  
Who've watched for your falling, who've set for you snares?  
When ye hear I am come, then can ye arise,  
The joy of your heart springing up in your eyes?  
Can ye come out to meet Me, whate'er the cost be,  
Though ye come on the waves of a storm-crested sea?  
When I call, can ye turn and in gladness "come out"  
From the home of your childhood, the friends of your heart?  
With naught but my promise on which to rely  
Afar from their love—can ye lie down and die?  
Yea, we'll take up the cross and in faith follow Thee  
And bear Thy reproach, Thy disciples to be.  
Blest Saviour for courage, to Thee we will fly;  
Of grace Thou hast promised abundant supply.

## Earthly Way Ended.

Another of our elderly brethren, Brother Rolke, of Melbourne, finished the earthly way on the morning of the 30th December last, after a short illness.

Our dear Brother had been a regular attendant at the Melbourne Class for a number of years; indeed, he had not missed a Sunday for a considerable time, and played the hymns for the evening meeting the Sunday previous to the Christmas Convention, and we were very sorry that he was unable to be present at any of the Convention gatherings.

Brother Rolke appreciated the truths of the Bible very much, and usually entered into the Bible studies with earnestness, and while we are all missing his presence and, fellowship at the gatherings, and his readiness to assist at the piano for the hymn singing at all times, we are thankful to realise that all his trials and weariness are in the past, and by the Lord's grace, he shall have entered into his reward.

Of a lowly, humble disposition, our dear Brother always manifested the quality of patience to a marked degree, and we shall always remember him as one of the Lord's musicians making melody and praise to the Lord in his own quiet, effective manner.

One of our brethren who knew Brother Rolke before he attended our Melbourne Class has written very truly of him as follows "The dear old Brother has been in his own way a remarkable, unorthodox man, possessing lovely traits of patience, gratitude and constancy. I'm sure we all loved and respected him; our own contact with him dates back about 25 years. Now his days of toil and hard living are ended, and he has left behind a fragrant memory."

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*"There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over . . . and help us." (Acts 16:9.)*

We have set apart, it may be, such an hour of the day for the purpose of devotion or study. But just as we are about to spend it so, some call of necessity or charity arises in another direction. In either case, whether it be of necessity or charity, it is God's call ; and not our duty only, but our happiness, lies in responding to it cheerfully and lovingly. We must be ready to go out of our way, if God calls us out of our way ; or, in other words, to have our little plans so modified and corrected as to be brought into the scheme of His great and all-wise plan.

—Goulburn.

## Correspondence.

Frank and Ernest—Thank you for such an interesting discussion over the radio on Station 2KY at 8.15 a.m. Sundays. If I may, I would like copies of the last three Sundays, and next Sunday's—"The River of Life."

I intend sending the copies to farm homes out in the country where the radio has to stand by whilst essential outdoor work is being done.

Being a blind person, I read Moon type braille, typewrite, knit, and do my house work, and find the wireless a wonderful medium of entertainment and of world-wide activities. Hoping to receive some copies, Yours sincerely.

The above letter was received recently from the first blind person (so far as memory serves) since the radio witness was commenced in Australia early in 1943, and it is good to realise that such a handicap is overcome in this case by the sound waves over the air. The courage and fortitude manifest by many blind persons seem to be equally revealed in this lady's letter, and we trust and pray that the message of the truth may bring much blessing and hope into the life of this newly found friend, by the Lord's grace. Truly, many physically handicapped people are a wonderful example to most of us, and really put us to shame when we are apt to complain at times over troubles and disabilities, etc., when we should be thinking of and counting .our blessings at the Lord's hands.

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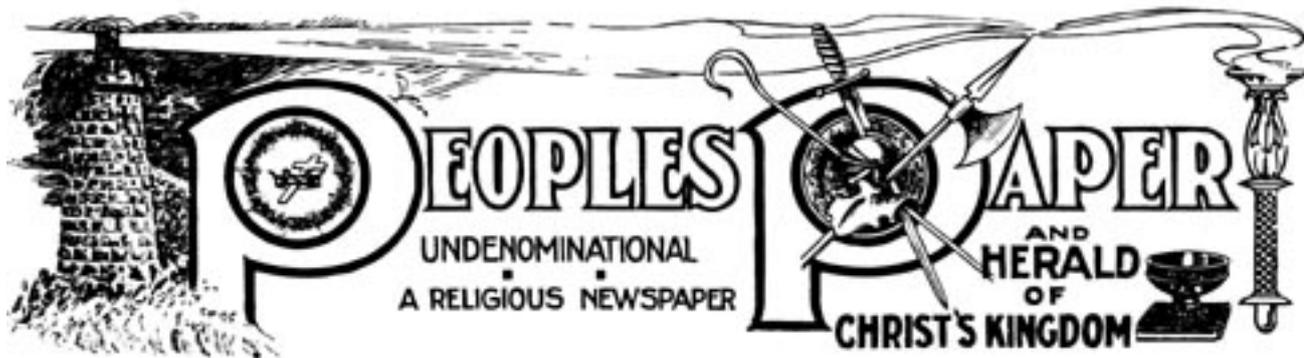
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**FRANK & ERNEST TALKS**  
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 V. ,, 4.45 p.m.



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**Pries—Fivepence**

## **Pride -- Its Manifestations.**

(Based on notes by Brother B. H. Barton)

PRIDE is a poisonous manifestation of selfishness. It is, as someone has well said, selfishness gone to seed. Every Christian should be on the alert to resist the encroachments of pride, because to whatever extent it is permitted to influence our thoughts and actions, it will blight our peace and joy in the Lord, and distort our every outlook in keeping with its own ugly form.

One of the manifestations of pride is that of undue self-esteem. Paul speaks of it as thinking more highly of one's self than is warranted—than one ought to think. Self-esteem manifests itself in many and unsuspecting ways. It may prevent one from accepting the truth from a humble source; and by the truth we mean not only the doctrines relating to the divine plan, but details of truth on any and all subjects. It is so easy for any of us to be wrong, even in the everyday things of life, that we should be willing to be corrected no matter from what source the correction may come.

If a person hesitates to seek advice for fear that it may reveal his own lack of knowledge, it is a sign of pride. In the world, the men and women who are the most successful are those who seek the advice of others, especially in fields with which they are not too well-informed themselves. This is still more applicable in the Christian life. Our understanding of the truth of God's Word is less likely to be complete if we are unwilling to take into consideration the viewpoints of others of like precious faith. This is the reason it is so essential that we meet together for mutual study, and fellowship.

Undue contention in presenting our views may be a manifestation of pride. The truth is such a bulwark of strength against error, that we do not need to be contentious in its use. To be over-concerned about a point may indicate that what we are presenting is partly our own view, rather than God's, and our pride is causing us to be contentious in its presentation. If such be the case, then pride will cause us to be very reluctant to change our opinion; that is, to admit that we are wrong even when the truth is apparent.

The self-esteem manifestation of pride also may cause us to resent reproof, even though the reproof may have been deserved and necessary. On the other hand, a Christian who is properly humble before the Lord and before his brethren will not resent reproof even though it may not be merited. Elders of ecclesias should be specially on guard along this line; for, unless they are, pride may ruin their usefulness as servants of the brethren. If an elder resents having his thoughts called into question by even the humblest member of the ecclesia, it is a sign of undue self-esteem, and he should take the matter in hand before he is slain by the monster.

Elders are the servants of the Lord's people, and it is not fitting for servants to resent questioning by those whom they serve. If there is any doubt in the mind of a brother or sister as to where one of their servants, or would-be servants, stands with respect to doctrine and practice, it behoves that servant to display the greatest of patience and painstaking care to make his position clear. A refusal to do this may represent a lack of true humility before the Lord and before the brethren.

Self-esteem also sometimes manifests itself in the habit of interrupting others when they are talking. This may not always be the cause for rudeness. Sometimes it is just a plain case of nervousness. But if we find ourselves constantly interrupting others in order that we may talk ourselves, it could easily be that we, inwardly think that what we have to say is more important than what that other person is saying. Such would represent undue self-esteem.

A willingness to listen to others is one of the evidences of true humility, and is of prime importance to our growth in grace and knowledge. The lowliest saints of God, from the standpoint of education and ability, may often express thoughts which are golden nuggets of truth, more valuable, perhaps, than a whole discourse by one more talented. If we are not listening when these thoughts are expressed, we lose them; hence we lose the blessings that would accrue from them.

If we are not humble enough to listen to our brethren, we could easily become proud enough not to listen to the

Lord. God speaks to us through His Word. If we go to **His** Word merely to find that which will bolster up an idea which we have developed in our own minds, it means that we are not truly listening to the Lord, but misusing His Word to satisfy the desires of our own self-esteem. Let us be on the alert, dear brethren, to note the slightest manifestation of pride along this line, and in prayer before the Lord, ask Him to help us to be free from it.

## Social Pride

Social distinctions among the brethren are, thank God, pretty well broken down, but the spirit of pride which was responsible for fastening the un-Godlike theory of class distinctions upon the unhappy world is still liable to manifest itself among the brethren. We may, for example, find ourselves seeking the fellowship of only the better educated and talented among the brethren, and ignoring those we consider not to be of “our kind.” If we find any such tendency to be influencing us, we may be sure that the grace of God has not yet taken as full control of our lives as it should. There is also danger that we may develop what might be called a spiritual class distinction complex. That is, we may wish to fellowship with only those whom we consider to be as well developed spiritually as we consider ourselves to be. Sometimes a fear is expressed that newly interested brethren coming into the ecclesia, may spoil our deep fellowship. This is to our shame, and is unlike the spirit manifested by the Master. If we feel that we are well developed spiritually, let us rejoice in whatever privileges we may **have in** helping others to the same condition. **If we do not** rejoice in thus helping the weak, **it is** a very good sign that our own development is not as rounded out as it should be.

While it is true that Jesus seemed to love some of His apostles more affectionately than others, this doesn't mean that He didn't love them all and was not glad for every opportunity He had of being with them all, and serving them. In our truth association there will be those to whom we are drawn more than to others, but this doesn't mean that we should ignore any of the brethren, and not rejoice in every privilege we have of being with them and enjoying their fellowship. There should be no cliques among God's people — “all ye are brethren.”

## Approbateness

Too great a desire to be well thought of by the brethren may manifest itself in various ways. One may hesitate to speak, read, or pray in meetings. To the on-lookers this may seem to be a display of humility ; yet, actually, it could be on account of fearing criticism if a mistake is made. We might decide that it is better not to give a testimony at all than to give a poor one, which could give the brethren the thought that we are not very good at giving testimonies. Thus pride in a very subtle form, would be ruling our hearts.

We may have an ambition to lead. The apostle says that one who desires the office of a bishop, or elder, desires a good thing. To have a desire to bless others through leading meetings, etc., is not in itself an evidence of pride; but it does expose the brethren to the dangers of pride. We can check on ourselves in this connection by noting our own attitude when others are speaking or leading meetings. Do we feel like staying away from meetings if we are not leading? Or, if present, are we uneasy and not paying attention to what is being said ; all the while thinking to ourselves that we could bring out the thoughts much better than is being done? If thus we muse, let us beware — pride is gaining the ascendancy and, if encouraged, will cause our downfall.

Along this same line, pride will hinder us from rendering faithful service unless we can be foremost in affairs. One who is truly humble will be just as happy to serve as a deacon as he is to serve as an elder. Indeed, he will be happy to serve in every way possible even though the ecclesia does not recognise his service or confer any office upon him. For some reason the idea of preaching has taken on altogether too important an aspect in the minds of many of the Lord's people, with the result that, at times, brethren may get the idea that if they can't be foremost in the service along this line they are being neglected and ostracised. If we find ourselves feeling that way about it, let us beware.

From the Lord's standpoint, the brother or sister who serves *faithfully* even in obscure ways and who does not, therefore, receive the praise of the brethren, is just as honorable as those who are out at the forefront, perhaps more so; at least, there is less danger that such service is rendered in part because of the expressions of appreciation by the fellow-workers. It is most proper that we afford every encouragement to those who serve, but how nice it would be to accord those who serve unheralded and unsung a little more attention along this line. They deserve it; and if they continue to be faithful in that which is least, surely rich blessings will be theirs in the *Kingdom*, whether or not we recognise and appreciate their services.

Another possible manifestation of pride is the disposition to talk too much about one's humility, as though the friends wouldn't know we were humble unless we told them. Humility doesn't need to be advertised. Like the fragrance of a beautiful rose, its presence is manifested without the necessity of special attention being called to it. The rose does not need to say, How sweet is my perfume; nor does a truly humble Christian need to call attention to his humility.

If we discover, then, that we are fearful the brethren will not recognise our humility, and feel that we have to call their attention to it, it is a sign that we have more approbateness than we thought. Of course, no brother or sister would actually say to others, See how humble I am! No, the flesh finds more clever ways of advertising its feigned humility than that. A brother might get upon the platform to speak and open his discourse by *saying* that he didn't understand why he was there, for there were others who could serve so much better. The chances are that if the brother really felt that way about it, he would have seen to it that he wasn't there. This might not necessarily be the case, but it could be, so deceitful is the human heart, and so desperately wicked. True humility will cause one to serve as well as possible in whatever position in the Lord's providences he may find himself, without making apologies, excuses, and explanations.

Another habit which may represent the spirit of approbateness is that of constantly referring to what “I said,” or

“I did.” “Brother so and so asked me such and such, and my answer was thus and so,” is an attitude *we* will do well to avoid. Deep down in our hearts the referring to matters of this kind may be a desire to let the friends know that we are very brilliant, and in such high standing with the Lord that our advice in spiritual matters is constantly sought. We say it “might” display something of this kind. In any case, it is well to be on guard.

Another good test of humility is to note our attitude when others get credit which may properly belong to us. An interesting thought concerning some passage of Scripture may be under discussion. The thought may be based upon a suggestion that came from us. Do we “itch” to let the brethren know this; or are we happy in the knowledge that they are being blessed as a result of our efforts? Right along this line it is well to scrutinize the motives of our every word and deed. In our association with the brethren opportunities are constantly arising for rendering a little assistance here and there, by kind words and deeds. If, **when** we do these things, we look to see whether or not they were noticed by the brethren, it means that a little bit of pride is still left in our hearts. “Playing to the gallery,” as the thought is expressed in modern language, will never get us into the Kingdom.

Along the line of seeking approval from the friends for what we do, is the other test of our own attitude **is** when someone else is complimented and we are ignored. Do we resent this instead of rejoicing in it? This is a heart-searching test, yet by it we are able to measure our growth in humility and to determine whether or not we have reached the point where we are able to actually esteem others as being better than ourselves, and are therefore glad to see them put forward.—Phil. 2:3.

Although the habit of “foolish jesting” is generally looked upon by brethren as a waste of time, yet it *could* manifest a spirit of approbateness in that one may seek to draw attention to himself and his brilliance through his ability to make the brethren laugh. **In** such an event the motive behind the jesting would be a whole more detrimental to the brother than the jesting itself. A humorous play on words, if wholesome and harmless, may help to relieve nerve tension, but if prompted by approbateness, it will do serious injury to any Christian indulging in it.

Just as one may hold back from giving a testimony for fear of making a mistake and thus having his pride injured; so a Christian may seek to give a very eloquent testimony in order to display his ability. Here again approbateness would be displayed. To make sure that love, zeal, thankfulness, sincerity, etc., are the motives that prompt us in speaking, it is well to ask ourselves such questions as, Is it my desire to speak only for the Lord? Am I truly seeking to be clothed in humility? Am I depending wholly on the Lord’s strength to help me speak? Do I really sense my own weakness?

Pride may also be manifested in our characters by a reluctance to distribute truth literature for fear our friends and neighbors might see us, and on account of it not think so well of us. Then again, does pride in any way hinder us from firmly, freely, and gladly acknowledging our belief in Present Truth no matter who may ask us. Or, are we just a little bit ashamed of being a “Millennial Dawnist”? Are we reluctant about being seen associating with the truth people; or do we rather own them as our friends wherever and whenever we may be seen with them? In these ways also we may check to determine the degree to which pride rules our hearts.

## **Accomplishments**

Success in life, whether connected directly or indirectly with the Lord’s service, proves a test to our humility. If we have, by God’s grace, learned to do something real well, how anxious are we to display our ability? Do we become fretful and assume a persecuted attitude, when we imagine someone is holding us back? If so, it is well to realise that it is probably the Lord that is holding us back until we have learned well the lesson of humility. In all such matters it is important to remember that there are really no secondary causes so far as our relationship with the Lord is concerned. If our ambitions or plans are frustrated, let us not blame this brother or that sister, but realise that all the brethren on earth, whether true or false, could not keep from us that which the Lord wishes us to enjoy.

When we maintain this proper viewpoint of our relationship to the Lord, and of His watch-care over our highest spiritual interest, we will be greatly helped along the road to true humility. If our ambitions are checked we will search our hearts, and enquire of the Lord for the reason why ; instead of blaming the brethren and becoming embittered toward them. Perhaps the brethren may be wrong in their dealings with us; if so, that’s something for the Lord to deal with. Of this we can be sure, that our own position in the matter could only be possible through the Lord’s permission. And our faith in His watch-care should enable us to believe that He will permit nothing •to happen in our lives but what will be for our highest spiritual welfare. In this let us rejoice.

The same viewpoint holds true even though our brethren in Christ may not be involved. In the business world, at our work in the factory or the office, we may seem to be held back from doing things which *we* aspire to do, and which we believe we have the ability to do. If this be the case, let’s not blame our competitor, our foreman, our office manager, or our fellow-worker. Let us rather, as in our association with the brethren, seek to ascertain what lesson the Lord may have for us in our experiences. If they accomplish nothing more than to keep us humble before the Lord, they are very valuable indeed. But if we become embittered toward those whom we imagine to be responsible, we have failed in the test.

Some of us may have imaginary accomplishments, and these cause more trouble than real accomplishments. Real accomplishments often represent years of patient toil and trials and tests in the school of Christ, hence the cost a attainment is a counterbalance to keep the Christian humble who has attained. On the other hand, mushroom-like development of ability, even if it is real ability, is frequently not accompanied by development along other lines, hence one in such a position needs to be especially on guard. But if one’s attainments are only imaginary, then the danger is truly great. Such an one may prove to be a great trial to many of the Lord’s people. Seemingly there is always someone to sponsor the cause of a brother who imagines he is being persecuted by the brethren, and thus his pride is

further encouraged, and his overcoming made the harder.

We have all heard the fable of the bird which tried to make an impression by wearing borrowed feathers. We may be tempted to do this along spiritual lines. We may reason that we wish to serve the truth in the best way possible, hence use the material of others, letting on to the brethren that it is our own. The friends may say, as they have said of various ones in the past, "What a talented brother!" The friends, no doubt, received a blessing, but the brother's blessing would have been greater had he presented his own, though inferior outline; or else, told the brethren the source of the thoughts he was presenting. The point in this is, that the desire to **get** ahead among the brethren, which is a form of pride, may lead, also, to mild forms of deception.

We can check the attitude of our hearts along this line by carefully scrutinizing the motive of everything we say and do. For **example**, it is always commendable to quote the Bible in proof of what we believe, whether it be from the platform, or in private conversation, but there is a possibility of quoting long passages of Scripture merely for the purpose of parading our knowledge before the friends. Let us watch ourselves along this line, and make sure that all we say and do is with the motive of glorifying the Lord, and not to display self.

## **Spiritual Achievements**

It is well to examine ourselves to discover what progress we have made in overcoming pride. Along this line, here are a few thoughts for prayerful consideration:

Are we truly glad to express approval of any grace of the spirit we see manifested in others; feeling at the same time that we have not reached such a high attainment ourselves?

Are we always looking for superior qualities in others, and happy to acknowledge them when suitable opportunity offers?—Phil. 2:3.

Have we learned to measure ourselves, not by ourselves, but by the perfect standard, Christ Jesus?—2 Cor. 10:12.

Are we humble enough not to fear that the brethren will think we are not humble?

Are we truly glad to take a back seat while others take a leading part in the service?

Are we patient and gentle in defending the truth?

Do we rejoice when various doctrines of the truth are repeated for the benefit of learners, even though we know them ourselves?

Are we able to enter whole-heartedly into the comments and prayers of others, even of the least talented, and not to rankle with the feeling that we could do it so much better ourselves?

Have we developed beyond the point where we are resting on the laurels of past service, but instead, are rejoicing in the golden opportunities of the present?

In this whole lesson of pride, Jesus is our pattern. He had all knowledge, all ability—earthly and heavenly — yet He said that His teachings were not His but His Father's. He said that He could do nothing of Himself, but only as the Father helped Him. His words, Jesus claimed, were not His own, but the Father's. In view of this wonderful example of humility, how should we walk who once were sinners, enemies of God, and without any spiritual knowledge, wisdom or ability?

May we indeed remember that before honor, goes humility (Prov. 15:33, 18:12) ; before destruction is pride (Prov. 16:18,19) ; and that pride is so displeasing to God that it is classed with murder, bearing false witness, and with lying. (Prov. 6:16,17.) Let us then endeavor to be clothed with humility, and being adorned with this and other graces of the spirit, be truly "meet for the Master's use." (Reprinted from "The Dawn," 1942.)

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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 Saviour, Christ, The Lord**

*"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord." (Luke 2:11).*

IN recording the birth of Jesus, the Scriptures are most careful to point out to us that He was not begotten after the usual manner—that He had no earthly father, but was begotten by •the holy spirit. The necessity for this is manifest. The father is the life-giver, the mother is the nourishes, of the offspring. If Jesus had received His life from a human father it would have been tainted, impaired, under condemnation of death, as is that of all others. This would have frustrated any work on His part as the world's Redeemer, because no imperfect man could have redeemed a perfect one, as the Psalmist declares.—Psa. 49:7.

In order for Jesus to be able to give His life a redemption price for father Adam's life (and for the life of his race, forfeited by disobedience), it was necessary that He be perfect, sinless; as we read, "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." And again, "A body hast Thou prepared Me," for the suffering of death.

It is not enough, then, that we recognise Jesus as good, well-intentioned in mind. We must see in Him human perfection sufficient as a sacrifice to offset the forfeited life of the first perfect man, Adam. And we must see also that He was begotten from above—that the holy spark of life in Him as the babe was a transferred life-principle from a

pre-existent condition, mentioned by our Lord when He prayed, “Glorify Thou Me with the glory that I had with Thee before the world was.” St. Paul explains to us that “He was rich and for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich.”

Few babes in all Judea or in all the world were born in a more humble place than Jesus. Joseph and Mary had gone to their native city, Bethlehem, for tax registration, under the imperial edict. The little city was crowded with others on similar errand. And so it came that Jesus was born in an out-house of the inn, where Joseph and Mary had been compelled to lodge for the night. Ah! we cannot wonder that it is difficult for many to understand why our Heavenly Father sent forth His Son for our redemption under such ignominious conditions! Only those who have the spirit of the Divine Plan, through the begetting of the holy spirit, can see the wherefore.

The Message of the angels was surely an inspired one, fully in harmony with God’s promise to Abraham — only an enlarged statement of the same—the same “all people” to be blessed — and it still meant great joy; but now, two thousand years later, the Message pointed out the very Individual through whom the good tidings would have fulfilment —the Babe of Bethlehem.

The angelic announcement, “Fear not,” is interesting. All humanity realise that they are sinners and naturally have forebodings. They find it difficult to believe that God is really gracious and loving. The gods of the heathen nations are ferocious. unloving and unlovable. But the God of all Grace, the Father of Mercies, Is a God of Love, who delights to use His Divine power for the blessing and uplifting of His erring children. Therefore He was peculiar in sending the Message of good “tidings of great joy unto all people,” as well as sending His Only Begotten Son at great cost to be man’s Redeemer—that He might be just and still be the Justifier of those who believe—Rom. 3:26.

The message declared that a Saviour had been born—the Anointed, the Lord. He was to be the antitypical Moses, the antitypical Aaron, the antitypical Melchisedec, the anti-typical David. In addition to the qualities pictured in these various typical characters, He was, also, the Son of the Highest. He was to be the Saviour—the Deliverer—the Mediator of the New Covenant, so long looked for, hoped for, prayed for.

There is a special force or meaning in the word Saviour — it signifies life-giver. The Syriac version is the one in which the Saviour is translated life-giver ; and Syriac was, likely, the language spoken by Jesus and others of Palestine at that time. And is there not a special fitness or appropriateness in this name life-giver? What had man lost and what would he wish to have back? The Scriptures answer that Adam lost life and came under the penalty, “Dying, thou shalt die.” He did not lose heavenly life, for he never possessed it. He lost earthly life, an Eden home, human perfection. And Jesus declared that He “came to seek and recover that which was lost.”—Matt. 18:11.

Hence, as we have seen, He was provided with a perfect, human life, that “He by the grace of God might taste death for every man,” and that by thus suffering, the Just for the unjust, the penalty of the sinner, He might become the purchaser or the Redeemer of Adam and all his race, with a full right to restore to perfect life and to all that was lost as many as would receive it at His hand—thankfully. Throughout His entire Messianic reign of a thousand years He will be the world’s Life-Giver, raising the willing and obedient up out of sin and death conditions to perfection and everlasting life and earthly, human blessings.

But our Lord also does a work for the Church, the “elect,” His bride and joint-heir in the kingdom, and this blessing to the Church begins before the setting up of His kingdom. The Church, “were by nature children of wrath even as others,” but they are not to be restored to what was lost. The offer to them is that they shall become copies of the Redeemer and lay down their lives, walking in His footsteps, and that He will make up for all their deficiencies and that thus the father of Mercies will bring them like their Lord to the divine nature, will assist them in making their “calling and election sure” to the heavenly state which God has promised them, for “if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him; if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him.”—2 Tim. 2:11,12.

In verse 14 we have a kind of Hallelujah chorus or angelic response to the Message of the angel already given. A heavenly host sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” How grand! How inspiring! But we see not yet this glorious condition achieved. The proper glory to God is not yet rendered on earth as it is in heaven. Nor does peace yet wave her banner, even over so-called Christendom.

What is the matter? Ah, said the Apostle, that is a secret, a mystery, hidden from past Ages and Dispensations! The mystery is that God not only intends to have Jesus for His Anointed One, to rule and bless the world, but He has foreordained also a company of footstep followers to be with Him and share **His** work, and this entire Gospel Age has been devoted to the work of selecting this class, variously called the Body of Christ and the “espoused virgin,” which eventually, at the Second Coming of the Lord, is to become “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife” and joint-heir.

It is for this that the Apostle declares that the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now — waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God—the revelation of Jesus and His Bride in the glory of the Kingdom for the blessing of natural Israel and all the families of the earth with knowledge and assistance, that the willing and obedient may be recovered to the image and likeness of God and to everlasting life on the restored earth.

## Pilgrimage Ended

A RECENT issue of the Murray Bridge, S.A., newspaper reported the passing of our dear Brother Faehrmann as follows:

“A well loved Murray Bridge identity whose life was characterized by painstaking tradesmanship and Christian ideals died recently in the person of Mr. August Charles Faehrmann. He was 76 years of age, and had spent 57 years as a Murray Bridge resident. He and his brother were associated with their father in his business as a wheelwright, and

the name of Faehrmann was closely identified with the early trading of the town.

“The subject of this review worked on many homes and other buildings in Murray Bridge, and his brisk efficiency kept his services much in demand. He was an earnest student of the Bible, and its teachings governed practically all his actions.”

It was in 1918 that the light of God’s Plan came to Brother Faehrmann, and he gladly received the message and responded to the heavenly call in fulness of consecration to God. For many years our Brother visited the Adelaide Class periodically, and his helpful addresses were an encouragement to us all. Our Brother took pleasure in sacrificing the **good** things of this life to serve the interest of the higher things.

Brother Faehrmann will be missed by those who knew him; nevertheless, we rejoice in his faithfulness to the Lord, the truth, and the brethren, and in the thought that he has now entered into the wonderful reward of the faithful overcomers. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” (Rev. 14:13.)

### **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

**The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.**

## **An Accuser Silenced.**

Two fellow-travellers were seated together in a railway carriage engaged in earnest conversation. It was of a religious nature, and one of them, a skeptic, was evidently seeking to excuse his skepticism, by expatiating on the various evils which afflict Christendom. He was detailing, with manifest pleasure, the hypocrisy and the craft and the covetousness and the divisions found in the professing Church, and then he pointed to some of the leaders as the most markedly corrupt of the whole.

In front of them sat a Christian who was compelled to hear all this. Had he felt the accusations to be false, he might have suffered them, as a part of the hatred the world bears towards Christ, and been truly happy in so suffering; but he knew them to be true— too true to be concealed from the most charitable mind, so all he could do was to bow his head and bear the deserved reproach.

Soon, however, the accuser, anxious to extend the circle of his audience, addressed this fellow-passenger in front of him.

“I see you are quick to detect evil,” answered the Christian, “and you read character pretty well. You have been uncovering here the abominable things which have turned Christendom into a wreck, and are fast ripening it for the judgment of God. You have spared none but given all a, good measure. Now I am a Christian, and I love the Lord Jesus and His people. Not a word shall I offer in defence, but I here solemnly challenge you to speak the first word against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.”

The skeptic was surprised He seemed almost frightened, and sheepishly replied, “Well, no; I couldn’t find fault with Him. He was perfect.”

“Just so,” said the Christian, “and therefore was my heart attracted to Him; and the more I look at Him, the more I found I wasn’t like Him at all, but only a poor, sinful, guilty man. But tell me yourself if I haven’t a right to be happy and to love Him when I found out that He had died for me; that on the cross He had fully paid all my debt, and thus cleared me of all guilt? Ever since then I truly love Him, and all the evil which professed followers of His may do, cannot turn me away from Him. My salvation hangs on what He has done, and not on what they are doing.”— Horatius Bonar.

## **Question Box’**

Question.—Col. 1:24 — Fill up that which is behind.” What is the meaning of “that which is behind”? Were not all Christ’s sufferings perfect and finished at the Cross?

Answer.—The actual personal sufferings of Christ Jesus, of course, ended on Calvary’s Hill; but the sufferings of the Church, the members of Christ, are not yet completed. It has pleased God to invite a “little flock” to first “suffer” with Christ and then “reign” with Him. (Compare Isaiah 53:7 and Rom. 8:36.) The reward of such exaltation to the Divine nature and to reign in kingdom power was contingent upon first proving loyal and perfect in obedience under great suffering and humiliation. As it was with our Lord, so it is with each member in Christ. “The servant is not above his lord.” First the cup of suffering and then there will be the cup of joy in the Kingdom. “Are ye able to drink of My cup and to be baptized with My baptism,” said Jesus to the two disciples who would sit on His right and on His left in the Kingdom. Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is His body. The body members must, like the great Head, learn perfect obedience under similar experiences, and prove loyal and true before they receive the great reward of joint heirship. He was “tempted in all points like as we are.”

The Church is a very special class which the Father has given to the Son. The prayer of Jesus (John 17:11) was, “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.”

So great is the oneness between Christ the Head and the members of the Church which is His body, and the Apostle

says, "All things are yours for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." The little hymn has put it beautifully

"I am His and He is mine  
For ever and for ever."

Whatever happens to the members of His body is as to the Lord Himself (Act 26:14), and not until every member of the Body has completed the Christian narrow way, finished the way of the Cross and drank to the dregs the cup of humiliation and pain, will the sufferings of Christ be ended and the Body be complete in glory. So then, it was the sufferings of the Church, the body of Christ, which were left over, and of which Paul could say, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of

Christ, in my flesh, for His Body's sake, which is the Church."

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death." (Rom. 6:3.)

## CLARIFICATION.

In the October issue of "Peoples Paper," page 3, first column, second paragraph, a mistake appeared with reference to John 7: 7. It was stated that Jesus was here speaking to His disciples, whereas they were His brethren, or kinsmen, as is clearly shown by **verse 6**— "For neither did his brethren (kinsmen) **believe in him.**"

## Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper."

The booklet "How Are the Dead Raised Up?—With What Body Do They Come?" is taking the place of January, 1960, "Peoples Paper," and copies are being posted out with this issue.

**Books Available.** "Most Holy Faith"—£1.

"Tabernacle Shadows"—6/-.

"Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday *pages*-10/6.

"God's Promises Come True"—£1.

"Emphatic Diaglott" — New Testament —18/-.

"The Book of Books"—Reviewing the Bible as *a whole*-10/-.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages"—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"-1/-.

"Manner of Christ's Return"-1/-.

"Christ's Return"-1/- "Some of the Parables"-1/- "Hope Beyond the Grave"-1/-.

"God and Reason"-1/-.

"Israel in History and Prophecy" is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

## FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. \_\_\_\_\_ 4.45 p.m.



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## “Because the Days are Evil.”

*“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time; because the days are evil.”*

THE word “circumspect” is from circum, signifying around, and spectus, signifying to look, to watch. The true Christian pathway is so narrow, so beset with tests and pitfalls and wiles of the evil one, that, if we walk carelessly even (not to say wickedly), we will be in great danger of mishap. It requires not only that we look all around at every step, but, more than this, it requires that we be wise, — wiser than our fellow creatures of earth—wise with the wisdom that cometh from above, which is pure, peaceable, loving; yet first of all loyal to the Lord and His Word.

We wish to call attention to some general principles, applicable to every member of the body of Christ, at every time; and especially necessary to be remembered and practised at the present time, because of the special activity of our adversary; — “because the days are evil.” For it would appear that, as in the “harvest” of the Jewish age, so in the present “harvest” of the Gospel age, opposition prevails not only in the synagogues, from the Scribes and Pharisees, but in the home circle —between parents and children, and husbands and wives—and among the Lord’s people. And in proportion as the adversary seeks to stir up strife, let each of the consecrated be the more on guard to give no avoidable offence either in word or deed. “Walk circumspectly, . . . because the days are evil,” — days of special trial and testing.

The rules we have to suggest are as follows:—

(1) Let each resolve to mind his own business.

The Scriptural injunctions along this line caution us not to be busy-bodies in other people’s affairs. Everyone of experience in life has learned that this is a good rule; yet few walk- by this rule, circumspectly. If we have not sufficient of our own business and of the Lord’s service to fill our hands and moments and mouths, there is something wrong with us that needs careful prayer and study of the divine Word to set right.

This does not mean that we should be indifferent to the welfare of others under our care, or for whom we are in any degree responsible; but, ‘even in doing for these we should be careful to recognise their rights and the rights of others, and especially careful not to exceed our own rights. Let us never forget that justice must govern in our interferences with the affairs of others, though we may not require full justice in respect of our own interests, but exercise mercy.

(2) We should exercise great patience with others and their faults — more than in dealing with ourselves and our own shortcomings.

When we remember that the whole world is mentally as well as physically and morally unsound through the fall, it should make us very considerate for their failings. Since the Lord is graciously willing to cover our blemishes with the merit of the precious blood, we cannot do less than be “very pitiful” and of tender compassion towards others;—even though their failings be greater or different from our own. This general rule is specially applicable to your own children. Their defects to some extent came from you or through you; hence, in dealing with their faults, you should do just as in correcting your own faults, — earnestly, rigorously, for their correction in righteousness, but sympathetically, mercifully, lovingly.

(3.) Do not be touchy and easily offended. Take a kindly, charitable view of the words and acts of others. A trifling slight or rebuff could well be passed unnoticed—covered with the mantle of generosity and love. A serious offence should be assumed to be unintentional, and inquiry should be kindly made in words that would not stir up anger, but in “speech seasoned with grace.” In a majority of cases it will prove that no offence was meant.

This rule in the Scriptures comes under the instructions not to indulge in “evil surmisings,”—imagining evil intentions and motives behind the words and acts of others. “Evil surmisings” is ranked by the Apostle as contrary to the words of our Lord Jesus, opposed to godliness, and of the same spirit as envy and strife—of a corrupt mind, works of the flesh and the devil.—1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5: 19-21.

The other side of this subject is brought out by the Apostle’s injunction respecting the elements of the spirit of

love, of which God's people are begotten and which they are to cultivate daily,—the development of which is one of the chief proofs of their being “over-comers.” He says, “Love suffereth long and is kind, . . . is not easily offended, thinketh no evil, . . . beareth all things, believeth all things (favorably), hopeth all things, endureth all things.” •

It may be urged that such a disposition would be imposed upon frequently, by the evilly disposed. We reply that those who possess this spirit of love are not necessarily obtuse nor soft; their experiences in cultivating this degree of love have served to develop them and make them of “quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” They will be cautious where there is even the appearance of evil, even while avoiding •the imputation of evil intentions until forced to concede them by indisputable evidence. Besides, it would be better far to take some trifling risks and suffer some slight losses, many fillies, than to accuse even one innocent person. And the Lord who has directed this course is abundantly able to compensate us for any losses experienced in following His counsel. He is both able and willing to make all such experiences work together for good to those who love Him. He places obedience in His arrangements first (even before sacrifice) saying, “Ye are my disciples, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

Whoever neglects the Lord's commands along this line of “evil surmisings” weaves a web for his own ensnarement, however “circumspectly” he may walk as respects other matters; for a heart impregnated with doubt and suspicion toward fellow creatures is more than half prepared to doubt God; the spirit of sourness and bitterness implied is at war with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. Either the one or the other will conquer. The wrong spirit must be gotten rid of, or it will defile the new creature and make of him a “castaway.” On the contrary, if the new nature conquer, as an “overcomer,” it will be along this line; if evil surmisings are overcome, half the battle against present difficulties and besetments is won. The surmisings are from the heart, and lead us either to good words and acts, or to evil words and acts.

(4) If you have been slandered you may explain, to set yourself right either publicly or privately; but surely avoid doing more than this. If you slander in return you make two wrongs out of one. Let no man render evil for evil to any one; — no, not even if what you should tell be the truth, while what your neighbour told was falsehood. And in contradicting and explaining false charges, remember not to go beyond this to make counter-charges against your defamer ; for thus you also would become a slanderer.

This is the Scriptural rule. We are to do unto others as *we would* that they should do unto us, and not *as they do* unto us. The wrongs done toward us will never justify wrong doing on our part. God's true children are to have no sympathy with Satan's delusion “Do evil that good may result.” But while no Scripture forbids our explaining away the errors and false statements of slanderers, experience proves that, if we followed Satan and his deluded servants of unrighteousness around, to contradict every adverse criticism and evil report, we should be kept more than busy. And if Satan found us willing to do so, he would no doubt lead us such a chase as would prevent our having any time to tell forth the good tidings of great joy; thus he would gain a victory, and we should lose one.

Rather let us commit our reputation to the Lord, as part of the sacrifice we laid at His feet when we surrendered all in obedience to the “call” to run the great race for the prize of our high calling. If thus we suffer some loss of reputation, by reason of our resolution not to neglect the King's business to fight for our own tinsel, we may be sure that it will count with Him as so much endured for Christ's sake; and so much the more will be our reward in heaven, when the battle is over and the victors are crowned.

Meantime, however, it behoves each of the Lord's people to be as circumspect as possible at every step of the way. Remember that in proportion to faithfulness and zeal in letting the light shine we will have the malignant opposition of our great Adversary, who seeks to turn and twist and maliciously distort and discolor our every word and act ;—because the accuser of the brethren can find no real charges; and because he is exceeding mad against the humble servants of the truth, as he was against the Chief Servant—our Lord. He, let us remember, was crucified as a law-breaker, at the instance of the prominent ones of the church, and betrayed to them by one of His own disciples.

“Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds” when attacked by the adversary whoever may be his agents and whatever their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lord's sight, if we endure faithfully, and he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the good of His cause—though that good may sometimes mean “siftings” of chaff and tares from the wheat.

(5) Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are strictly forbidden to God's people, as wholly contrary to His spirit of love—even if the evil thing be true. As a preventive of anything of the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out *one only way of redress of grievances*, in Matt. 18:15-17.

Even advanced Christians seem to be utterly in ignorance of this divine ruling, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandal-mongers. Yet this is one of the few special specific commandments given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, Ye are my disciples *if ye do* whatever I command you, its constant violation proves that many are not far advanced in discipleship.

If any brother or sister begins to you an evil report of others stop him at once, kindly, but firmly. “Have not fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove •hem.” Refuse to have any share in this violation of our Master's commands, which does great mischief in the church. Supposing the brother or sister to be only a “babe” in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject—Matt. 18:15, and 1 Tim. 5:19. If the conversation is not directed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in “evil-speaking,” “back-biting” and telling you his “evil surmisings,” reprove him more sharply, saying as you go,—I cannot, must not hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are—violating the Lord's command.

And even if I were to hear your story, I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow His plan of **redress** for grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word cannot be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples. If to any extent you listen to such conversation or express "*sympathy*" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.— Heb.12 :15.

A slanderer is a *thief* according to worldly standard; as Shakespeare wrote:

**Who steals my purse steals trash;  
But who filches from me my good name  
Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
And makes me poor indeed.**

According to the Christian standard, still higher, as voiced by the Great Teacher, slanderers are murderers (See Matt 5:22; 1 John 3:15, Revised Version). Thus seen, the very suggestion to slander is to be shunned, as of the spirit of Satan.—John 8:44.

(6) God's people should beware of pride as they would avoid the most deadly plague.

This rule, always good, and well backed by Scripture, seems doubly needful to those who are blessed with the light of present truth. This may seem strange. It may be reasoned that the receiving of so much grander views of God's character and plan would make His people feel the more insignificant and humble, the more dependent on divine goodness, the more trustful of God and the less trustful of themselves. And this should be the effect, always and ever ; but alas, with very many it is not so.

Many get to feel that the knowledge of the plan of the ages proves them especially wise or great or good; they seem to forget that God hides the truth from the wise and great—that no flesh should glory in His sight. They love the truth selfishly, as dealers love their merchandise, for the sake of what they can get out of it. If they cannot hope for wealth in exchange for the truth they can hope for small notoriety — to appear wiser than others, that they may dole it out in fragments and thus perpetuate their notoriety for wisdom, and gratify their pride or vanity. Such people do little to help circulate the present truth.

We therefore caution all who by the grace of God have been translated out of darkness into God's marvellous light, that they walk proportionately the more humbly before the Lord: because, if the light received should become darkness, how great would be the darkness, and how hopeless the condition! It would, as the Apostle declares, be better for such never to have known the way of life. If salt loses its flavor it is good for nothing more than sand.

(7) Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and men. Begin with the heart—the thoughts. Harbour no thoughts 'that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded upon you, either from without or from within, lift your heart to Him in prayer for the grace promised to help in every time of need. Keep constantly near you the thought and prayer, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

(8) While treasuring and seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come into sympathy with the *principles which underlie* the divine law: this will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Indeed, as we get to understand and sympathise with the principles of divine law, to that extent we are getting at the spirit of the divine Word.—See Psa.119 :97-105.

(9) Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit or disposition of Christ—contrary to love.

A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil and their various snares, and this fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed; — against sin, first in ourselves and secondly in others; if used for the Lord and His people, and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This in the Scriptures is called fighting the good fight: and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for right and truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and His people's liberties.

But such a good use of combativeness is not pleasing to the prince of this world, and he will seek to pervert what he cannot directly use. Consequently he attempts with some to make combativeness appear a chief virtue; he encourages them to fight everything and everybody; — the brethren more than the powers of darkness; — nominal churchmen more than the errors and ignorance which blind them and make them such. Indeed his desire is to get us to "fight against God."

Let us be on guard on this point. Let us first of all *judge ourselves* lest we cast a stumbling block before others: let us fight down in our own hearts the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over little and non-essentials. "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the truth be not from motives of self glorification; but from love for the truth, love for the Lord and love for His people, the brethren. If love be the impelling spirit or motive, it will show itself accordingly, in loving, gentle, patient, humble efforts toward the fellow-servants; and let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the spirit, the Word of God," which is quick and powerful, do all the *cutting*.

(10) Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, strife, hatred.

Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do you great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all His creatures,—the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have His spirit and walk in His directed way.

(11) Do not trust your conscience. If it were a sufficient guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws of God given to guide conscience. And still worse off than these are those mentioned in I. Tim.4 :2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and walking *circumspectly* according to its light.

(12) Do not be bold, except for the right, the truth. So far as yourself is concerned, preserve a reverential *fear* — of sin, and of displeasing the Master, and of losing the great reward—"the prize of our high calling." Nearly all who "fall away" first lose all fear and become self-confident. They forget that it is only "If ye *do these things* ye shall never fall." (2 Pet.1:5-10.) "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." (Heb.4 :1.) Partly because of the loss of this proper *fear*; "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance." (From "Reprints.")

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## **Dalai Lama Asks U.N., "Save Tibet."**

UNDER the above heading a New York news item appeared in the Melbourne "Age" of September 11th, as follows:  
The Dalai Lama last night asked immediate intervention by the United Nations against Communist China's moves in Tibet. But diplomats said one nation would have to raise the issue before the world organisation could discuss it.

Tibet is not a member of the United Nations.

The Dalai Lama, in a letter, put his appeal directly to the U.N. Secretary-General (Mr. Hammarskjöld), asking that the matter be placed on the agenda for the coming General Assembly session by the organisation's general or steering committee "on its own initiative," without waiting for any member to raise the issue for debate.

The Dalai Lama's indictment said the Tibetan people were undergoing sufferings beyond description and that it was imperatively necessary that "this wanton and ruthless murder of my people should be immediately brought to an end."

He accused the Chinese Communists of sterilising Tibetan men and women "with a view to the total extermination of the Tibetan race."

He said thousands had been dispossessed and driven from their livelihoods. Men, women and children were put into labor gangs for military construction work without pay or with small pay.

The "god-king" of Tibet said leading Tibetans had been murdered and "thousands of innocent people of Tibet have been brutally massacred."

Finally, the Dalai Lama charged, the Chinese Communists sought to destroy the Buddhist religion, razing thousands of monasteries and wrecking religious paraphernalia. "Life and property are no longer safe," he told Mr. Hammarskjöld, "and Lhasa, the capital of the State, is a dead city."—A.A.P.

The above report reveals something of the terrible experiences inflicted upon the Tibetan people over recent months. Apparently a very peaceful, inoffensive people, and living in their little kingdom for generation after generation, it is most pathetic for these people of Tibet to be subjected to such ruthless treatment by a great power seeking to overrun and absorb this little country into their way of life.

Some people may say, Surely this appeal by the Dalai Lama, the "god-king" of Tibet, will stir the United Nations into action to save this kingdom from further aggression, and repel the invaders. Others may question, Why does not God prevent such onslaughts upon innocent people? And will not God answer the prayers of this religious leader for deliverance and reinstate him in his rightful place in the minds and hearts of the Tibetan people?

Only through a knowledge of God's Plan of the Ages can these questions be answered satisfactorily. The Scriptures clearly reveal that we are now living in the end of this "present evil world" and that the time has come for the removal of all man-made kingdoms in preparation for the setting up of Christ's kingdom of peace. This necessarily means much hardship and suffering in the process, and man's inhumanity to man will not go unpunished either, even though it is accomplishing the Lord's will. (See Psa.76:10.)

It is very evident, therefore, that the United Nations will be unable to save Tibet, just as the appeal from Hungary against the aggressor was ignored in recent years. The time has arrived for the passing of all the "god-kings," and when the Tibetan people receive the truths of the kingdom, in God's due time, they will never regret having their errors and superstitions removed for all time, and even the Dalai Lama himself will then also realise that being a "god-king" was dishonoring to the true God and our Lord Jesus Christ, as they only are worthy of praise and worship by all the human family.

How revealing is the statement from the prophet Haggai, speaking for the Lord—"Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land (the religious and social order of this world); And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai 2:6,7.) We thank God that when all nations come to a true knowledge of the Lord, they shall then acknowledge that all their desires are fulfilled in His wonderful Kingdom, for "nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Mic.4 :1-4.)

## We Have An Inheritance.

(Convention Address)

*"In whom (Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, having been previously marked according to a design of Him who is operating all things agreeably to the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11. Diaglott.)*

THERE are three Greek words of similar meaning translated "inheritance" in the New Testament. The one used in our text, according to Strong's Concordance, means—"To allot, to assign (as a privilege), sometimes acquired in ancient times by casting lots."

In Heb. 1:4 it is used to denote Jesus' superiority to the angels since His resurrection. "Having made purification from sins, seated himself in right of the majesty on high; thus becoming so much superior to the messengers, inasmuch as he has inherited a more distinguished power than they." (Fenton.)

The second Greek word, used in Eph.1 : 14,18 and elsewhere, means—"Heirship, patrimony, or possession." It seems to refer to more than merely allotting; rather the nature of the allotment, as in Eph. 1: 13,14, where it is a spiritual portion. "Ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest (or pledge) of (obtaining in full) our inheritance." A spiritual inheritance, appointed for the spirit begotten new creatures. Also in 1 Pet.1:4—"Begotten again to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, reserved in heaven for you." A heavenly, spiritual portion has been allotted to a special class.

The third Greek word translated "inheritance" means—"A portion, whether allotted by God or man." In Acts 1:26 it is translated "lot." The Apostles cast lots for one to take the place of Judas; the lot fell upon Matthias. The land of Canaan was divided by lot; on the basis of this a portion of the land became the inheritance of each tribe of Israel.

The three Greek words referred to all seem to suggest a portion as distinct from the mass, or lump, as a potter may take a portion of clay and make a vessel of honor and another of less honor. Whether the portion thus allotted is heavenly or earthly can be determined usually by the context in which the word is used, or by comparing other Scriptural references bearing upon the matter.

From the Creator comes every good and perfect gift. He allots portions of His blessings and bounties to all His intelligent creatures. "The heavens are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men." From the mass of the human family God has chosen some to occupy a special place in His plan and presence. Also among mankind He has given some priority and favors above others.

In Deut.32 :9 we read—"For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Also Zech.2 :12 states—"The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again." Natural Israel is the Lord's portion from among the nations. He chose them and gave them an earthly inheritance, and it is written in Heb.9 :15 that Christ redeemed them who were under the first (law) covenant, that they which are called may receive the (fulfilment) of the promise of eternal inheritance.

In the spiritual world also some beings occupy a special place and honor and power above others. Jesus said in John 14 :2—"In my Father's home (universe) are many mansions (planes of being) . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

Gabriel was one such who was so honored by Jehovah. This mighty angel announced to Zachariah prior to the birth of John the Baptist, in Luke 1:19—"I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God," and in Matt.18:11 those angels who minister to the heirs of salvation are spoken of by our Lord "as always beholding the face of my Father." Apparently all angels are not thus favored. In whose presence seraphims (fiery ones) cover their face—as unworthy to behold the divine majesty; and cover their feet, as a token of reverence — an Eastern custom when approaching the presence of a monarch. (Isa. 62:2.)

When describing the splendour of the Lord the Psalmist says—"Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment." (Psa. 104:2.) Again in 1 Tim.6:16 we read—"Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." Before whom seraphims cover the face, and proclaim — "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." (Isa.6:3.) We are indeed also filled with reverence and awe when we read (Jude 24) that before such a Being we shall be "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

In His pre-human existence the Logos was highly favored, and on becoming the Messiah' and proving faithful unto death was given the pre-eminence—raised up, and sat down on the right hand of Jehovah. And bear in mind that none dare take these favors without dire consequences unless called by Jehovah to do so.

During this Gospel Age there is a poor despised company of whom the world is not apprised, to whom our Heavenly Father has given a special portion in His "House" — a place prepared. As the Apostle Peter says (2 Pet.1 :4, Diag.), to these He has given the greatest promises. They walk in yonder narrow way, beset by many foes. They are of a royal line, all children of a King. He has begotten them through His Word of truth (James 1 :18) that "they should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

In Acts 15:14 these are referred to as "a people for his name." Also in 1 Pet.2 :9—"Ye are a chosen generation (race), a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a purchased people." (Diag. a people for a purpose.) And in Isa. 62:3 we

read—"Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." For these, the Lord Jesus, the Head or Captain of this company, is preparing a special place, and the Apostle's prayer for such is — "That the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his (God's) calling (invitation), and what the riches (or wealth) of the glory of his inheritance among the saints." (Eph.1 :18.)

Neither are we able to fully comprehend the grandeur of this wonderful, eternal, unfading inheritance which belongs to God's own, of whom the Lord Jesus is the Head—the One altogether lovely, and we glory in His kingly power. "The fairest of the fair is He." And He, too, will rejoice over you with singing — "a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." In 1 Cor. 2:9,10, it is stated that no human "eye hath seen, no ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," but "God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit," and you know that this is true. As humans we could not appreciate this, but only as begotten of His spirit. Already our spiritual vision and hearing has seen and heard wonderful things, —"Visions of rapture burst on my sight."

"Oh, what a foretaste of glory Divine!  
Heir of Salvation, purchase of God;  
Born of His spirit, washed in His blood."

Those who will be accounted worthy to be heirs of God and joint-heirs of Jesus Christ must be changed from glory to glory — a character of holiness, purity, meekness, gentleness, loveliness. These things we see and appreciate in our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, we have a present inheritance already, as a foretaste,—"For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. 4:6,7.) Fellowship is also truly established—the Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus make their abode with us, if we keep His Word and love Him supremely. (John 14:23.)

This new life has begun and this new relationship has been established because we have consecrated ourselves and all our earthly portion unto Him, and God's pledge is that if faithful unto death we shall be born of the spirit. Unto this end the Lord "has given us the greatest promises that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1 :4. Diag.) Already, by faith, we are "raised up and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." (Eph.2 :6,7.)

From these heavenlies we focus our telescope—the Word of God—upon the precious things promised; through this we are able to view celestial mountains, and life-giving streams, and contemplate upon the ages to come and the glory of the temple (Psa.48.) "Beautiful for situation . . . on the sides of the north." "How lovely is thy dwelling-place, O Lord of hosts." (Bsa.84 :1.) Search we may for many years, and still new beauties shall we see.

The length and breadth and height of our inheritance is much grander and more lofty, sublime and pure and enduring than we once thought. The Designer of our telescope has taught us to adjust and focus it more accurately, and the heavenly beauties and loveliness, also the earthly wonders, have been greatly enlarged, and what a joy this has been. Jesus said,—"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy may be full." (John 15:11.)

Nevertheless, the Christian life has its seasons of "heaviness through manifold temptations." We are still in the night of trial and temptation, even though the night is studded with these precious gems of sparkling light, and promises, and realities. There are and must be, strivings within and without and we sometimes wrestle, not merely with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in high places. Faith, love, humility, self-control, patience, endurance, watchfulness and prayer are still so necessary, or else, like Moses, after being taken upon a high mountain to view the glorious land, so near, we too fail of receiving that full reward. In the words of another—"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts 20:32.)

## Pilgrimage Ended

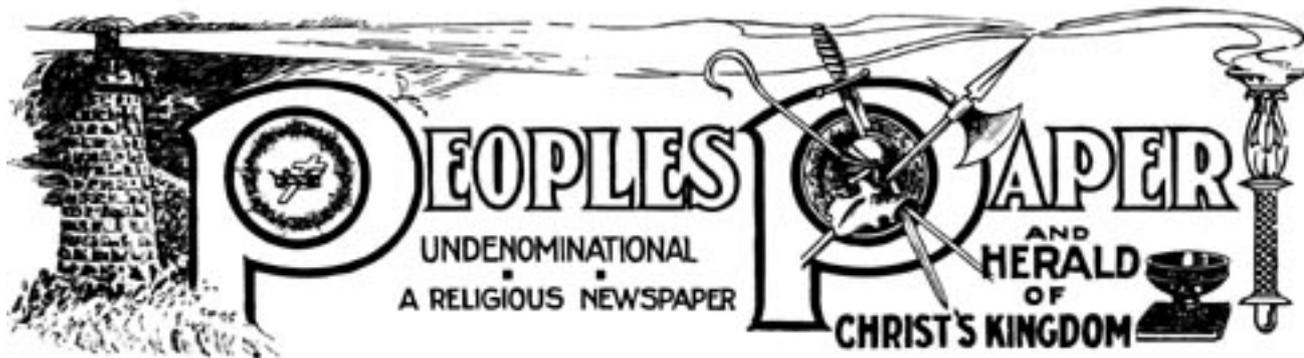
SOME weeks ago we learned of the passing of our Sister Davidson, and one of our brethren who had met her quite often has gladly supplied the following which we feel is a fitting remembrance of one, whom to have met, was to love in the Lord.

As one by one of the Lord's "jewels" are being gathered Home, we are reminded of the words of John the Baptist, — "He must increase, but I must decrease." Sister Davidson, whose home was in Sydney, reached the end of the way recently, after a long life of loving devotion to the Lord and His people. Being the eldest of a large family, our Sister was obliged, through sickness in the family and difficult economic conditions, to bear a large share of the burdens of the family even from her early girlhood.

It was early in 1913 that the clear enfoldment of God's Plan came to Sister Davidson, who joyfully received it, and co-operated in making it known to others. When the Photo Drama came to Sydney in 1915 Sister Davidson rendered much assistance to the cause of truth, and encouraged and entertained the colporteurs and other workers in her home.

In 1921 Sister Davidson's husband was shipwrecked and died at sea, leaving our Sister with three young daughters to train and guide. Our Sister's life provides another instance of how God's grace, operating in a faithful, humble heart, can turn tragedy into triumph. Sister Davidson was one whose life showed very rich development of the graces of Christ-likeness. Full of loving sympathy for human need; never-ending patience, deep humility, practical wisdom, and an *all*-conquering faith, combined to bring to our loved one's life a rare sweetness which God's grace alone can





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## Pressing on Toward the Goal.

(Contributed Article).

READING Philippians 3:8-17 according to the Revised Standard Version seems to convey further helpful thoughts. In the Authorized version it is a passage well known to all Christians.

Firstly, the “all things” which Paul counted as loss were chiefly, if not solely, the advantages of which he could boast in Israel after the flesh. Paul’s lineage was such of which the average Jew would boast. Instead of glorying in the above average station in which he was born, he repudiated it, because he had found something better. Quoting from the R.S.V., he says that though he had reason for confidence in the flesh above other men, he had been led to see that it was no gain at all; in fact he repudiates it gladly in order to lay claim to something better. The only thing Paul wanted was to gain Christ, and be found in Him, — “not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.”

This faith that Paul had was not mere credulity; it was not a blind faith, but based on knowledge and reason. To use a simple illustration; we do not put faith in any person who is a complete stranger to us. When we confide in a person, or seek advice in personal, important affairs, the faith we have in that person is based on our previous knowledge of him; we know he is reliable and to be trusted. Faith, then, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. We are not asked or expected to believe in something that cannot be understood.

When Paul says in verse 10, — “that I may know him (Christ) and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,” he was not desiring or seeking something that was obscure to him; he knew what he was talking about. How many professing Christians today really desire to share the sufferings of Jesus, and become like Him in His death? Rather, many fear the death that Paul desired. (Heb. 2:15.) If there is one thing more than any other that the flesh, or natural man, shrinks from, it is suffering. As for being made like Jesus in His death, how many really desire it? The ignominy of Jesus’ death is hard to appreciate in this day, when, outwardly at least, the cross and the death of Jesus are somewhat glorified. But in His day such a death was viewed as the lowest of the low. Few seek after that kind of death; most have a regard that they might make their mark in the world, and that their posterity shall look back upon their life and work with pleasure and pride.

Paul had a reason for desiring such close association with his Saviour, and verse 11 tells us what it was, — “that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” We know that this was the first or chief resurrection that he desired, the spiritual or heavenly inheritance, the glory of the Lord. It was the glory of the Lord that inspired Paul; he wanted that above everything, and he was no misinformed Christian. “If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him”; “if we are planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” The one is necessary to attain the other. Paul knew that no earthly path of roses leads to glory.

In verse 12 he acknowledges, — “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; (no, but he was daily continually seeking to attain it) but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.” What beautiful expressions are in this version. Christ Jesus had made Paul His own; yes, had bought him with a price, had cleansed him fully, so that now there was no condemnation in him. What a miserable thing the Law arrangement was by comparison. It was fully to be expected that he would regard his previous connections with the Law as a loss; he had been wasting time and effort to no end, but now Christ Jesus was his aim. All that Christ Jesus offered him was not yet his own, he said, “but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Let us carry that beautiful thought with us every day—the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus” — more and more the things of earth fade and the things of heaven grow nearer and dearer. Not only so, but our lives become daily more sanctified in the Master’s service; the daily round and common task has more lustre the longer we live, because we *see* that in every moment we can glorify our Father above, and what does not do so, we disdain to touch. While in tune

with Him there is no experience of any kind that can befall us except it work out good for us in respect of the upward call of God — all draws us nearer to Him, removes dross of the old nature, and matures further the fruits of the spirit.

At times we may question this, and doubt if some experiences do really draw us closer to the Lord, but if we take the long view we are fully persuaded that all things do work together for the lasting good of those who are reaching out toward that great foundation Headstone of the corner, laid in heaven.

In the messages to the seven churches in Revelation, we know that the one addressed to the church of Thyatira (Rev 2: 18-29) is historically addressed to the church during the time of the Papal reign. We need to read history to realise what the Christians of that time had to endure; indeed, they were persecuted practically to extinction. The Son of God, with piercing eyes like a flame of fire — eyes that miss nothing, either of good or evil — commends those who had maintained their zeal, through terrific trial for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

In Rev. 2:19, we read — “Your last works exceed your first.” (R.S.V.) He loved and appreciated their first works, imperfect though they had been as “babes in Christ,” but all the long years of their trial time had worked out good, had mellowed and matured them, so that now the latter works of these true ones were more prized by their Lord. It is good for us all to know and realise that whatever our experiences, the fruits of the spirit are developing, the call of God in Christ is drawing us ever upwards, even though our earthly body is going down in ignominy—”becoming like Jesus in His death.”

Phil. 3:15 reads—”Let those of us who are mature be thus minded,” and verse 17 — “Brethren, join in imitating me.” May God help us to do so.

May we conclude with a special word to the younger folks who may not yet be “mature” ones, but who have in some measure meditated upon the things relative to the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Your numbers will be few in this day; care not for that, the Lord is sufficient. Watch unto prayer and keep close to Him. In this world of today you face peculiar difficulties, but Jesus knows the position. We are in the world, even if we are not of it. The majority of professing Christians today are both in the world and of it too. Then there is the unrealistic Christian who tries not to be in the world, or of it either, the monk-like tendency that shuts-in to self, and all else out.

You are young, with life before you, and like all Christians you are expected to provide things honest in the sight of men. This is the day of the specialist. There is no degradation in earning a living with pick and shovel, but we need to realise that today no such jobs exist. The world of tomorrow will know little labor but skilled labor, and the wise youth of today will fit himself. To the truly Christian youth this may present a test and a problem. If you have heard the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus,” and are minded to press on for its prize, you will probably feel that the time and energy required for your education for secular things is taking everything. Think of the old hymn—”Fight manfully onward, Dark passions subdue, Look ever to Jesus, He’ll carry you through.”

Learn to order your ways; remember, you have not got to do things because everyone else is doing them. As youths, your education to fit you for secular work is necessary; pay good attention to it, but seek and pray for the spirit of a sound mind. Even in this, as in everything, remember there are many things the world counts gain which are not really so. The most blessed experience that any of you can have is to know that “Christ Jesus hath made you His own.” Thus, going through His “school” make progress in “the upward call of God” that it might be true of you, that “your latter works exceed your former work,” in making Christ Jesus your own.

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## The Presence of Christ.

THE subject of Christ’s return is surely of paramount importance to all His disciples, and it is of special interest to all sincere students to know that eminent scholars of the Bible are agreed that the English word “presence” is the equivalent of the Greek word “parousia.”

When we may look forward to having an absent friend with us for a season, we know that there must be a moment of arrival, also a time when he will be journeying, and thus “drawing near,” but it is his presence to which we look forward. Though in speaking of the matter, we may say we shall do this or that when he comes, we do not mean, when he is drawing near or at the moment of arrival, but while he is present with us and we are enjoying the renewed fellowship.

The word “parousia” occurs 24 times in the Greek Testament, and there would seem to be no other word than “presence” that can so well be used to translate it in every instance.

In the Epistles we have :-

(1) 1 Cor. 15:23. Speaking of the resurrection of Christ (head and body), as the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ’s during His “presence.” James also speaks of the church—the body of Christ— as being a first-fruits unto God. Christ died, rose and revived, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living, thus all belong to Him by right of purchase. All are Christ’s — the just and unjust—and are to be raised during His 1000 years’ reign. “As all in Adam

die, so all in Christ shall be made alive.” 1 Cor. 15: 21,24. Rom. 14:9. Acts 24:15. John 5: 28,29.

(2) 1 Cor. 16:17. Here Paul is expressing his gladness at, the presence of three brethren. “For they have refreshed my spirit.” That was not by their journeying “or “drawing near,” nor by the act of “arrival,” but by their “presence” and fellowship.

(3) 2 Cor. 7:6; (4) 2 Cor. 7 :7. Here the Apostle speaks of the comfort he had by Titus having come to him. It was not that Titus was coming, but that he was comforted by his presence and fellowship, and the good news he had brought.

(5) 2 Cor. 10 :10. Here :the word “parousia” is correctly translated presence, and it should be clear to all that that is what is meant. One could not reasonably say that His bodily “drawing near” was weak, or that His bodily “arrival” was weak.

(6) Phil. 1 :26. Certainly Paul did not mean that the act of his arrival would do the Philippians good ; it was his presence and fellowship, his instructions and counsel that would increase their joy.

(7) Phil. 2:12. The word is again correctly translated “presence,” and is placed as the alternative to absence. No other word could so well convey the meaning of the passage.

(8) 1 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” we look forward to, but to 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.

(18) 2 Pet. 3:12. This has reference to the time called, “The day of God,” “The day of the Lord’s wrath.” It will not be a flash of lightning in length of time, but a period, “A time of trouble,” even greater than that in Noah’s day, or at the destruction of Jerusalem.

(20) 1 John 2:28. If the coming of the Lord was like a flash of lightning, there would be no time for anyone to feel ashamed “before” Him, but John had no such thought. He, along with all those who love His appearing, looked forward to being like the Lord and with Him, and to “see Him as He is.” Such have confidence that they shall not be ashamed before Him at His presence.

Thus we have gone over all the instances of the word “parousia” in the Epistles, and see that no other word than “presence” can so well convey in English the meaning of the inspired writers. Now we turn to Matt. 24, where the remaining four translations of the word occur, and find that the same word “presence” is clearly the Lord’s meaning in each case.

(21) Matt. 24:3. Here is the inspired question which was asked of the Lord, in order that the inspired answer could be provided for our edification, and it is only when we allow the proper meaning of the Greek word “parousia” four times used in this connection that *we* can comprehend the “meat in due season.” V. 45.

“When shall all these things be and what shall be the sign of thy presence (parousia) and of the end of the age?” So that the answer given is not indicating signs that the Lord was soon to be near, or to arrive, but rather that He would be present when the signs should be seen.

Had the Lord intended returning in a way visible to all human eyes, there could be no value in providing any sign of His presence, but as He had said that it would not be with observation, the signs are given, and the signs are all now to be seen.

(22) Matt. 24:27. It would be indeed a sorry thing if the Lord was to come and go just like the lightning flash, but when we see that the Greek word rendered “lightning” is elsewhere used for the shining of a candle, we readily perceive that it is the glorious sunshine, rising in the east and shining all day, setting at evening in the west, that is here used to show the glorious reign of the “Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in His wings.” Also, that it is not just the “arrival,” “coming,” or “drawing near” that is referred to, but the “presence” of the Son of man, which

will continue for a 1000 year day. The word rendered “lightning” simply means “brightness,” or “shining,” and could be used for sunshine, or shining of a candle, or brightness of lightning, and is dependent upon connections respecting translation.

(23) Matt. 24:37; (24) Matt. 24:39. “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be.”

The word in the Authorized Bible is mistakenly rendered “coming.” As Noah was present in the “Days of Noah,” so, of course, our Lord must be present in the days of the Son of man. See corresponding passage in Luke 17 : 24,26.

## Earthly Way Ended.

Recently our elderly Brother Neale, of Adelaide, reached the end of the earthly way. In recent years our Brother had been hindered by ill-health from attending Class meetings, but always warmly received those who visited him in his home. Brother Neale was one who had learned to trust the Lord, and he bore the effects of a painful malady with patience and fortitude, and looked forward with desire for the coming of God’s Kingdom of righteousness and peace, when sickness, sorrow and death will all be done away. Much sympathy is expressed to the members of our Brother’s family, and especially to Sister Neale and son John, who have lost a loving husband and kind father. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” (Psa. 30:5.)

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## Contentment.

“Charge not thyself with the weight of *a* year,  
Child of the Master, faithful and dear;  
Choose not the cross for the coming week,  
For that is more than He bids thee seek;  
Bend not thine arms for tomorrow’s load—  
Thou may’st leave that to thy gracious God;  
Daily only He saith to thee,  
‘Take up thy cross and follow me.’ “

## Except the Lord Build the House.

(Psa. 127 :1,2.)

(Convention Address)

“EXCEPT the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it in it.” So reads the margin rendering, and we think this is quite applicable to our topic. This supports what we know to be true, that much energy, influence, time, expenditure, conscription of forces, flattery, violence, guile, falsehood, truth mixed with error, art, talents, beauty and ugliness, sacrifice, science, learning, inventions, in short, all the resources of which man is capable are exercised for one purpose. That purpose is to build a house, a collective house.

People build houses for a variety of reasons —(a) For shelter from the elements ; (b) for protection from enemies ; (c) for independence; (d) for creative expression ; (e) for raising a family; (f) for investment of wealth; (g) for rest and peace. Our text definitely teaches two things— (1) The Lord takes a part in human affairs ; (2) only when man’s efforts are in harmony with the Grand Architect can the building be passed as fit for habitation.

None should need convincing of the inability of any house to withstand storm and tempest, tidal wave and earthquake, lightning and fire. “The world that was” perished in a flood. Regarding those who build houses for rest and peace, we wonder if they find any peace outside of God’s peace.

Other houses are constructed with a view to something different to habitation; a place of worship or a religious institution; a legislative assembly embracing either the building itself or the assembly itself ; a place of business, many big business houses being prefixed with “The House of So and So”; and there is the Stock Exchange.

A house could also refer to “a household,” a family, including ancestors and descendants. You have heard of the House of Windsor, the House of Stuart, the House of Jacob, the House of Israel, Judah and David. “Moses was faithful in all his house”; that is, the house of servants, and there is also a house of sons, the Head of that House being Jesus Himself. “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub,” Jesus queried of the disciples, “how much more them of his household?” Our text still holds good, “Except the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that are builders of it in it.”

Many houses are built embracing one or more of the foregoing ideas or ideals for construction. Irrespective of how many houses may combine for greater strength (since unity is strength), God’s sanction for continuance is needed.

Just as a group of houses may combine and become a village, so villages may combine and become towns, towns amalgamate and become cities; cities affiliate to become nations ; nations combine for commonwealths. Yet this same simple truth is applicable to either the humble tent in the wilderness as it is to the magnificent temple, the city of gold, or the “impregnable” nation. Our text warns, too, that any conspiracy to defeat God’s plan will be of no avail. “Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” (Read also Psa. 2:1-6.)

In case we think “it couldn’t happen to us,” turn the pages of history back and ponder the might and strength, pomp and glory of nations that have ruled the world and today are no more than a memory.

God invites us to ponder a few things about “the watchman.” He was the employee of the group to be alert, awake, and about his business so that the other occupants of the city could enjoy their sleep, their rest. The watchman would instantly raise the alarm the moment danger threatened. It could be invasion, enemies, natural disturbances, “underground” movements, etc. Once the alarm was given remedies could be taken to offset the coming trial. One could not blame the watchman for doing his work; in fact he is to be commended. The cause for complaint was without doubt in the house, in the village, the city, or in the nation.

The housebuilders of the city, the builders of it in it, transferred their responsibility to the watchman ; he would safeguard their interests. The watchman would no doubt call for reinforcements as needed ; his garrison would be strengthened as the occasion demanded. The watchman’s efforts are said to be all in vain except •the Lord keep the city. Ponder how men have striven to ward off the wages of iniquity. In the city we call Christendom are four big houses—social, political, financial and ecclesiastical—and all have their watchmen.

Are there any watchmen in today’s cities? Remember his duties of yesteryear ; to guard against, to protect, to warn, etc. Think of all the money and effort expended annually to protect the city, the nation, against disease; the military forces that console us with security and defence; the political armies who arrange our welfare conditions; the scientists who contribute their share towards defence and arresting disease, etc.; the research workers ; sometimes conscripted armies of watchmen; the huge watchdogs that raise their towers to overlook the cities’ walls, we call them insurance companies; banks to guard our wealth; newspapers, radio and television to cry aloud the moment danger is sensed ; the economists to solve all our currency troubles; the firemen; public servants, etc., are all “watchmen” guarding our cities from trouble that may develop either outside or inside its walls.

The text of our subject further describes activities organised for the city’s continuance. Troubles have come; they have increased both in size and importance. To counter these troubles, these calamities, has meant many long hours of fatigue ; rising early, retiring late, a thousand-and-one sacrifices by all inhabitants. We have not been as successful as we hoped, as we prided. The “bread of sorrows” has in some way come to every home, every house; the aftermath of two world wars left bread of sorrows which we still eat. The stain of sin we cannot cover. Instead of fewer hospitals we need more, still more, and bigger than ever ; mental institutions, too.

If the watchman wakes in vain, except the Lord keep the city, it surely means that the inhabitants have no peace, no rest, despite transferring their responsibilities to the watchman. Could anything be truer? It also means that despite all efforts, trouble, calamity, death has found us unprepared.

Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, a city built not on the sand of surface values. Jesus described the progressive troubles of the house, or city, built on sand. He said in His parable — “*And* the rain descended, *and* the floods came, *and* the winds blew, *and* beat upon that house; *and* it fell; *and* great was the fall of it.” Please note the gradual deterioration until the final phase, when “great was the fall of it.” The watchmen are on the job, but the Prophet Isaiah says they are “blind, ignorant, dumb dogs that cannot bark, greedy who can never have enough, shepherds that cannot understand, all looking to their own way, for their own gain, thinking that tomorrow will be the same as this day.” (Isa. 56:10-12.)

A house, a household, a village, a city or a nation, or a commonwealth of nations built on selfishness, hatred, envy, violence, deceit, idolatry, would possibly find it hard to believe, while the builders of it are in it, that dire experiences are just around the corner. When the “best of them is as a brier and the upright among them sharper than a thorn hedge,” Micah says the day of visitation is on *its* way. The condition is so grave, they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net, contention and strife, no confidence in another, no mercy to intervene for other suffering folk; what a sorry picture. Micah says this will happen when the “enemies of man in his own house” are not subdued. Things progress from bad to worse until all that can be done is to “wrap it up” for bitter vexation, perplexity, fear, and destruction to take its toll. (Mic. 7:1-4.) It has happened before, many times.

Despite this gloomy picture, there is a brighter side. In this respect our text says, “He giveth his beloved sleep.” There may be fightings without, fears within, the “mountains may be cast into the midst of the sea,” “men’s hearts may be failing them for fear of those things which are coming upon the earth.” It could be a time of great shaking, as prophesied in Hebrews 12:22-28, yet all the while “He giveth his beloved sleep.” Rest, peace, belong to the Lord’s people. Jesus left us a legacy of peace; who can take it away? If God be for us who can be against us?

Why do His beloved rest in peace when all around is confusion and strife? Because their faith is in God’s House, a House in which are many mansions; a mansion for the House of Sons; a mansion for the house of servants ; a mansion for the house- (hold) of man — the family of man. Because their faith is in the City of the Living God, the New Jerusalem, a city whose Builder and Maker is God. It was Solomon, a man of peace, of rest, who built the typical house of God; the same qualities of rest and peace will be found among the House of Sons who are to assist, (“co-workers together with God”) in building the “house not made with hands.”

When that gracious building is complete a strange work is promised; God has promised to re-build a house now in ruins. It is the tabernacle of David, fallen down in ruins, but, thank God, is to be restored to its former glory and power

for the blessing of mankind in general. “Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.” “He giveth his beloved sleep.”

Jesus, the “thief in the night” has broken into the *house*, the “kingdoms” of this world. “The present evil world” will soon be a thing of the past, and then the New Jerusalem, the House of God’s building, will take control, and what a prospect! This will be a house, the labour of which will not be in vain.

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## Faith and Sight.

(Contributed Article)

LET us draw your attention to Hebrews 11:1 —“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” As we intend to show ;the difference between Faith and Sight, we could look at 2 Tim. 2:15 —“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

It will be observed by what follows that the dividing of the word of truth indicates a time feature, or time period. The whole plan of God is divided into such periods; we refer to the time of the Prophets, the time of the Judges, the Kings, the time of Christ, etc. The particular time we have under consideration is known in the Scriptures as — “In those days,” “the last days,” or “the time of the end,” which brings us to the period in which we see our faith turning to sight. Once having seen something we no longer need to have faith in it in the sense of still expecting it.

Getting back to Hebrews 11:1, this is what one concordance has to say about it—“Faith is a dependence on the veracity of another”—and as God is the author of all prophecy it must increase our faith in Him. Having our faith in God and His prophecies, let us examine Zech. 12:3—“In that day (the last days or time of the end) will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” Look at Matt. 24: 6-8, which has reference to the last days —Bible students recognise this as the end of the Gentile times; namely, 1914 onwards.

Another prophecy which helps us in this matter is Dan. 12:4 which could apply now only, and can be recognised and understood. With all these things happening before our eyes, seeing •them must increase our faith in the author of them; namely, our Heavenly Father.

We would like to draw your attention. to Dan. 11 :40—“And at the time of the end shall the king of •the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” This is the time of the gathering of the nations by God. See also Isa. 10:24-34; 17 :12-14 ; 34 :8,9 ; Joel 3 :1-4,9 ; Zech. 14 :14 ; Ezek. 37; 38; 39. This gathering is to be to the Promised Land, which boundaries are shown in Gen. 15:18; the latter part of the verse reads—“From the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

Have a look at a map of the Middle East, the focal point being Palestine; trace the Euphrates from its mouth, at the top end of the Persian Gulf, back to its source. You will observe that the north takes in a considerable portion of Syria, while to the eastern side of Palestine is Jordan and Iraq, while on the southern border is Saudia Arabia, and all these countries are hostile to the Jews,—God’s people.

Let us look now at the gathering of Israel. We are familiar with the 37th chapter of Ezekiel which shows the gathering of the “dry bones.” (Also Ezek. 36:31-38.) We can see that this process began with Zionism and the Balfour Declaration, the release of the Promised Land from the Turks in 1918, and Israel becoming a nation in 1948. The last phase is shown in Ezek. 37:14 when the breath of life, or the spirit, is given, when God comes to their aid at Armageddon, at which time they will recognise their Messiah — “Him whom they had pierced.”

We have already said that all nations are to be gathered together; how do they line up; can we recognise them? Today they are commonly known as East and West, with two distinct ideologies. How do the Scriptures define them? As North and South. Does the Bible show this division? We will draw your attention to the description in Ezek. 38:2,3,5,6. We see in these verses the names of Gog, Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, Togarmah, Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. We must include Egypt in this group, as they are the avowed enemies of Israel, and are now in league with Russia.

What about the king of the South? Let us look at Ezek. 38:13,—“Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, and all the young lions thereof.” Look at the map again. Sheba and Dedan are on the southern tip of the peninsula, bounded by the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Today Sheba and Dedan are names only, but the locality is the important point, because the British control this sector, which is known as Aden. It is generally conceded by Bible students that the “Tarshish” mentioned in Ezek. 38:13, means Britain, and if we take the whole of chapters 38 and 39 they show that Sheba and Dedan are there right to the end.

We think it is right to bring in Zech. 12:3 at this point. “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut into pieces,” etc. The term “that day” (or time of the end) is used again. We know that Turkey held great sway in the Middle East in 1914, and were in control of Jerusalem; they lost it to Britain in 1918. What has happened in the time from 1918 till now? Britain has lost possessions or alliances with these countries—Egypt, Canal Zone, Jordan, Iraq, India, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Singapore and Cyprus, thus forcing her into the only safe position in the Middle East, that of Aden (Sheba and Dedan), which we know is south of

Jerusalem. This leads us to the conclusion that Britain and all she represents is the King of the South.

This may seem like a presentation on history and geography, but we feel that what has been stated is the prophetic utterance, as we see it in the Scriptures pertaining to the time of the end, and also the signs of the time of the end as shown in Matthew 24, and other similar Scriptures, such as Daniel 12:4. Seeing all these things does not hold our interest simply on account of their military or national *significance*, but because they show us the times in which we are living, and their prophetic value, knowing that they are the culminating part of God's Plan. Therefore, having seen them, our faith is increased in the Word of God, and in Him who inspired the accounts to be written, hence our dependence on the veracity of our Heavenly Father.

Our justification in watching these things is borne out by the life of our Master. He was very conscious of things going on around Him, and we know He came to be the Redeemer of mankind by His sacrificial death. He could have gone straight to the temple after His baptism and sojourn in the wilderness for forty days and said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth! I am the King of the Jews! I am the Son of God," and then have been promptly executed for so-called blasphemy, as He was eventually, and His death would have brought the salvation of mankind. But our Lord had many things to do, chiefly the inauguration of the Church. He associated with all kinds of people from the least unto the greatest in the land. He healed the beggars, the sick, etc.; He dined with publicans and sinners; He had discussions with the priests and Pharisees who were considered the spiritual leaders of Israel; He also came in contact with high civil officials of the land, such as Herod and Pilate.

All these things He did that He may become a sympathetic and understanding High Priest. (See Heb. 4:14,15.) Can we as followers of the Master do less? We know if we are faithful unto death we will be made kings and priests; therefore, we too must be sympathetic and understanding. We are told to watch and pray as we see these prophecies being fulfilled, such as the 24th chapter of Matthew, Daniel 12:4, etc. May God help each and every one of us to follow in the Master's footsteps.

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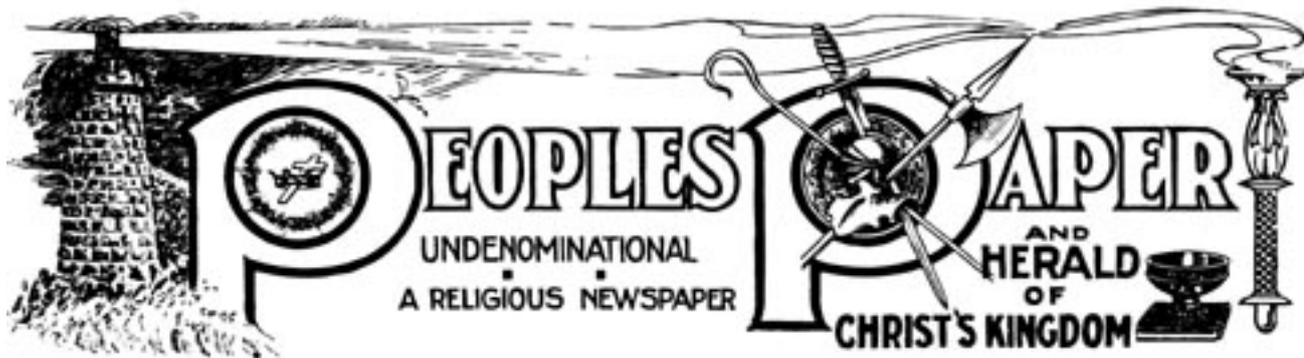
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## Should Christians Accept Blood Transfusions To Save Life?

IN taking up this subject we do so without any thought of criticizing the opinions of others in matters personal or relating to conscience. Our object is wholly to seek to determine from the Scriptures what the Lord would expect from us as His followers now that we are living in a day when such things as blood transfusions are common and everyday performances in all the large hospitals of the world. You realize that it is a very common matter now for one to receive a blood transfusion, and appeals are going out continually for people to make donations of blood for the benefit of those in need.

In the days of our Lord and the Apostles, such scientific attainments in the medical world as blood transfusions were absolutely out of the question, and we cannot expect to find any direct statements on such matters recorded in the Bible, but there are Scriptures which do help us in a general way to arrive at right conclusions in matters which are not especially revealed in so many words in the Bible.

One of these Scriptures is found in 2 Tim. 1 :7—"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and a sound mind." True followers of the Lord surely desire to have a sound mind about all they seek to do for the Master, and this promise of the Apostle Paul's is just as applicable today as when he wrote those words to Timothy—that is to those who have truly given their hearts and lives in full consecration. Again, we have Phil. 4:5. "Let your moderation be known to all men." The meaning of the Greek word from which our English word "moderation" is translated carries the thought of "appropriate", or "reasonable." "Let your reasonableness or appropriateness be known to all men." In other words, do not be extremists so far as the world's affairs are concerned. Rather, the Lord's people are to be in the world, but not of the world, seeking to be reasonably minded and having the spirit of a sound mind.

We know that one of the greatest deceptions of the Adversary is to try to influence the Lord's people in one extreme or the other. An example is the theory of eternal torment as proclaimed by some for the majority of the human race. Then on the other extreme we have the theory of universal salvation proclaimed by others, who claim that God is too loving to destroy any of the human family. Both these teachings are unscriptural. We read in Ps. 145: 20 that "all the wicked will God destroy", and know that this will mean destruction for those who are not worthy of life when they have been fully tested and wilfully reject the love of God. They are not going to be allowed to interfere with the progress and blessing of others who do wish to serve the Lord in every respect. So the sound mind of the Christian agrees with this procedure in God's dealing with the human family as being in keeping with His attributes of justice, love, mercy and power, whereas the erroneous teachings of eternal torment and universal salvation are at once discerned by the Christian's mind to be of the Adversary. They are not in accord with God's character. That is one way we can test any teaching. Is it like God? When we see the wonderful plan of God in all its glory, we cannot help saying, "It is just like God." Those who will not accept the grace of God after knowing fully and wilfully rejecting it, must be destroyed. "Nothing shall hurt or destroy" in all the Lord's Kingdom. He will not have anyone interfere with the desire of other living creatures to obey and serve Him.

Another verse in connection with our subject is found in Acts 17:26. This verse is from that wonderful sermon Paul gave on Mars Hill. He delivered to the Athenians there a wonderful sermon indeed. In v. 26 he says, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." This is a very important point, especially in respect of colour discrimination. We find in this enlightened twentieth century, white people having some kind of a grudge against dark-coloured people, even in so-called Christian nations. Yet we read here in the Bible that God hath made of one blood all nations of men.

While there are different blood groups, the colour of the skin should provide no objection to anyone willing to accept a blood transfusion. Let us suppose that there are four or five main blood groups amongst people of each colour of skin. It will be seen that the blood of a dark man or woman of the same grouping as a white person would be much more suitable for that white person than that from other white people of different blood groups.

Now there are two main classes of people who feel that the giving or receiving of blood transfusions would be improper. Firstly, there is the class who objects mainly because they feel that the blood of some people would likely be impure. We have heard people put it this way, Take people who smoke or take alcohol freely. Surely their blood would not be pure and clean. So for health reasons some seem to think it would be improper to receive blood of uncertain purity. While being uninformed as to the processes of keeping blood in the blood bank, surely in this day of increased knowledge it would not be difficult to remove any likely impurity from blood received from people who had made donations of their blood. A little investigation should be all that is necessary on the part of those who object to blood transfusions for health reasons.

An illustration may help here. Those who have been on dairy farms and have seen the separating process of milk will know one thing that is most surprising. The milking machines are on the cows, and the milk is not touched by human hand at all, but is in the pipes right through the machinery and runs immediately into the separator, and the cream and milk are separated. The amount of sediment in the separator is the most surprising thing. Where does it come from? A considerable amount of sediment is obtained from milk which you would think would be absolutely pure. We use this illustration because some years ago in an advertisement for blood donors in the city, there was shown a separator for separating blood. In regard to the milk, it has been suggested that by using separated milk and then bringing it back to the appropriate richness with cream, it is much purer than if it had not been taken through the separator. In the same way, blood can be cleansed and made quite pure for the use of blood transfusions. Possibly there are more recent processes in this art than the one mentioned. We have simply used the illustration to show that there should be no question of people feeling that for health reasons they could not accept a blood transfusion.

A second class of people object to accepting blood transfusions for themselves or their families on the ground of conscience, feeling that certain Scriptures infer that accepting blood would be contrary to the Lord's instructions. It is quite right that our consciences should be our guide in the Christian way, so long as the conscience is correctly adjusted, shall we say, to the precepts of God's Word. The Apostle Paul's words in Acts 24:16 are appropriate—"Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." This is a wonderful condition of heart to be in. He would exercise his heart and mind to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. The same Apostle informs us of some whose consciences would not be a true guide, — we refer to 1 Tim. 4:2. This is a class who the Apostle says "have their consciences seared with a hot iron". In other words, they had drifted away from the Truth, and their consciences would be no longer a true guide. They could be quite wrong. That is why we say our consciences must be regulated by the Word of God; the principles that go to make up the character of God, along with His Word in our hearts, must be the test as to whether our conscience is dictating to us correctly in respect of any matter regarding ourselves or our families. So it is not sufficient to say, My conscience tells me so and so is correct and proper. It must be true, according to the principles of God's Word.

The "Manna" comment for November 24th gives us a good thought—"Our consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a timekeeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully; so our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God."

It seems that is most important in connection with our subject. Our consciences must be regulated in accord with the Word of God.

Now let us examine some Scriptures which are used to imply that blood transfusions are improper for human beings. Firstly we have Gen. 9:4 as a text that is used in this connection. After the Flood in Noah's day he was given instructions in regard to eating. "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, ye shall not eat." This instruction was given to Noah, and intended, of course, for his family and all mankind since that time. The Lord would have his people know they must not eat flesh with the blood in it.

Another instruction was given to Israel some considerable time after Noah's day—Lev. 17:10,11. "Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for the soul; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Then in Lev. 19:26 we have a plain statement, "Ye shall not eat anything with the blood." Deut. 12:16,23—"Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water. . . . Only be sure that thou eat not the blood; for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh."

Those instructions given to Israel were most important. They were strict. There could be no excuse for the Israelites to be misinformed in regard to this important instruction from the Lord to abstain from eating the blood of animals God had given them for food. There seems to be good reason for the Lord's strict prohibition of Israel eating blood. We read in Lev. 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls." Did the blood of the animals really make atonement for the Israelites? We answer, only in a typical sense. The atonement made by the blood pointed forward to the real atonement which would be made for Adam, by Jesus' blood. In every instance where the reference is to the blood making atonement, it is in the typical sense of looking forward to the real sacrifice for sins.

Heb. 9:22,23 gives us this most important lesson very clearly. "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens

should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” Under the law of Moses, the Lord made provision whereby Israel could be typically cleansed for twelve months ahead by the sacrificing of the bullock and the goat on the Day of Atonement, by following those instructions and sprinkling the blood. They were then accounted clean in the sight of God. That was intended to keep them a separated people. By repeating this sacrifice of the animals every year, it reminded them, of course, that this was only a type. The repetition showed it was not actually accomplishing the redemption, but that it was picturing what would be done by the real sacrifice of Christ Jesus in due time. It was necessary for these animals to be actually slain and the blood sprinkled. But the heavenly things themselves had better sacrifices. The real sacrifice for sins was accomplished by much better sacrifices than animals, even the blood of Christ Jesus Himself.

We remember the offerings of Cain and Abel to the Lord. They had a mind to commune with the Lord, and offered sacrifices to Him. We see that the desire to worship the Creator was not obliterated by the fall. Gen. 4 :3,4—”And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain he had not respect.” Abel was in tune with the Lord and was able to grasp what the Lord would desire, so his offering was acceptable to the Lord. Cain being an agricultural man, thought he would bring the firstfruits of his fields, but the Lord did not respect him. It was not a fitting type, it did not point forward to the blood of Christ, and so was not accepted. Cain was wroth. Vengeance came into his heart. We see the spirit of the Adversary coming in, and Cain slew his brother because of revenge. What a dreadful condition in the first generation! But the point is that God had respect unto Abel’s offering because it was an offering of blood. The blood pictured, then, the blood of Christ that would take away the sins of the world. We have repeatedly in the Old Testament the illustration of the value God placed on the blood of the animals, and that which He impressed on the hearts and minds of Israel, was that it pictured in reality the real Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

It was necessary first of all that those types be purged with blood, and God arranged that the types should be made with animal sacrifices ; that the patterns or pictures of things in the heavens should be purified with those animal sacrifices. But the heavenly things themselves had better sacrifices, even the blood of Christ Himself. We see, then, that as the blood of bulls and goats pointed forward to the blood of Jesus Christ, God attached great sacredness to animal blood, and did not want the Israelites to consider it a common or ordinary food. The blood of animals was sacred, and would impress the great value of the real atonement blood of Jesus on the minds of all Israel, who were God’s Covenant people. There can be no doubt that the impression would be conveyed that if the blood of animals is precious, how much more precious would be the blood of Christ, that actually cleanses and takes away the sin of all mankind, and will give life from the dead to all who would accept the sacrifice when given the opportunity.

It may be asked, What relationship is there between God’s prohibition of eating the blood of animals and the matter of receiving blood transfusions? In the first place, God’s command had to do with the blood of animals only, and the prohibition was against the taking of blood into the digestive organs, eating it. In the case of blood transfusions, no animal blood is used, and human blood is not taken into the digestive organs, but transferred to the blood stream of the patient. There seems no ‘real similarity, and we know of no Scripture which would give the slightest indication that blood transfusions for Christians should be rejected. We know of no Scriptures at all that would seem to imply they should not be accepted. There does not seem to be any similarity in the prohibition against eating animal blood and receiving human blood by patients who are gravely in need of some sustaining source to prolong their human life.

In New Testament times, when Gentiles were received into the early Church, a situation arose which called for a special presentation from the Apostles, and this is found in Acts 15:19,20. God’s covenant people were a prepared people, and their hearts were being trained ; the Law was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. If they had been obedient people, they might have been able to enter the Heavenly calling and become the Bride class. But when they rejected Christ, God called for the Gospel to go the Gentiles. Cornelius was the first Gentile convert to be received into God’s favour, and was granted the opportunity to become one of the sons of God. About 31- years after Pentecost we find that the Gentiles who were becoming interested in the Lord’s teachings through the ministry of the Apostles, had been associated with the customs of heathen nations ; and many of those customs were abhorrent to the Jews, and to people today. Some would have been partaking of blood in their heathen revelries. Some coming into the Church would bring with them a certain amount of their former life. Their minds would have to be helped in the way the Lord would want them to walk now they were becoming Christians. So there was a necessary presentation given by the Apostles as to what the Gentiles should be expected to subscribe to in regard to their Christian conduct. The Jews, of course, would try to enforce some things that were not necessary on the Gentiles. They had been used to form and ceremony, and now, while accepting Christ, they would want to continue some of those ceremonies, which now would not be necessary at all. In other words, when the Lord invites His followers He does not say, Thou shalt do this and thou shalt do that, but He appeals to their hearts and minds. He gives them a sound mind by His spirit.

So Christians arrive at conclusions not because they are servants as they were under the law of Moses, but they are brought into God’s family as sons, and that makes the relationship very much more intimate. A man in business brings his son into the business arrangements and makes his son an associate. The father and son now co-operate in the business so differently to the servants. The son may stay behind for an hour or two, with the interests of the business in mind, and there are no restrictions. There is a liberality and oneness of mind. Just so, Christians are given the spirit of a sound mind, and want more and more to do the things the Heavenly Father would have them do, just like Jesus Himself. He “learned (proved) obedience ,by the things He suffered”. He always obeyed God, and as He said, “I know Thou hearest me always”. He always most lovingly did the Father’s will.

When the Gentiles were coming in with their Jewish compatriots they would have to eliminate some of those baser things they were associated with in the heathen customs. So the Apostles came together to say what would be essential. And this is what is written in Acts 15 :19,20—"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God ; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." The Gentile Christians would be delighted to conform to the main principles, shall we say, to which the Christian life must be directed.

Yes, but strangely enough that instruction from the Apostle of "abstaining from blood" is taken by some, conscientiously they say, to refer to human blood for the purpose of blood transfusions. Comparing Scripture with Scripture we can see that what the Apostles would mean would be to abstain from eating animal blood. Something strangled would not be bled. We cannot take any other interpretation than this. It is a plain direction, that as God told Israel over and over again that they were not to eat blood, so these Gentile Christians were having the subject presented to them, that they should abstain from things strangled, and from blood. In the majority of cases it would be abhorrent to them and they would not think of doing it anyway. But the Apostles were not going to lay any other burdens on the Gentile Christians. They knew that as Christians they would receive more and more of the spirit of the Lord, and come more and more into accord with the law of love; for the Christian life calls for the laying down of the human life, laying it down in service of God in as direct a way as possible. Also in an indirect way, because all that the Christian does is a service unto the Lord. The Apostle says, Even if you eat or drink, do it to the glory of God. That is a great help to us. We would not eat or drink anything to bring dishonour to the Lord's name. Especially would we refrain from blood. This blood in the minds of Israel was very sacred. The animals' blood pictured the blood of Christ, given to make atonement for sins; in addition, of course, to being absolutely unhealthy to be partaken of. God gave it that sacred touch so they would realise it was pointing to the sacrifice of Christ. These restrictions could be clearly understood in the Apostles' day. How any Christian could interpret this to include blood transfusions is very difficult to understand. There seems no connection.

In the case of children under the care of parents or guardians, it would be a great responsibility to deny any little ones a blood transfusion if it would likely save their life. Perhaps parents and guardians need to remember that the children under their care are first of all God's little ones, and would need to be sustained by every reasonable and possible means at their disposal; and even if they rejected a blood transfusion for themselves because of conscience, they should think more than once, they should think very, very deeply in respect of their children. God has given all parents their little ones to sustain under every reasonable circumstance, to sustain their life while there is hope. We would say that even if anyone felt that he himself could not take a blood transfusion, the principle should not be applied to others under his care. The necessity for conscience to be regulated by God's Word is very essential.

It may not be out of place to mention a suggestion put forward in a recent Coroner's Court by an assisting Counsel. We do not know whether he would be a professing Christian, but it would be a very wise and helpful suggestion—that, say in the case of infants, perhaps a few hours old, where the parents felt they could not agree to a blood transfusion, the Counsel suggested that there should be an appeal made to some overriding authority such as the Child Welfare Department; to some body of people who have given their lives to assisting in the welfare of children. That would relieve the parents' own conscience in respect of this matter, inasmuch as in objecting, their conscience would be clear, but the authority could give a ruling and instruct the hospital to go ahead and save the life of the infant. That seemed a reasonable suggestion, because some consciences undoubtedly can become twisted, and by not sustaining the life of one given into their care, or not allowing others to sustain that life, they could be giving a very wrong judgment, and in later life they may have much to learn that could be avoided by a little more wisdom and a rightly-regulated conscience in the matter.

We mention in passing that even in men of the world, sometimes there is wisdom that should be appreciated, that is in respect of natural things. We realize that there is a belief in the hearts of some that if a refusing of a blood transfusion results in death, there will still be a resurrection; but that does not fulfil the obligations of a parent or guardian. We should not take the position of saying, If the child cannot live without a blood transfusion I cannot take the responsibility of agreeing to it, for even if it does die it will be resurrected. That is not God's way. Life must be preserved by every reasonable and possible means. God wants His children to realize that life is precious. The few short years we have are very precious to us. During this time we may have the opportunity, by the Lord's grace, of being invited to the heavenly- inheritance, something which could never be gained by anyone if he did not live long enough. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a person may have his life sustained by wonderful medical science, and grow up and be invited by the Lord to become a member of His heavenly kingdom. Sometimes we might feel that a life is, as it were, hanging on a thread; but to save a life and have the opportunity of the High Calling **is one of the** greatest privileges that anyone can receive from the Lord. For God to pass over even the angels and condescend to invite human beings to such an inheritance is a marvel beyond our thoughts.

Another matter of great importance for all Christians is to see that they do not agree with and obey any injunction of any church or organisation simply because it is put out by such a church or organisation ; that we do not agree with or subscribe to anything because it comes from headquarters. The regimentation of the Lord's people seems to have been a great temptation all down through the age. If you look at church history you will find the Papacy ruled with a rod of iron, and made decrees as to what people should believe, and those who dared to contradict were slaughtered. What a dreadful system of iniquity was instigated under the direction of the great Adversary. We are thankful it is not so today; but nevertheless there are similar efforts along these lines, to regiment beliefs, prepare tables or creeds of what people should believe when they belong to a particular church or organisation.

When we come into the church of Christ we come into the liberty of the sons of God. God gives us His spirit, and teaches us by His spirit, and we have the spirit of a sound mind as we progress along the way; by comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn right from wrong. We will act becomingly in His sight. When the Lord sent out the Apostles, He said, Be not concerned about what you will say when brought before governors and kings. The spirit of the Father will **tell you what to say**. So in regard to the truths of the Bible. We are not to try to regiment one another. Organisations must not do so. If they do, they are not of the Lord. If there is any effort along that line, then far better to be away from such organisations or churches.

The Lord's people need to learn that they gain the Lord's approval by being individual Christians, exercised in their own minds from the Bible as to its meaning, and the truth or otherwise of any teaching put out by any church or organisation. The Lord did not call people because they belonged to any organisation. He called individuals. He called them in twos by the seaside. He did not say, To what 'organization do you belong? No; but "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He knew they needed to be instructed. So it is with all of us. We are learning in the school of Christ day by day. As we preserve our humility and meekness and desire to be instructed along the lines of the Lord's Word, we will find it is a very happy condition in spite of the narrowness. There are multitudes associated together in some movements. It is quite an experience to be with a multitude. Some people feel that numbers make strength, and that they are all the more secure if they are surrounded by numbers. But not so in the Lord's family. It is one here and there, comparatively speaking.

So in answer to our question, we will say we know of no Scripture which can be rightly taken to prohibit anyone accepting the benefits of a blood transfusion if they are in need of it. Our hospitals today do not give transfusions for the fun of it. They do not do it to experiment. All the experimenting to save life in this way has been done years ago. It seems that for one to refuse for themselves it would be their own responsibility, but to refuse another human being under their care would be a very grave injustice. Such an one perhaps has much to learn, and by the Lord's grace they may be able to learn, too, if not in this life, then in the life to come.

We could just briefly refer to the wonderful kingdom of God, when all minds will be cleared of obscurity, the veil taken away from all faces, the misconceptions and superstitions removed. The kingdom of God is going to be a time when all will be enlightened on every subject. All shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. In the meantime, special light is for God's called-out people, those responsive to the love of Christ and who have been instructed in regard to the mysteries of the Kingdom. These are highly favoured now in their Christian life and development along the lines of the character and attributes of God. That is, to a great extent at least; we are still imperfect beings and cannot be like the perfect Master, but we can become copies of God's dear Son. That is just what we need to be to inherit the heavenly kingdom. God's spirit is the means of transforming human beings more and more into the likeness of His dear Son. As the Redeemer paid the price that all mankind may have life, so we now must also cherish human life, not in any way treat it cheaply. While there is no intention, possibly, with those who reject blood transfusions to treat human life cheaply, it may come to that when the conscience is not rightly regulated by the laws of God. The laws of the land might need to be changed so that parents or guardians would not have the only say in respect of infants particularly, to give them an opportunity of growing up, and ultimately living forever in the kingdom of God. Sometimes a combination of minds may arrive at a better conclusion than one individual.

So let us appreciate our privileges as children of the Lord. Let us appreciate the increase of knowledge in the world today. We should cherish our Bibles, knowing it was impossible to have them only a short while ago. All the additional, benefits of our age are to be used for the Lord. So in the matter of blood transfusions ; they should be accepted as one of the blessings, the increase of knowledge that can be used gratefully and thankfully to God's praise. If we are healthy enough to give blood donations, it would be a good procedure. Otherwise we should not. We should not make ourselves ill about it, but if anyone is healthy enough, that surely is a contribution to help some who are otherwise unable to help themselves.

Christians are not to separate themselves from the world into better environments, but to be representatives of the Lord and to be seen of men, not to be hidden away like some mistakenly believe. The Lord's people must be representatives and ambassadors for Christ. Let their moderation be known to all men, their reasonableness, their appropriateness. Let their spirit of a sound mind be an evidence that they are upholding the Word of God, and are in hope of the heavenly kingdom, and helping others with whom they come in contact day by day. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." We see the individuality of the Christian call. We do not gain the heavenly kingdom by belonging to a church or earthly organisation. We grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as individual members. We are taught in the school of Christ that we might be able to appropriate the truths to ourselves, being guided by them more and more along our Christian pathway. May it be that we appreciate all our privileges as we walk along the way day by day faithfully, by the Lord's grace.

## Stephen's Dying Prayer.

*"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God (R.V. "the Lord"), and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."*—Acts 7:59,60.

AS usually understood, the "spirit" referred to by the persecuted saint, is an immortal part in man, which, in the case of the pious, is borne aloft to the nightless world at the final hour. About to die, it is assumed that the martyr committed himself, or his spirit, to the Saviour, in the hope of enduring happiness as soon as liberated from the tenement of clay. A pleasing representation, no doubt; but one encompassed with difficulties we dare not overlook.

This common view is diametrically opposed to our Lord's testimony in the hearing of His Apostles immediately before His crucifixion, — "I go to prepare a place for you." — John 14:2. At the conclusion of their toils and pains were they appointed to go thither—as orthodoxy assures its disciples now? It seems not (verse 3)—"And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also;" words which may be regarded as explanatory of John 13:33-36. When He rose in sublime majesty from the mountain top, the attending angels said to those who were spectators of His removal — "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner"—that is, quietly and unknown to the world—"as ye have seen Him go into heaven."—Acts 1 :11. The doctrine of Scripture then is, there is no such thing as going to Him at death; not one saint will be privileged to behold His face till He revisits this world, according to His promise.

The Apostle Paul understood the Divine plan and ordination perfectly, and therefore anticipated neither reward nor inheritance till the Lord should be manifested a second time without a sin-offering unto salvation. "I am now ready to be offered," he says, "and the time of my departure,"—that is, from life—"is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me"—at death? No—"At that day"—when He returns; "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." — 2 Tim. 4:6-8. Was not Stephen educated in the same grand errorless spiritual school? Knew he not that the Deliverer in whom he trusted had spoken in this manner, "I will come again and receive you unto myself?"

Following His hours of agony on the hill of shame, and when the last moment had arrived, the Man of Sorrows, after crying with a loud voice, closed His utterances with these words—"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (literally out-breathed); that is — died — Luke 23 :46. According to Matthew 27:50, He "yielded up the ghost" (literally, dismissed His spirit, ); that is, drew His last breath, or ceased to live. Stephen, the earliest martyr among the disciples, appears to have imitated his Master in the closing scene. Jesus said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." When the stones were cruelly battering his quivering form, Stephen appealed thus — "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The original word used by the dying Lord, and by His dying servant, is pneuma, translated "spirit," and both passages are given in Robinson's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament as illustrations of the term, when indicating "the principle of life residing in the breath;" turning our thoughts back to the old record. — "The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."—Gen. 2:7.

Taking this as undoubtedly correct, the right interpretation of this expiring witness' devout language is not hard to find. He called on his exalted Lord to receive back the life-giving breath, or to accept his life which he rendered up as a sacrifice on the altar of Christianity. Very different from the popular view, but quite in accord with the general teachings of Scripture, and the rest of the narrative itself. After exclaiming,—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"—did he pass upwards to the heavenly abode? As a spirit, winged he his flight to the Redeemer's presence? No, verily, "He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, — Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." He was stoned to death, he returned to the dust. For him there was no release till the "dead in Christ," during His presence and by His power, burst forth in the bloom and blessedness of immortality.—Selected.

### Tracts Available.

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## Things Worth Striving For.

(From Bro. B. H. Barton's Note Book) .

THE PATIENT PERSEVERANCE which defeat cannot discourage nor discouragement defeat.

THE IMPARTIALITY which delights as much in a grand work another has done, as if you had done it yourself.

THE SPIRIT which finds a more ready excuse for your brother than for yourself.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS which would rather right a wrong than conceal your share in it.

THE CHASTITY which always looks for some good intention, even where a slight or injury are seemingly intended  
 THE CHRISTIANITY which is as careful how we live in our homes as how we act before the brethren.  
 THE LOYALTY which even your stumblings and failures cannot dishearten.  
 THE LOWLINESS which will sorrow when your enemy falls and rejoice when you are humbled.  
 THE WISDOM which knows when to speak and when to be silent.  
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 THE FORGIVENESS which not only pardons in words, but proves its reality by never referring to the matter again.  
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**Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. 8.15 a.m.**

**Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. • • 9 a.m.**

**Perth, 6KY, 227 M. p 4.45 p.m.**



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## **Thoughts On The Second Coming.**

(Convention Address)

*"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.)*

THERE are a number of Scriptural statements bearing upon the nature and purpose of our Lord's second advent, and to get the correct understanding all these Scriptures must be considered, even though some texts seem to conflict with each other, which, however, they really do not. There must be harmony in the Scriptures for they are the words of Divine inspiration.

The purpose of this address is not so much to show what is the nature of our Lord's coming, but rather what it is not, and why. In our text, quoted above, it is evident that none of the world was aware of Jesus' ascension to heaven; and actually the text does not state that anyone will see Him come, but merely that He comes in like manner as He went away—quietly, secretly, with no supernatural demonstrations, unknown to all but a handful of disciples.

But the Scriptures do not leave the matter here. Oh, no! Many prophecies both in the Old and New Testament, describe the, manner of our Lord's second advent and the work He will do, dealing first with His Church, and then later with the world of mankind at large. This work covers a period of more than 1000 years, for, after gathering His elect, He will, with His glorified Church, inaugurate His reign over the earth, which, in itself, will cover 1000 years.

To attempt to understand all these events as taking place at the moment of His arrival leads to a maze of confusion.

The same would be true, on a smaller scale, of events at His first advent. Numerous prophecies in the Old Testament told of events occurring with our Lord's first visit to the earth; these covered various phases of His first presence. Some told of His birth as a babe; some told of His consecration at Jordan; some told of His miracles; others that He would speak in parables; still others of His sufferings and death, and that lots would be cast for His garments; and others referred to His crucifixion and resurrection.

Now, it should be evident that if we apply all these prophecies concerning His first advent to any particular moment of His life on earth, it would result in destroying the meaning of those prophecies, making them contradictory and meaningless. Even so it is in regard to the second advent of Jesus.

Consider some of the things which are to be done during His second advent. The gathering of Christ's Church is referred to as a harvest and the sending forth of reapers to gather them, exalting them to joint-heirship in His Kingdom; the destruction of Antichrist; the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world; the binding of Satan, followed by the establishment of the new kingdom; the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies, and then the general resurrection and judgment of the world; the times of restitution; the destruction of the incorrigible sinners, including Satan; then the turning over of the triumphant kingdom to the Father. Is all this to be done in a moment—A literal day of 24 hours as some misguided Christians teach? No! No! This great work calls for a period of time; a presence after the arrival.

We have already referred to the statement by the angels that Jesus would come "in like manner" as He went away—very quietly, unobserved by the world. However, note, in contrast with this, the words of the Apostle in 2 Thes. 1 :7,8—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." Were there any mighty angels visible with Jesus when the disciples saw Him go into heaven? No! Did they see any flaming fire? No! Obviously, then, these two prophecies refer to different phases of our Lord's return.

Let us take another event pertaining to the second advent, in Rev. 14 :14—"And I looked, and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." Jesus is represented here as sitting on a white cloud with a sharp sickle in His hand. No flaming fire here, even as there was no sickle in either of the other prophecies just mentioned.

In Luke 12:37 there is another prophecy differing from any of the foregoing mentioned. It states—"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh (arrives) shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Here we notice that the Lord is represented at His return as being one who serves at a table. No sickle, no flaming fire, no clouds, as in other prophecies.

Take another text. In Rev. 3:20 Jesus is recorded as saying — “Behold I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Jesus sups with those who hear His knock and open the door, but there is nothing said about girding Himself and serving, as in the prophecy stated in Luke 12:37, and nothing about flaming fire, or sickle.

In 1 Thes. 4:16 is still another prophecy on the second advent, differing from all those to which we have already referred. Here the Apostle says—”For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” How unlike the quiet manner in which Jesus left His disciples is this coming with a shout, the trump of God, and with the voice of the archangel?

Try to imagine what the return of Christ would be like if all these prophecies, thus far mentioned, were to be fulfilled literally, and simultaneously, in a few hours. We would have the monstrosity of a glorified man sitting on a white cloud, blowing a trumpet, shouting and talking, with a sickle in one hand, and a platter of food in the other ; with

Him would be a company of mighty angels, and sitting at His feet, eating from His tray, would be His disciples, and in front of Him, near enough to be reached, would be a door upon which He would be knocking, and the whole scene would be engulfed in flaming fire which would be reaching out to destroy His enemies. All this, and there are still other prophecies pertaining to Christ’s second advent which call for consideration.

Do not misunderstand us; we are not attempting to make light of the Scriptures, nor even making light of those who attempt a literal interpretation. No, we are merely attempting to show how utterly impossible it is to arrive at a reasonably accurate conclusion as to the manner of our Lord’s return unless we give due consideration to the chronological order of the prophecies relating thereto, and realise also that many of these prophecies are highly symbolical.

This subject must be studied chronologically and symbolically, bearing in mind also that Jesus’ second advent covers a long period of time. We need to examine whether a prophecy is stated in symbolic or literal language. If we thus rightly divide the Word of Truth, a beautiful harmony will be found in all the prophetic utterances concerning Jesus’ presence and kingdom.

In addition to the prophecies already mentioned, there are still others which must be taken into consideration. For example, instead of sitting down to feast with His disciples at His return, Jesus says in John 14:3 —”I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, ye may be also.”

The Apostle Jude, quoting a prophecy of Enoch, declared that the “Lord will come *with* myriads of saints.” (Jude 14.) Notice that the text in the Gospel of John states that He comes, not bringing His saints with Him, but *to gather* them and take them to the place He has prepared, and this entails sending messengers to gather His elect from one end of Christendom to the other. (Matt. 24:30.) The coming *faro* His saints cannot be the same moment of time as coming *with* His saints, but must refer to an earlier phase of His presence.

When Jesus left His disciples, and the angels said He would come “in like manner,” only those few saw Him go, yet in Rev. 1 :7 it is said—”every eye shall see him.” To what time does this refer? Not to the beginning of His presence, for Jesus said mankind would go on with their natural occupations, unaware on His arrival, until His revelation.

We have already mentioned Luke 12:37, where Jesus is represented as coming to His Church and serving them, but in Matt. 25:31-46 we are told that when He comes with His Church all nations will be gathered before Him, and He will divide them as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. This is an absolutely different viewpoint to that of any of the other prophecies.

Furthermore, He says, “He comes as a thief in the night.” It is also recorded that during the day of His return “heaven and earth will pass away with a great noise.” (2 Pet 3:10.) If this is to be understood literally there would be no clouds upon which the Lord could sit, with sickle in hand to do the reaping, and nowhere for mankind to stand during judgment day. And so we might go on quoting and comparing and contrasting various inspired Scriptures. There is still another in Acts 15:16, which states that when the Lord returns, He will “build the tabernacle of David.” Also in Acts 3:20,21 the Apostle Peter says that when the Lord returns there will be ushered in “times of (years of) restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all God’s holy prophets.” All the prophets say this will be a wonderful and blessed day for mankind in general, during the Lord’s presence. No reference to flaming fire, sickles, trumpet, clouds, or burning of heaven and earth.

Why go on confusing in this manner, you say? But no, the object is not to confuse; all these references to the Lord’s second advent are not confusing when interpreted in harmony with the Divine Plan of the Ages, but to give them a literal interpretation, then, yes, most confusing.

There is one Divine Plan only into which all these texts fit perfectly; they will not fit into any other plan, without distorting the picture. It is similar to the boys’ box of wooden blocks; upon each cube is a part of a design, and if correctly fitted in place, according to pattern, there is displayed a beautiful design which gives credit to the designer, but to lose sight of a block, or to misplace any, spoils the picture. It won’t do to say that this, or that text, or those three texts, show the manner of our Lord’s return. The all-comprehensive view is necessary; all Scripture bearing upon the subject must be used.

Now, it seems that if we are to understand and harmonise these apparently conflicting Scriptures, we will need to have a correct understanding of the nature of Jesus. If we try to understand these prophecies and associate them with the coming of a flesh and bone being, we will certainly get into confusion and unreasonable theories. The Scriptures teach that Jesus, since His resurrection, is a powerful, invisible Divine Being, carrying on His work invisibly to human eyes, even as the Heavenly Father has always done, for the Scriptures declare that Jesus is “the express image of the

Father's person," (Heb. 1 :3)— "whom no man hath seen, nor can see." And in order for the members of His Church to see Jesus, each one must be changed in the resurrection, born of the spirit. "This mortal must put on immortality."

To understand Jesus' second presence to be secret and invisible to human eyes, unknown to the world, during the first phase of His presence, does not contradict the fact of a personal presence in the earth. When Jesus rose from the dead He was personally present with His disciples for forty days, a glorious, invisible, spirit being of the highest order, before He ascended to heaven. During those forty days He manifested His presence about twelve or thirteen times, all of them covering no more than three or four hours, yet He was personally present all the time, though invisible to the disciples most of the time. This should help us to understand our Lord's personal presence now, even though invisible to the physical eye.

One difficulty in understanding the manner of the Lord's return has come about by a faulty translation in the question asked by the disciples in Matt. 24:3 — "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" Scholars give the meaning of the Greek word translated "coming" here, as "presence" (Greek—*parousia*). The Greek word "*parousia*" does not mean coming, but the presence of a being after arrival. Both the American and English Revised Versions give the marginal reading as "presence." Also Professor Wilson's *Diaglott* gives the word for word translation as "presence," and Rotherham in his 3rd edition of his N.T. translation gives a note saying that there is no real reason why this word "*parousia*" should not be translated "presence" in each occurrence.

In addition to this, the Lord gives us this same understanding. It is not His coming or arrival, but His presence after arrival, of which the world will be ignorant. Here are His words in Luke 17: 26,27 — "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man." The coming of either of these is not implied, but their presence. "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark." It does not say, "In the days before His coming" which is the commonly accepted belief. No, but in the *days of*, means, of course, during the Lord's presence after He has come, the world will carry on its legitimate business as usual, for quite a while. Jesus said His day would come upon all "as a snare."

They will not know the cause of the great changes taking place until all are involved in a great time of trouble in which the social and religious arrangements will pass away with a great noise — a great commotion with which this Gospel Age closes. In fact this is one of the effects of the Lord's presence in the earth, just as He predicted. It is one of the signs given to the watchers. None will know of the coming or arrival of Jesus, not even His watching, faithful Church. Here are His words—"Watch, therefore; for ye (disciples) know not what hour your Lord doth come (arrive). . . . Therefore be ye ready ; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (will have arrived). (Matt. 24: 42,44.) But to those who are watching and ready, He will give signs of His presence after His arrival; while not knowing of the hour, they will know of the day. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thes. 5:4.)

The 24th chapter of Matthew should be studied, for therein are given the signs or indications of His presence. These signs will be, and are being fulfilled, not before He comes; no, but during His presence. Note this point well, for it is distinct from the generally accepted belief of His return. His presence will be made manifest later to all mankind, and this is referred to as "apokalupsis"—the revealment, or uncovering, as a thing previously present, but hidden. In due time all will recognise that a new, heavenly power has taken control of the affairs of mankind, and all will see, not with the literal eyes, but the eyes of their understanding will be opened.

In the Apostle Paul's day the Church at Thessalonica seemed to have gotten the thought that Christ was already present, in their day—that He had returned—and in view of what this would mean some members had given up the ordinary pursuits of life, had given up working. The Apostle corrects this error in 2 Thes. 2 :1,2—"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (Greek, *parousiapresence*) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand,"—or is present (Rotherham—"has set in.") Note how he corrects this premature idea. He did not say, as some would tell us now,— "You foolish brethren, do you not know that when Christ returns there will be supernatural signs in the sky, great and sudden demonstrations, and every eye will look upon Him, while you and all the saints will be drawn up to Him, while flaming fire destroys His enemies." How simple it would have been to refer to this, if it were the correct understanding of the manner of Christ's return. No, the Apostle had no such view, nor did he teach that Christ's return would occur in this literal manner.

Rather, Paul taught that Christ's return would be a presence; he taught that the Church would be gathered to the Lord during that time. However, the declaration that the second advent had occurred was premature. This announcement did not come from Paul, nor from any of his letters, nor from the spirit, or disposition, or conduct he manifested. The Apostle goes on to say that there must first come a falling away from the faith and antichrist must develop and reign in the earth, and this is followed by a revealment (uncovering of antichrist). Antichrist was in the world a long time before it was revealed as a deception and counterfeit of the true, but the Lord's people see it in its true light. Truth has revealed its claims as being false, and then verse 8 shows this antichristian system will be consumed and finally destroyed with the brightness of Jesus' second presence.

The brightness referred to here is from the Greek word "*epiphania*" which means "bright shining, or manifestation," which is an effect of His presence. This bright shining means a diffusion of light, of truth — an increase of light and knowledge. This will, and is already affecting all people, and especially antichrist. Light makes manifest, but this affects the Church differently to the world. Who can deny that all the world is being enlightened; increase of light, of knowledge along all lines, is turning the world upside down. This light reveals to the Lord's people the real character, spirit and teaching of antichrist — the false church. Furthermore, this great, false church system has been for some

years past, and is now being consumed; its power is being destroyed — a direct effect of Christ's presence, just as this prophecy predicts. But remember that this sign is not given us to warn us that Christ is coming soon. No, but of His presence after He has arrived.

The Lord gives us also an illustration in Matt. 24:27 that His presence would be marked by a great increase of light, of knowledge, and that this would be actually a sign of His second presence. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the presence of the Son of man be." It seems that the Lord does not mean a lightning flash here, for strictly speaking lightning does not shine, it is just a flash and disappears. The Lord refers to the great light that comes out of the east and shines even to the west—the sun. So in like manner will the Lord's second presence be. Not His coming, for that was not the question asked by the disciples, but "What shall be the sign of thy presence?" The same Greek word translated "lightning" in this text is translated "bright shining" in Luke 11:36 where it refers to the bright shining of the light of a candle.

This worldwide diffusion of light, this illumination by means of the printing press, radio and general education of the masses of mankind is what we are now witnessing. It is one of the chief or outstanding signs of the Lord's second presence. In this our day the world is being flooded with accumulated ideas, representing the sum total of knowledge gained through all past ages.

This has also been predicted by Daniel the prophet (Dan. 12:1,4.) "Michael shall stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. In the time of the end many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Michael is Christ, assuming His authority. His second presence brings with it this effect in the world today, causing worldwide trouble and the breaking up of our present order of civilization.

This should help us to understand the prophecy already mentioned, that the Lord cometh with, or during a shout. This, of course, is not a literal shout, nor are we to understand that Jesus will blow a literal trumpet. Remember, it is also true that "He cometh as a thief in the night," and a thief does not shout, or blow trumpets. This shout is symbolical. Professor Strong defines the Greek word used in this text as meaning "a cry of incitement." The thought seems to be that Christ's return would be accompanied by a general increase of knowledge, which would incite people to rise up and demand their long-desired rights. This symbolic shout is closely related to the bright shining of the Master's presence.

This increase of knowledge is exerting a powerful effect in the affairs of the church, and the world. Even China and the Asiatic peoples who have slept for centuries are now awakening and demanding recognition, and are throwing off the powers which oppressed them for so long. Yes, this shout rises up all over the world. (Compare Jer. 25:29-33.)

Time does not allow discussion on other symbols and prophetic statements concerning the second advent, and to show how these are meeting fulfilment in present day events in the religious and social world. There is also the fact, however, that since 1914 — the date when the Gentile Times ended — the nations have not been able to gain their equilibrium since the first smashing blow of World War One.

Since that time peace conferences, disarmament conferences, the League of Nations—the world court — and other conferences all have failed, and the nations have become more fearful. Then World War Two has greatly hastened the final collapse, and to avert this billions are being spent on armaments, each great power hoping that it may save itself, even though civilization as a whole will be destroyed. The symbolic clouds are dark and ominous, hanging low over the world, for Jesus "cometh with clouds."

These things are signs to the watching Christians who have their lamps trimmed and burning—signs, not that Jesus will come soon, but signs of His presence, and the fulfilment of His promise that He would gird Himself and make them to sit down to meat and would come forth and serve them, with a feast of Truth.

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## The Institute's Work

ANOTHER year's work has been completed for the Berean Bible Institute, and we lift up our hearts in thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings and overruling providence in connection with the work being carried on in co-operation with our brethren in various parts of this land and across the seas. In rendering thanks to God, it is also desired to express sincere appreciation to all the dear friends who have assisted in various ways, in the service of the Lord, in the undertakings carried on at the Institute.

The work each year is of a similar nature, being directed mainly towards encouraging our brethren in the Christian way in which they have been privileged to walk since responding to the invitation to walk in the steps of Christ. The presentation of the kingdom message is also a witness to others who have ears to hear "the joyful sound" of the truth, and who long for a substantial and lasting hope for the future, especially in view of the precarious international situation. The principal means of contact with the brethren and other interested friends is provided by our monthly "Peoples Paper," and it is encouraging to receive the words of appreciation of the "Paper" from many of its readers.

The contributions to the columns of our periodical throughout the year past were also much appreciated, and other friends who have helpful articles suitable for publication are also invited to send them in. The subscription list for our "Paper" has been generally maintained, though the price of 5/- per year does not cover the production costs, so the

deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund. Considerable numbers of the "Peoples Paper," are distributed free throughout the year, and all subscribers are welcome to extra copies for distribution where good may be done. Those friends who supply subscriptions for others whom they feel may be helped are also assisting well. The work of proof reading for the monthly "Paper" on the part of some of our friends is greatly appreciated, as also is the folding and wrapping for despatch to our readers.

Supplies of tracts are on hand for distribution by friends who can use them to good advantage, these tracts being supplied free from the Tract Fund. The mailing of Consolation Cards to the bereaved has also been continued by some of our brethren, and suitable literature is forwarded when the cards are returned. Any other friends desiring to assist in this work are invited to contact our office.

Public lectures have been continued at regular intervals also throughout the past year ; good appreciation has been shown by the brethren who have encouraged their friends to attend, and others from the public have also expressed appreciation on these occasions. By the Lord's overruling, some who appreciate the Bible truths in this way are encouraged to attend the regular Bible studies.

The General Tract Fund account listed below reveals the financial position for the general work, and the voluntary contributions of our friends have provided all the good assistance in the Lord's providence. This loving co-operation and sacrificing to assist in the work is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord. The outlook from the natural standpoint may well give cause for apprehension, but from the Lords standpoint we are living in one of the most wonderful periods in human history, as the harvest work continues for the Gospel Age church, in preparation for the heavenly inheritance for all the faithful over-corners, by the Lord's grace and strength. It is the privilege of the brethren to continue their service with devotion to the Lord and His cause, building up themselves in the most holy faith, and encouraging others to do the same, while sounding forth the message of the kingdom to all who may have ears to hear. The prayers of our brethren are requested for the blessing and guidance of the Lord to be over His work in these last days of the Gospel Age. "Therefore, beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.)

#### GENERAL TRACT FUND.

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## Radio Work

THANKFULNESS to the Lord for His I blessings in connection with the radio witness in Australia throughout another year is also gladly expressed at this time. Many of our friends have freely co-operated in this witness over the air, and their good assistance in this work is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord.

Considerable numbers of enquiries have been received from the radio programmes, and while some Bible subjects promote special interest, a wide circle of listeners state that they consider each Sunday's message a means of blessing

and encouragement in their Christian life, and that they always look forward to the sessions over the air. It is nice to know that the Lord will grant the increase as He sees good. The same radio stations have been used, — 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY/NA — and printed copies of each broadcast are offered to all interested listeners for further investigation, as also other Free Literature.

Copies of the “Peoples Paper” are also sent free for at least six months to all enquirers to the radio sessions, and in this way they are brought into contact with the truth generally, and a number have become subscribers to our monthly “Paper.” All our brethren are invited to advertise the radio stations within hearing distance, so that the message may reach as many as possible, especially those who may be looking for the glad tidings of the kingdom.

The financial position for this branch of the work is shown by the Radio Fund Account, and the voluntary contributions of our friends reveal the very good assistance received, and which is much appreciated, in the service of the Lord. All expenses have been met, and provision is also in hand to continue this work, in the Lords providence, our Western Australian friends continuing to cover the cost of the broadcasts through 6KY/NA. Again it is requested that our brethren join in prayer for God’s blessing to attend this witness of His truth, that He may grant the increase as He sees good in this part of His harvest field.

## Tracts Available.

The article—“When Will God Pour Out His Spirit Upon All Flesh ?”—is now available in tract form and friends who can use them to advantage are invited to obtain supplies.

Other subjects available in tract form are — “Do World Events Foreshadow Armageddon ?”; “Refrain Thy Voice From Weeping”; “Is There a Second Chance for Salvation After Death ?” etc. Apply for these according to opportunities for wise distribution.

**T**he sentiment that it matters not what a man believes, so long as he is sincere, is as unscriptural as it is absurd. Sincerity in belief has no more effect in warding off evil in the spiritual than in the natural kingdom. If the teachings and persuasions of a reputed chemist should prevail on you to believe that arsenic is harmless, would it therefore be harmless? Could you mix it with your bread, and eat it without injury? Oh, no, neither will the sincerity of your belief save you from the consequences of error in religious faith. Right belief — truth, God’s truth, my brethren, is the only foundation on which you can safely rest your hopes.—Selected.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier **clear type**, **Persian Morocco** binding, is now available at 60/-. **Same** Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/.

## Correspondence.

Dear Brother—Thanks for your letter, and it is good to hear of the helpful meetings, also of the Memorial of our Saviour’s death kept by the friends in Melbourne. . . . Thanks

Brother for the Convention Notes compiled by brother Smith. It is very good to have reproduced such a nice outline of the various talks and studies—another cause of thankfulness to our Lord, and also to Brother Smith and yourself. We know the matter is a labour of love for the Lord, cheerfully rendered, and I’m sure much appreciated by those who receive them.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Christian Friends—Most loving Greetings from your elderly Sister across the water, in the name of our blessed Lord. It has occurred to me that it is up to me to be sending you an offering for your work in publishing the little “Paper,” so full of the meat that perisheth not, so please find herein my check for—for that purpose.

O, the blessedness of the truth! In these end days, when everything that can be shaken is in process of disappearing, how humble it should make us who know the future, as revealed by our God, to realise this great favor of being in His confidence, thus we need not fear, no matter what the future holds, for God is at the helm. . . . May our faith keep on in the narrow way ‘till “life’s last hour is fled,” is the prayer of your Sister in Him.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs — Re your broadcast last Sunday, 3rd May, from 3GL, I should like to have a copy of this talk, as I have come up against the subject of healing in these days, “Jesus the same yesterday, today, and forever,” being used as the reason why we should be able to heal. I have had reason to study the subject closely in recent months, and thought your talk was very helpful, and to be able to pass it on to any others who are undecided on the point, would be a privilege for me, so I am hoping you still have some copies left, and be able to send me some.

I would like you to know that I often listen to your Sunday morning talks, and gain quite a lot of helpful information from them. May God be with you as you carry on helping people to understand His Word and Plan for us. Yours in Christ.

Dear Christian Brethren—Will you kindly post to the above address copies of the last two addresses that you have given over the radio, in which I was very interested, as you put forth some truths about which I am not too familiar? The study of the Scriptures is my constant delight and I often wish I had more time to devote to them, although I can truly say they are always first place in my readings. May the Lord be pleased to bless your messages on the air. Sincerely yours in His precious love.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Please send me to the above address a copy of your Biblical Discussions of May 3rd and 10th about healing' and speaking with other tongues; they were very good. Thank you for your sessions to which I have listened for several years. Enclosed is a small donation towards your broadcasting fees. Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs — I was extremely interested in your discussion about salvation after this life. I tuned-in to it quite accidentally last Sunday, and missed part of the talk, so I would be very grateful if I could have a copy. Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir — Please find enclosed a donation of £1. Will you please continue to send me your "Peoples Paper"? I enjoy reading it; it is very enlightening reading, especially to myself, as there are quite a lot of the passages of the Bible I cannot grasp. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Am enclosing a small donation for your funds. Thank you for your continued messages ; your music too is very lovely. May you continue. Thanking you; yours sincerely.

Dear Brother—Thank you for the books; we are very grateful to be able to read still more of the wonderful truth. We were also very thankful that we could manage to attend. at the Memorial Supper; such a great privilege indeed! Perhaps Brother will come along on Sunday afternoon, but as this is not sure yet I am sending you this cheque. Would you please keep the change towards the work. Thanking you again. With Christian Greetings; your Sister in Christ.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Fellow Christians —We are regular listeners to your Sunday morning sessions from the G.L. Station, and I am writing to ask for copies of the last four talks that have been given, especially yesterday's. May God continue to bless the broadcasts each week. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours sincerely.

Dear Sir—I was wondering if you would be kind enough to send me (if any) the Scriptures condemning blood transfusions. I am doing Bible studies and have been shown a few Scriptures from a book, but somehow I am not satisfied with what I have been told, particularly after reading in the Sydney newspapers about a person in Melbourne not allowing his baby to have blood transfusions. I would like to know what the Scriptures say regarding this matter. Trusting you will be able to help me. I remain; yours faithfully.

(An article entitled — "Should Christians Accept Blood Transfusions to Save Life?"—covering this subject in some detail, will appear in next month's "Peoples Paper" and copies will be available for all. — B.B. Institute.)

## **Bible Study Meetings.**

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

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

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

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

## **Immovable for Christ.**

The old Lollards were called "Holdfasts," not only because of their firmness under persecution, but of their strong grasp of the truth. Coleridge said, with a practical aptness unusual with him: "What does not withstand. has no standing ground." "Hold fast, then, the form of sound words, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." Be modest, unostentatious in all that is your own, willing to concede everything you have a right to yield, but be scrupulous and immovable about all that is Christ's.—Selected.

### **BOOKS WANTED.**

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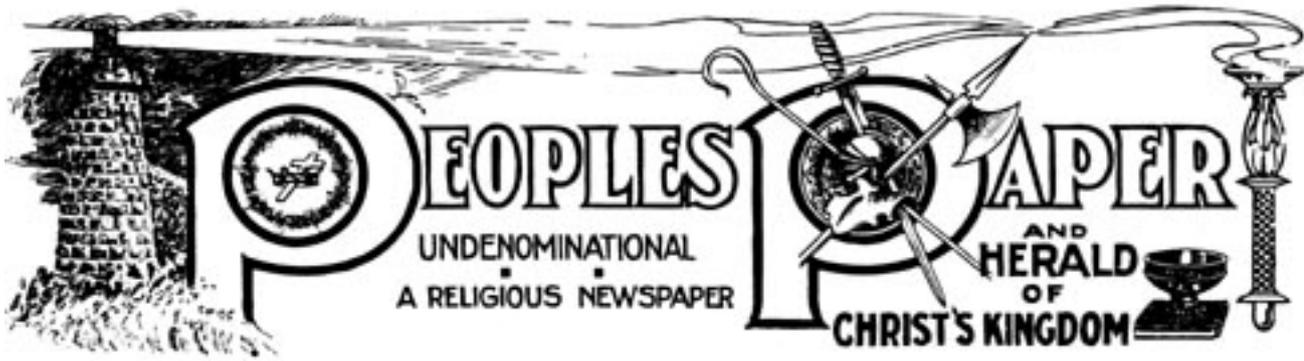
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## The Bible Teaching on Pentecost and the Trinity.

(This article is published by request).

THIS subject is closely connected with the Easter season, and has been selected for examination because of some strange statements having been made in connection with the season of Pentecost

Most of our readers will know that the term Pentecost signifies “fiftieth,” and was used amongst the Jews as the name of one of their most important feasts, or religious celebrations. As their fiftieth Jubilee year followed a cycle of seven times seven years, so Pentecost, as a jubilee day, followed a cycle of seven times seven days, from the time of the gathering of the sheaf of firstfruits, which was presented before the Lord as a “wave offering.”

This sheaf of the firstfruits evidently typified our Lord in His resurrection on the 16th day of Nisan, He having been slain as the Passover Lamb on the 14th day of Nisan. The account given in Leviticus 23, is most enlightening, as follows—“In the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan) at even is the Lord’s passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord.” (Verses 5,6, 9-12.)

As our Lord was crucified on the evening prior to the sabbath, “the morrow after the sabbath” would refer to the first day of the week on which Christ was resurrected; hence, the sheaf of firstfruits was a fitting symbol of our Lord’s resurrection, as stated by the Apostle Paul—“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” (1 Cor. 15:20.)

Further verses in Lev. 23 help to explain our subject, as follows — “And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour ; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.” (Verses 15-17.) There can be no doubt that this counting forward of fifty days “from the morrow after the sabbath” even “unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath” was to typify the important Day of Pentecost, fifty days after our Lord’s resurrection.

There is also an important comparison seen in those verses in Lev. 23. In verse 6, in connection with the Passover, the feast is of unleavened bread which pictured Christ’s perfection as the antitypical Passover Lamb, and His resurrection is shown by the “sheaf of firstfruits” being offered on “the morrow after the sabbath,” as we have seen. Then, in verses 15-17, when explaining the procedure to determine the 50th day after the “morrow after the sabbath” — in other words the typical Pentecost — we find that two wave loaves, of fine flour, were to be baked “with leaven.” They were “the firstfruits unto the Lord.” This seems clearly to picture the acceptance of the Church, in the persons of the Apostles, on the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after our Lord’s resurrection, the loaves being baked “with leaven” showing the imperfection of the church in contrast with the perfection of Christ. So, the Apostle Paul refers to the Church as “Christ the firstfruits” in 1 Cor. 15:23, our Lord Himself being the first of the firstfruits unto God. (See also James 1:18.)

How wonderfully, then, did those ceremonies with Israel picture the presentation of the first of the firstfruits to God, in the resurrection of Christ; and the presentation of the Church of the firstfruits to God, fifty days after our Lord’s resurrection, and ten days after His ascension.

The first occasion that we find the word “spirit” in the New Testament is in Matt. 3:16, at the time of Jesus’ baptism in the River Jordan, where we read—“the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.” It would have been much more helpful had this expression “spirit of God” been preserved throughout the Bible when the holy spirit

was mentioned, but in numerous places the expression “holy ghost” is used, and to many people this gives a very wrong impression. When our Authorized Version of the Bible was produced, the translators, believing in a personal holy spirit, conceived the idea of calling it a holy “ghost,” and this term has hindered many from thinking it could be anything else than personal. However, later translations use the word “spirit” wherever the word “ghost” is used in the Authorized Version, and this gives the correct thought to the Greek and Hebrew words which mean power or influence.

We wish to give the translators credit for correct renderings, and one of these is in Luke 11 :13—”How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him.”

As the time drew near to the close of our Lord’s life on earth, and knowing that the blessing of the holy spirit would come upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, He explained this matter to them rather fully, especially on the evening when He observed the Jewish Passover and afterwards instituted with His Apostles the Memorial of His death. These explanations from our Lord are found in John’s Gospel, chapters 14, 15 and 16.

From John 14:16 we read—”I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” Verse 17 from the Diaglott translation reads —”The spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, because it beholds it not, nor knows it; but you know it, because it abides with you, and will be in you.” Also verse 26 from the Diaglott states —”But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name shall teach you all things, and remind you of all things which I said to you.” Here we see that the personal pronoun is not used, and which gives us the correct thought. But even when the pronoun “he” is used in speaking of the holy spirit, it is quite in order when we understand that it is God’s spirit—the masculine pronoun represents God. However, the word “it” is just as correctly used for God’s holy spirit or power.

Knowing how disappointed the disciples would be to hear that their Lord must leave them after only 3½ years of ministry, Jesus tried to break the news gently, and as helpfully as possible. So we read—”I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him (it) unto you.” (John 16:7.) “It is expedient”—it is essential—that I go away.” Our Lord was impressing the necessity for Him to pay the death penalty that stood against all the disciples, as well as all others of mankind. How expedient, then, it really was; how essential that Jesus die as the ransom sacrifice, and then be raised for our justification, as Paul states in Rom. 4: 20-25.

After our Lord’s death and resurrection, we are informed of this by the Apostle in Heb. 9 :24—”For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Why was this necessary? It was necessary, that Christ may present, antitypically, His sacrifice in the Most Holy—heaven itself—on behalf of His Church, to open up the heavenly calling. (See Heb. 10:19, 20.)

If Christ had not died in sacrifice, and appeared on behalf of His Church in heaven, there could have been no pouring out of the holy spirit, and no invitation to any of the human family to participate in the heavenly Kingdom. This helps us to see, also, that previous to our Lord’s ascension, no one could be invited to be the Bride of Christ. Even such a devoted servant as John the Baptist could not be of the heavenly calling, as shown in Matt. 11:11. But when our Lord was raised from the dead, and appeared to His disciples from time to time during those forty days, He gave them definite instructions, as recorded in Luke 24: 44-53.

Again in Acts 1 :3-5, 8, 9, these instructions are recorded for our benefit — “Being seen of them forty days . . . . He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. . . . Ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you.” We know that the power of the holy spirit was manifest upon the waiting disciples after ten days from our Lord’s ascension to heaven, and that waiting time of ten days is interpreted by Bible students as fulfilling the words of Rev. 8:1—”There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.”

When those ten days of waiting had passed, the Day of Pentecost came, as we read in Acts 2: 1-2 — “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” How appropriate that this mighty wind was associated with the bestowing of the power of God upon the disciples on that wonderful occasion for wind, being invisible, is a fitting symbol for God’s holy power. Indeed, both the Hebrew and Greek words from which our word “spirit” is derived, also mean wind, or unseen power.

Strange as it may seem, however, there are a great number of people, some of them holding degrees in theology, who claim that the power which came upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost was a third person in the Godhead, and they go to some lengths to try and defend their teaching of the Trinity, or the Triune God, as they express it. We remember that the Apostles were accused of being drunk with wine, as a result of the “gifts of the spirit” which came upon them on the Day of Pentecost, but Peter explained the matter clearly in Acts 2:14-18. Also in verses 32, 33 he showed how this outpouring of God’s spirit came about — “God hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” Did the Father shed forth another God—the third person in a trinity? How strange that would be, if true! Let us note verse 18 of this 2nd chapter of Acts — “I will pour out in those days of MY SPIRIT.” Yes, God poured out His own spirit, His own power, His own influence.

Further Scriptures are helpful along the same line—”But if the spirit of him (God) that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom. 8:11. See also Rom. 8:14-16; Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30.)

It may be asked, How are we to understand John 10:30,—”I and my Father are one.” Comparing John 14:28 we read—”My Father is greater than I.” Is this a contradiction? Turning to John 17 :20, 21, where Jesus prayed for His Church, we read—”Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Are we to take from this prayer that Christ's Church of thousands of members is to be taken into the heavenly Godhead also, because they are to be one with Christ and the Father? No, indeed! Rather, this oneness is a oneness of mind, of heart, of purpose. So is also the oneness between Jesus and the Father, when He said—"I and my Father are one."

We have a helpful explanation regarding our Lord Jesus in 1 John 4:1-3. Verses 2 and 3 read—"Every spirit (doctrine or teaching) that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Our Lord could not have come "in the flesh" if He were one in the trinity ; but how important it was that He did come in the flesh, to redeem mankind, otherwise we are not yet redeemed. (See Heb. 2:9.)

The Apostle Paul presents this matter to us very clearly and helpfully also, when, after referring to the many gods worshipped in the heathen world, he declared — "But to us (Christians) there is but one God, the Father, a whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6.) If the doctrine of the trinity were correct, how easy it would have been for the Apostle to have stated the matter there and then, when the Father and the Son were contrasted with the many "that are called gods" outside the Christian religion. (See also Diaglott translation of Phil. 2:5, 6, and word for word English and Greek of John 1:1, 2.)

As we meditate upon the blessings and favors of the truth received from on high on that Day of Pentecost, fifty days after our Lord's resurrection, how thankful we are that "the faith once delivered to the saints" has continued all down the Gospel Age to our own day, as God's spirit is received into the hearts and minds of all the true disciples of Christ, and they come under the anointing of the spirit following their full consecration to walk in the steps of the Master. From 2 Cor. 1:21, 22 we read "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." The same Apostle also declares — "God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light 'of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'" (2 Cor. 4:6.) We may be sure that God will continue to shine into the hearts of all devoted disciples, enabling them to finish their course successfully, in His own good time and way, to His praise.

## Dead and Buried.

In the fourth century a young earnest disciple sought an interview with the great and good Macarius, and asked him what was meant by being dead to sin. He said, "You remember our brother who died and was buried a short time since. Go to his grave and tell him all the unkind things you ever heard of him. Go, my son, and hear what he will answer." The young man doubted whether he understood; but Macarius only said, "Do as I tell you, my son; and come and tell me what he says." He went, and came back, saying, "I can get no reply ; he is dead." "Go again and try him with flattering words—tell him what a great saint he was, what noble work he did, and how *we* miss him; and come again and tell me what he says." He did so, but on his return said, "He answers nothing, father ; he is dead and buried." "You know now, my son," said the old father. "what it is to be dead to sin, dead and buried with Christ. Praise and blame are nothing to him who is really dead and buried with Christ." (Rom. 6 :3.)—Selected.

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## Where the Bible and Jesus are Silent.

PERHAPS most people wonder sometimes why the Bible and the sayings of Jesus are so often silent on so many questions which are perplexing. Why is it, they wonder, that so many things they would have liked to see stated in black and white are simply not mentioned at all? Perhaps you discover that for the special doubt of your soul there is no direct word, and you can find no completely satisfying answer to the special needs of your life.

However, would it have been possible to have given detailed and minute instructions and advice so far ahead that it would have covered all the variety of individual need, and all stages of human development? And even if this had been

possible, would it have been beneficial. Would it have been good for us to live by a huge book of spiritual recipes, or by a great code of ethics, which would supply chapter and verse for every emergency? How many of us could stand that, and where would be our spiritual freedom?

Think of what you possess as a child of God; think of what you see in your hours of vision, even if you cannot always express it articulately; think of that which gives you shelter in the assaults and storms of life, and light in the doubts of your soul! It is not this or that particular word or saying, it is not any special command, but it is the deliberate turning of your spirit towards God : the sense of truth, the spirit of reverence for all that is holy, and an ever renewed aspiration—even though it may often be hindered — of desire after a life whose power is not of this world. This is the spirit of God, which you have received, and it will lead you far more clearly into the truth, that is, into the reality of a higher life, than a single word or command could ever do, because as the brook issues from the mountain spring, so the spirit issues from God.

From this spirit, in increasing measure, you yourself will be able to decide what is true for you, and what you ought to do in your necessities and difficulties and doubts. And it is precisely this feeling of freedom which will give you strength.—Selected.

## In the Night Watches.

*“My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips; when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches.”—Psa. 63:5,6.*

PSALM 92:1 declares that it is “a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,” also to “sing praises” unto the Most High. The more we learn about our God through an increasing understanding of His Word, the greater will be our desire to sing His praises. As our knowledge of Him deepens into a personal acquaintance with Him, through the out-working of His providences in our lives and the fulfilment of His promises of grace to help in every time of need, our lives should flow on in endless songs of praise to the God of our salvation.

The Lord referred to David as a man after His own heart, and in many of his psalms the sweet singer of Israel declares his love for the Lord and his delight in the law of his God. In one of them he writes — “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever ; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” — Psa. 19 :7-10.

David speaks of meditating upon the Lord in the “night watches.” It was these meditations that enabled him to write “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3,4.) And again, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.”—Psa. 19:1,2.

The hours from sundown to sunrise in David’s time presented a somewhat different situation than they do today. Now the electric light and other means of artificial illumination very nearly turn night into day, with the result that the vast majority of the people keep active, either in work or in pleasure for such long hours that there is scarcely time left for the proper amount of sleep, and seldom is there any opportunity for quiet meditation.

‘But this was not the case in David’s time. With the flicker of a dim flame from the burning of olive oil almost the only means of securing light after the sun went down, probably most people spent much more time in bed than is the custom now. And since the body requires only a certain amount of sleep, there were doubtless many sleepless hours during the night.

In the case of David, while he was a shepherd boy, and later as leader of Israel’s army, he no doubt spent many of his nights under the canopy of heaven. It was under these conditions that he rejoiced as he meditated upon the goodness of the Lord, and marvelled at the wonders of creation. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that the subject matter of many of David’s beautiful psalms took shape in his mind as he thus meditated during the night watches. How wonderfully such surroundings would prepare him for the influence of the holy spirit which guided him in his inspired writings.

Truly David was a man of God, and the spirit of devotion and praise found in his writings is a sincere expression of his own heart, a heart that had been given to the Lord. When he wrote, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” he was expressing his own feelings in the matter, giving utterance to his own confidence in the keeping power of his God.

But beyond the expression of his own delight in the Lord, David was inspired by the holy spirit to pen messages peculiarly fitting to the needs of the people of God during the present age. Indeed, in the divine providence, this is the chief purpose of his writings, even as it is of the writings of all the Old Testament prophets; for, as the apostle declares, not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister. They wrote for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come.—Rom. 15:4, 1 Cor. 10; 6, 11; 1 Pet. 1:12.

This being true, we might think of David’s experience of meditation upon the goodness of the Lord upon his bed during the night watches as having a counterpart even more blessed in our own experiences. We are not suggesting the making of a type of his experiences, but merely that they remind us of something greater in the divine arrangement than literally lying upon a bed meditating upon the goodness of the Lord during the dark hours of a night.

In God’s creative design there are seven “days,” six of them having been completed about the time our first parents

were created. Each of these days began with an “evening” and closed with a “morning.” There is reason to believe that each of these creative days was a period of seven thousand years in length, with the seventh, or last “day,” beginning with the creation and fall of man, and ending in the “morning,” a morning which will become fully bright at the close of the thousand-year reign of Christ.

In each case the “evening” of the creative days marked an obscure beginning, with darkness settling down into a night, until the “morning” marked the close of each period. And so it was when sin and death came upon the scene at the beginning of the seventh creative “day.” From then until now, the world has been passing through the long hours of a night of darkness. “Weeping” has continued throughout this night, David tells us, “but joy cometh in the morning.”—Psa. 30:5.

During this long night of weeping the world has been greatly distraught and unsettled. But those who have had faith in the promises of God have enjoyed rest of mind and heart. This has been particularly true of Jesus’ followers during the Gospel Age. Paul wrote concerning these, saying, “For we which have believed do enter into rest.” (Heb. 4:3.) We are keenly aware of the evil with which we are surrounded, and of the motions of sin in our flesh, but *we* place our faith in the finished work of Christ on our behalf and know that through Him and His kingdom all evil will eventually come to an end, and that even death itself will be destroyed.

Thus *we* are at rest. It is a rest “by” faith, and a rest “in” faith; that is, in the “most holy faith,” the foundation of which is the meritorious sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Based upon the merit of the shed blood are all the various features of the divine plan of salvation — its times and seasons; its heavenly calling for the church, and the hope of restitution for the world; its prophecies pertaining to the end of the age, and its promises concerning the new age at hand; its explanation of the divine permission of evil, and its assurance that evil will not rise up the second time.

Yes, all this, and more, is contained in our “most holy faith,” that wonderful outline of the divine plan in which we find peace of mind and rest of heart. No matter how dark the night, or how far distant the morning hours at times may seem, we can continue to rest in this “bed” of divine promises, and while we rest, continue to sing the praises of our Lord.

In Isaiah 28:20 we read about a bed which “is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.” Two verses previous to this we are told of some who make a “covenant with death,” and an “agreement with hell.” The Hebrew word here translated “hell” is *Sheol*, meaning simply the death condition. Contrary to this plain Scriptural statement, it has been agreed by the molders of religious thought throughout Christendom that there is no death.

Upon this false premise the creeds of the nominal church have been built—creeds, or confessions of faith, which have been designed to give “rest” to believers, but which, when they are put to the test, fail to do so. These creed “beds” are too short. One who endeavours to find satisfaction in them upon the basis of reason discovers that they are too short. Nor do they provide adequate covering to protect one from the chilling drafts of doubt and fear which plague the soul.

These, apparently, are the beds referred to by Jesus in His great prophecy pertaining to the end of the age when He said that two would be lying in a “bed,” that one would be taken, and the other left (Luke 17:34-37.) And such was the position of some of us. We have experienced the shortness of these creed beds of Christendom, and have been most uncomfortable under their limited conceptions of the love and grace of God. But the Lord has favored us in that we have been lifted out of these beds and given rest upon the bed of present truth.

This is not because we are wiser than others, nor more worthy, but simply because of God’s grace in permitting us to know “the mystery of the kingdom of God.” (Mark 4:11.) Surely this is great cause for rejoicing, and for praising our God, as now, while it is still dark, we are privileged to rest upon this soul-satisfying “bed” which the Lord has provided for us.

Our rest of faith in Christ, and in the great plan of God of which He is the centre, is not designed to induce sleep. While we are resting upon this bed of present truth during the world’s dark night of sin, sorrow, and death, we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Concerning this Paul wrote, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness.. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”-1 Thes. 5:5,6.

“Let us watch and be sober.” In our text David speaks of the “night watches.” In order to participate in a “night watch” one has to be awake and alert. Night watching is a very old institution, made necessary because of the sin and selfishness of fallen man. Darkness serves as a sort of natural protection for prowlers, thieves, opposing armies, or whoever would rob another or inflict damage upon him or his property. As an offset to this, watchmen are stationed to detect the approach or presence of enemies, and to sound an alarm.

Obviously, a watchman would fail of his •duty if he fell asleep. It is not his privilege, during the night, to “sleep as do others.” Rather, he is to “watch and be sober.” And, as Christians, this is our position during the night time of sin and death. We are “watchmen” in Zion, as it were, and we should keep alert and be on guard against the approach of “enemies” of whatever nature they might be which would rob us, or others of the Lord’s people, of their heritage in Christ Jesus.

Paul continues : “They that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” (1 Thes. 5:7,8.) This, of course, *is* all symbolic language. To “sleep” suggests spiritual lethargy, and to be “drunken” indicates an intoxication by false theories, doctrines, and hobbies.

We can avoid these conditions, Paul reveals, by “putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” In his letter to the Church at Ephesus, he admonishes us to “put on the whole armor of God,” that we may be able to stand against the “wiles of the devil.”—Eph. 6:11.

The truth, in its many aspects, and in its various applications in our lives, is the Christian’s armor. The very truths in which we find peace and joy and rest are also our protection against the insidious attacks of the Adversary during these dark hours of the night. It is for this purpose that the Lord gave us the truth.

Among the very important truths which guard the Christian’s heart and life today is a proper knowledge of the times in which we are living. It is this that Paul speaks of particularly when reminding us of our privileges as watchmen. We quote — “Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” — 1 Thes. 5:1-4.

The reason the “day of the Lord” does not overtake the “brethren” as a “thief in the night” is because they are “awake” and faithfully watching. In this lesson Paul is closely following the thoughts presented by Jesus concerning the time of His second presence and the end of the age. Jesus said, referring to a possible advanced knowledge of His coming, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man.” (Mark 13:32.) For this reason he admonished His disciples to “watch.”

Paul says, “Of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.” Jesus said that no one would know in advance, and Paul was not assuming that he did know, but he added, “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” The Thessalonian brethren knew this “perfectly” because they had confidence in what Jesus had said on the point.

But the thief-like coming of the day of the Lord was to be true only so far as the outside world and drowsy professed Christians were concerned. “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness,” Paul insisted, “that that day should overtake you as a thief.” When Jesus gave His great lesson pertaining to the time of His second presence, admonishing His disciples to watch because they did not know the day nor the hour, He did not say in so many words that their faithful watching would be rewarded by a discernment of His presence and the beginning of the day of the Lord. But this is how Paul understood what the Master had said. That is why he wrote, “Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

But this can be true only of those who are awake. “Let us not sleep, as do others,” Paul wrote. And oh, the joy with which the faithful watchers are rewarded! Concerning the saints who would be living in this time, and to whom, because of their faithfulness, the Lord would reveal His presence, Daniel wrote, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.”—Dan. 12 :12.

Yes, “blessed” indeed is the David class in this most wonderful time during which we are now living! From the human outlook it is the darkest period of all time. In this darkness there is fear and apprehension. So frustrated is human wisdom that peace is feared almost as much as war. It is the time referred to in Psalm 46: 2,3, when the symbolic “earth” is being “removed,” and when the “mountains” are being “carried into the midst of the sea.”

But “we will not fear” wrote David. No, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in (this time of) trouble.” He is helping in every needed way, and especially by having favored us with a knowledge of the • truth. When on every hand there is unrest, nervous apprehension, chaos, and distress, we have a “bed” upon which we can recline and “rest.”

And if we keep properly “awake” during these dark hours, watching the on-moving events in the great plan of God, the very things which increase the world’s fears, make our rest more complete. For among the things we see as watchers in Zion is the near approach of morning. Indeed, the Morning Star has already appeared, and through the din and confusion incident to the death of Satan’s world we discern the first gray streaks of dawn!

Surely, as David wrote, our souls are “satisfied with marrow and fatness.” The rich feast of truth, the “meat in due season” served to the household of faith by our returned Lord, satisfies our longings as nothing else could do. It is as manna from heaven, sweet, nourishing, and soul-satisfying.

And when we think of the many blessings which the Lord has so abundantly bestowed upon us, we cannot help, while resting upon our “beds” during the night watches, to sing aloud the praises of our God. David makes six al mention of this in Psalm 149:5, where we read, “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.” Yes, we are “resting” but not “sleeping,” and while we rest, we “sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.”

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,” David continues, “and a two-edged sword in their hand.” In Psalm 92, where David says that “it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,” he also speaks of showing forth His loving-kindness. We give thanks to God in our personal and collective prayers to Him, but we show forth His praises when we speak of His loving-kindness to others. So, to sing aloud upon our beds, and for the high praises of God to be in our mouths, call for activity in making known the glorious Gospel of the kingdom.

This is the great privilege of all who have been called out of darkness into the marvellous light of the divine plan. We rejoice in the fatness, the richness of the “meat in due season” upon which it is our privilege to feed. Resting upon our “bed” in the “night watches” we delight to meditate upon the goodness of the Lord, and to give thanks to Him for His boundless grace.

But this should not be all. The result of our meditations should be a bursting forth in song, even the “new song” which the Lord has given us to sing. And when we take into consideration all that the Lord is doing for us, how can we

keep from singing? Surely we will want to praise the Lord with joyful lips!

In Psalm 92:3 David speaks of praising the Lord upon an “instrument of ten strings.” We might think of these “ten strings” as representing the various fundamental doctrines of the divine plan. It is the beautiful harmony of these doctrines, when these “strings” are played upon by those who have learned the “new song,” that really brings praise to our God.

These doctrines reveal the wisdom, justice, love, and power of our God which, blended in perfect harmony and unison, make up His glory. It is our privilege now to show forth this glory, while, resting upon our “beds,” we joyfully contemplate the time now nearing when a knowledge of His glory will fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. Praise ye the Lord! (From “The Dawn.”)

## **Discord Precedes Harmony**

It seems to me the trials and the temptations of this life are all making us fit for the life to come—building up a character for eternity. You have been in a piano manufactory; did you ever go there for the sake of music? Go into the tuning room and you will say, “My dear sir, this is a dreadful place to be in; I cannot bear it; I thought you made music here.” They say, “No; we do not produce music here ; we make the instruments and tune them here, and in the process much discord is forthcoming.” Such is the church of God on earth. The Lord makes the instruments down here, and tunes them, and a great deal of discord is perceptible, but it is all necessary to prepare us for the everlasting harmonies up yonder.—Spurgeon.

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**Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ,, 4.45 p.m.**



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## In Your Faith Supply Virtue.

(Convention Address)

*“Yea, and for this very cause, adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue” (2 Pet. 1: 5, Rev. Ver.)*

THE connection of these words with the preceding is more accurately rendered by the translation of the Revised Version, which for “besides this” substitutes “for this very cause.” That is to say, the exhortations of our text, and of subsequent verses, are all based upon the bestowment on us of “exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”

These radiant words, which seem to carry us far away into a dreamland of ecstasy, are bolted together in the closest manner, with the homeliest duty of diligent self-culture. A fanatic would have said—“We are partakers of the divine nature, therefore we are absolved from toil.” Peter says—“We are partakers of the divine nature, therefore let us fully appreciate our privileges, and yield ourselves in hearty obedience, in co-operation with the heavenly call.”

That is plain common sense at all events, and may assure us that we are not listening to a mystical dreamer with his head in the clouds, when we listen to this writer, telling us that the holy spirit of God is dwelling in and working within the consecrated Christian’s heart.

We have here in this and the subsequent verses, seven of the prominent Christian graces. We will consider, for a few moments, the first of these which the Apostle Peter called “virtue.” Consider first what is this virtue. Now, virtue is not a common word in the New Testament. It belongs to another dialect altogether. It is taken from the language of philosophers and moralists, rather than of evangelists and Apostles. What those call virtue the New Testament calls righteousness; and on the single occasion in which the Apostle Paul uses the word, he puts it, as it were, in inverted commas, as belonging to another order of thinking than his own. He says, “If there be any virtue . . . think on these things.”

The Apostle Peter uses the word three times in his letters ; twice in regard to God, and only this once in regard to man. We can scarcely apply the expression in its ordinary sense to the excellences of the divine nature; and here the word cannot be intended to bear its usual generic meaning, if for no other reason, because it is followed immediately by a number of special virtues; and, however little systematical the Galilean fisherman may have been in stating this list of graces, we can scarcely suppose him to start with a word that swallows up all the rest, and immediately afterwards to add a number of specific forms of it. That would be as if one were to say—“There were a crowd of men, and Frenchmen, and Germans, and Englishmen.” If for no other reason than that, we must take this word as meaning some special form of moral excellence, which may stand in line along with its companions.

No better suggestion has been made than that which takes as meaning a certain manly energy, vigour, and firmness of disposition, which is the first outcome of Christian faith, and may well be the first aim of Christian effort. Now, that strength of nature, firm tenacity of character will, at bottom, be neither more or less than a good, strong will; for a man’s strength is the strength of his will. That being understood, we may ask ourselves for a moment what are the shapes in which this strength, this manly energy, will manifest itself?

There should flow from faith a tenacious vigour which masters circumstances, and does not let them work with us as they please. True, the ship can only be carried by the wind and currents, but, equally true, if there be a strong hand on the tiller, and the canvas be wisely set, she can sail almost in the wind’s eye ; and two vessels, under the impulse of precisely the same atmospheric and marine conditions, can head and move in almost opposite directions. Circumstances do make us, but it depends on us what they make us.

The virtue of our text will manifest itself first, in determining what outward things are to do for us, and then in bending them and coercing them, even whilst we submit to them. Man governs Nature by obeying it, and he obeys it in order to govern it. We obey circumstances in order to harness them to our car. Though they supply the force, the guidance lies in the hand that holds the reins and pulls the bit. The strength of the Christian man will manifest itself in ruling outward things, and making them subservient, whether they be sorrowful or joyful, to the highest end of all,

even his larger possession of the spirit of courage, the spirit of love and of a sound mind—the spirit of sonship—the spirit of CHRIST.

In like manner, the virtue meant by our text will manifest itself in the rigid subjugation, by the energy of a strong will, of our own inclinations, desires, tastes, passions, and the like, which all seek to assert themselves, and which the more mightily and ungoverned they work, the weaker a man is. A strong passion means a weak man ; and a strong will means passions weakened, and all desires and impulses tamed and taught to know the master's hand when it lifts the rod and bids, or if needful beats, the beast that is in us all into quietness and submission. There is no strength, worth calling by the name, in any man who has not the power of weakening and silencing his worse and lower self.

This manly energy, which all Christians are bade in the very first place to cultivate, will teach us independence of other people. As you are strong that you may, and in proportion as you do, master circumstances and give the law to your nature, so wise strength will show itself in, and will be increased by, letting other people go their way. Let them find their own fashions of life and of work ; be independent of their praise or blame, whilst profiting by their criticisms ; learn not to live upon their smiles ; dare to be voices and not echoes, and to take your commandments, not from the habits of your fellow men or your associates, but from the lips which alone have power to command, and whose approval is praise indeed.

In the control of outward things, in the management and mastery of ourselves, and in independence of the judgments and practices of the world, the Christian man's faith should blossom into a virtue which is manly energy enlightened by knowledge, and softened by gentleness, and able to control and resist.

Strength of will and determined purpose of heart to do the whole will of God is absolutely essential, and no child of God will gain anything worth while unless he has that virtue well and strongly developed. For there is so much more in our circumstances of life to draw us wrong than to draw us right, that unless we have this divinely-given strength we are sure to go wrong. A feeble constitution with low vitality catches any disease that is going, whilst a strong one passes with impunity through the infected air. If we leave our field gates open, the wild cattle are sure to come in and trample down our crops, and eat up all the tender herbage that is there. As one of the poets expresses it

“Who keeps no guard upon himself is slack,

And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.”

For peace there is needed strength ; for service there is needed this virtue. For all work is warfare in this world, and no man does good service for his fellows or for his Master, except on condition of battling with and overcoming opposing selfishness and slothfulness in the strength which the Lord supplies. Christians must fight in the strength of the Lord in order to do effective work, and unless we have this manly energy and virtue, we shall be lazy workmen in the Master's fields.

The gentle Christ is the pattern of this manly force, as of everything else that is lovely and of good report. All that the world adores as power looks weak, hysterical, and strained by the side of the calm gentleness of that life which bears no trace of effort, and yet is mightier than all besides. He is Power, because He is Love. The might of meekness and the omnipotence of gentleness are taught us in Jesus Christ. “Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation ; lowly and riding upon an ass.” The trampling of the warhorse is vulgar and weak beside that slow-paced persistent march of the King, whose goings are from everlasting. “In thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness.” “Be strong and quit yourselves like men” ; and that you may “let all things be done with love.”

Now, let us observe that the root of this virtue, or energy, is in faith. The Revised Version, to which we again appeal, improves our translation by reading, instead of “add to,” “supply in.” That is to say, virtue, is not to be piled upon “faith,” and “knowledge” upon “virtue,” and so on, as if they were unrelated graces, put on the top one of another, like bricks upon a wall. It is not to faith that virtue is to be added, but it is in faith that virtue is to be found. The germ, the root, the vital point from which is developed virtue and all that follows is Faith.

The great series of Christian graces here is a case of growth or development, one after another springing from the primary Christian characteristic of faith in Jesus Christ, which Implicitly contains them all. Each link in the chain grows out of that which precedes, and leads forward to that which follows.

The thought that underlies this exhortation is that a Christian man's faith in Christ is the productive root of all goodness of character. That is not because of anything in faith itself, but altogether because of that on which faith lays hold. We do not for a moment mean to say that these beauties of character which follow in these verses cannot be produced without faith. That would not be true ; but if they ever are, they are of a more imperfect form than they might be if they were rooted in the soil of Christian confidence in Jesus Christ. If they are ever produced, as undoubtedly they are, independently of that exercise of Christian faith, they lack at once their best security, their most vital power, and their highest consecration. Apart from that, let us take this thought home to ourselves, that the New Testament knows nothing of a faith the only effect of which is to obtain pardon, and that, unless what we call our trust in Jesus Christ is working in our lives all manner of fair and noble things, there is something seriously, if not fatally, wrong. Trust in Christ is the opening of the sluices, and if the sluices are open, depend upon it, the Water of Life will come in. Faith is that condition of our possessing all things lovely and of good report ; because faith opens the door for the entrance of God Himself, and where God comes His holy spirit brings all manner of rich spiritual blessings of peace and joy and love and holy fellowship.

If any have the notion that faith is mainly concerned in laying hold of a certain provision by which we may escape the wrath of God and obtain forgiveness, let them widen their notions of what faith is, and what it is for. If any, on the other hand, are saying that the system of redemption, by Jesus Christ is not in accord with the highest morality because it substitutes faith for character, let them revise their thoughts and understand this, that Christianity does not substitute

faith for character, but that it puts faith as the foundation of character, and demands that every man who professes that he has trust in Jesus Christ shall show his faith by his works. A faith which does not grow into virtue and knowledge and all the other links in this chain is, if not dead, at least ready to perish. If it has not vitality enough to fruit, there is but little difference between its enfeebled vital force and absolute death. Let us consider this matter carefully.

Still further, need it be said that the exercise of confidence in God, as revealed to us in Jesus Christ, has a direct tendency to produce this strong form of character of which our text speaks? Trust will always make a person strong. As long as there is confidence, there is power; as long as there is trust, there is peace and vigour. That is why our adversary, Satan, goes about trying to destroy our faith. He will try to make us doubt God. He will try to break down our confidence in the faithfulness and integrity of our brethren. He is the accuser of the brethren. We must withstand the evil one; we must “resist the devil, steadfast in the faith.”

Faith, as communion with God, will bring strength. For, when we get close to Him, then all the tumult of life dies into silence, as the city noises were dulled to the ear of the priest in the Holy Place. Faith, as the realization of the Unseen, will bring strength; for in the measure in which we walk in the light of that solemn, certain, blessed future, in that measure will its sun put out the fire in our chambers and dim the glories of our artificial lights. O, hold fast by Jesus Christ, commune with God day by day, realise that great future as we call it, but which we had better call the enwrapping, unseen present, and strength will be yours to resist—to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.” (Eph. 6: 13.)

Lastly, a word as to the cultivation of this virtue by our own effort. Again, we invite attention to a preferred rendering of the text. “Giving all diligence” might be more accurately rendered as the Revised Version has it—“adding on your part all diligence.” The original word is a very graphic and picturesque one. It means, “bringing in by the side of,” when fully and though clumsily, yet accurately translated. Bringing in your diligence by the side of what? By the side of that “partaking of the divine nature,” which has just been mentioned. God’s gift does not make my effort unnecessary, but rather requires and demands it as its completion and consequence.

This is not the time to talk about the great and wide subject of the relation and co-operation of the divine gift and the human effort in man’s salvation. The whole matter may be looked at from the one point of view or from the other. You may so fix attention on the divine element as to lose sight of the human; you may so fix attention on the human as to lose sight of the divine. It is like some complicated pattern, where, as you focus the eye, you can persuade yourself that you see white on a black ground, or black on a white ground.

Our text takes the divine element as first and fundamental, and does not say—“God does, therefore you need not”; nor does it say, “Shut your eyes and open your mouths, and take what drops into them.” But it does say that it is God that worketh in, therefore do you work out; and inasmuch as you are partakers of the divine nature, see that you “give all diligence”—a commonplace virtue—on your part, to work into your characters, and to work out in your conduct, whatsoever of the divine beauty or purity has passed from Him to you. Someone has said that man’s salvation is one hundred per cent. God’s provision; and we say, yes, that is true; but if the salvation freely provided for you and me is to be effective, it will require a one hundred per cent. effort on our part. We are required to love the Lord with all our heart, and mind and being and strength. God will prove us to see whether we love Him with our whole heart.

The general principle, then, is plain; the special application of it here, as to the manner in which, and the degree to which, the weakest of us—weak by natural disposition, and weak by circumstances—may make ourselves strong by laying hold of the divine strength, and cultivating that strength, needs not many words. The best way by which we can give diligence to make ourselves strong, is by cultivating and nurturing the faith which strengthens. Let us get into the habit of thinking about Jesus Christ all through our days; let the word of Christ dwell in us richly; let us get the habit of bringing mind and heart and will under the dominion of the spirit of God’s Word, not only on certain days and special occasions; not only at our times of prayer, but all through our common-place work and trivial duties, and we will find His strength more and more controlling and subduing and strengthening our minds and characters. It is by “beholding and reflecting as in a glass the glory of the Lord,” that we “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3: 18.)

This heavenly strength can be obtained in larger measure, too, by the simple process of habitually acting as if we possessed it; that is, we must claim by faith the grace and strength so freely offered to us by our blessed Lord. (See Mark 11: 22-24.) We must “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” By the Lord’s grace we may cultivate the habit of subduing and suppressing the desires of our lower natures; and of cultivating and fostering the heavenly desires and of setting our minds on the things above. We can stop our ears to men’s voices; and we can acquire the habit of mastering and coercing circumstances. The will gets dominion by asserting its dominion, and “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.)

We can accustom the lower parts of our nature to go quietly in harness, and break them in, through faith in the Lord, if we will. Our Saviour said—“Without Me ye can do nothing,” and the Apostle Paul said—“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

There are probably no better ways of developing this strenuous vigour from faith than these two. First, live near to the source of it in earnest prayer and watchfulness—“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” (Isa. 40: 31.) Then let us exercise the little that we have, and it will grow by exercise. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,” and “Put on the whole armour of God.” (Eph. 6: 10, 11.)

Let us keep close to the food which the Lord has especially provided for us at this time of His presence. The six

Volumes of Scripture Studies, provided by divine grace, are a veritable mine of heavenly truth, beautifully and simply stated. Let us not under-value the help they contain. Let us fill our minds and hearts with God's thoughts by keeping close to His Word and by using the helps to its understanding.

If we are not watchful, the influences of the world will crowd out and hinder the influence of God's holy spirit, and our development in heavenly grace and truth will be hindered. O, how earnestly we need to watch and pray, and put on the whole armour of God, so that we may gain that heavenly strength and grace of Christlike character necessary for us to be over-comers in the great fight against our three-fold enemy, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Our Lord, in His prayer for His followers, said—"Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth" ; and again, "If ye continue in My Word then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 6: 28, 29.) "The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1: 17.) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John 5: 4.)

Increase our faith, beloved Lord!  
For Thou alone canst give  
The faith that takes Thee at Thy Word,  
The faith by which we live.

Increase our faith! So weak are we  
That we both may and must  
Commit our very faith to Thee,  
Entrust to Thee our trust.

Increase our faith! For there is yet  
Much land to be possessed;  
And by no other strength we get  
Our heritage of rest.

Increase our faith! On this broad shield  
All fiery darts be caught;  
We must be victors in the field  
Where Thou for us hast fought.

Increase our faith, that we may claim  
Each starry promise sure,  
And always triumph in Thy name,  
And to the end endure.

Increase our faith, O Lord, we pray,  
That we may not depart  
From Thy commands, but all obey  
With free and loyal heart.

Increase our faith—increase it still—  
From heavenward hour to hour,  
And in us gloriously "fulfil  
The work of faith with power."

Increase our faith, that never dim  
Or trembling it may be,  
Crowned with the "perfect peace" of him "  
Whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Increase our faith, for Thou hast prayed  
That it should never fail;  
Our steadfast anchorage is made  
With Thee, within the veil.

Increase our faith, that unto Thee  
More fruit may still abound;  
That it may grow “exceedingly”,  
And to Thy praise be found.

Increase our faith, O Saviour dear,  
By Thy sweet sovereign grace,  
Till, changing faith for vision clear,  
We see Thee face to face!

F. R. Havergal.

## Pilgrim Way Ended.

Friends who have attended the meetings in Sydney over some years past will remember Sister Brien, of Guildford, who finished the pilgrim way in February last. Our dear Sister had rejoiced in the truth for upwards of twenty-five years, and had truly made it her own as was manifest by her devoted love for the Lord and the brethren, as well as for His Word.

One of our brethren has written as follows —”The passing of our dear Sister Brien will be a great loss to us, and more so to the members of her earthly family, but her trials are over and she will have entered into her reward. I would like to emphasize Sister’s quiet and submissive spirit, and her evident trust in all the precious promises contained in God’s Word. It was always a pleasure to behold Sister’s smiling face, and her readiness to help those who met in the name of the Lord. We could all learn from the attitude our dear Sister Brien showed so well ; that is, to put ourselves in the background and never to show the spirit of opposition or intolerance.”

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## Convention News.

THE Convention held at Adelaide, S.A., during the four days of the Easter season was much blessed of the Lord, and those privileged to attend expressed their thankfulness and appreciation of the good things provided by the Giver of every good and perfect gift. It is always a pleasure to meet with those of “like precious faith,” and especially at Convention seasons when special blessings are bestowed upon consecrated and truth-hungry hearts. It was a pleasure to welcome to our midst visiting brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, Victoria; also two brethren from far away Queensland, as well as from the country town of Murray Bridge, South Australia.

Much thanksgiving and praise is offered to our loving Heavenly Father for the privilege of attending this Convention, and being able, by His grace, to participate in the special blessings bestowed. What “riches of grace” has been extended to those who have been called of God to the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ. As we contemplate the honor bestowed upon us, how we should be humbled with the thought of our littleness and personal unworthiness. The grace (unmerited favor) of God is endless, and cannot be computed. The wealth of the grace of God towards us in Christ is unsearchable, but as we try to discover some of the bounties of His love, encouraged by the promises of His Word, and the leadings of His holy spirit, we are led to fountains of grace and truth, and we exclaim with the Psalmist —”With Thee is the fountain of life ; in Thy light shall we see light.” Yes, and He “makes us to drink of the river of His pleasures.”

The portions of Scripture which were chosen for Bible Studies were as follows—Heb. 12: 1-7; Rev. 11: 15-19 ; 1 Pet. 1: 13-19 ; and Col. 3 : 1-10. These inspired messages from the faithful Apostles were a means of comfort and encouragement to us as we endeavoured to receive the instructions with obedient hearts ; and thus to be “doers of the Word and not hearers only.”

The various addresses from the brethren were helpful as each one endeavoured to encourage and build us up in “our most holy faith.” The topics for these addresses were—”Rainbow Signs” ; “Humanity Deluded by Demon Doctrines” ; “The Stone That The Builders Rejected” ; “Prayer” ; “We Have An Inheritance” ; “Great Decisions” ; “The Bible Teaching on Pentecost and The Trinity” ; “Lesson and Blessing from Shortcomings” ; “Except the Lord Build the House” ; and “In Your Faith Supply Virtue.”

It was a pleasure to receive messages of Christian love and Greeting from various Ecclesias and also from individual brethren ; and it was good to be reminded that these dear brethren were remembering us in prayer for God’s blessing upon our gatherings in His name. Some of our members were unable to attend the meetings because of physical disability, and these were especially remembered in our prayers that the Lord’s sustaining grace may support and bless them in the narrow way that leads to life.

The Praise and Testimony meetings afforded opportunity to tell of God’s goodness and favor, and of the lessons and experiences along the way, as also did the “Hymns We Like and Why” session. At the closing session the message to the brethren was chosen and is found in 1 Pet. 1: 13 and Rom. 15: 13.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast and singing of the beautiful hymns “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian Love” and “God be with you till we meet again,” followed by the concluding prayer of

thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for all mercies and blessings received, and requesting His continued favor and blessing upon our way in the days that lie before us.

### **Convention Notes.**

Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are now available free from this office.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocca binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

“**The Divine Plan of the Ages**”.—A new supply of this wonderful study on the Bible is on hand. Blue cloth binding, handy pocket size. Price 4/6, post paid.

“**Israel in History and Prophecy**” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

## **Memorial Observances**

### **Melbourne.**

THE memorial of Christ's death was gladly celebrated by the brethren of the Melbourne Class on the evening of April 21st, in response to the request of our dear Saviour that this be observed “in remembrance of Him.” Though some members were absent through sickness, the attendance was very good, and a blessed time was experienced with the Lord's presence in our midst.

Our studies prior to the anniversary of our Lord's death proved very helpful in impressing the graciousness of the sacrifice of our dear Redeemer in becoming the antitypical Passover Lamb, so that the “firstborns unto God,” being “passed over” during this Gospel Age, may then be associated with Christ in delivering the “groaning creation from the bondage of corruption” in the new day of the Millennial Age.

During our service some lovely hymns were sung, prayers were offered in thanksgiving to God and especially on behalf of the Lord's people likewise observing the Memorial Supper throughout the world, Bible readings from Mark 14:12-46; John 18:12-40; 19:1-30 were used, and an address was given showing the privilege of the Lord's people in appropriating the merit of Christ, that they may then “present their bodies a living sacrifice” in the steps of the Master. The partaking of the emblems thus signified our “remembrance of Christ,” our justification through faith in His sacrificial death, and also our willingness to be broken with Him and have our life poured out as we continue our daily pilgrimage by His grace and strength.

### **Geelong, Vic.**

It isn't your position which makes you unhappy, but your disposition.

On Tuesday evening, April 21st, friends of our fellowship met once again to remember our Lord in the manner He requested during His last night upon earth. The quiet, solemn service of suitable hymns, prayer, Bible readings (John 17:1-12, 24-26; 18:1-14, 28-40; 19: 1-30; 1 Cor. 11:26-32), and a short address ended with the partaking of the emblems. We esteemed it a privilege to be able to show our love for the Lord in this way.

In our pre-studies to the Memorial season many good lessons were re-impressed concerning both the primary and secondary (deeper) significance in partaking of both the bread and the cup. Journeying out of Egypt, Israel of old complained at the bitter waters, but God directed them to a certain tree, which, when happy, or cast in made the water sweet. The tree which makes our bitter sweet is the understanding we gain concerning our Heavenly Father's purpose in us, as we become associated with His Son.

These Memorial observances are like breaking our “alabaster boxes” to show our love and appreciation of Him who has done so much for us, and serves to deepen or increase that oneness with the Father and His Son, and with each other, for which our Saviour prayed just prior to His crucifixion.

### **Adelaide.**

The Adelaide Class found it a very sweet and blessed privilege once again to keep the Memorial of our dear Redeemer's death for us. All our hopes of life and blessing, both present and future, are dependent upon the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What an example He left for His Church, of meek and humble submission to the most severe and awful suffering connected with His apprehension, examination and crucifixion.

What an honor and privilege is given to His Church, His Body, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. And what a glorious outcome will be the result, when, in due time He sees “the travail of His soul,” and is “satisfied” with the blessing of all the families of the earth, in the glorious “times of restitution of all things,” now so near at hand.

“In the cross of Christ we glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.”

### **Perth.**

A gathering of 15 brethren remembered our Lord's death and kept the Memorial as He instituted it on that fateful

night of His betrayal and subsequent crucifixion.

The chairman led our minds through our Lord's closing earthly scenes when He completed the laying down of His perfect human life. The bread of life was broken for mankind and the blood of cleansing was given that all may have an opportunity of life eternal.

With grateful hearts the earnest brethren partook of the emblems in memory of our Lord's supreme sacrifice, being reminded again of being "dead" with Christ, and that we were prepared to complete our "covenant of sacrifice" with our Lord who is the Head of the Body, and we members in particular of that honored Body. "For we being many are one bread, and one body." (1 Cor. 10:17.)

### **Sydney.**

The Sydney observance of the Memorial was duly celebrated at Strathfield on Tuesday, 21st April. Although comparatively few were present undoubtedly a rich blessing was the result. The presiding Brother ably conducted the service, and the address given by another Brother, dealing with the type and antitype, was very good. Happy the day, when, with our Lord, we will be able to drink anew the wine in the kingdom.

"A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—

The brighter dawning of that glorious day.

Blest Saviour, make our spirit's vision clearer,

And guide, O guide us in the shining way!"

## **Advocate and Mediator Contrasted.**

THE fact that the church is "the mystery of God" has become clearer within the last fifty years. We know that Christ and the church are separate and distinct from the world in every particular. They are neither under the Law Covenant, nor under the New Law Covenant, but are a peculiar people, called, sanctified, developed under a special covenant by themselves. This the Scripture styles the Covenant of Sacrifice. "Gather My saints (holy ones) together unto me (saith the Lord) those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."—Psalm 50:5. This special class of saints, or holy ones, who make the covenant of sacrifice have as their Head the Lord Jesus Himself. When this company shall have completed their covenant by sacrifice, this present age will end.

Moses, of the Law Covenant given to Israel, represented specially that Law Covenant, which will be given to the world through the antitype of Moses—the Christ. In other words, the Mediator of the Law Covenant was one man, but the Mediator of the New Law Covenant of the Millennial Age is the New Man, of which Jesus is the Head, and the apostle declares that the members are made up of those elected both from Jews and Gentiles. From the time of Jesus down, the Mediator of the New Covenant has been in process of selection, and "the better sacrifices" as the basis for the New Covenant have been in process of offering.

During this Gospel Age Jesus has not exercised His office as Mediator for the world, and the world has no relationship with God, but still lies in the wicked one. The Mediator Himself has been in process of development. As the apostle declares, God raised up Jesus first, and since has been raising up the church, and soon will finish the raising up. It is this Mediator or Prophet of whom St. Peter speaks in Acts 3:22, 23. (See also 1 Tim. 2:5, 6). No mediating can be done until the Mediator of "many members" has qualified for the office. The qualification consists of sacrificing according to the Covenant of Sacrifice. The Christ, Head and Body are, therefore, the Mediator for the world in a prospective sense, in the same sense as Jesus the Babe could be spoken of as the Saviour, and the King. He is only now becoming the King, and has yet saved only a few of His people.

There is a wide distinction between the work of a mediator and the work of an advocate. The great Mediator between God and man—the Christ of glory—will fill His mediatorial office for a thousand, years, and complete it only by the end of that time, when He will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the Divine arrangement.

The work of an advocate is different, and, according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the church during this age. The church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. It is Jesus individually, who is the Advocate for us — "the church, His body." He advocates our cause, first of all, by imputing to us the merit of His sacrifice, thus making us presentable in the Father's presence and acceptable as sons of God. Because of this advocacy, we have received the holy spirit, and are new creatures in Christ. As new creatures we still need our Advocate, because we cannot do the things that we would perfectly. We have imperfections of the flesh, which as new creatures we cannot fully control. Hence *we* need a Throne of Grace and an Advocate, through Whom we may maintain our present relationship with the Father, and thus not be condemned with the world.

## **Character Development.**

A GREAT thing to develop in life is character. This is the peculiar quality which distinguishes one man from another, or something that permeates his whole being, prompting him and guiding him in all things. Character is structural, and may be likened to a house, the building of which demands many things, first design. Successful characters are never developed haphazardly, they always show a sequential purpose and plan in the mind. The seed of character is thought. If we sow a thought we reap a word; if we sow a word we reap an action; if we sow an action we reap a habit; if we sow a habit we reap a character. Therefore, it is essential that whatsoever things are true,

whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, think of these things.

One of the outstanding charming values of Christianity is that it presents to us a perfect character design. A flawless example of whom Pilate had to say, "I find no fault in Him at all." No sensible man will neglect that perfect life, that pattern character. Having decided on the design, there is the site to consider, though perhaps not to choose. Only a few can choose the site of their activities, the place where they can live and work, but the beauty of character-building is that it is often done best under the least helpful conditions, just as the sweetest flowers are sometimes tucked away in some hidden cranny, so sweet and lovely characters abound that are unnoticed and unknown except to that Omniscience that knows exactly where all His jewels are. The site for your character is where you are.

Then there is the foundation, and that generally is made of materials that are subsequently and permanently covered up. Have you ever considered all those hidden things in the foundations of great structures ; well, it is the same in character. If you are only going to be interested in that part others can see, well you will only have a flimsy and superficial structure of character. Attend to those deep, strong secret principles that underlie all successful lives and give them substantial basis. Then you will proceed to lay the bricks of godliness, devotion, purity, prayerfulness, kindness, patience, gentleness, tact, honesty, industry, diligence, straightforwardness, ambition, discretion, commonsense, and so on, and all these cemented together with a sunny disposition and a courageous faith will go far to produce a building greater and of more value than any material structure, for, after all, a character is of more value than a cathedral, and even a palace may be eclipsed by a personality.—Selected.

**FRANK & ERNEST TALKS**

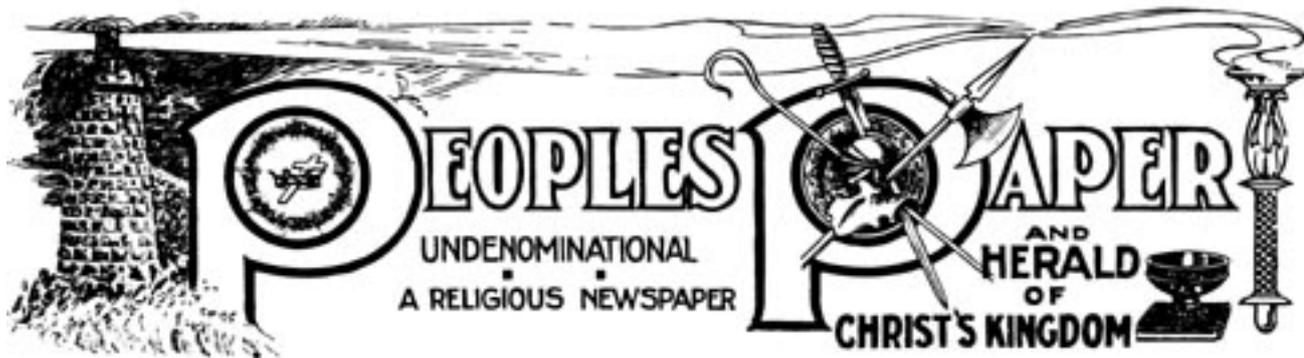
**Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.**

**Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ,, 8.15 a.m.**

**Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. ,, 9 a.m.**

**Perth, 6KY, 227 M. p, 4.45 p.m.**

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## **Christ, Our Passover Lamb.**

IN REVIEWING the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death, when our Saviour met with His little band of apostles in the "upper room" on the evening preceding His sacrifice on Calvary's cross, the careful student of the Bible is at once impressed with the connection between this sacred service and the Jewish Passover ceremony which God had instructed Israel to keep in order to effect their release from Egyptian bondage, and then to observe, year by year, as an annual remembrance of that great deliverance by the Lord on their behalf.

The importance of Israel keeping their Passover service each year on the anniversary of their deliverance from Egypt is clearly indicated by the Lord's directions, as we read—"And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service, that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when, he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and thy sons for ever." (Exod. 12 :25-27, 24.)

God had also clearly impressed upon the minds of all Israel that only by observing all His instructions, principal of which was the slaying of the Passover lamb and sprinkling its blood upon their homes, would their firstborns be spared by the destroying angel in Egypt, and they as a nation be guided out of the slavery from which they longed to be free. No doubt the Lord intended to impress that the Passover lamb was a type of the Messiah whom He would send, and by whose blood, sprinkled upon their hearts, so to speak, the "firstborns" of God are "passed over" during this Gospel Age, as they yield their lives in sacrifice.

Following the commencement of our Lord's ministry at thirty years of age, we have no record of His observing the Passover ceremony with His disciples on the three anniversaries prior to His sacrifice, as these would not be of special interest, but on the anniversary of the Jewish Passover when He was to be the anti-typical Passover Lamb, we read His words—"With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) Yes, the Lord was about to explain the deep significance of the memorial of His death, which, from that time onward, would take the place of the Jewish ceremony in the lives of His true followers. No wonder that the last Jewish Passover that God could acknowledge is the only one recorded in the Gospels, for at that time our Saviour became "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

In addition to the accounts of the Lord's Supper given in the Gospels, we have a most remarkable presentation of the same recorded by the Apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians. While this apostle was not a follower of the Master while He was on earth, following his conversion and complete surrender to the service of the Lord he was given some of the most astounding revelations regarding God's plan of the ages, not the least of which was the detailed record of the procedure when Jesus met with His other apostles to institute this important memorial of His death.

It seems very clear that the Apostle Paul had cause to rebuke and exhort the Corinthian church to observe the Lord's Supper with proper dignity and sacred reverence, and not to make it a common feast, as apparently they were wont to do, and this called for the explanation of the subject of the Supper in some detail. We read Paul's words in 1 Cor. 11 :23 —"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread," etc. How influential should the Apostle's words have been when we realise that the risen Lord gave him this special communication from heaven, by the spirit. The words—"I have received of the Lord"—should surely provoke the most profound attention on the part of all who are seeking to walk in the steps of the Master.

The fact that Paul records—"I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you,"—is worthy of note. Apparently the previous sacred information about the memorial of Christ's death had not the desired effect, so the Apostle felt it essential to impress that partaking of the Lord's Supper in a careless or any unworthy manner could bring condemnation upon the recipients, as well as shame upon, the Lord's cause as a whole.

The Apostle continues—“The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread.” Yes, it was while Judas was on his final ;A of betrayal, after receiving the sop from Jesus, that our Lord proceeded with the institution of the memorial of His death. It was quite out of place that the betrayer should be present at the Lord’s Supper, as we read—“And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. He then having received the sop went immediately out; and it was night “ (John 13: 27, 30.) Yes, “it was night,” and the darkest act of betrayal, instigated by Satan, was then under way. What a warning to all who would be disciples of the Master, to think that within the space of about three years, one, who at first set out with a true heart to serve the Lord, could be overcome by the spirit of avarice and become the betrayer of his Lord he professed to love, because he allowed the Adversary to take possession of his heart. Speaking prophetically for the Lord, the psalmist declared — “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” (Psa. 41:9.)

Most of the Lord’s people have similar experiences to those of their Master, whether it be through envy, malice, or tongues “lifted up against them,” and what a lesson we have in the life of Judas, revealing to what depths one can fall from the grace of God, as Paul again warns us—“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.” (Heb. 12:15.)

“He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this **do in remembrance of me.**” This bread was unleavened; fitting symbol of our Lord’s perfect humanity—“For such an high priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26.) “Take, eat,”—appropriate the merit of my perfect offering for your sins, that you may gain justification by faith in the sight of God. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1.)

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped (after the Jewish Passover supper), saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” Again we see that the Lord was showing how to gain justification — by appropriating His merit, partaking of the value of His perfect, life, pictured by the fruit of the vine. We note also that Christ’s blood is to make the new covenant operative, and to offer His disciples a participation in His blood that will seal that covenant in the Kingdom Age is a very great privilege indeed. This is the secondary or deeper meaning to our Lord’s memorial, and implies all true Christians participating in the cup of suffering with 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 is advising the Corinthians to observe the Lord’s Supper “often,” and it is well known that some denominations celebrate weekly, others monthly, and still others quarterly. Those celebrating weekly misunderstand the references to “breaking of bread” on the first day of the week, in the Acts, to refer to the Lord’s Supper, but that was not so. (\*) Weymouth’s translation of 1 Cor. 11:26 reads: “For every time that you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death—until he comes.” As the Jewish Passover was observed annually, and the Lord’s Memorial took the place of that typical Passover, so, every time, or each time that the anniversary of Christ’s death comes round, and the celebration is observed in spirit and in truth, it is “showing forth the Lord’s death till he come”; firstly, as demonstrating faith in the death of Christ as our Passover Lamb, and also confirming that the breaking and sacrificing of the members of Christ still continues “till he come” in the full sense, when Christ, Head and Body, shall be fully sacrificed and ready to “drink anew in the Father’s kingdom.” (Matt. 26:29.)

The faithful Apostle Paul continues in 1 Cor. 11 to give helpful exhortation when he states — “Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” (Verses 27, 28.) As one has said, “Each should examine his heart, not his life; the examination of the life can only show that it is imperfect, and is greatly discouraging to many.” This is very true, and Paul was not seeking to discourage any sincere ones, but rather sought to encourage all the Lord’s called ones to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in spirit and in truth—“discerning the Lord’s body”, being willing to be broken with Christ, and have their lives poured out in sacrifice, day by day, in the service of the Lord. (Phil. 2 :17.)

It is surely a very great privilege to have been invited into the fellowship of saints, and to be counted worthy to endure something for Christ’s sake, as stated by the apostle—“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” (Col. 1:24.) The celebration of the Memorial Supper is a means of much encouragement and blessing to all the truly consecrated who approach the Lord’s table with clean hands and a pure heart. “Christ our passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

\*The booklet entitled—“Why We Observe the Lord’s Supper Annually”—contains an explanation of texts relating to “breaking of bread” in Acts, and is supplied at 6d. per copy, post paid.

# Are Mass Conversions Included in God's Plan of Salvation for Today?

(Contributed Article)

THIS subject seems a very timely one, in view of the wide publicity and the apparent success of what some term evangelistic crusades, missions to the nation, etc. It seems good to look into these things, particularly as they come closer to us at this time.

We would like to emphasize this point, it is not our intention to decry or voice down any movement whereby people are assisted to live better lives. When efforts are made to take people out of darkness and the drab and dreary existence in which many find themselves, particularly in congested cities like Melbourne and Sydney and other places, any little ray of sunshine that can bring them happiness is worthwhile. If people can give them something to live for, to bring them out of that darkness and dreariness, that is very good. Any movement, wherever it comes from, if it brings sunshine, joy, peace, happiness, love and goodwill, surely must do good. On the other side of the scales are the drab experiences that people find to their sorrow when they, seek fellowship and excitement in the many questionable places all too easily found especially by the young folk in these days. So we are not going to cry down and speak ill of these efforts. Our complaint is not against the sunbeams but against the shadows. Why mix truth with error? Why not open the windows of understanding, too long clouded with ignorance, superstition and darkness, and let in the full sunshine of God's love and plan?

Our purpose is solely to examine the Scriptural authority of any who claim to come in the name of the Lord. By the same token as we claim this privilege, we invite and plead and pray that each one of you will do the same with what we present to you. You should do the same with us as we propose to do with those who make these pretentious claims.

This is what we invite you to do----"try the spirits," that is to say, test the teachings. In 1 John 4 :1 we read, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Our Lord said, "Many shall come in my name, and shall deceive many" — Matt. 24:5. Many also would claim His affection and blessing because of the great works accomplished in His name. Unfortunately for them, Jesus refuses to acknowledge them as His Bride. He says, "Depart from Me." (Luke 13:25-27.)

But how, or by what means, may *we* be able to distinguish between true and false? Many religious movements over the years have come and gone. Like comets in the heavens, they shine with great brilliance, but soon the novelty and excitement is finished. Many of us can remember such movements. Not long afterwards we are back in the same ruts and grooves, same old frustrations and depressions. Mighty works have been claimed to be done in the name of the Lord, but there has been no continuity.

You may well ask, how can we test the teachings of great religious leaders? Doctors of religion, doctors of law, men of letters, how can we question their authority? We assure you there is a way, and it is not only your privilege, but your responsibility to prove all things for yourself, so you may be fully persuaded in your own mind that you have the truth.

If we recommended to you a certain man to do a building job for you, you may be disposed to accept our recommendation. You might act on that advice. You would, up to a point, approve of our recommendation, but would you not very soon check for yourself his progress with the blueprints, as he proceeded with the job? Even before that you would have checked the foundations, which are important in any building; but so are the details. At certain stages of construction you would check up, would you not, on this man's work. You know what you would do if he was not building according to your specifications.

We would like to emphasise this point—he could be an excellent builder and a very well-meaning, sincere, honest and god-fearing man in every respect. As a man he could be everything you would desire. But if he presented you with something entirely out of harmony with your plans, what would you do? Now that is the precise position in regard to God's Church. Let us read 1 Cor. 3: 10-15—Paul says, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

They are very strong words. So friends, it is important how this building is designed and proceeded with in its various stages of construction. We have it in the words of the Psalmist, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it." God is interested in the human efforts folk make to build His Church. Is it unreasonable to think that God will reject results out of harmony with His will, any more than you as a designer of your house would reject something a builder prepared out of harmony with your design? As these various winds of doctrine blow around the world, you must be assured in your own mind, of your faith. At the close of this article you answer the question, Are mass conversions included in God's plan of salvation for today?

A plan, did you say? Just as in any plan, much detail is given in God's plan of salvation. Supposing the outline is all right, and the detail wrong. Supposing the foundation is all right, and the superstructure wrong. There is confusion. Something is out of harmony. God does take an interest in His building. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it." In every work of God there is plan and design, from the butterfly's wings to a snowflake, from the ocean's depths to the top of Everest. From the jellyfish to the highest form of life on earth, Man, there is planning.

We may be so foolish as to refuse to admit the Plan and the Planner. Many do this. But you will not read very far in the New Testament without discovering that there is to be a Church, and as in all other arrangements, there is a plan of its structure. But in fact, it is a mysterious building. (Read Eph. 3:3-11.)

Now read Eph. 2:13-22, where Paul is speaking to those Gentile believers who have come into the faith of Jesus Christ. Looking particularly at the last three verses, we have “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord ; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Yes, God is interested in a certain building, and this building has for its foundation the prophets and apostles, and Jesus Christ Himself is the apex. God is particularly interested in this building, since He is going to abide in it. It is going to be His habitation. So we may be sure that God is very interested in any movement that claims to be building His Church.

In our city (Melbourne) at the moment we have activity that has for its object mass conversions. Since 1954 this particular movement claims for itself stupendous success in drawing crowds — 25,000 here, 50,000 there, 70,000 somewhere else. In one centre there were 180,000 in one single day. If you have heard and read a little of this movement, you will discern how its gatherings are “sold” to the people. Firstly, the publicity and the initial support—thus success is guaranteed—that is if numbers are any criterion. This publicity is highly organised, with newspaper articles, pictures, T.V., radio and other avenues in which publicity goes before it. Then there is lovely music and singing, the more enhanced because of the way it catches on. It is really delectable.

A man may also use a lovely personality and cultivate talents and develop them to capture the imagination and enthusiasm of other folk. It is interesting to note here that Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, as such, had no personality. Read Isa. 53:1-3. This is the man Jesus Christ, whom we delight to talk about. “He had no comeliness, that we should desire Him.” He must have been a beautiful creature, crowned with the glory and honour of perfect manhood. Sin blurs our vision, while the author of sin complicates it still further by putting light for darkness, darkness for light, sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet. The repentance we preach is more than something akin to a new year resolution. It is a discernment not only of sin in ourselves, but that Jesus, in His great humiliation, carried those sins. He bore our grief, carried our sorrows and shame, and the peace of God will be absent from our hearts until we see our healing in His stripes, smitten of God and afflicted for our transgressions.

As to the Apostle Paul, one of those “foundation stones,” he must have had a dynamic personality in one way, yet in another way he had no personality outwardly. They said of him, “Yes, his letters are weighty, but his bodily presence is weak.” There was no publicity for him, nothing to attract the fleshly mind.

Paul gives us a lead as to what we should look for in a preacher. He says, “Who is Paul, and who is Apollos? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” The message is the thing that counts, not the man behind it. The Apostles themselves could see that message in detail, the detail of God’s building. It is a message with a man behind it—and that man is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 3 :4-8) .

However, let us return to mass conversions. These happenings remind us that some even go so far as to say they are a second Pentecost. Incidentally, there is to be a second Pentecost (Acts 2:16-18). But this great movement that is going around the world since 1954 is likened by some to a second Pentecost. We want first to know what a second Pentecost will be, if we are not to be deceived. This movement reminds us, not of a second Pentecost, but as we look into the Word it reminds us of a harvest. As you know, each age has a harvest. Look back to the harvest of the Jewish Age. That great man, John the Baptist, was there. He had a message similar to the message these prophets have today—“Repent.” John, of course, had something to back it up. “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” Jesus was in attendance six months after John. He supported John, and John supported Him. People flocked in thousands to see and hear John. They trudged out to the place where he was baptizing. It was given to John to point out the Messiah. If John had his thousands, Jesus had His tens of thousands. It was deemed expedient by those in authority, because of this, that they should get rid of Him. “All wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” This is the sad part of it—despite the great crowds, as He continued to reveal God’s plan and continued to point out some of the details of the building in which He was to be the Chief Corner-stone, His followers dwindled. They dwindled until at last there was just the twelve of them. You could hardly believe it. He said to His apostles, “Will ye also go away?” But they could not leave Him. He had the words of eternal life.

When He sent His seventy disciples out, to winnow the grain from the chaff in the harvest of that age, He sent them not as a body to convert the thousands en masse, but in pairs; sent them to the individual households with a message of peace. The Scripture in this sense would be fulfilled,—“Ye shall be gathered one by one, O, ye house of Israel.” (Isa. 27:12.) Isn’t that pertinent to our case today? Jesus said it would be similar at the end of the Gospel Age. We are comparing these movements to the time of the harvest. His parable of the wheat and tares is very definite in this respect. (Matt. 13.) He points out that at the end of the age there would be a great harvest, because the wheat and the tares would be separated.. This parable suggests that rather than mass conversions there would be mass declensions. So does the Psalmist support the idea. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand.” But the promise is, “it shall not come nigh thee”, provided we have taken the necessary precautions. The fields in the Gospel Age are like the fields in the Jewish Age, ripe to harvest, but the labourers are few.

The pages of history repeatedly tell of the struggle of the few, sometimes of the individual, against the minions of evil. The Lord’s people are not to be affrighted though the whole world be arraigned against them. “If God be for us who then can be against us?”

Earlier we showed that plan and design, law and order, is Heaven's first law—morning and evening, summer and winter, springtime and harvest, sowing and reaping. What would you think of a farmer who brought out his plough and harrows rather than a thresher and binder? The Master mentioned a feast (the Apostle Paul calls it Present Truth), and said that there would be a great separation work. One would be taken from here, one would be taken from there, and one would be taken from another place (Luke. 26:37). It is much the same as it was at the end of the Jewish Age, when people were in expectation of they knew not what. This work of separation is *going* on, and rather than mass conversions, it is one here and there that is gathered. Many say, Here is Christ, accept this and everything will be all right. But is mass conversion what the Lord portrayed as taking place at the end of the age?

It is sometimes helpful to examine a movement or teaching by comparing it with other matters. Now let us open our Bibles, and keep them open. You often hear it expressed of those they term "hot gossellers" that they "have something." Let us from the Scriptures show you some of the things they have, and on the other hand some of the things they do not have, and then make up your own mind.

They do have that infamous doctrine of hell fire. It makes one wonder regarding their reasoning when we open our Bibles and read Matt. 5:43-45. It is beyond comprehension how any man can teach hell fire in view of this. This is taken from the Sermon on the Mount, and held up as the perfect relationship of man to man. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Friends, that means to say, Like. Father, like son. Particularly note the point that we are to be like God. But in the next breath these folk tell us that God does something different with His enemies. It is beyond comprehension. It makes God a hypocrite. He. treats His enemies differently to what Jesus tells us we should treat ours. There is something wrong somewhere, is there not?

There is something else these "hot gossellers" have—the Trinity doctrine. Jesus, according to them, is God. How could anyone read John 17 and think Jesus and the Father are one and the same? The detail is all out of harmony with the foundation, if we build that way.

They could not very well teach hell-fire and the Trinity without teaching the old-age lie, "ye shall not surely die." But they put on this deception a modern garb, give it a different dress and call it immortality of the soul. This cuts the ground from under the plain teaching of Jesus that there shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust. If you subscribe to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, you will have to clip from your Bible all the passages that speak of a resurrection. Then you must clip out all those parts that speak of a restitution of all things. (Read Acts 3:19-25).

Here is sound advice. Repent. But what follows? "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." If you believe the age-old lie of immortality of the soul, you will not only need to clip from the New Testament those portions speaking of restitution and resurrection. You will also have to cut out from your Bible all those lovely passages that speak of the restitution blessings to come through Abraham's seed, who you know is Christ and His Church. There is to be a blessing for the world, not consignment to eternal torment. One thing leads to another. Then you would be obliged to eliminate any reference to Jerusalem as the capital of the earth. You would need to cut out such passages as Micah 4:1-4 (please read). But we trust you will retain that lovely promise, and particularly the latter portion, "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his *fig* tree, and none shall make them afraid." That is quite different to what these "hot gossellers" preach. They are mixing things up. Security is what people want, and they are going to be assured of security under the reign of Jesus Christ. We must test these teachings.

Let us go on. You also, like those of the Jewish faith at the end of their day, would not know the day of your visitation, speaking generally. You would be well equipped to forecast the weather. But you would be unable to read the signs of the Lord's presence. You would have a false sense of security. It would amount to what Jesus Christ describes as the blind leading the blind.

John Bunyan puts it this way.. When Christian was on his way to the Celestial City, he came to the forked roads, and both were identical. He did not know which way to go. He deliberated for a while which of these two roads he should take. A man came along and said, This is the way. Christian took this way, to his sorrow. For a while it was all right, but ,by and by it became worse. As deeper became the mire and morass and trouble, he had great difficulty in retracing his steps. (2 Pet. 3:16.) That is what is being done with the Scriptures. They are being disguised, and people are being lulled into a false sense of security.

Is mass conversion included in God's plan of salvation for today? We answer, Conversion from what, and conversion to what? Since 1914, the beginning of the great time of trouble, the walls of faith are in the process of being demolished. They are being shaken as never before. Our Lord asked, when He comes shall He find faith? — implying, of course, there' would be very little of the true faith as it pertains to His ransom sacrifice and the details of the house God is building, His Church.

Ye's, since 1914 these things have been shaken, and the walls of faith have tumbled around men and they do not know their right hand from their left as far as the Word of -God is concerned. The ecclesiastical powers, the heavens, are greatly alarmed. These mass conversions seem to be attempts to rebuild the old bulwarks. They were unable to withstand the blast of God's displeasure. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it."

Right down through the age there have been two voices, one from the true Shepherd and another from a stranger. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice; but a stranger will they not follow." The voice of the true Shepherd will open up the Bible, and as it opens up you will be led beside still waters and green pastures. You are compelled to ask

yourself, If these great revivalists know these things, why don't they tell the people? They know, as we know and have experienced, that if they tell the people these things, very little interest would be shown. There would be one here, one there. But it is just as our Lord said it would be, so why should we be perplexed? God has a plan, and a good plan, which involves not only the Church, but mankind in general. Every man will share the blessings of that plan, just as the Church has enjoyed the blessing of coming into Christ and being associated with Him in this temple God is building for His own habitation. There is one here and one there, and it was exactly the same in the days of the Apostles. A short time after Jesus Himself had gone there was quite a company together on the day of Pentecost, but after that it was hard going. You do not have to read very far in the epistles of Paul and John to see that very few responded. There were twelve foundation stones, and it was as hard for them as it is for us. Very few responded, just one here, one there. Is it reasonable to suppose that if the twelve foundation stones of the Church could do so little as to mass conversions, that we, so far removed from the purer teachings of Jesus, are going to match and excel their efforts? No.

Our advice to you is to open your Bibles, look at the harvest message, the message appropriate to the time mentioned in Matt. 24. In this chapter, which is referred to as our Lord's great prophecy, you will see at the beginning Jesus had warned them about certain things which were to happen. This chapter is worth reading and pondering, because it provides the answer to all the problems that confront us today in our social world, in our religious world, and as we go among our friends and families. They are the words right from the Master •Himself. It is strikingly apparent that the harvest of these two ages, the Jewish and Gospel ages, are in many respects similar. He told them about the mighty works of that day—look at the great temple buildings, and all the glory and pomp and splendour—but He said not one stone would be left upon another. It was to be razed to the ground. The disciples were worried, and came to Jesus and asked Him at a convenient time as to what was meant. They said, "Tell us, when shall these things be?" You will notice there are three questions, "When shall these things be," i.e. about the great time of trouble that was to come at the end of the age. The next question is, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming"—how shall we be able to understand? They were speaking for the whole Church. The third question is, "And of the end of the age." Keep in mind in reading the following verses that Jesus is answering three questions, and you will *see* that some part of the discourse that follows is in regard to the first question, some parts in regard to the second and third questions.

Jesus had said' previously to Jerusalem, "Your house is left unto you desolate." He had wept over that glorious fortress of God. Later that city was razed to the ground, and truly not one stone was left upon another. The Temple must have been a magnificent piece of work. It was said that because of the amount of gold there, in the conflagration the gold was melted and ran down between the great stones. In their efforts to recover the treasure, the soldiers literally tore one stone from another until not one was left standing. How true the Lord's words became.

Then regarding the next question, the sign of His coming — He had been forewarning them about His departure. He also said He would come again. "Where I am, there ye may be also." They were anxious to know what would be the sign of His second coming. They also were very anxious to know what would happen at the end of the age. That is what concerns IF. We would like you to read Mat. 24 :31-45.

So there is going to come a time in the life span of one person when tremendous events are to be fulfilled before our eyes. We think they have begun. It began, we believe, in 1914. Every unsolved problem dates from then. 1939 was a repetition of 1914. The same troubles are there .to be solved today. Men will not face those problems, so these conditions our Lord says would arise are shortly coming to pass. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass." "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall the days of the Son of Man be." Before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the flood came and took them all away. These things are not in themselves evil. It is no sin to be married, to be eating and drinking and so on. But this is the trouble — men are so preoccupied with these things that they can think of nothing else. "Then shall two be in the field," etc. They are gathered to the spiritual food prepared for them. In another place it says, "Where, Lord?" Our Lord says, "Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." It is a feast of truth. That is where we are today.

Can you in your imagination see that mass conversions are going to accomplish anything as far as God's building of the Church is concerned? It may have beneficial effects on young people. We would be unsympathetic not to wish anyone well in any good work. But we are merely concerned with the authority they claim in regard to the conversion of the world. Nothing could be further from the truth. God has a plan, and His plan envisages not only the Church, but also the whole world of mankind. It is the best news we ever heard in our lives. We should not be enticed away by these great gatherings. The truth is more precious and valuable than anything. It keeps us stable, and with a definite purpose in view.

The verses we have read, and the experiences of the Apostles and others, show us that rather than mass conversions, it will be mass declensions. We have to recognise our part in these things, then we will not be afraid. It may be that this will test us still further when we have to take our stand and speak in regard to the great and glorious details that go to make up God's plan. In it there will be an opportunity for everyone. There is no thought of mass conversion.

"Blessed Bible, precious Word,  
Boon most sacred from the Lord—  
Glory to His name be given  
For this precious gift from heaven.

'Tis a fountain, pouring forth  
Streams of life to gladden earth,  
Whence eternal blessings flow,  
Antidote for human woe.

'Tis a mine, aye deeper too  
Than can mortal ever go;  
Search we may for many years,  
Still some new, fresh *gem* appears."

### **Passover Memorial, 1959**

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me."

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

**Melbourne.**—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

**Perth.**—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.45 p.m., at 240 Shepparton Road, East Victoria Park, W.A.

**Sydney.**—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

**Adelaide.**—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.90 p.m., at Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

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## When will God Pour Out His Spirit upon All Flesh?

IN view of the claims being made by certain preachers at the present time that we are now living when God is pouring out His spirit upon all flesh, this subject is considered quite an important one. These claims are often based on the passage of Scripture found in Acts 2:16-18, which is a quotation from the Prophet Joel, chapter 2. Acts 2:17,18 reads —"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh .... And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit ; and they shall prophesy."

The fact that this prophecy, quoted from Joel, mentions firstly that God would "pour out his spirit upon all flesh," does not necessarily imply that this promise was fulfilled first, in point of time, when Peter quoted it. Rather, verse 18—"And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit,"—was definitely fulfilled first, beginning there on the Day of Pentecost, when Peter spoke.

We do well to keep in mind that the outpouring of God's spirit on the Day of Pentecost was a very special occasion, revealing God's acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ, not on behalf of all mankind, but rather on behalf of the household of faith—"for himself and his house"—as stated in the type , when the blood of the Day of Atonement bullock was sprinkled on the mercyseat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle, and described by the Apostle Paul, in the anti-type, in Hebrews 9:24 — "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

So, the outpouring of the holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost was upon God's "servants and handmaidens" only, just as the spirit was poured out upon our Lord at the time of His consecration and baptism at the beginning of His ministry. (See Matt. 3:16,17.). And as those who received the outpouring of the spirit on the Day of Pentecost were Jews (Acts 2:5), it was fitting that when the time came for Gentile Christians to receive the spirit there was another manifestation, or outpouring from God, recorded in Acts 10:44,45. See also Acts 11 :15-18.

Throughout all his epistles the Apostle Paul shows how the Lord's people, His "servants and handmaidens," come in under the anointing of the holy spirit when they consecrate their lives to the service of God, fully and completely. How clearly this is shown in Eph. 1 :13,14—"In whom (Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." Again, to the same church, Paul wrote—"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ      For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2: 11-13, 18.)

We see, further, the great purpose of the granting the spirit to the followers of our Lord Jesus in such texts as Rom. 8 :11—"If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." And again—"As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God      For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:14,29.)

The true followers of the Master—"the servants and handmaidens"— have their lives transformed by the spirit in preparation for the heavenly inheritance, as Paul declares in 2 Cor. 5 :17—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new." Here we see how the new heart condition, the new outlook, is developed by Christ's spirit within. Former hopes, aims and ambitions, or pleasures of this world, etc., are forsaken, and counted as nothing in comparison with the spiritual hopes and aims of the new creature in Christ Jesus.

How beautifully did the Apostle Paul give us the true assessment of values when he declared —"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those

things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:7, 8, 13, 14.)

It does us good, at times, to ask ourselves, What things that were gain to us (before we became Christians) have we counted loss for Christ? In other words—What are we sacrificing, as “servants and handmaidens” of the Lord, that would be quite right for worldly people to have and enjoy? Are we truly—“forgetting those things which are behind”; are we really “setting our affections on things above,” or do some things or pleasures of the world crowd in upon us in our associations with relatives or friends? Our Lord’s words help us in all such circumstances, and happy are we if we follow His admonition, as presented in Matt. 10:37,38—“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

From the Apostle Paul we read further, in Eph. 5 :15,16—“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” “Redeeming the time”—buying back the time from earthly things for the service of the Lord, so far as possible. The point being impressed is, that the invitation to the “servants and handmaidens” of the Lord, during this Gospel Age, is to a “narrow way” of sacrifice, separate from the world in every respect, even as James tells us “The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.” (James 4:4.)

It is very clear from the Scriptures as a whole that to none others than the “servants and handmaidens” has God’s spirit been poured out during this Gospel Age, for we read in 1 John 5 :19—“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” There has surely been no change in the world of mankind since John’s day; “lieth in wickedness” describes the world perfectly at the present time.

We remember, also, that in concluding each of the messages to the churches of Revelation, in chapters 2 and 3, we have the words—“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches” ; that is, to the “servants and handmaidens” in the Lord’s churches, including the Laodicean church period, in which we are living today.

How, then, are we to understand the words of Acts 2:17, already quoted—“It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh”? It will be noticed that the words — “in the last days” — are intended as a guide to a correct understanding just as the term—“in those days” is used in connection with the outpouring of the spirit upon the “servants and handmaidens” in verse 18. We enquire, What is meant by “ in the last days”? In Micah 4:1,2 we read—“In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it For the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (See also Isa. 2:2,3.) When shall these prophecies be fulfilled? When shall “the law go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”? Undoubtedly this takes place in the Kingdom Age, and as it is definitely cited as being “in the last days,” we see that the “last days when God’s spirit is poured out upon all flesh” must also be in the Kingdom Age, the Millennial Age.

We are assisted further in this matter, from the Scriptures, to find that the Lord will deliver Israel out of their Armageddon troubles, and bless them with His spirit in advance of the nations at large, as shown from Zech. 12 :9,10 —“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.” From Ezekiel’s prophecy, chapter 37, we are given a wonderful insight into the restoration of Israel to Palestine from other lands, and also from the death condition, when the new age comes in. Quoting briefly from this chapter we read—“And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live and I shall place you in your own land.; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.” (Ezek. 37: 13, 14.) “Neither will I hide my face any more from them ; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.” (See Ezek. 39: 23-29.) That these prophecies are not yet fulfilled is very evident to all thinking people, but what a wonderful prospect is in store for Israel in the time of Christ’s Kingdom, and not only for Israel, but for all nations of the earth.

This is clearly manifest from Isaiah’s prophecy—Isa. 59:20,21 ; 60 :1-5, where we see that the light of the Lord received by Israel will be passed on to all nations, — “The Lord shall arise upon thee and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising .....thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side ; [‘And I will give them (Sodom and Samaria) unto thee for daughters’ — Ezek. 16:61], then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.” And again — “Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem ; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends, of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” (Isa. 52: 9,10; 40:5.)

It may be asked, Why is it that certain claims are made today that the Lord is pouring out His spirit now upon all flesh? These claims are usually from those who are desiring and expecting a revival in conversions, and in some cases with signs and wonders in the way of healings, etc. While it is always good to find those who are desirous of turning to the Lord and receiving His truth, we find from God’s Word that there will not be any great revival in true Christianity at this end of the age, but rather the reverse, and what is claimed as God pouring out His spirit on all flesh, is often a very deceptive manifestation, not from the Lord, but from Satan, working — “as an angel of light” — as the Apostle warned. (2 Cor. 11 :14, 15.)

We do well to always remember that the Pentecostal blessing was upon God’s “servants and handmaidens” only, and

not until the new age comes in, after the time of trouble has humbled mankind in all nations, will His spirit be poured out upon all flesh, to bless and uplift, as they obey the laws of Christ's Kingdom. (See Psa. 72:1-6.) "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth."

In the meantime, how favored are the "servants and handmaidens" of the Lord, who have been blessed with the holy spirit in their hearts, being prepared now for the wonderful inheritance with Christ. What a privilege is in store for all these faithful who overcome, who become the Bride class, by the Lord's grace, and look forward to the fulfilment of that glorious promise—"And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22: 17.)

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### **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, March 27th to 30th, in the Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 1.0 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

### **Passover Memorial, 1959**

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord's request—"This do in remembrance of me."

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

Perth.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.45 p.m., at 240 Shepparton Road, East Victoria Park, W.A.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.45 p.m., at Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

## **"Songs in the Night."**

WHILE the perplexities and difficulties of recent years are deepening the world over, causing much travail of mind amongst statesmen of all lands, and with mankind in general greatly concerned as to the outcome of this period of gloom, it may be asked how the Lord's people can at this time truly sing "songs in the night."

The year past has surely witnessed a continuation of the night of weeping. Sickness, sorrow, sighing and dying continue, but those Who have been brought to know the Lord and His plan of salvation realise that these conditions, under the reign of "the prince of this world," exist only for a limited time—until the glorious morning of Messiah's Kingdom—and so they have great cause to rejoice that while "Weeping may endure for the night, joy cometh in the morning." (Ps. 30:5.) How glad we are that we have learned from God's Word that, then, the glorious change will come to earth! St. Paul confirms this truth when he declares, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8 :22.)

At present these sons of God are comparatively little known or recognised amongst men ; frequently they are considered "peculiar people," because of their zeal for righteousness and truth and for God. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Soon the Lord will establish His kingdom under the whole heaven. Soon the Church class, the saintly, "the elect," will be glorified, and then the time will come for the blessing of the non-elect — for their restitution to human perfection and to a world-wide Paradise which Messiah's kingdom and power will produce. "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet ; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Death will be destroyed; sheol, hades, the grave, will be destroyed, by the resurrection of the dead therefrom—"Everyone in his own order."

While the whole creation groans under its load of sin and sorrow, the saintly few may sing, may rejoice, even in the midst of all the sorrows of life, and even though they share the results of sin as fully or even more fully than do others. The secret of their joy is twofold : (1) They have experienced reconciliation to God. (2) They have submitted their wills to His will. They obtained this new relationship by the way of faith in the Redeemer—faith in His blood of Atonement. They entered by the "strait gate" and "narrow way" of consecration to God — surrendering their own wills and covenanting to do the Divine will to the best of their ability.

This submission of the will to God and the realisation that all their life's affairs are in God's keeping, and under His supervision gives rest to the heart. They have a rest and peace in this surrendered condition which they never knew when they sought to gratify self-will and ignored the right of their Creator to the homage of their hearts and the obedience of their lives.

Similarly, these have joy and peace and songs of thankfulness to God because to them He grants a knowledge of

His Divine purposes, and shows them things to come. These see beyond the trials and tribulations of the present time—they see the glories that will follow the present time of suffering. These see that the Church, the saintly few from all denominations and of all nationalities, are prospective heirs of God—heirs of glory, honour and immortality and association with the Redeemer in His glorious Kingdom. This encourages them. They see also the outlines of the Divine Programme for the blessing of all the families of the earth. When they thus perceive that God is interested in their dear ones who are not saints, and interested in the whole human family, very few of whom are saints, it causes them rejoicing. When they perceive that God has arranged that through Christ and the glorified Church all the families of the earth shall be blessed, it makes them “joyful in the house of their pilgrimage”—while pressing on in the narrow way, and fully realising how light are their own afflictions in comparison with the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

A very good Oxford Bible, with References. India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 19/9, plus 1/3 postage.

## Thoughts from a Shipwreck

(Acts 27 and 28.)

(Convention Address)

FROM the Scripture quoted as the basis of this talk, it will be gathered that the shipwreck was that experienced by Paul, while a prisoner, on his journey to be tried before Caesar. The journey throughout suggests some interesting thoughts that relate to our Christian journeys over the “sea” of this life.

From verses 2 to 7 in chapter 27, we find that many times they meant to sail by a certain course, but were compelled to keep altering it; they meant to sail by the coasts of Asia; in those days of travel the safest route, no doubt, was to hug the coast lines, but they finished up sailing by two islands, Cyprus and Crete, well out in the open sea. Contrary winds changed their course. Man proposes—God disposes; how true in many affairs of our life. It is good to have determination in the course we take, provided we are sure it is the way God wants us to go. For the Christian, the proper course at all times is—if God will, we shall do this or that. (See James 4 :13-15.)

The next point is gathered from verse 9 onwards. Because of their stormy passage it became manifest to Paul that the wisest thing to do was to wait a while for more favorable weather. He warned the captain and the centurion, into whose charge he had been committed as a prisoner. It would seem that he tried to persuade the centurion not to continue, with the result—read verse 11. From verse 12 it seems that personal comfort entered into the thoughts of the captain—the place was not desirable in which to spend winter. Paul had the wisdom of a spirit-guided mind, but how often is the advice of those who live close to God spurned by the worldly wise. It is a good thing to be able to listen to good advice.

So they decided to go on—read verse 13. We can imagine them scoffing at Paul; what a poor weather prophet he was after all. So in life with the self-willed, ridiculing the advice of the saner minded; they have their own way and it often prospers early, and they sometimes like to rub it in—“See, I knew best after all.” But it is the long view that counts how the self-willed finish up; often they learn their lessons from bitter experiences that might have been softened much had they listened to wiser ones. Despite the early, favoring breeze the journey finished up as Paul warned it would—read verse 14. They ran into a cyclone.

Verses 17-21 describe the storm, and what a terrific one it was as they never saw the sun or stars for many days. Can we imagine what they endured in a storm like that in a craft of sea travel in those days? One thing after another they tossed overboard to try and ride the storm.

Read verse 21. Paul reminds them that it would have been better to have taken his advice. The captain’s action had gotten Paul into the trouble, too. How like it is on life’s journey—the high handed, self-opinionated actions and plans of the unruly often lead the Lord’s people into situations that they would not themselves have gotten into. But there is a nice lesson for us here. Paul was gracious; he did not sit down and say, “Well, you got yourself into this, now you will have to get out of it the best way you can,” but he continued to render all the help he could.

Read verses 22-25. He speaks words of good hope and cheer from his God. Paul lets all know exactly where he stands; he is not ashamed to admit himself as God’s representative, allowing no thought that he himself is any great one. Note the reason in verse 24 why Paul was not to lose his life—he must appear before Caesar. Jesus made known that one of the purposes for which He called His apostles was that they appear “before kings and rulers for my name’s sake”; i.e., to bear a testimony to the truth in this way. This being a purpose of God in Paul, God would look after him. Here is another little reminder for us—that God’s saints are immortal till their work is done.

We note that all who were with Paul were graciously spared from death by the goodness of God. This reminds us, somewhat, of Sodom’s destruction. In response to Abraham’s questioning, the Lord made it known that Sodom would be spared, despite her gross iniquity, if so many as ten righteous men could be found in her. On other occasions wholesale calamities were withheld for the sake of one righteous person.

However, it was by no miraculous method, that all in Paul’s company were spared on this occasion, but by a way of much hardship. In the extreme experiences Paul’s faith never wavered as he sought to encourage the others. “Fear not, for I believe God that it shall be even as he has told me”; then read verse 26. They would be saved, but certain

experiences had to be faced during which they were going to lose everything. For how many of us has our salvation required “being cast upon a certain island”—certain experiences of hardship during which we lost earthly status or possessions? Paul lost much in this way, but in another place he said he counted it all as refuse in order to win Christ.

Read verses 27-29. What an ordeal; fourteen nights of such an experience, and now the constant dread of smashing on rocks. How helpless they were, unable to do a thing. They threw anchors overboard and “wished for the day”—nothing to do but wait. How like some of our experiences, our anxieties at “wits-endcorner.” We “wish for the day,” to be able to see a way out of the dilemmas that face us, and for the day of the kingdom.

From verse 30 we find that in the time of anxiety the shipmen (sailors in charge of the craft) were going to flee, and in verse 31 Paul warns the centurion that that would be disastrous for all concerned at that stage. Note Paul’s great leadership, and now the centurion was ready to listen to him and apparently he commanded his soldiers to halt the sailors, which they did by cutting the life boat adrift.

In verse 33 we sense the relief as daylight comes; their hopes are renewed, tension is eased. Apparently for the whole fourteen days of their frightening vigil they had been too tense to eat. Paul reminds them of their physical need ; probably even after so long some of them could not find interest in food. The apostle gives thanks to God in the presence of them all. We don’t know what happened to his companions in the years afterwards (276 of them), but we can be assured none of them would ever forget the witness Paul gave to them during this journey. It would be nice to think that our witness before unbelievers in the storms of life is as pleasing, and that they will serve to assist men, if not now, at least in the day of their visitation.

In verses 39-41 we find that, even in sight of land, fresh disaster overtakes them. Everything at last seemed sure for their deliverance, and in confidence they hoist the mainsail, only to become foul of some kind of undertow which grounds and smashes their ship. This is like the Christian’s experience often—from one puzzling difficulty to another. In verses 43, 44 we see that now each one had to exert himself to the last ounce of strength, either by swimming or clutching broken pieces of the ship. There was no miraculous, divine help, just overruling of the various features of the mishap that none should lose his life; even a broken piece of the ship to cling to would be **regarded as** a Godsend by those unable to swim. Whatever of earthly belongings we lose in the storms encountered in our pilgrimage as strangers and foreigners upon earth, we are never left destitute—the “broken piece of the ship” is always at hand. Said the psalmist—“I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” (Psa. 37:25.)

Passing into the 28th chapter of Acts we note their further experiences. After escaping safely from their ordeal they found themselves amongst a barbarous people, with rain and cold. The word translated “barbarous” does not carry the meaning that our language generally conveys. It simply means that they were not of the same nationality as the shipwrecked ones, and could quite easily have proved hostile to them. After a storm of that kind at sea, and they on a small island, can we not conjure up in our minds the miserableness of that morning? Perhaps it was the extreme nature of their plight that banished any thoughts of hostility from the minds of the island’s natives. Likewise, sometimes we find that God so overrules our experiences that the extremity of our plight causes others to show us unexpected kindnesses.

Next we observe Paul gathering a bundle of sticks for the fire, always in the forefront when there was something to do. Like his Lord, he was not in this world to be ministered unto, but to minister, and he was ready on every occasion to do good to all men, as he had opportunity. The incident of verses 3-6 regarding the viper coming out of the sticks on the fire and fastening itself to Paul’s hand has a touch of humor. Said the natives—“There is no doubt that this man is a criminal alright, he escaped the sea, but now his judgment is upon him; he must surely die.” So, they watched Paul—a great while it says—likely all day, and when nothing happened, they changed their minds and concluded he must be a god. How like the judgments of men regarding the Lord and His people ; opinions are formed and changed according to what meets the eye.

While in the instance of our story public opinion changed in a few hours in hailing Paul from murderer to god, it was similar with our Lord, though the order was reversed. One day they hailed Him as their King during a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, while a few hours later they were condemning Him of the grossest crime and crying — “Away with him.” We are aware how similarly it sometimes occurs in the lives of Christians. The Lord’s people may have many friends while there is hope of present advantage, but they soon find themselves deserted when others find that the Christian course is one of worldly disfavor.

Let us read a few verses about Jesus in this connection—John 2: 23-25. It seems to intimate that Jesus knew that the people’s interest lay in His miracles, rather than in His teaching and practice. The Lord’s people are to be as “wise as serpents and harmless as doves,” and it is a good thing to exercise proper wisdom and remember “what is in man,”—just how fickle they can be. Like Jesus, it may not always be wise to commit ourselves fully to every man first hailing us enthusiastically.

However, on the other hand, we find Paul laboring much in ministering to sick and diseased ones amongst the natives, and it is apparent that he won their high regard and in turn they lavished temporal good things upon the shipwrecked ones. Verse 11 tells us that they had to wait three months before they could continue their journey. How the 276 men were accommodated during that time is left entirely to conjecture — hardships innumerable.

On their journey again, we find Paul contacting a few brethren. Possibly they in turn found a way of letting others know, and a small company came out quite a distance to meet and greet Paul as he neared Rome — “whom when he saw, he thanked God, and took courage.” What a treat it must have been to converse and commune with others of like precious faith after his ordeal. After all his experiences amongst unbelievers how he would appreciate the company and fellowship of fellow Christians. So with us, with experiences in the work-a-day world, though we meet some fine

people, all are unable to appreciate with us the spiritual things. So our little assemblies, week by week, refresh us, and we thank God for these privileges we enjoy, for they encourage us. Likewise, isolated brethren find the convention seasons a refresher for them.

The chapter goes on to describe Paul before Caesar, and his noble witness, and the last two verses reveal that Paul was allowed to receive visitors and probably do much teaching for two years more in his own hired house. We leave him there, undaunted by any and every experience, in the words of the last verse—"Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." With all our experiences, it is good if we continue doing the same.

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"Israel in History and Prophecy" is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

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## He Lived Inside a Whale.

*The following article by David Gunston appeared in the Melbourne "Young Sun" of January 22nd, 1959, and was passed to us by one of our brethren. Having obtained permission to reprint it, we believe this amazing account will prove of much interest to our readers, and will serve to show that the story of Jonah and the whale was not the only occasion when a human being was released from such an extraordinary predicament.*

TO be swallowed alive by a giant sperm whale is hardly an appetising fate, yet it happened to many old-time whalers who attacked these oil-bearing monsters with handheld harpoons from the bows of frail rowboats. But one man who was swallowed lived to tell the tale.

He was James Bartley, whose well-authenticated story earned him an honored, if little-known, place in the annals of the sea, of natural history, and of high adventure.

Seaman Bartley had sailed the oceans on whaling trips and when the Star of the East sailed from England in 1890 he had no reason to believe that, dangerous though it always was in those primitive days, this voyage would hold any special terrors for him.

All went well until one day in February, 1891, when the ship was cruising off the Falklands Islands. The lookout suddenly spotted a big sperm. "Thar' she bloooows !" he cried, and two whale-boats, one containing Bartley, were lowered to close in on the quarry.

The first boat's marksman pierced the whale with his lance, and the enraged beast swung half out of the sea, its 15 ft. tail splintering the second boat and hurtling its little crew into the water.

One man was drowned, and when the first whaleboat checked the survivors it had rescued, Bartley was found to be missing. This sort of thing was the day-to-day risk of whaling, and Bartley's presumed loss by drowning was duly recorded in the ship's log.

The whale was finally killed and in a few hours its great limp carcass was lying alongside the Star of the East. The crew began at once the unsavory task of flensing it for blubber and flesh.

They worked all the day and part of the same night, and next morning laid bare the whale's vast stomach. Lifting tackle was fixed, and the whole organ hoisted on to the deck for cutting up—when one of the whale-men gave a shout.

### ALIVE!

He had noticed a slight spasmodic movement within. The flensers went to work with their scimitar blades. Perhaps there was a fish here still alive, they thought.

But curiosity turned to horror as the blades leapt back from the doubled up, drenched, but still living body of their missing comrade. Bartley was unconscious, but within seconds was being crudely but effectively doused with cold sea water.

Laid out on the deck, he began to show signs of life. Whale catching and flensing forgotten, the men put Bartley to bed in the captain's cabin, and gradually he regained consciousness. But he had lost his reason. All he could do was gibber and in spite of all the officers and crew could do for him, he stayed that way for two whole weeks, during which time he was kept under lock and key in the captain's quarters for his own, and the ship's safety.

But gradually Bartley began to recover. He became mentally normal again, and physically seemed none the worse for his unique ordeal except for one terrible thing.

Wherever his body had not been covered with clothes the merciless acid of the whale's gastric juices had eaten deep into his skin, bleaching his face, neck and hands a deadly white. His skin was dried, shrivelled and tautened like a piece of old parchment.

When he was able to talk coherently of his ordeal, Bartley said he clearly remembered being thrown into the sea. Then came a tremendous rushing sound he took to be the swirling of the sperm's tail through the water, and he was soon, as he himself put it, "encompassed by a great darkness."

He felt he was slipping swiftly along a smooth passage that itself seemed to carry him onward. Shortly after this, he realised the movement had stopped, and he had more room.

### **SLIMY WALLS**

He groped about in the stench and the darkness to find the walls of his prison slimy and yielding.

Slowly the awful truth dawned in on him. He realised escape was impossible — that it was only a matter of time.

To add to his anguish there was the intense heat of the whale's inside, an oppressive heat which opened every pore in his body and sucked out all his vitality.

Inevitably, he passed out, chiefly from shock, and remembered nothing more until he came, round in the captain's cabin.

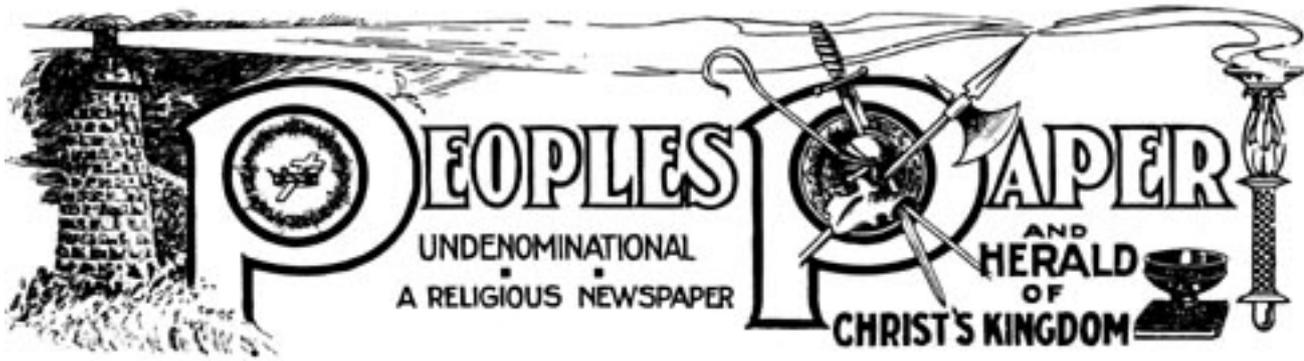
Bartley fully recovered, save for his disfigured skin, and in later years was said to be in "splendid spirits and enjoying life," as well he might, the luckiest man on earth.

## **The Bible.**

The Bible is the torch of civilization and! liberty. Its influence for good in society has; been recognised by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have, looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings.. The grand old Book is unintentionally, but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through traditions of their fathers. Would that such would' awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their. weapons !

Since the light of nature leads us to expect a. fuller revelation of God than that which nature supplies, the reasonable, thinking mind will be prepared to examine the claims of anything purporting to be divine revelation, which bears a reasonable surface evidence of the truthfulness of such claims. The Bible claims to be such a revelation from God, and it does come to us with sufficient surface evidence as to the probable correctness of its claims, and gives us a reasonable hope that closer investigation will disclose more complete and positive evidence that it is indeed the Word of God.

The Bible is the oldest book in existence ; it has outlived the storms of thirty centuries. Men have endeavoured by every means possible to banish it from the face of the earth; they have hidden it, burned it, made it a crime punishable with death to have it in possession, and the most bitter and relentless persecutions have been waged against those who had faith in it; but still the Book lives. To-day, while many of its foes slumber in death, and hundreds of volumes written to discredit it and to overthrow its influence, are long since forgotten, the Bible has found its way into every nation and language of earth, many hundreds of translations of it having been made. The fact that this book has survived so many centuries, notwithstanding such unparalleled efforts to banish and destroy it, is at least strong circumstantial evidence that the great Being whom it claims as its Author has also been its preserver.



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## **Receiving and Giving.**

(Convention Address)

CHRISTMAS is a good season of the year to reflect upon God's goodness to the children of men. Not that we should reserve our reflection in this respect to the Christmas season, but with all the exchanging of gifts and greetings the tenor of the days seems to direct our attention to the topic of giving and receiving. Many of us have probably found how true are the Master's words — "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We would not reserve one or two occasions during the year for gift-giving were we conscious of all God's goodness toward us and endeavoured to emulate Him and thus show our appreciation. "He openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," while the Apostle Paul declares that ever since the creation there is not a spot on earth where God has left Himself without witness — giving rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, the sun, moon and stars, food, and the joy of life. Add to these the beauties of nature — floral treasures, trees, rivers, mountains, birds, thousands of lovely things so close at hand, ours for he receiving. To give back our admiration and gratitude we become the richer. Job also mentions iron, silver, gold, precious stones decking out in beauty the glorious earth. If there be any who fail to appreciate the splendour and beauty of God's gifts in nature because of the mal-administration of the violent who mostly gather up and acquire these beauties for selfish reasons, let us not forget at least that out of the earth comes food, our daily bread.

Poor, hungry, ill-clad folk (and there are millions) who live in cold countries would probably miss "the treasures of the snow and hail," just as the weary, the footsore, the destitute (and there are millions) of the better regions would no doubt trample underfoot the "lilies of the field" without a second thought for the glory that is greater than Solomon's. Nevertheless, because so many overlook daily blessings, there for the receiving, should we be indifferent to our blessings? "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained," the mighty oceans "compassed with bounds", "the earth suspended on nothing", all for the happiness of that creature we call Man, who could fail to ask himself — "What is man that thou art mindful of him" to such an extent?

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the earth showeth forth his handiwork"; truly the "invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen" leaving those without excuse who fail to receive with gratitude the daily benefits. How fortunate are those folk who attempt to count their blessings, without revering the gift more than the Giver.

Additional to all the many lovely things that surround us, too numerous to attempt an itemized description, God has given us what is termed an Unspeakable Gift. As you know, many declined this precious Gift, even His own people would not receive Him, but to as many who did receive Him to them gave He the power to become sons of God. Further gifts are showered upon this class — to them belong "exceeding great and precious promises" beyond our comprehension, for "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things God hath in reservation for those who love him." "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." It is our endeavour to show that these wonderful gifts may actually be experienced, in part, from this time on, but the strange thing about sharing in these gifts is that one must give before receiving. There are treasures of knowledge, wisdom, faith, love, joy, peace, security, ours for the receiving, provided we give something back to God.

But what can we give that He has not already given us? "What have we that we did not receive?" You remember how God reproved David in this respect when David desired to build God an house. "Hath not my hand made all these things?" "What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits unto me?" The cup of salvation, which we are invited to take involves not only receiving, but giving. There is one thing that we can give ; it is a very precious thing to us, embodying all our affections, faith, love, hope, and is termed the heart — "My son give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." Jesus did this, surrendered His will. "Not my will, but Thine," He said, and thus became eligible for further gifts. But these gifts are enfolded in mysterious wrappings, which of course must be broken before the contents may be enjoyed.

It reminds us of that mysterious book mentioned in Rev. 5, in the hand of Him that sat on the throne. This book, you will remember, was sealed with seven seals which no one, either in heaven or in earth, was able to break. With all their

power and glory none of the angelic host was able to loose the seals, and no one on earth, with all our pride of life, able to loose a mere seal. Much weeping was occasioned, for while the book remained closed the plan and purposes of God were not only hidden, but packed away in storage. Then, to the amazement of all, a slain Lamb was pronounced worthy to open, and by so doing, the contents became available to other servants. The angelic choir sang a new song, and this choir you will have noted, bore a close relationship to the Lamb. The anthem they voiced was a real Christmas carol, extolling the worthiness of the Lamb, and now declaring He is worthy to RECEIVE “power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, blessing.” This wonderful anthem was ‘echoed back from earth, all acknowledging the authority of God and Jesus the Messiah. Note that before these treasures were possible the Lamb had to GIVE something. Because it was a slain Lamb there is no question what He gave. “Christ our Passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us.” “God gave his only begotten Son,” and the Son gave Himself for us, a ransom for all.

If Christians acknowledge that they have received so much, Paul says their reasonable service is to give something in return. If the goodness of God led us to repentance, what should all His further mercies do to us? To help us in this respect, for we will find we are insufficient to accomplish it in our own strength, we’ll need help. This is, true to God’s goodness, available for the receiving, for when Jesus ascended on high God gave us gifts in the form of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, all speaking in harmony, to enlighten our eyes of understanding that we may know more of these heavenly treasures.

There was once a colony of lepers, ten men in all, living on the outskirts of a certain village. Outcasts from society, a law to themselves now, forbidden to fraternise, no hope in this world, nothing but a slow torturous death ahead of them, no sympathy from any, for all shunned them; just waiting for the dreaded leprosy to claim parts of the body at a time — their hands, feet, ears, etc., dropping off as the incurable disease spread. Is it any wonder that they cried with a loud voice when it became known that Jesus, the miracle worker, was passing that way — “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” What a cry ; what poor, despised dregs of humanity they must have been. The compassion of Jesus came to their rescue, and what joy must have been theirs to find themselves rescued from such a plight. What wonder and amazement to the onlookers, but what relief to the poor sufferers. They received much that day. Nine of God’s “own family,” and one stranger made up the colony. Now, there were ten clean, wholesome men, ready for rehabilitation.

The episode would have had a happy ending but for one thing — the ingratitude of mankind. Nine of the men could not get back to society fast enough. Maybe their parents, or families awaited them with open arms ; back to all those important things now needing their attention ; the lost job, the pleasures of living, etc., etc. The stranger, the one not satisfied to receive everything without giving something back, came back, alone, to give thanks. Jesus sounds very sad when He asks of this stranger giving thanks — “But were there not ten? Where are the other nine?” The Psalmist has the same sad note — “O that men would praise the Lord for all his goodness to the children of men.” The leprosy of ingratitude is worse than the leprosy of the skin. You can easily trace it out, ungrateful, unhappy, selfish, etc. Gratitude expressed leaves one happy, hopeful, useful, loving and kind. Giving and receiving is vividly portrayed in the above account.

Flowers give themselves to the sun ; what a joyous result — sparkling, scintillating, radiating colors, perfume, creating beauty and happiness. Glance again at the colony of lepers, where nine were ungrateful and one returned to give thanks. Those nine, ungrateful beings must always have been the same. They must have “cashed in” on the faith of the stranger. Confined together in the one camp any straw would be clutched at to save from certain death. There was nothing else to do but join in the plea of the stranger — “Master, have mercy on us.” For the sake of the small minority the wrath of God is delayed. Sodom was safe while “ten righteous men were to be found in it.” The master and crew of the ship in distress were safe because of the relationship to the prisoner, the Apostle Paul. For the elect’s sake the days of wrath at the close of the Gospel Age are also shortened. For the preservation of the mass, let the salt give forth its saltiness.

What is known as “The Parable of the Two Seas” pictures our theme very strongly. In the Land of Promise are two seas, the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Separated one from the other by a high tableland for about sixty miles, these two seas have much in common and yet are as different as light is to darkness. They are both inland seas, both fed by mountainous streams and both mainly fed by the mighty Jordan River. Both are well below sea level, yet one is “a most attractive object, a beautiful body of water, blue water overarched by a blue sky. Its rare beauty has kindled the enthusiasm of many hearts.” Jews and Gentiles both sing its praises. The ancient rabbis had a saying — “Although God has created seven seas yet He has chosen this one as His special delight.” Its waters are always “clear, cool, and sweet.” The River Jordan at times brings down much sediment and appears like a very dirty stream. Yet the Sea of Galilee remains clear, cool and sweet. Fish are here in profusion, quality as well as quantity. Its shores were one continuous garden at the time of our Lord, and no doubt will again be restored to their former beauty.

The Dead Sea enjoys everything that flows into the Sea of Galilee ; some of the streams that feed it are teeming with life. Yet this sea is so aptly named because of its lack of life. Not a living thing in its waters, nor in the vicinity of its shores. Its waters yield 24 pounds of salt for every 100 pounds of water, while the Atlantic Ocean’s waters yield 6 pounds of salt for the same quantity of water.

Associated with the Dead Sea we have Lot, Sodom, and Gomorrah. Jesus of Nazareth exalted the Sea of Galilee by His presence along its shores, and on its waters, making one of its cities, Capernaum, His home. If its waters could speak what history they would tell. Along its shores He called His first disciples, multitudes came to be healed, He fed the five thousand, and Jesus Himself referred to the “mighty works” that had they been done in Tyre and Sodom would have meant salvation. What makes the big difference, then, between the two seas? The same difference that divides a nominal Christian from a real disciple; the same difference that separated the lone stranger in the leper colony from

the nine who failed to return.

With Galilee, water flows into it and also out of it. The Dead Sea will take everything that comes its way and gives nothing back. In the case of Galilee we have beauty, activity, life. With the other sea we have stagnation, death. Galilee receives and gives again, yet loses nothing by so doing; in fact, it benefits. The Dead Sea takes everything and gives nothing. Compare the results, for these issues affect the Christian; these two Seas symbolise people.

To give back the life in Christ means an overflowing cup. The more that is given the greater the overflow. We receive and give; we give and receive. This is a Christian life; the result will be as beautiful and useful as the Sea of Galilee; suffering and dying with Christ means giving, but it also means receiving, so that we all may say — “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Gal. 2: 20.) “As every man hath received the gift, so minister the same one to another.” “Give to him that asketh of thee.” “Freely ye have received, freely give.”

### **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

The Adelaide brethren wish to advise that their Easter Convention is to be held this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, March 27th to 30th, in the Master Builders' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, South Australia.

### **Passover Memorial, 1959**

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord's request—“This do in remembrance of me.”

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

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Thy soul must overflow, if thou  
Another soul would'st reach;  
It needs the overflow of heart  
To give the lips full speech.

“Think truly, and thy thoughts  
Shall the world's famine feed;  
Speak truly, and each word of thine  
Shall be a faithful seed;  
Live truly, and thy life shall be  
A great and noble creed.”

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## **Convention News.**

ONCE again the Annual Convention arranged by the Melbourne Class over the Christmas period proved a means of great blessing and encouragement to all the brethren able to attend, and we lift up our hearts in thanksgiving to the Lord for all His favours bestowed in connection with the gatherings throughout the four days of Convention.

It was a pleasure to welcome some visiting brethren from other Australian States and districts of Victoria, all of whom contributed to the benefits received from the various sessions listed on the programme. We were sorry that others were prevented from attending the gatherings through illness, but the attendance was very good, being slightly larger at the concluding session than at similar Conventions for many years past.

Messages with greetings from other classes and individual brethren were received at the convention, being conveyed personally and through the mail, and these were all much appreciated and demonstrated the desires and prayers of other brethren for the Lord's blessing to attend the gatherings.

Three Bible Studies were conducted during the Convention on the Scripture passages — Psa. 2: 1-8; Rev. 3: 14-22, and James 3: 13-18. These studies provided a well balanced examination of a goodly amount of Bible truth, with special emphasis on the end of the Gospel Age, the period in which we are now living, and concerning God's true people, Christendom at large, and the nations of the world in this "time of the end" prior to the setting up of Christ's Kingdom. Some thoughts from each of these studies will be found in the Convention Notes compiled by one of our brethren and now available free to all desiring them.

A number of helpful addresses were delivered by visiting and local brethren and were a means of **much** encouragement throughout the gatherings. Each speaker conveyed a message from God's Word which revealed the diversity of talent amongst the Lord's servants, all of which is a means of upbuilding the members as a whole. The chosen subjects for addresses were: "Expectation"; "Some Thoughts on the Resurrection"; "Here Have We No Continuing City"; "Thoughts From a Shipwreck"; "Receiving and Giving"; "The Rewards of Christian Living"; "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ"; "Fellowship With God"; "Prosperity"; "God Himself Will Provide"; "Our Part, With God's Promises"; "Glad Tidings, Great Joy, All People" and "Thoughts on Christ's Second Coming." A brief outline of these addresses will also be found in the Convention Notes, while some will appear in full in this and succeeding issues of "Peoples Paper" for the benefit of all readers.

Further helpful sessions were the three Fellowship Meetings for Praise and Testimony and a Hymn Service. It is a means of blessing to all to hear of the Lord's leadings and overruling for good in the lives of the brethren since last they met in Convention. Not many are able to express all that they feel, but a few words often reveal that nearness to the Lord which is a great incentive to others in the Christian way. The session of "Hymns We Love and Why" provided the usual helpful relaxation and meditation upon the words of the hymn writers, while appreciating the lovely melodies of others who have used their talents in this manner to the Lord's praise.

On the evening of the last day of Convention, the Melbourne brethren selected the message contained in Rev. 3: 20-22 as a Convention greeting with Christian love to be conveyed to all brethren who had sent messages, and to all others who love the Lord and His truth in all parts of the harvest field.

The concluding feature of the Convention comprised the usual Love Feast, when the assembly, filing past each other, bade farewell with a hearty handshake, and partook of the symbol of cake, whilst singing "Blest Be The Tie." "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" was the closing hymn, and concluding prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessing, and desire for His leading and guidance in all the clays ahead terminated the very helpful 1958 Convention.

### **Convention Notes.**

Notes covering the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free upon application to this office.

## **God Will Provide.**

(Convention Address) (Genesis 22: 1-19.)

OF all the Old Testament heroes of faith, Abraham surely stands out as one of the greatest. His whole life was a journey of faith from God's first call to leave home and kindred, and though the various tests which God saw fit to send. To him also were given great and wonderful promises to apply through the seed of promise. Of Abraham it is stated that he was the friend of God.

The greatest of Abraham's tests of faith was that recorded in Gen. 22: 1-19, wherein God asked Abraham to offer up the son of promise, even Isaac. Even here we see that Abraham faltered not, but set out with faith and resoluteness to do God's will.

As Abraham set out, his party consisted of himself, Isaac, and two of his young men, and they journeyed three days towards the place appointed of God. There, the young men were left behind, the remainder of the experience being too personal for any outsiders to share. The heart of Abraham no doubt bled as he went on with his beloved son, but we see no wavering of his faith until he stands with knife raised to offer up his son. Just at that point he stands alone before God, with nothing but his faith to support him in the final moments of trial.

In our testing experiences, friends may come so far, but in the final issue we stand alone before God. Do we know Him so well as to be able to trust Him like Abraham in the face of the impossible situation? Abraham had no other seed acceptable to God, nor any prospect of other such seed, nor was there any way but to obey God, yet he believed still that God could do the impossible. How appropriately he is named the father of all them that believe, the faithful seed out of all nations. Let us urge each other on to greater trust like his; God may be calling us to sacrifice some treasure, something we even feel is essential. If we go ahead in faith and obedience, God will overrule in His own way, just as He did for Abraham.

What a great picture there is here of God's own giving of His only begotten and well beloved Son; how beautifully the story of Abraham and Isaac foreshadows the so great love of God in the giving of His first Christmas Gift to mankind and its mighty cost.

Turning now to Isaac, we see a picture of unquestioning obedience to his father, Abraham. Without murmur or complaint he goes with Abraham the long three days' journey by foot. How it reminds us of our Saviour's three and a half years' journey of service and self-sacrifice over the dusty roads of Palestine. Then, after leaving the two young men, Isaac carried the wood for the offering, even as our Lord bore His own cross to Calvary.

The only recorded conversation between the two is that given in verses 7 and 8. Isaac sees the very evident

preparations for an offering and asks what is a very natural question. His father's answer is a staggering one — what faith in God's provision is displayed — "God will provide Himself a lamb." Yes, even if the "lamb" was to be Isaac, the son of promise who was to be a father of nations. The lesson surely is that we too should trust God even where we cannot trace His designs and purposes. The mind of our Heavenly Father is so far vaster than the limits of men's minds and His immediate call to us may make no apparent sense. Why in Abraham's case should a reasonable God ask for such an apparently futile act. The offering of Isaac would not in itself achieve any purpose or blessing. In fact, humanly speaking, it could only cut right across God's earlier promise of blessing to all mankind through the seed of promise. With much justification, Abraham might have argued back with God on these lines, yet Hebrews tells us that Abraham believed that God was able to restore Isaac to life if need be, which we are told is what did happen in a figure. Of course, the testing and proving of Abraham in itself was the glorious purpose of this experience, even as in our lives it is the trial of our faith that teaches patience and strengthens hope.

Because of his faithfulness in this last and greatest trial God confirmed and enhanced His earlier promises to Abraham, and through him and his seed, even Christ, and all of the faith of Abraham, we have been blessed and ultimately shall all mankind be blessed. Though you and I may not see the purpose of God's dealings with us, let us not murmur or complain, but rather, as did Abraham, believe in our God as the God of all-seeing wisdom and love who does indeed work all things together for good to them that love Him and are called according to His purpose.

Looking again at verse 8 — "God will provide himself a lamb." Yes, there was the ram caught in the thicket, verse 13, and this was offered in Isaac's stead. How Abraham's heart must have rejoiced to see God's loving hand in this provision; he had trusted that God would provide though he could not know just how or when. So God will not tempt us beyond what we are able to bear, but with the trial will provide the way of escape when He sees we have learnt His will, so that we may be able to bear whatever experiences He sees are best for us.

Best of all, this part of the account reminds us of the Lamb of God provided as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. God, as a righteous judge, must needs demand the life sentence of all mankind. All our lives were forfeited by Adam's sin, but God has provided Himself a Lamb, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." How wonderful is God's provision that even before the need existed the remedy for sin had been appointed and prepared.

As it was in the case of the ram offered in Isaac's stead, so the offering of our Saviour was a substitutionary one. God had asked Abraham for the offering of his son, not that Isaac's death would have atoned for sin or had merit in itself, but that Abraham's faith and suitability for God's purposes might be finally tested. Our Lord Jesus Christ has, however, tasted death for every man — in every man's place — on the cross of Calvary. There He gave up His perfect life that all who by faith, even the faith of Abraham, claim Him as Saviour might escape the penalty and power of sin. In this age, God is drawing to Him only those that He wills for His purposes, but to all who hear His call to their hearts in this time, what a wonderfully rich provision there is in Christ — "the unsearchable riches".

To any who have not yet made God's provision their own, the Christmas season again presents the challenge of the cross of Christ. The human race, dead in sin, sorrow and suffering, desperately needs the grace of God, and we praise Him that He has provided blessing beyond human conception to be revealed in due time. But to those who have the ear to hear and the heart to respond, now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation. The need of each one of us for a Saviour requires no emphasis; in our own hearts we know it is truly so. Why not then take God's provision to our hearts now — accept God's greatest of all gifts at this Christmas time, and make the new year a year of new life and joy in Christ. May His holy spirit speak to each of us at this season, and if we have not yet laid hold on life in Christ may we receive grace to heed the call and to follow Christ in full devotion to His will and service. For us all, may His spirit make the new year one of renewed zeal for His service, for more love for the brethren, for greater trust in His all-seeing overruling day by day.

Let us all earnestly seek to be built up in faith, through trial though it be, to learn the daily lessons of submission and obedience, knowing that He who has provided the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, even your sin and mine, will day by day provide all our needs through His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

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## **The Christian's Needs.**

THE Scriptures furnish rules for holy living in abundance, that the man of God may be complete, perfectly furnished for every good work—none of his necessities are overlooked. For instance, when we come into the world, we need clothing, and so does the Christian—"For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isa. 61: 10. "Be clothed. with humility" 1. Pet. 5: 5; and again—"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel; but let it be . . . a meek and quiet spirit . . . for so holy women of old adorned themselves." 1 Pet. 3: 3-5.

You need food : "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." John 4: 34.

You need to be educated : "Teach me Thy will." "Come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Psa. 34: 11. "They shall be all taught of God." John 6 : 45.

You need exercise : “Exercise thyself unto, godliness.” 1. Tim. 4: 7. “Herein do I exercise’ myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and man.” Acts 24: 16.

You need pleasure: “In Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore” Psa. 16: 11. “Thy law is my delight.” Psa. 119: 77.

You need work : “Work out your own salvation.” Phil. 2 : 12. “Let us labour, therefore, to, enter into that rest.” Heb. 4: 11.

You need rest : “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matt. 11 : 28. “My presence shall go with. thee and I will give thee rest.” Exod. 33: 14.

You want a reward: “I will be thy . . . exceeding great reward.” Gen. 15: 1.

Do you desire riches? “Lay up for yourselves, treasures in heaven.” Matt. 6: 20. 1 Tim. 6: 17-19. “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich.” Prov. 10:22.

Do you desire a home? “I go to prepare a. place for you . . . I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, ye may be also.” John 14: 2, 3. “To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away.” 1 Pet. 1: 4.

You need company : “He that doeth the will of My Father in heaven, the same is My brother, sister and mother.” Matt. 12: 50.

You may need a new song : “My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.” Psa. 51: 14. “And He hath put a new song into my mouth.”

Psa. 40: 3. “And they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.” Rev. 15: 3.

Do you want to be loved? “The Father Himself loveth you.” John 16: 27. “I have loved thee with an everlasting love.” Jer. 31: 3.

Do you want to know where God dwells? “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy ; I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit.” Isa. 57: 15. “If any man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.” John 14: 23.

Do you want to see God? “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Matt. 5 : 8. “Follow peace and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” Heb. 12: 14.

Do you want wisdom? “In Christ, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Col. 2 : 3. “The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Prov. 9: 10.

Do you want to be true? Think on the things that are true. Phil. 4: 8. “Put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour.” Eph. 4: 25.

Do you want to be free from the power of evil? “Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.” Rom. 12: 9.

Do you want to be cleansed from bitterness and hate? “I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.” Luke 6: 27, 28. “Let all bitterness be put away from you.” Eph. 4: 31.

Do you want to be free from envy? “Be content with such things as ye have.” Heb. 13: 5. “In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves” Phil. 2 : 3.

Are ye in search for happiness? “Happy is the man whom God correcteth.” Job 5: 17. “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye ‘do them.” John 13: 17.

You need courage and strength: “The Lord is the strength of my life.” Psa. 27: 1. “Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart.” Psa. 27: 14; Deut. 31: 6.

The Bible will correct your anxiety and worry; “Cast all your care on Him for He careth for you.” 1 Pet. 5: 7. “My God shall ;supply all your need.” Phil. 4: 19.

The Word of God opens the heart, enlarges the affections and constrains us to love others. See Psa. 19: ‘7-11.

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## **Ransom - Ransom Price - Sin Atonement.**

BUT one Ransom-price was arranged for by our Heavenly Father and provided for in the death of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. That Ransom-price is for the sins of the whole world. But the world has not yet gotten its share of the benefit of that Ransom-price provided more than nineteen centuries ago; for it still “lies in the Wicked One.” (1 John 5:19.) Our Lord, knowing the Father’s will in this matter, declared, “I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.” — John 17:9.

The application of the merit of the Ransom for the Church was made when our Lord Jesus “ascended up on High and appeared in the presence of God for us” — the Church class. (Heb. 9:24.) His application of His merit for us was manifested by the Pentecostal blessing, which has since continued with all of the “us” class, begetting these to the new nature, as joint-heirs with our Redeemer.

Our great High Priest will not make application of His Ransom-merit on behalf of the world until the end of this age, until He shall have finished the use of it on behalf of the Church — now enabling those drawn of the Father to “present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, their reasonable service.” — Rom. 12:1.

During this Age, He accepts, therefore, as part of His own sacrifice, the offering of the Church. This enables this class, as referred to by the Apostle (Col. 1:24), "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for His Body's sake, which is the Church." Thus, suffering with Him in this present time they will shortly be glorified with Him in His Kingdom as His Bride.

To recapitulate: The Ransom-price is one thing, and the Sin-atonement made with that Ransom-price is quite another. The Ransom-price for all was provided by our Lord in the work finished by Him at Calvary. The appropriation of the Ransom-price is two-fold:

- (1) In this Age, for or on behalf of, the Church.
- (2) In the coming Age, for the sealing of the New Covenant with Israel, which will be open for acceptance by all the families of the earth — all nations.

The Atonement so far as God is concerned, all proceeds from the Ransom-price provided at Calvary. The first application of that price was made after our Lord ascended up on High, when He appeared for us, His Church. The second application of the Ransom-price **will be** at the close of this Age, when, as the Great Priest, He will mediate the New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. This Covenant is different from the Covenant under which the Church is developed, namely the Abrahamic Covenant, which has no mediator, and which is a Covenant of sacrifice, while the New Covenant is a Covenant of Restitution, to return man to his original condition of perfection.

## Pilgrim Ways Ended.

AT the close of November last our elderly Brother Morris, of Glenbrook, New South Wales, finished the pilgrim way after having rejoiced in the truth message for many years.

Our dear Brother Morris was well known to the friends in N.S.W. particularly, but had also visited other States to and from a visit to England about 30 years ago and met some of the brethren at ports of call around Australia. He was well known for his loveable and kindly disposition to all, while at the same time appreciating the harvest truths so fully. His periodical visits to the Class friends in Sydney were always warmly appreciated, and they will greatly miss his company and fellowship in the truth.

Failing health, with loss of memory over the greater part of last year made it necessary for our Brother Morris to enter a nursing home, but his heart and mind were continually centered upon the Lord and His precious truths. We have every confidence in his having gained the Lord's approval as an overcomer, by His grace, and having entered into the joys of the heavenly inheritance to which he ever looked forward. Sincere sympathy is expressed to the members of our dear Brother's family, who would greatly miss the love and kindness of their aged Christian parent. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth : Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Our Victorian friends, as well as others visiting the Melbourne Conventions, will remember our elderly Sister Bannon, who finished the earthly way on January 9th last, after spending a truly Christian life which was evident to all who knew her.

Our dear Sister Bannon first contacted us through the broadcasts from 3GL Geelong over twelve years ago, and it was evident that the truths contained in the Plan of God for the salvation of all mankind immediately appealed to her as being in harmony with a God of love and mercy, and which she had not previously understood. It was lovely to see how our dear Sister appreciated the truths of the Bible and was never happier than attending the Class. meetings with the brethren in Melbourne, and it was not long before she symbolized her consecration to the Lord by water baptism.

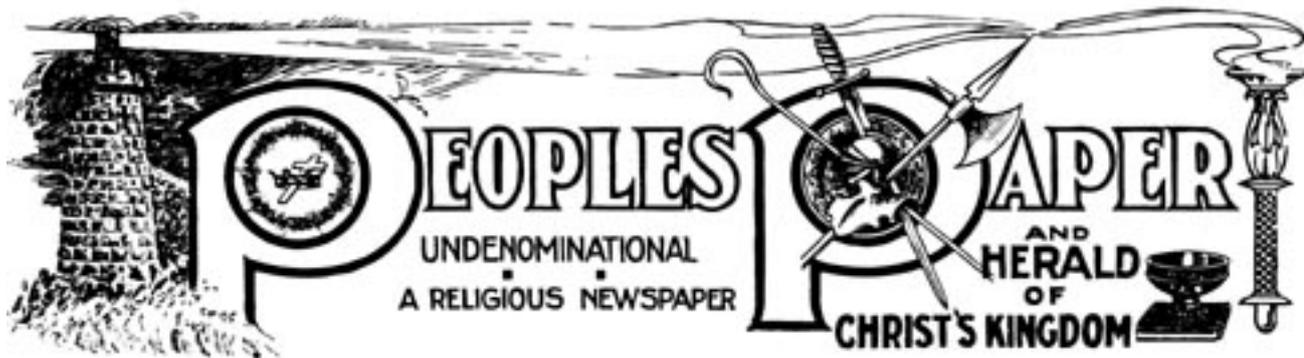
Of a truly humble and lowly disposition our Sister Bannon was a wonderful example of patient endurance as she contended with various physical ailments. No complaints of any kind came from her lips, and when laid up she had her Bible right at hand, from which. to receive the support and comfort of the truth. in which she rejoiced. While not able to study the deeper significance of some of the doctrinal features of the truth, her heart and mind reacted so fully in accord with the attributes of our Heavenly Father's character revealed in the foundation truths, and so our dear Sister was at one with the brethren so fully in spirit. and in truth. Thus it is felt that our dear Sister Bannon has entered fully into the joys of the, Lord, of which she had a foretaste during the earthly sojourn.

To the three daughters, one son and their families, sincere sympathy is extended in their. great loss of a loving Christian mother and' grandmother, of whom, no doubt, they will have lasting memories for good in the days to come., and possibly also an appreciation of the truth which meant so much to our Sister Bannon over the past twelve years in particular. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." We feel that our dear Sister was truly one of the Lord's. "jewels" to whom it is the Father's good' pleasure to give the kingdom. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (daily dying) of his saints."

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**Look straight into the light, and you will always. have the shadows behind you.—A.F.W.I.**



Volume XLI. No. 12      MELBOURNE, DECEMBER, 1958

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## Is It Necessary for Christians to Understand Bible Truths?

THIS SUBJECT is one that has no doubt been presented to the minds of a great number of people at one time or another. Most of us have probably heard the remark by well-meaning people that it does not really matter what one believes about the Bible, or if one tries to understand it or not, so long as we lead a good, honest and upright life, do no harm, but try to do good whenever possible.

This outline is certainly very honorable, and if every member of the human family carried it out in their dealings with their families and those with whom they come in contact, the world would certainly be a very different place to what it is today. 'So in dealing with our subject, let it not be thought that we are disparaging such a noble objective.

This formula which is thought by a large number of people would constitute the full requirement for a Christian must certainly be incorporated into the lives of everyone who is seeking to please and honor the Lord in all things, for without this heart-desire all understanding of the Bible truths would be worthless; yes, without this heart-intention the knowledge of Bible truths could bring condemnation. So, when we hear someone say—I try to lead a good, honest and upright life and do no one any harm, but try to do good wherever possible—we should be glad that such a one has the right viewpoint of what a Christian should be in the eyes of those who have not been drawn of God to understand His plans and purposes for the followers of Jesus during this Gospel Age.

However, what about Christians themselves; is it really necessary that they understand the truths of the Bible as a whole? A helpful Scripture in explanation is found in Acts 8:26-38, which please read. It has been suggested that the angel of the Lord likely directed Philip by a dream, in explanation of verse 26; and in verse 29 the information to Philip would probably be communicated to his mind. It was an honest enquiry in verse 30 to this earnest Ethiopian—"Understandest thou what thou. readest?" From the response in verse 31—"How can I, except some man should guide me?"—we observe the quality of meekness in this man, and which is so necessary in the understanding of the Bible, not only intellectually, but also in the heart.

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture (Isa. 53:7, 8), and preached unto him Jesus."— Verse 35. What a wonderful presentation of the truth concerning Jesus that must have been which Philip explained to that Ethiopian. No doubt he would tell him about the great condescension of Jesus to become a Man, that He might redeem the world of mankind—such as we find in 2 Cor. 8:9. He would explain about the pre-human existence of Jesus,—"the glory that he had with the Father before the world was"—as shown in Phil. 2:6-9.

Philip would show that Jesus' sacrifice of Himself was a voluntary one—that He delighted to co-operate with the Father in paying the ransom, or corresponding price for Adam and all mankind condemned to death in Adam. All these features about Jesus would be explained from the wonderful prophecy of Isaiah 53 which the Ethiopian had been reading, and he would show the exaltation of the Lord to the Father's right hand in the words of verse 12—"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great." Yes, the high exaltation of Jesus was to "the express image of the Father's person." (Heb. 1:3).

It would be explained further by Philip that God was "taking out a people for His name", from both Jews and Gentiles, as indicated by the further words of verse 12—"He shall divide the spoil with the strong." Yes, with those who are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,—those who are strong for the Lord, strong for truth and righteousness, willing to sacrifice all worldly pleasures and ambitions for the Lord and His cause. Indeed, no others could be of this class "for God's name," and to whom the risen Jesus is pleased to divide the spoil, in the language of the prophet Isaiah.

How deeply, also, must Philip have shown that Jesus' sacrifice began at the time of His consecration, when He was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. He could have shown the great difference between the baptism of John and Jesus' baptism. John's baptism signified the "remission of sins"— picturing the heart condition of the Jews who repented of their sins against the Law of God. How different was Jesus' baptism—He had no sins of which to repent, and we can understand the position of John the Baptist from Matt. 3:13-17.

Philip must have explained this matter very fully, showing that the followers of Jesus, true Christians, should truly understand these spiritual truths, and know that they also are invited to walk in the steps of Jesus' death baptism, as we read in Rom. 6:3-5.—"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"

Having made the heart consecration to be dead with Christ, then it would be in order to take the symbol of water baptism, as the Ethiopian desired to do, and which Philip gladly administered, when the query was made—"What doth hinder me to be baptized?" There was nothing to hinder—apparently this man had for some considerable time been devoted to God, and had undertaken this visit to Jerusalem, as is stated in verse 27—"to worship." All he needed was to get things straight in his mind, his heart being already in a consecrated condition, and Philip was God's servant for this special occasion.

It has been suggested that this "man of Ethiopia" was probably chosen of God to first introduce the Gospel into Africa, and we can see that it was very necessary for him to understand the truths of the Bible; indeed, he was so yearning and longing to understand the prophecy about Jesus, that God sent a special messenger, in the person of Philip, to "preach unto him Jesus." We can be quite sure that all who hunger and thirst after righteousness, as did the man of Ethiopia, will likewise be supplied with the heavenly truths, for it is equally necessary today for true Christians to understand the truths of the Bible.

We remember how our Lord encouraged His disciples to understand the truths He was preaching when they asked Him on one occasion why He spake in parables. He answered in Matt. 13:11—"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (the multitude at large) it is not given." The Apostle enlarges beautifully on this matter of the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" in Col. 1:26, 27—"The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

What a wonderful favor is this—"Christ in you the hope of glory"—for there is nothing in this wide world to compare with the blessing in the hearts of those so privileged. In 2 Cor. 5:17 we read—"If any man be in Christ, he, is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." It may be asked—What is the difference between "Christ in you," and being "in Christ"? There is no difference; these two expressions but emphasize the reality of Christ's transforming power. To those who have experienced this indwelling of the spirit of Christ—Christ in you—their hearts and minds are in continual harmony and accord with the Lord, the brethren, and all with whom they have to do. This is one way in which we can test our relationship with the Lord and His cause—Do we experience continually the indwelling of Christ's spirit—"Christ in you, the hope of glory?" If not, we could be allowing the Adversary to hinder our appreciation of spiritual things, and we must resist the evil one, with his evil thoughts and suggestions, if we are to be worthy of the indwelling spirit of Christ.

No wonder our Lord declared of His own devoted disciples whom He found worthy to appreciate the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"—"Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which, ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." Yes, indeed, the revelation to the ancient prophets was limited; they could not be invited to partake of the heavenly truths prior to our Lord's first advent. This is made very plain again from the Apostle Paul—"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward; how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. 3:2, 3, 5, 6.)

Those who are favored to become partakers of the heavenly calling in Christ by the Gospel do not need to be reminded of the necessity to understand the truths of the Bible, for the Word of the Lord is truly their meat and drink. They rejoice also that the partaking of the spiritual truths in Christ by the gospel is for all the members of the body of Christ, as revealed in Gal. 3:27-29—"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

It may be asked, What does Abraham have to do with the followers of Christ, seeing he lived so long ago—back in the Patriarchal Age? It is very interesting to find that God made a wonderful promise to Abraham because of his great faith in being willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac, had God required it, assured that God could raise Isaac from the dead to fulfil His promises. This is found in Gen. 22:15-18.—"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord . . . That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." In this promise of God we see two seeds are recorded—"the stars of heaven" and "the sand by the sea shore,"—and the Apostle reveals the understanding of this matter in Gal. 3:16—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." So, in that promise to Abraham, God had Christ in mind (also those "in Christ") when referring to the "stars of heaven" seed. Paul reveals this as he continues the connection in Gal. 4:28—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

How clearly we see, then, that the followers of Christ, Christians of this Gospel Age, are called and developed under the Abrahamic Covenant—that unconditional promise God made to Abraham. This the Apostle shows in Gal. 3:17—"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." No, indeed; what Paul is stating is, that while God did add the Law Covenant for Israel through Moses 430 years after His promise to Abraham, yet, when Christ

came and the Law Covenant had finished its work, it had not disannulled, or cancelled the Abrahamic promise — to develop the spiritual seed, Head and Body. That is why, we saw in Gal. 3:29—”If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

The Apostle John gives us a helpful connecting thought with our subject when he declared —”If any man sin; we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1.) The Apostle does not say that Christians have a mediator with the Father, as will be the case with Israel and the world when the New Covenant is operating in the Millennial Age. There is an important difference in the offices of an advocate and a mediator. Christ, as our Advocate, stands alongside, and makes up the deficiencies of those who are not opposed to God (we are “accepted in, the beloved”, Eph. 1:6) ; whereas, as Mediator in the kingdom age Christ will stand between two opposing parties—to fully reconcile the world to God. (1 Tim. 2:3-6.)

In 1 John 2:2 the Apostle John continues to expound the truth—”And he (Christ) is the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins ; and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” We surely rejoice that the truths of the Bible are so all-embracing to provide for every member of the human family who has ever lived, and surely it is necessary for all true Christians to know this, for this is part of the gospel of Christ.. In bringing the blessing of everlasting life to the world, God first of all deals with the nation of Israel (after the time of trouble has passed) and makes a New Covenant with them, as stated by the prophet Jeremiah 31:31-34.

The Apostle Paul also mentioned this New Covenant to be made with Israel in various places, such as in Rom. 11 :27—”For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” He had stated previously about the “fulness of the Gentiles coming in” to make up the Bride of Christ, and then declared—”All Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” (Verses 25, 26.) In Acts 15:14-17 we have the same truths of the Plan of God presented,—The taking out of the Gentiles “a people for God’s name,” followed by the restoration of “the tabernacle of David.” We note especially *in* verse 17—”That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.”

The extending of God’s blessings to all mankind through His New Covenant favors to Israel will be a truly wonderful culmination throughout the Millennial Age, following the completion of the “Mystery class,” the Bride of Christ, which is even now unknown to the majority in the religious world. However, the time is at hand when “the mystery of God should be finished” (Rev. 10:7)—when the Bride of Christ is completed and united to her Lord, at which time it will be no longer a mystery that God has selected the “stars of heaven” class to reign with Christ and bring blessings to all the families of the earth, even to “the sand which is upon the sea shore,” when “they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.”

## Pilgrim Way Ended.

ON November 5th our dear Brother Kaesehagen reached the end of the earthly way after a brief illness. For about 50 years our Brother had enjoyed the light of Present Truth, and had rejoiced in service and fellowship with the Adelaide Class during that period. Always humble-minded and whole-hearted in his service for the Lord, he rejoiced in the wonderful hope of salvation for the Church in this Age, in order to the blessing of all the families of the earth in the Millennial Age.

Our dear Brother looked forward with earnest longing to the coming of the Lord’s Kingdom, and his sympathetic nature caused him to feel deeply the wrongs and sufferings of mankind during the present “night of weeping and sorrow” which precedes the glorious “day” of joy, peace and blessing. Much sympathy is expressed to our dear Sister Kaesehagen and family in the great loss they have sustained, and we earnestly commend them to God in this time of trial and need.

It is indeed a precious thought that since we are now living in the “days of the presence of the Son of Man,” the sleeping saints have been awakened, and those fully consecrated ones who now “die in the Lord” are “changed in a moment” to be with and like their beloved Lord. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection . . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:6; 14:13; 1 Cor. 15:51-53.)

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

## Receiving God’s Gifts.

ANOTHER anniversary of the birth of our Saviour is at hand, and it does us good to meditate upon the great condescension of our Lord Jesus to become the Saviour of the world, which meant leaving the glory of the heavenly courts and becoming the man Christ Jesus that He may pay the corresponding price to redeem Adam and the human family condemned in Adam.

While a considerable number of mankind know of our Lord’s birth as the babe of Bethlehem, His growing up to man’s estate, and finally His crucifixion after 31 years of public ministry, yet, so few, comparatively speaking, are

able to accept Him as their personal Saviour, and yield their lives to His service in full consecration in the present life. While, then, we read that “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,” yet the all-important matter for us is to be able to receive our Lord as our personal Saviour, so that we may gain the benefit, here and now, that God made possible by the greatest Gift of all time.

We are reminded of the importance of being able to receive additionally, the Lord’s gifts to us through various of His servants, whom He has delegated to carry His treasures of truth throughout the Gospel Age, by the words of our Lord to His twelve apostles as He encouraged and instructed them for the important mission in which they were to engage after His sacrifice was completed. He declared —”He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that, sent me.” (Matt. 10:40.) It is obvious that our Lord meant that only those able to receive the apostles could gain the blessing that their message would give— being favored as though they were receiving the Lord Himself.

In Matt. 10:41 Jesus proceeded to explain that He would have lesser servants than apostles, even “prophets” and “righteous men” and those who showed a readiness to receive these as representatives of the Lord would receive a corresponding “reward” for their meek and teachable attitude of heart. By receiving a prophet “in the name of a prophet” —knowing that he was a prophet, and desiring to receive him as from the Lord—the reward would be in keeping ‘with the prophet’s ability to give. If the prophet was not “received” no reward of any kind would be gained. The same would apply in the case of the “righteous man.”

Again, in verse 42, the same lesson is implied. Those who would give to one of the Lord’s “little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple”—knowing that he was a disciple, and thus indicating a desire to “receive” him—”shall in no wise lose his reward.” No, indeed ; the Lord’s “little ones”, appreciating the kindness shown, would impart some spiritual reward or blessing, as from the Lord’s storehouse.

How clearly the principle is shown throughout the Scriptures that the degree of reward or blessing gained by the Lord’s people in the present life, (and of course in the life to come), depends upon their desire to receive, as Jesus indicated—”Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6.)

As another Christmas season comes round we surely thank God especially for the favor bestowed on us, enabling us to “receive” the Gift of our dear Redeemer, and the exhortation from Paul is appropriate—”As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” (Col. 1:6.) Our responsibility in connection with all we have received from the Lord is also impressed by the words of Jesus—”Freely ye have received, freely give”—and we are encouraged by the fact that while comparatively few now desire the precious truths we love to give, yet in the age to come, “all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest,” in harmony with the angel’s message —”I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” (Luke 2:10, 11.)

### **Booklet for January’s “Peoples Paper “**

The booklet—”Mankind Coming Back From Hell—’Two Ways Out”—is taking the place of January’s “Peoples Paper,” and is being posted out with this month’s issue. Extra copies of this booklet will also be available for general use.

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The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

## **The Lost Coin.**

(Contributed Article) •

WE invite your attention to Luke 15:8, 9 which reads—”What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.”

This parable of the Lost Coin, in the light of present truth, we believe to be most *significant*, because from one special viewpoint it traces the entire history of the Christian church from the beginning to the end of the Gospel Age.

We are aware that the words found in a series of parables which the Lord gave, *as* for example The Prodigal Son and The Lost Sheep, are generally interpreted to teach the Heavenly Father’s willingness to receive any who would come to Him in the divinely appointed way through the Lord Jesus, and we think it very appropriate to apply a general lesson in this way, as we read—”As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked, turn from his way and live.” Also—”Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” (Ezek. 33:11; Luke 15:10.)

A verse of poetry from the poem—”The Lost Coin”—reads-

“Now all Scripture is by God’s inspiration

Given by Him to us for our instruction,

And all these things are like an allegory

Deep meanings hidden in each simple story.

God sent His spirit forth to choose a bride  
Who'd leave the world and stand at Jesus' side.  
He took ten doctrines, pictured by the camels,  
Do aid him in his search and in his travels.  
To God's household, children of faith, he came  
To seek for those who thought upon His name."

We read in 2 Tim., 3:16—"All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." In Matthew's Gospel it is also recorded—"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 13: 34, 35.)

The above verse of poetry, speaking of an allegory or picture lesson, refers to Abraham sending his eldest servant, Eliezer to Haran, to his own people, to find a wife for his son, Isaac. His servant took ten camels laden with jewels and gold which in due course he gave to Rebekah, and also precious things to her brother and mother; that is, after God had indicated that Rebekah was to be Isaac's wife. This is related to Genesis 24.

Students of Scripture are unanimous that this story is an allegory, or picture, of God sending forth His holy spirit (as represented by Abraham sending forth Eliezer) into the world to choose a companion-company for Jesus, a Bride, to live with Him in heaven. There is much to learn from this allegorical story; for example, when Eliezer met Rebekah at the well, outside the city of Nahor, and Rebekah gave Eliezer water to drink and watered the ten camels, Eliezer gave Rebekah a golden earring, representing the blessed effect of hearing the call to be the Bride of Christ. He also gave her two bracelets, representing the blessed effect of the Divine call on our doings after we hear the call.

But relative to our subject we are here interested only in the ten treasure-laden camels. It has been suggested that each of these ten camels represents one of the ten fundamental doctrines, or truths, given to the Lord's true Church. Also, in the sense that each camel pictured one story, or teaching of God's Word, the ten camels together pictured God's Word, the Bible.

Each camel had two humps, and this could show that the Old and New Testaments were both to carry the truths. The gold and silver pictured the golden promises of God, and the silver truths of His Word. The jewels also would represent the great and precious promises of God. Even the food the camels carried was to picture that God would provide everything that His spirit and those who carried His message would need, or require in this life, and that He would provide for the Church in her journey to heaven.

Camels can go a very long way without water, and as water is a picture of truth, this shows that God's Word does not require to have new truths added to it; it has enough truth for the journey in itself.

Keeping our subject in mind, we now refer to Scripture respecting the harp, in Psa. 33: 2-4—"Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth." Psa. 92:2, 3—"To show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound."

So, then, in our three word-pictures we have—Ten silver coins, one coin being lost; ten treasure-laden camels; and a ten-stringed harp giving forth beautiful music. One thing in common—ten different articles but all good.

When Jesus lived in the East if a young man desired to get married his parents chose a nice girl, and they visited the girl's parents and a marriage was arranged. Then the father of the man gave the girl 4 headdress made of ten silver coins; this was a gift from the bridegroom and it took the place of the wedding ring. The girl did not go to live with her husband. then; she stayed quietly at home and got everything ready, making her wedding dress and preparing clothes and linen for her home. So we have ten camels laden with costly treasure; a ten-stringed harp giving forth beautiful music and a headdress of ten silver coins, a symbol of betrothal and marriage.

Imagine the girl's consternation when she found one of those precious coins was lost, and her joy on finding the same again. In the East everyone knew what a chain of ten coins meant, so Jesus did not need to explain. The bride would get word that her husband was coming for her, and she would hurry to get everything ready—when she could find only nine of the coins, she would be very worried.

In each of these three pictures the generally accepted thought amongst students of the Bible is, that we have here ten fundamental doctrines of the Bible. So, with the harp, when these truths are properly harmonized what beautiful music is produced; how sweet to the ear does the music sound. As one has written—"The whole divine testimony must be in harmony, whether it be communicated by the Law, the Prophets, the Lord, or the Apostles. Their entire harmony is proof of their divine inspiration, and thank God we find that harmony existing, so that the whole Scriptures of the Old and New Testament constitute what the Lord Himself calls the 'harp of God.' (Rev. 15:2.) And the various testimonies of, the Law and the Prophets are the several chords of that harp, which, when tuned by the holy spirit indwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of devoted searchers after Divine truth, yield the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears. Praise the Lord for the exquisite melody of the blessed 'song of Moses and the Lamb.'"

Again from the same writer we quote—"We can go forth in Jesus' name, rejoicing as we go, praising Him with our lips, singing the new song which He hath put into our mouths, 'even the loving-kindness of our God.' It costs something to sing this song; only those who have learned to play the harp of God, who have all its strings attuned to perfect

harmony, can properly render this song of 'Moses and the Lamb.' Never before has it been possible to produce such melody from this wonderful harp, or never before have all the chords been properly placed and attuned; now its music is entrancing. Then let us take this wonderful harp of the ages, and as we sweep its chords let us sing with the spirit and with the understanding this wondrous glad new song."

The same writer gives the opposite side of the story ; when speaking of the past, he says —"God's Word, the great Harp of God, from which comes forth such wondrous music was unstrung. One denomination had one string, another denomination had a different one—Election ; Free Grace ; Baptism ; Second Coming

Christ ; Time Prophecies, etc. They had twanged away, each on his own string until all were disgusted at the discord, and about ready to quit for relief, as they have since done practically."

We now come to what these ten fundamental •doctrines are, as represented by the ten coins, ten camels and ten strings of the harp, and further, in line with our subject, as to which one of these basic subjects was lost and later found, as represented by the lost coin which was later found.

Bible students have listed the following ten 'doctrines in the order stated

- (1) Creation, as explained in Genesis.
- (2) Justice, as represented in the law of "the wages of sin is death." Also the law given by Moses of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."
- (2) The doctrine of the Ransom and a proper appreciation of same.
- (3) The Scriptural doctrine of Justification.
- (4) The presentation of Consecration or Sanctification.
- (4) The Scriptural doctrine of Resurrection.
- (5) The doctrine of Election.
- (6) The doctrine of Free Grace.
- (7) The doctrine of Restitution. (10)
- (6) The doctrine of Second Death.

All these truths became tarnished and dirty (but one was lost sight of altogether), for example

The doctrine of Creation was superseded by the theory of evolution.

Again God's character has been, maligned all through the Gospel Age by the theory of eternal torment, which superseded God's just arrangement, as listed under our second heading of Justice.

The doctrine of the Ransom was made void through the theories and sophistries of science falsely so-called; for example, the theory of the immortality of the soul.

The doctrine of Justification has been superseded by a doctrine of conversion in an effort to get converts to the "Christian faith" instead of believing in justification by faith.

The doctrine of Consecration is not a doctrine of good works, but of laying the "living sacrifice" on the altar.

The doctrine of Resurrection is made foolish by Satan's great lie—"Thou shalt not surely die"—which Weans, that at death the spirit is released from the body and is destined to various states or places according to the particular brand of theology to which one adheres.

The doctrines of Election and Free Grace seem antagonistic to each other to those on whom the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of the living God has not shined.

The tenth doctrine of Second Death could also have little meaning in view of the indestructibility of the soul, as taught by the nominal churches.

But what happened to the ninth doctrine, represented by the lost coin. This was the one that was lost sight of ; this is, Restitution.

These other nine doctrines had been taught to some extent (miserably as they have been represented), but restitution has been lost sight of for centuries ; it has not been preached at all. Nobody has attempted to proclaim anything about restitution until the harvest time. The story of Adam and Eve, their perfection, the wonderful garden of Eden, was discredited as a happy fairy tale, and so the basis of the restitution doctrine—a return to Edenic conditions for the human race—was lost. And so the Lord's Prayer was seemingly made meaningless, when, through the age the prayer went up from all Christendom—"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." And so, this was the doctrine that was lost, as represented by the one piece of silver which the woman lost.

Today, ministers of religion say, as it were, when the house is being swept clean at the present time—"You are raising too much dust ; why don't you keep quiet? Suppose these creeds are wrong, we have left them on the shelf, we have not been doing anything with them. Let them alone ; what is the use of raising so much dust?"

However, we today have got to clean the house; all the rubbish, must be cleaned out, we do not want the dust to settle on the furniture; we want it all swept out and the house completely clean.

Now, see what the woman did. Did she sit down and say, "Thank God, I have found the coin? ;" no, indeed, that is not what the Scriptures say. Let us quote again—"And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost."

And that is what we should be doing. That is what the true Church is doing in the harvest. She is calling in her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice, we have found the coin which for so long has been missing ; not only that, but all the rubbish and filth has been taken from the nine other coins. Are they not beautiful; we have found that which was lost."

So, we are rejoicing ; we are calling our friends and neighbours in, and the Lord wants us to continue to call them in just as long as there is opportunity to work—"Work while it is called day, for the night cometh, when no man can work."

## Correspondence.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friend—I have been very much interested and helped by the "Peoples Paper" and also Frank and Ernest talks. I'm sure that we are living in a time prophesied as being the end of this age, but I do realise that I know so little about these things which are so important. I pray that I may be favored, through God's mercy, to have more of His great Plan revealed to me.

I have the "Divine Plan of the Ages" which I've read and enjoyed much. I'm wondering if you could forward me copies of the following booklets—"Our Lord's Great Prophecy," "Some of the Parables," "Manner of Christ's Return." I'm enclosing a little for subscription to "P.P." and for the books mentioned above. I cannot get 3GL plain enough to listen to here. I pray for you and your work. May the Lord bless you all in the service of His glorious Son. Kind regards.

Dear Friends—Please accept the enclosed cheque. Would like you to post to me the booklet "Israel in History and Prophecy," using the remaining sum as necessary in your work, though I have a special regard for the radio work, as it takes the message to hearing ears.

It is pleasing to know that the wonderful news of the restitution and the thousand year trial and uplift for mankind is going out to the people ; as far as I know, there is no other publication that does send it out in its fulness. It is always—"This is your last chance before Armageddon," so we feel much blessed to see something of the wonder and beauty of this part of the Lord's great plan; any other teaching seems so bleak, don't you think? I am sure you must feel great satisfaction in the thought that you are engaged in bringing it, to people's notice, though I don't doubt the path you have taken is not always easy.. May God richly bless you and, keep you His own... With kindest Christian regards; yours sincerely..

-----  
Frank and Ernest, Dear Brethren—Would you please send to me the book called "Most Holy' Faith." I enclose £2 in postal notes to pay for the book, also my subscriptions to the "Peoples. Paper" and Dialogues. This literature is the most hopeful reading matter I have ever come across, and I do not wish to look further, as I am sure God is giving me the truth, the wonderful truth which may mean everlasting life, to love righteousness and to hate iniquity.

In this hour of great strain it is a joy to believe that there is coming a consummation of the system of things. Before I close, I want to wish you both the rest you deserve from honest labor, and the joy I know is yours in the Lord. Hoping the undeserved kindness of God be on us all. Yours faithfully.

-----  
Dear Brother—I am enclosing It Would you please send me "Tabernacle Shadows" and keep whatever change there is to help with the radio work. I do appreciate the Frank and Ernest sessions on Sundays and the literature received from you has been, and still is a great help to me. I can't stop thanking God to have been so privileged as to have been brought into the Truth, and when one sees so much darkness in those around, one is doubly thankful..

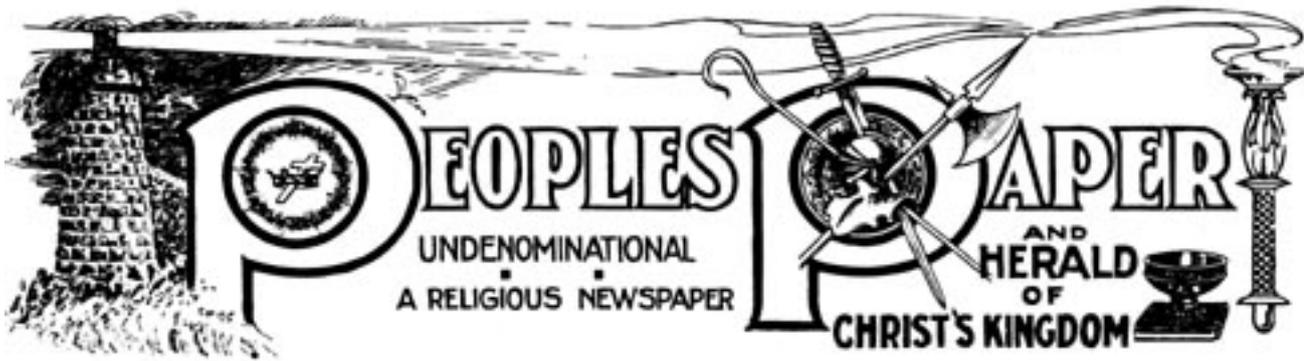
How fortunate I am to have— so close, and to be able to discuss the Scriptures and world events. which are intensely interesting—I am wonderfully blessed. Yours in Christian love.

-----  
Dear Brother—if you can spare me 200 of the tracts "Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ's Return" I think could use them; now may be a good time to put them out as there seems interest up this way in the Billy Graham Mission. By what I see it is the man in the street. who sees the times in which we live; those in the nominal church systems are still asleep. With Christian love.

### **Appreciation of November "P. Paper.**

There has been particular appreciation of November "Peoples Paper," and extra supplies have been printed. Any of our friends who can pass on copies of this "Paper" to advantage should apply for same, stating how many they can use.

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## **Why Does an All-Powerful God Permit Aggression Amongst the Nations?**

IT may seem unnecessary to most of us to even question the power and ability of the Almighty God to regulate all things throughout His universe in accord with His good will. However, we have met people who have asked, If God is really all-powerful, and loving, why does He permit aggression by the strong whether it be nations or individuals, with the resulting suffering and distress on the part of the weaker and often innocent of mankind ?

This is an honest and reasonable question, and we believe that it is fully answered in the Bible in a manner that should be satisfactory to all right thinking individuals, even if they are not yet Christians. Noting some Scriptures with reference to the Lord Himself, we read in Gen. 17:1—"The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God ; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Through the prophet Isaiah, we also read of the greatness of the Lord in comparison with the nations of this world in Isa. 40:12-28. To visualize a God who was the Creator not only of our planet, but of all the planets in the whole universe--"that bringeth out their host by number"—really passes our comprehension of His might and power. But it does help us to understand the truth of the same prophet, speaking again for the Lord in Isa. 46:9-11.—"For I am God, and there is none else ; I am God, and there is none like me . . . My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure . . . Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass ; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

Someone may say, Yes, we admit the great power of God to accomplish just what He wills on any matter, but why does He allow such unjust and unequal things throughout the lengths and breadths of this earth ? The partial answer to this question is found in the words of Gen. 1:26, with reference to the creation of our first parent.—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." To be created "in the image or likeness of God," meant that Adam must have a free-will; that is, to be able to make an intellectual choice respecting all of life's affairs. God had instructed Adam what was expected of him in the way of obedience, and he, knowing the love that his Creator had for him, was expected to obey, not because of any pressure brought to bear, but from his own choice—in the exercise of his free-will.

The angels in heaven were no doubt controlled by the same principles—they also having free-wills were required to obey God, not of compulsion, but out of love for their Creator also. This gave the opportunity for Satan to rebel against God, and we know he also engineered the disobedience of Adam, our first parent, who gave way to the subtle deception. The outcome was, as we well know, that Adam must experience the penalty of death, which would never have been experienced had he resisted the Adversary and remained faithful to his loving Creator. Condemned to death himself, all of Adam's children were born into a dying existence, as we read from the Apostle in Rom. 5:12—"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

However, what about the spirit of aggression which was manifest in the human family even in Adam's day ; indeed, the first child of Adam and Eve developed the aggressive spirit so strongly that he killed his brother, Abel. This influence also came from the great Adversary, whom our Lord said, "was a murderer from the beginning."—John 8:44. See also 1 John 3:12.

We may think, and question, Why did not God, the all-powerful Creator, intervene in the day of Cain and Abel and nip that spirit of aggression in the bud, before it blossomed forth into the lives of hundreds, thousands and millions of the human family as it has today ? Apparently, God saw it was wiser not to interfere with His original Plan—that all mankind must experience the sad and disastrous result of disobedience—so that when the opportunity comes to be delivered from the fall into sin, the majority, at least, will accept that deliverance, not wishing to continue eating the sour grape, which has set so many teeth on edge. One great lesson that the Lord wishes all mankind to learn is that expressed in Prov. 13:15 —"The way of the transgressors is hard."

Further, in addition to the lasting lesson of the sinfulness of sin being impressed upon the whole human family, God

has been proving the faithfulness of two classes of people, over hundreds of years, by the permission of evil, including aggression by a section of mankind.

We think, first of all, of that noble band of patriarchs and prophets from the days of Abel right down to John the Baptist, many of whom are described by Paul in Heb. 11. In verse 38 the apostle declared—"Of whom the world was not worthy." How true ! These faithful Ancient Worthies suffered aggression of a most violent type, and endured "as seeing him who is invisible," being proved worthy to obtain "a better resurrection" in the earthly kingdom. Without the permission of evil, and the aggression displayed against them, they could not have manifest their supreme love and devotion to the Lord and His cause. They shall be compensated, and no doubt counted the Lord's cause well worth suffering for, as they exhibited that overcoming faith in God and His promises for the future.

Of our Lord at His first advent it was prophesied in the Psalms and quoted by Paul in Romans 15:3—"The reproaches of them that reproached thee (Jehovah) fell on me." In Old Testament times the reproaches of them that reproached Jehovah were experienced by all the faithful ones of the class of Ancient Worthies, as we have seen, but Christ experienced the greatest reproaches of all, the greatest aggression of all time. Why did the Father permit these acts of aggression upon Christ ? We have the answer in Hebrews 5:8, 9—"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience (proved His obedience) by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." We read further of our Lord—"Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand. of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Heb. 12:2, 3.)

As with Christ, so with His followers, the experiences through which they pass demonstrate their worthiness of a place in the kingdom with the Lord. Paul's words to Timothy, respecting his own position and that of all faithful followers of the Master, are most explanatory in 2 Tim. 3:10-12—"But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions . . . what persecutions I endured ; but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Again, we have the exhortation from the Apostle--"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.)

In the opening verses of Revelation 17 we have a most remarkable prophecy respecting the judgment of a great system, pictured by an unchaste woman, and we quote in part—"The inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication . . . And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus ; and when I saw her, I wondered with great astonishment." (Rev. 17: 2, 4-6.) What aggression, what persecution is revealed in the words of this prophecy, and which was poured out upon God's people throughout the centuries of the Dark Ages by the Papal system—and that in the name of the Lord ! It has been estimated that at least 50 millions of people were persecuted unto death by the Papacy over the centuries of this Gospel Age, and as we write we hear of thousands bowing down to the body of the recently deceased Pope, the head of the system which claims that it never alters. Which means, that if it had the power today, it would continue to slaughter those who dared to think for themselves and serve the true God in spirit and in truth.

No wonder we read of the destruction of this great system of iniquity in Revelation 18. We quote again—"All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her." (Verse 3.) We hear in the news at this very time that kings and queens, i. residents and prime ministers the world over have been lamenting and praising the man who represented this system which is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. We can well understand the further exhortation—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Verses 4, 5.) While these words in Revelation describe the Mother system of iniquity, we know that the "Daughter" systems partake largely of the spirit and teachings of the Mother—along the line of immortality of the soul, hell fire, trinity, etc. So, the term "Babylon" includes all church systems which teach these God-dishonoring theories, and the call goes out to all who have ears to hear—"Come out of her, my people."

The further verses in Revelation 18 describe the lamentations at the destruction of Babylon—"Alas, alas, that great city Babylon ; for in one hour is thy judgment come." Then the message is addressed to God's faithful saints who would then be with Him in glory—"Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all . . . And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Verses 10, 20, 21, 24.)

In Revelation 19:3 we read in this same connection—"And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." Yes, "her smoke"—the remembrance of such a system of iniquity, Satan's masterpiece, will last in the minds of all people, so that they will never desire again, nor subscribe to such an abomination of desolation. It is estimated at the present time that 450 millions of people are deceived in the Mother system of Papacy alone, apart from those also in the Daughter systems, but all these shall be liberated at the destruction of Babylon, as well as all the millions that will be awakened in the resurrection, at which time we read respecting the saints in glory—"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." (Rev. 3:9.) See also 2 Thes. 2:7-12 with reference to this "mystery of iniquity."

Again, it may be asked, Why did the all-powerful God permit such an aggressive, devastating system to deceive all nations ? One of the main reasons seems well presented in the words of Revelation 20:4—"I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." These overcoming saints had not worshipped the beast—the beastly Papal system. Neither his image—any similar system, ancient or modern. Neither had received his mark upon their foreheads—did not intellectually yield to the great deception which ensnared the majority of mankind. Or in their hands—did not work for, or further the interest of such a system of iniquity. No, these faithful ones were gladly "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God," and the aggression and persecutions against them have but demonstrated their loyalty, and sifted out all those who were not fully consecrated to the Lord and worthy to endure and suffer for His sake.

Coming down the stream of time to our own century, we think of other great aggressions, such as the First World War, and, the devastations inflicted upon many nations, and especially upon innocent women and children. During that war, a Peace Mission was organized in America, led by a Mr. Wilson; an ocean liner was chartered with the peace delegation on board to sail for Europe to try and bring peace to the warring nations. A noble effort indeed ! Reading an account of the voyage, it was reported that during the deliberations in preparation for the peace mission, disputes broke out amongst the delegation—amongst themselves, before they reached the war area. Why ? it may be asked! The Apostle Paul's reference to the former lives of the Ephesian Christians is very explanatory—"In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Yes, the Adversary would seek to disrupt any good movement, and accomplishes much along this line in all except those truly controlled by the Lord's spirit.

It may 'be asked, But what good was accomplished by God permitting that First World War ? Answer, many of God's people were further developed for the heavenly kingdom; millions of people gained lessons in the sinfulness of sin that will be to their everlasting gain in the kingdom to come, and Jerusalem was liberated from the Turks, in preparation for the further progress over the 40 years since.

What of the Second World War and the aggression of that time in various countries ? Out of that again, further millions of lessons have been gained by the inhabitants of the world; further developing of the members of the Church on earth, and the driving of the Jews back to Palestine. Read Jer. 16:14-17—"The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them . . . Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain (kingdom)." Harsh methods some may think ! Yes, perhaps so, but the Lord knows best what to permit, and what to restrain.—"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psa. 76:10,)

What of our own days, and the aggressions which continue in various lands of the world ? We think of the aggression in Hungary by Communist domination. Aggression in the Middle East, and now again in the Far East. Newspaper reports have stated that up to 67,000 shells have been fired from Red China to Quemoy Island in a day ! And this is Chinese against Chinese—their own countrymen and women. Truly man's inhumanity to man knows no bounds in this 20th century civilization. And God, the all-powerful God allows mankind to be subjected to their own inhumanity. Why ? Because He wishes to impart the greatest lesson of all time in the ending of this "present evil world." In Psalm 46 we read—"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth (earthly society) melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth." The prophet refers to the Lord making the desolations because it will be by His permission, and what He requires in His Plan. Then will follow—"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psa. 46:6, 8-10.) The Lord will surely call a halt to all aggression of all kinds when sufficient lessons have been learned of the sinfulness of sin.

While the disturbances of earth continue, the Lord's people are to progress with their own preparation of heart and mind for the heavenly kingdom, as shown in 2 Cor. 10:3-6. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." And then follows one of the Apostle's most revealing statements concerning God's plan—"and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your (the church's) obedience is fulfilled."

What a wonderful solution to all earth's aggressions—the Lord will revenge all disobedience when the Church has fulfilled her obedience, her sacrifice in the steps of Christ. How fitting, then, are Paul's words—"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath ; for it is written, Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Bless them which persecute you ; bless, and curse not. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer." (Rom. 12:19, 18, 12.)

### *Melbourne Christmas Convention.*

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

### *Books Available.*

“Most Holy Faith”--£1.

“Tabernacle Shadows”-6/-.

“Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-10/6.

“God’s Promises Come True”--£1.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“The Book of Books”—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-1/- “Manner of Christ’s Return”-1/- “Christ’s Return”-1/-.

“Some of the Parables”-1/-.

“Hope Beyond the Grave”-1/- “God and Reason”-1/.

“Israel in History and Prophecy” is the title of a very interesting and informative 64-page booklet now in stock, priced at 1/- per copy, 1/3 post paid.

### PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

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

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

## Heavens Rolling Together.

THE recent death of the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church has revealed a situation amongst the so-called Protestant Churches which has not been so apparent previously. A news item in the Melbourne “Age” of the 13th October last, is presented in explanation :—

“The congregation at Wesley Church P.S.A., at Dr. Irving Benson’s invitation, stood in silence as a tribute to ‘a simple, humble, kindly, greatly gifted man who had gone to his reward.’ At Scots Church Rev. A. Crichton Barr offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the life of a good man. Rev. Lyall Dixon at Independent Church said ‘We share the loss occasioned by the death of the Pope, and sympathise with the members and friends of that church.’ “

For the leader of any Protestant Church to declare that the head of the Roman Catholic Church had gone to his reward after serving for about twenty years as director of the great anti-christian Papal system is almost unbelievable. Surely the three church leaders quoted above have read a little of church history, and should know that during the Dark Ages the Papacy persecuted and slaughtered millions of innocent people in the name a Christ. They should know also that not many years ago the claim was made that the ‘Roman Catholic Church never alters, and inasmuch as the recently deceased Pope accepted his office on the assumption that his predecessors had acted rightly, then he must have condoned their conduct, and, if he had the power, may also have continued their devastating reign of terror, and that, in the Lord’s name.

When Napoleon took the Pope of his day prisoner and broke his power, by the Lord’s overruling, that marked the beginning of the end of the greatest anti-christian system the world has known and now in our day we see further amazing evidence of the consuming going on in preparation for the complete destruction of the “mystery of iniquity” which has deceived all nations. In Rev. 6:14 we read —”And the heaven (ecclesiastical systems) departed as a scroll when it is rolled together.” How appropriate the expression—”rolled together as a scroll” — showing that the Mother and Daughter systems will combine, making up Great Babylon, which is shortly to be overthrown like a “great millstone cast into the sea.” (Rev. 18.)

The recently deceased Pope, along with all mankind, Roman Catholic and otherwise, will no doubt come up in the resurrection day, to unlearn the grossest of errors, if they will, and learn and obey the laws of Christ’s kingdom, if they are to prove worthy of everlasting life on the restored earth. (Acts 3:20-23.)

## Retrospection.

(Convention Address)

*“Call to remembrance the former days.” (Heb. 10:32.)*

THERE is a decided advantage in looking back on things past—calling to mind past experiences, lessons, instructions and knowledge, mistakes, failures or successes learnt in former days, not only in our • natural life, but especially in our spiritual life and character development, noting how our fellowship with the Lord has increased and become more intimate.

Calling to mind our endeavors to obey the instructions of the Scriptures and overcoming our own selfish will and conduct is cause for joy and thanksgiving to our Creator. This joy springs from the fact that the Lord has supplied the necessary help, strength and guidance with corrections and instructions. Looking back over the years we cannot come

to any other conclusion than that it is a definite spiritual experience—it is a real thing.

Apart from the Lord and a knowledge of the Scriptures we could not have brought about this change. Although the beginning of this schooling was perhaps feeble and faulty on our part, yet, as we look back, there definitely has been progress.

It is interesting to note in the Scriptures that Israel was so often urged to call to mind their former days and experiences, especially in their deliverance from Pharaoh and the Egyptian bondage.—“Remember this day, in which ye came out of Egypt ... by the strength of the hand of the Lord.” “Remember, and do all the commandments, and be holy unto your God.” (Exod. 13:3; Num. 15:40) Often, they were urged to “Remember, and forget not how thou provokest thy Lord in the wilderness.” (Dent. 8:2.) Forgetting this, so often brought them calamities, punishments and national disasters.

We too, are likewise warned—“If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” (Heb. 10:38.) We, who have confessed Christ and His truth, are also included in that message to the Church of Sardis—“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee.” (Rev. 3:3.)

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews urges his readers to “Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated (enlightened), ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” Calling to mind days, now past, when we were first enlightened surely does encourage and stimulate the consecrated followers of the Lord, causing them to rejoice in His providences and guidance as they observe the manifestations of His love, mercy and power overshadowing them.

On reflection, as we take a mental picture of the past experiences and blessings of the truth, especially “present truth”, the question presents itself to our mind—What would our life, our circumstances, hopes, aims, our going out and coming in, have been, if the heart-cheering, sanctifying and joyful message of Present Truth had not been shown to us? How it has changed our lives, our former conduct, and choice of friends and fellowship, and given new experiences. As the writer of Hebrews says—Ye became the companions of them that are persecuted and esteemed as foolish by the worldly wise.

Once we were dead in trespasses and sins. “For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles.” (1 Pet. 4:3.) After referring to the evil works of the flesh, the Apostle Paul says—“And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:11.)

Calling to mind those former days, as the Apostle reminds some who were now consecrated to the Lord, was not with the purpose of shaming them, but to remind them of their present privileges; favors and blessings of our merciful Lord, so that joy and love may abound in their hearts one for another, and call forth from them genuine gratitude and praise to the Lord for His goodness which led them to repentance. He does not now refer to them as miserable sinners under condemnation, but “If any one be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17.)

To another group of Christians Paul writes —“When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness (ye freely followed your selfish inclinations). What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:20-22.)

Calling to mind some things in which we once lived and moved may not be good, and it is proper to forget some things in ourselves and in other fellow Christians. We note the Apostle Paul had put the question—“What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?” Nevertheless, seeing our past conduct in this light, we, by the Lord’s illuminating spirit, have turned about, and what a change this has been; no other power could do this—we are convinced this is of the Lord.

O! blessed they, and greatly blest,  
Where Christ is ruler and confessed!  
O happy hearts and happy homes,  
To whom this King of triumph comes!

This position which we now occupy before God has been entered into by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the spirit of our God. So great is this change, that the Scriptures declare—“Henceforth know we no man after the flesh . . . If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you.” (2 Cor. 5:16, 17; Rom. 8:9.) Christianity is much more than living a good, moral life. In God’s viewpoint and estimation we are not now regarded as sinners, but as spirit-begotten sons—“I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor. 6:18.) While the Apostle Paul does refer to himself as the chief of sinners in 1 Tim. 1:15, 16, he did not, refer to himself as such after he had been chosen as an apostle of Christ, but he confesses that this was his condition before he found Christ as a Saviour—before he was enlightened. As he had received Christ, so also he walked in His steps, and was “not disobedient to the heavenly vision,” but grateful indeed for the favor that justified without merit on his part, and for the truth which sanctifies.

So, in like manner, we should appreciate the favors and gifts bestowed upon us by Christ without merit on our part. Truly, we can all testify that He guided our steps where we could not see, by ways that we had not known,

these many years. And what lessons they unfold—what watchfulness, love, patience and tenderness, longsuffering instructions and experiences, corrections with Fatherly love and wisdom, all given so freely these many years. We feel

so unworthy of them, and those who have been forgiven the most love Him the most.

We cannot deny that we have had these blessings and experiences, for we now know for a certainty that His precious truths and promises have come to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot help but sing-

O! come, my Sovereign, enter in;  
Yet more Thy nobler life begin;  
Thy Word and spirit guide us on,  
Until the glorious crown be won!

When we make a comparison of what we might have been without the favor and spirit of the Lord, it is not very happyfying as we look back over these many years. How much of the selfishness, vanity, pride, malice, anger, envy, covetousness and other works of the flesh dominated us? And these works would have increased within us, resulting in unhappiness to ourselves and to others about us if we had not known the wonders of the Scriptures. It is therefore, not presumption to claim the blessedness of the truth, its wonders, its promises, its uplifting, transforming powers, guaranteed to us by the Highest and Holiest personality in the universe. The message in 2 Thes. 2:13, 14 applies to us also.—"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

No, it is not presumptuous for us to claim, and for all the consecrated all over the world to claim that we now stand on higher ground—truly by faith already "seated with Christ in the heavenlies." In Eph. 2:4-6 are words of authority on this matter which are applicable only to consecrated Christians. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The context from which our text is taken refers to the same blessed fact and experience. "Call to remembrance (how) you took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing ("for" margin) yourselves that ye have ("in heaven" omitted by Diaglott and R.S.V.) a better and enduring substance (or possession)." Therefore, when you are tossed upon life's billows, when you are discouraged thinking all is lost, or when you look at others with their lands and gold; think—"call to mind"—that Christ has promised you His wealth untold; count and think upon your many blessings wealth can never buy.

Call to mind the consummation of your trial day, when the shadows lengthen and evening comes; our earthly tabernacle (tent) is about to be taken down; then, call to remembrance your promised reward in heaven and your home on high. Foolish we would be after these many years to have endured a great conflict and many sufferings and trials, to throw away our confidence in the hope, now so near, set before us. No, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has a great reward." (Heb.10:35.) Yes, this is sure to all who fight the good fight of faith.

However, we all still have need of patience, for the Christian's life consists of doing the Lord's will every day, "and having so done" the Apostle says, verse 36, "ye shall receive the promise." The Lord promised—"For I am going to make ready a place for you, and I will return and take you to be with me, that where I am you also may be." (John 14:2, 3, Weymouth.)

The apostle urges the consecrated in Heb. 10:37 to be patient in their trials and sufferings, for in comparison with the eternal fellowship with the Lord these were for a little while only, and "He that cometh will come, and will not tarry."

As we look over 'these many years, the espoused virgin church has waited long for her beloved Lord and Bridegroom. Even to the longing, beloved John, at the beginning of the Gospel Age, the Lord gave a final assurance—"Surely I come quickly." This is His last message to the Church. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," was John's response and every Christian's response these many years. (Rev. 22:20).

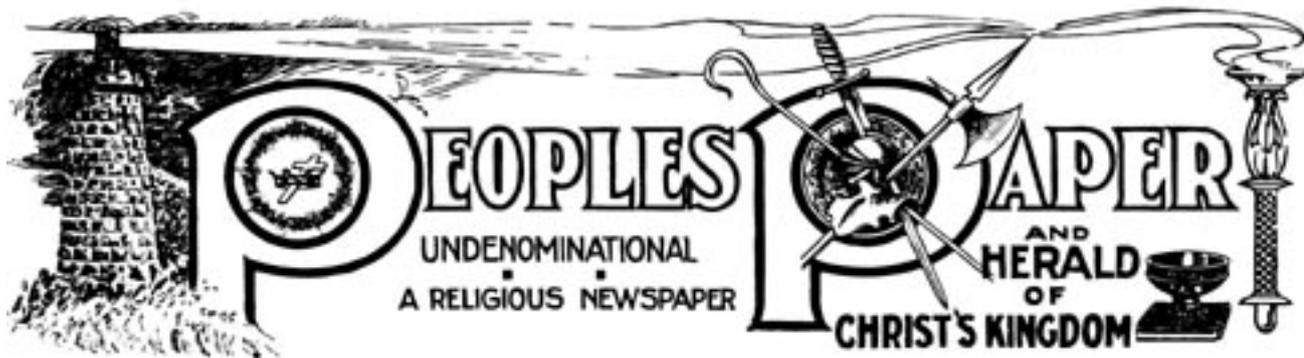
It is therefore most fitting for us to call to remembrance the former days (years) in which we were illuminated concerning the message of Present Truth, which is light for the last days, for there may be a tendency to now follow up merely a devotional life, placing doctrines of Present Truth secondary because these have to be contended for. Are we not favored to be living now--enlightened with the knowledge of the Lord's presence, and what is involved in these days of the Son of Man, and the gathering of His virgin Church unto Himself, also the nearness of the blessing of all the families of the earth. Perhaps the delay or full accomplishment of these things for which the Church is waiting has been trialsome to many.

Although we see the signs and preparations for these things everywhere, yet the giant powers of evil are still very formidable and feverishly scheming how to avoid a total collapse of the present evil world. Nevertheless, the message still comes to the consecrated Christian—"Yet a little while"—and all things written by the prophets shall be accomplished, for there is no tarrying as far as the Lord is concerned, for we are surely living in the "days of the Son of Man"—His second presence. It is now true concerning the signs of His presence, that "when ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh."

After these many, many years these things are beginning to come to pass as predicted. Surely, then, let us press on in watchfulness and prayer, with joy and zeal, for it is also true that we are living in very perilous times; that is, spiritual peril, with foes on every hand to draw us away from the prize. The powers of darkness will not retreat without a great conflict, and with cunning craftiness seek to becloud the issues involved and to belittle Present Truth and its importance.

Call to mind what has happened in the religious and secular world since we were first enlightened; hasn't there been a change since then? Yes, indeed. Perhaps some can look back 40 or 50 years since they first believed the truth; their





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## **Why We Never Go to Shows or Football.**

THIS SUBJECT was first brought to mind some years ago as the result of a visit one Sunday afternoon to our Bible Class in Melbourne by a reporter of one of our Melbourne newspapers. During the Bible Study it was evident that our visitor was taking an intelligent interest in the proceedings, and at the close of the meeting asked a number of questions respecting our beliefs and understanding of the Christian life.

A weekly article was appearing in the particular newspaper as a result of this reporter attending the various churches and other gatherings week by week. When his report on our Bible Class appeared in the newspaper some weeks later, without any suggestion on our part, it was entitled — “They Never Go to Shows or Football.” The reporter’s summing up of our conduct as respects The world and its pleasures could not have been better expressed, and it was felt that his choice of a heading in presenting some details about our gatherings was quite a good witness in itself.

It has been thought well to take up this subject again as being a very important one, because what we do with the full time at our disposal for the complete seven days each week, will determine, in the end, whether we are really faithful followers of our Lord, and what kind of an example we are upon the people with whom we live, or with whom we come in contact.

Firstly, in taking our subject — “Why We Never Go to Shows or Football,” — it will be evident that the “We” represents the truly consecrated followers of Christ — it stands for real Christians. In this connection it is important to remember that as “Christ” was the title given to our Lord Jesus from the time of begetting of the holy spirit at His baptism, so the name “Christian” applies correctly only to His anointed followers — those also begotten of the holy spirit.

It is very helpful to note the appropriate steps which are necessary to take in gaining the great favor of membership in God’s family of spirit-begotten sons, and the Scriptures are very clear and revealing in this respect. For instance, it is important to note that coming to Jesus is one thing, but coming after Jesus is quite another. Our Lord declared — “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” (John 6:44.) This drawing or prompting by the Father of those in right heart condition to come to Jesus is for the purpose of their receiving justification by faith, Thus coming to Jesus, full of faith that He is their personal Saviour, and accepting Him as such, these have the assurance — “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1) This is truly an important and essential beginning for all followers of the Master.

We see a further and, equally important step indicated by the invitation of Jesus to His disciples, when He declares — “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” (Matt. 16:24.) To come after Jesus in the manner stated, —to deny self and take up the cross — appeals only to a comparatively few of those who have come to Jesus. Because it calls for sacrifice, not many respond ; but there is no compulsion for those who cannot appreciate the privilege of accepting this greatest of all invitations ever offered to mankind. Explaining this invitation to discipleship in the full sense, in more detail, our Lord’s words to the Jews who felt the heavy burden of trying to keep the law of Moses were — “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11:28-30.)

The Apostle Paul contrasted the house of servants under Moses, with the house of sons under Christ, when he declared — “And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant . . . But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” (Heb. 3:5, 6.) We become members in the house of sons only by taking the Lord’s yoke upon us — being yoked in sacrifice, gladly yielding up our lives to His service — as shown so clearly by the apostle in Rom. 12:1 — “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice ; holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service.”

Who, that has been drawn of God to Jesus, and has accepted Him as their personal Saviour, becoming justified by faith, and who appreciates this amazing invitation to walk in the steps of Christ by full consecration, could fail to

accept it whole-heartedly, rejoicingly? When it is realised that this invitation is possible only “by the mercies of God”, the response of the truly appreciative will surely be — “Take my life and may it be, Lord, acceptable to Thee.” What a wonderful proposition it is to know that our lives may really be “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,” through the merit of our dear Redeemer.

The words of the lovely Consecration Hymn seem so fitting to express the desires of our innermost being, as we yield ourselves fully and completely to the Lord to be used in His service, even unto death. It seems appropriate, then, in presenting our lives to God as individuals, that we consider each of our members as comprising a part of our being to be laid on the altar, a living sacrifice, — my heart, my hands, my feet, my voice, my lips, my silver and my gold, my moments and my days, my intellect, my love, myself.

“Take my will and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.” How expressive of one who feels he delights to take the Lord as his Head and Guide in every avenue of life, just as our Lord felt towards the Heavenly Father — “I come to do Thy will, O God.” In Revelation 20:4 we have revealed the true attitude of the overcoming saints, who gladly give up their own wills that they may do only the Lord’s will. — “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,  
Accept this *gift* to-day, for Jesus’ sake.  
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,  
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;  
But here I bring, within my trembling hand,  
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small;  
And Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand  
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

“Take my heart, it is Thine own; thus in me Thyself enthrone.” Truly it has been stated that the heart is the centre of the affections ; therefore, our heart, yielded fully to the Lord would give no divided service, but full and complete in every particular. Speaking for the Lord, the writer of Proverbs declared — “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” (Prov. 23:26.) Yes, indeed ; and Paul’s words are so appealing — “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.” And further — “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.” (2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.) How important it is for the followers of the Master to always realise — “Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price.”

“Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.” Yes, truly, as another hymn writer declared, “Let my hands perform His bidding,” for our Lord on one occasion stated — “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, ‘ is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62.) From the Psalmist we also read — “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.” And again — “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” (Psa. 24:3, 4; 141:2.)

“Beautiful hands, are they that do  
The work of the noble, kind and true.”

“Take my feet and let them be swift on errands, Lord for Thee.” “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom. 10:15.) What a favor to run with the glad message of the gospel of peace. And while it may be our heart’s desire to — “Let my feet run in His ways” that may not always be accomplished and so we have the helpful exhortation from the Apostle — “Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” Being properly equipped, with “Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” is essential to be able to perform that service worthy of our Lord. (Heb. 12:13, 14; Eph. 6: 15.) The instructions which Jesus gave to His disciples as He sent them out in His service are also most important to us today — “And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, peace be to this house (if not literally, then, in prayer). And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it ; if not, it shall turn to you again.” (Luke 10:5, 6.) “If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.” (Gal. 5:25.)

“Take my voice and let it bring honor always to my king.” It is surely a great privilege to use our voices in the interest of the Lord’s cause, — “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” From the same apostle we read — “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.) From the Revelator we learn of the triumphant chorus which expresses the happiness of all the faithful over-comers during this harvest of the Gospel Age — “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast . . . stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” (Rev. 15: 2, 3.) By using their voices to honor the Lord in this life, this class will prove worthy to continue the same in the heavenly kingdom. (See Rev. 14:1-5.) “In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.” See also Psa. 40: 1-3 — “He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our Lord.”

“Take my lips and let them be moved with messages from Thee.” The faithful apostle helps us in this matter — “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Col. 4:6.) The Psalmist also adds his testimony — “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.” “Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name . . . And my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.” (Psa. 19:14; 63: 3-6.) From Paul, further, we read — “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus ; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 15:5, 6.) What a privilege it is to — “Let my lips speak forth His praise.”

“Take my silver and my gold; nothing, Lord, would I withhold.” The words of Jesus seem so appropriate — “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matt. 6:19-21.) And again — “Make to yourselves friends of the mammon (riches) of unrighteousness ; that, when it fails, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much . . . No man can serve two masters ; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:9-13.)

“Take my moments and my days ; let them flow in constant praise.” How important it is that the Christian’s time be used faithfully in the service of the Lord, even the moments each passing day. Paul’s exhortation is most timely for us today, — “See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will. of the Lord is.” (Eph. 5:15-17.) “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Yes, we must seek to redeem, buy back, some time for direct service to God — as much as can be from the necessary daily round and common task. In other words, the Lord’s people are to see that no time is wasted in worldly pleasures and frivolities, and that from the indirect service of God some time may be redeemed for direct service to our Lord and Master. “Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep ; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand ; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” (Rom. 13: 11, 12.)

“Take my intellect and use every power as Thou shalt. choose.” In asking the Lord to take our intellect and use our best powers, He expects us to co-operate with Him and become more and more acquainted with the truths of His word, as He declared — “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed and ye shall know the ‘truth, and the truth shall make you free. The servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:31, 32, 35, 36.) From the Apostle Paul we also read — “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth, not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy profiting may appear to all.” “Set your affection (mind, intellect) on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4: 15; Col. 3:2, 3.) (See also Rev. 7:2, 3.)

“Take my love, my God ; I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.” Our love that we ask the Lord to take may be very imperfect, but when rendered to Him it will increase and abound as the days go by. What a standard Paul presents to us in 1 Cor. 13:4-8 — “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not ; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” No, indeed

Love is the filling from one’s own  
Another’s cup.  
Love is a daily laying down  
And taking up;  
A choosing of the stony path  
Through each new day  
That other feet may tread with ease  
A smoother way.  
Love is not blind, but looks abroad  
Through other eyes;  
And asks not “Must I give?” but “May  
I sacrifice?”

“Take myself — I wish to be ever, only, all for Thee.” This surely expresses the rendering of our all to the Lord, just as the lovely words of the hymn likewise present the sentiments of our heart

“Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus,  
I’ve lost sight of all beside.”

There is truly no comparison possible when once we have become attached to our Lord and Saviour by those ties that bind our hearts in Christian love. So, with the Apostle we do, indeed, “Give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meat to be partakers (sharers) of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” (Col. 1:12, 13.) Having tasted that the Lord is truly gracious, how could anyone so blessed use consecrated time and talent attending worldly shows or football?

How clearly did the Apostle John express the matter — “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John 2:15, 16.)

It matters not if we do not need to “go” to shows — whether they were one mile or more ; whether they were next door, or the next room, it would make no difference to God’s people. We may be thought narrow-minded, but that is to be expected, seeing that we are walking in the ‘narrow way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.’” (Matt. 7:14.) The words of the hymn give a true assessment of values

“O! what are all earth’s gilded toys,  
Compared with heaven’s eternal joys?  
Or even to the feast now spread,  
For pilgrims through the desert led?”

The words of Paul in 1 Cor. 13:11 could also apply in this connection — “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man (in Christ), I put away childish things.”. “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Faithful when with tears thine eyes are dim,  
Faithful when Joy’s cup o’erflows its brim;  
Faithful when God seems to veil His face,  
Faithful when He crowns thy work with grace.  
Faithful, though thy loved ones turn aside,  
Lips that praised thee once, in harshness chide;  
Faithful, though success enwreathes thy brow,  
Faithful, should the world before thee bow.  
Faithful till hath fled life’s fleeting breath,  
Eager hands lie folded still in death.  
“Faithful unto death!” Lord, day by day,  
Help me thus to keep the narrow way!  
Strengthen me to bear the scorn and shame—

Portion of all those who take Thy name. “Faithful unto death!” When all is done, Cross is changed to Crown, the victory won, Let me hear Thee say, O blessed Lord, “Child, come enter into thy reward! Faithful thou hast been, come share with Me Glory, Honor, Immortality!”

### **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and all friends able to attend these gatherings are cordially invited to make their arrangement accordingly. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

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## **Appreciation of Booklet.**

THE following has been received from one of our brethren and is gladly made known for the benefit of all readers of our “Peoples Paper.”

Recently, I have been looking at the teachings concerning Christ’s Second Advent, and have found the booklet “Christ’s Return — His Revealing and Manifestation,” published by the Berean Bible Institute, most interesting and helpful.

Those of your readers who have seen this booklet would be greatly helped by the perusal of its pages, I am sure. It deals with some of our Lord’s parables which illustrate various aspects of His second coming. The “Young Nobleman” of Luke 19th chapter, also the “Virgins” parable of Matt. 25th chapter are examined, showing that our Lord would be present for some time unknown to the world of mankind in general, and known only to His watching servants.

The thought of the secret presence of Christ may be a new one to many Christians, but it seems to me to be the correct Scriptural teaching, as indicated also by the meaning of the Greek word “parousia” used by our Lord in Matt. 24: 27, 37, 39 etc., in answer to the disciples’ question in Matt. 24:3. “Parousia” means “presence” (see Diaglott) as of one who has arrived, not “coming” as in the Authorized Version, which applies to one who is on the way. How we rejoice in this thought of our Lord’s “parousia” (presence) as the Chief Reaper of the Harvest, and in the thought of the near approach of His Kingdom.

Copies of this booklet “Christ Return — His Revealing and Manifestation” are supplied at 1/- pen copy, post paid, or free to those unable to purchase. Apply to-

**BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE,  
19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.**

# Gentleness.

(Contributed Article)

*“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy right hand hath holden me tip, and thy gentleness hath made me great.” (Psa. 18:35.)*

DAVID, in one of his psalms, is telling us that something entirely apart from himself had made him great — “Thy gentleness.” We cannot wonder over the psalmist’s greatness for the Almighty was his Counsellor and promoting his cause.

Jehovah never failed in manifestations of love and gentleness in His dealings with His typical people, wandering and rebellious Israel, forever disobeying and repenting, forever falling short of the ideal set before them by the prophets whom God raised up to lead and teach them, and always living far beneath the privileges which they might have enjoyed under the gracious provisions of so great a theocracy.

Times without number God had rescued them from most desperate situations, given them glorious victories over their enemies and brought them safely into places of rest and quietness; yes, “beside still waters.” Like as a father, the Lord had pitied Israel, and because Israel feared Him and was striving in her exceedingly human way to obey Him, God was gentle, compassionate, merciful. • He bore with her backslidings, not appearing to mark every failure, but encouraging the feeble attempts which she made to please Him. Every chastisement was given because He loved His people with, divine and fatherly love. He felt every stroke of the rod His hand applied, and in pity He removed their afflictions as they had learned in some measure the lessons He sought to inculcate.

We recall, too, the tenderness that King David displayed as he fled before his wicked son, Absalom, who, with an army of insurrectionists, was following his father, intent upon his destruction. David had numbered the people who had passed over Jordan with him and divided them into three companies, each company under a captain. With unspeakable sadness the king said, “I will surely go forth with you myself, also.” That broken-hearted father could not endure the thought of his men fighting against his beloved son, knowing their intent to kill him. But the people with David would not allow him to go. “And the king stood by the gate side of Mahanaim, and commanded, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom; and all the people heard.” (2 Sam. 18:1-6) What pathos, heartache and humiliation the father’s words displayed. He had shown that he had learned a good lesson from God’s dealings with himself and his people.

We remember the gentleness of our Saviour at His first advent, how His heart overflowed with love and compassion toward the people. We recall the two blind men sitting by the wayside and when they heard that Jesus passed by, they cried out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.” (Matt. 20:31-34.) “And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.” (Mark 1:40-42.)

When Judas escorted a crowd of men, officers and soldiers, with torches and weapons to arrest Jesus, our Lord, knowing all things, went forth and said unto them, “Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.” (John 18:4, 5, 8.) This remarkable composure and courage, the calm, quiet poise of mind and heart under such cruel circumstances is nothing short of amazing to us. And when impetuous Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, Jesus gently said, “Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.” (Luke 22:51).

It was undoubtedly because of the trust and confidence Jesus had in His Father, with entire submission to the Father’s will for Himself, that He maintained such gentleness, meekness and quiet unperturbed spirit, unruffled in every experience. Consider Him, too, before Pilate; when questioned concerning Himself, “He answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.” Then Pilate said, “Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.” (Matt. 27:14; John 19:10, 11.) Jesus knew that His Father’s unlimited power was at His bidding; twelve legions of angels were at His disposal had He so desired it that way, but He chose rather the shameful humiliation, the bitter anguish of the cross, knowing that His Father’s way was best. Yes, His gentleness had indeed made Jesus the great One that trod this earth.

Also regarding the little called-out class that the Father is developing and proving now, the feet members of His Gospel Age house of sons, how gently has He led these, for “As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them. that reverence him.” When we consider how the Lord has led us in our individual lives we are amazed how gently He has led us. step by step to the position wherein we now stand. How gently He has dealt with us in our weaknesses, our short comings; how often have we repeated the same errors, and how often we have had to go to Him. through Jesus to receive cleansing and help and encouragement. Yes, and how gently He has chastised us and pointed us to the wonderful example of our Saviour, and said, “This. is the way, walk ye in it.” Yes, as David puts it in Psa. 86:15 — “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”

Jesus also exhorts all those who are sincerely striving to follow Him; He tells us in John 13:34 — “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”

The Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Tim. 2:24 — “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all, apt to

teach, patient,” and. this is to apply to us as brethren and sisters in Christ. Further, we are instructed in Col. 3:12 — “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forgiving one another ; even as Christ forgave -you, so also do ye.” In doing this, in helpful, kindly deeds, one to another, we are keeping Christ’s commandment, and also showing to our Heavenly Father our love to Him, for it is. written — “He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.” (1 John 4:20.) Also we are becoming a little more like Jesus in the gentle acts we do, for he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him, for this is the great objective of it all — to be like Jesus and to see Him as He is, to be called the. sons of God. It may not seem very much, but it is the little things that mean so much in our loving Heavenly Father’s eyes; so, be kind to one another, be gentle, be loving. Yes, Thy gentleness can indeed make us great.

## Keeping the Faith.

*“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” -2 Tim.4 :7.*

WAS there ever a nobler soldier of the Cross than St. Paul — the Redeemer alone excepted? Soldiers of fortune and patriots have indeed left their marks in the world and on the pages of history, but not one of them has left so indelible a mark as St. Paul. The motive power influencing others has generally been selfishness, but the motive power of the Christian is the reverse — love. Others hazarded and laid down their lives in self-interest, or in the interest of their kin or tongue. St. Paul, copying his Master, laid down his life for Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, to assist in gathering the “elect” to be the. Bride of Christ — that ultimately through the glorified King and His glorified Bride, all the families of the earth may receive the blessings which God waits to give through Abraham’s Seed. — Gal. 3:29.

God is seeking only for heroes now. By and by He will deal with the remainder, helpfully. The “elect” must all be courageous, “conformed to the image of His Son” — heroes. Hence the promise to the Church is “to him that overcometh.” And let us remember that scripturally considered this character which the Lord seeks may be developed in very humble stations; no matter how low, all may develop the overcoming qualities which the Lord will reward. (1 Cor. 1:26-29.)

When writing the words of our text St. Paul realised that the close of his career was near — his course was finished. He recognised as a Christian that he had certain lessons to learn in the School of Christ and this was a part of his course of preparation for joint-heirship with Christ in the glories of the Messianic Kingdom. The course included not merely theory, but also practice. He not only theoretically learned about Christ, but experimentally. He became a partaker with Him in the sufferings of the present time. And sympathetically he was permitted to enter into a large degree of knowledge of the “mystery” of the Divine Plan hidden from the world.

Not only had his own course of instruction been a thorough one, but he had been given a post-graduate course as an ambassador for his Lord and Redeemer and as an apostle for the brethren, the Church. Moreover, he recognised the fact that all such as become members of the Body of Christ are so directly under the divine supervision and regulations that their times are in God’s hand — all of their affairs of life, temporal and spiritual. As the Master’s death could not occur “until His hour was come,” so likewise it is with His consecrated members.

He had kept the faith and the faith had kept him. Many do not realise how important are knowledge and a correct faith. “My people perish for lack of knowledge” is the Lord’s testimony. And their faith can keep pace only with their knowledge, for faith must have a basis. A correct life depends greatly upon a correct faith. Why did our forefathers burn one another at the stakes in a diabolical manner? because they were governed by error. False doctrines, styled by the Apostle “doctrines of devils,” had been presented to them and they had believed them. And the legitimate outcome of the wrong. belief, the wrong faith, was wrong doing. Believing that God purposed the torture of His creatures ‘for centuries in purgatory or for countless millions of years in eternal torment, they copied the misconception of the Almighty in their lives, to our horror.

But St. Paul had kept the faith — the true faith once delivered unto the saints — faith in the Redeemer’s sacrifice ; faith in its application on our behalf; faith in our justification by the Father on that account; faith in the glorious promises of God’s Word; faith in the Lord and faith in the brethren. Surely it meant something to keep the faith — especially when we realise that our great adversary, Satan, is on the alert continually to take it from us or turn or twist it to our loss or injury.

The crown mentioned, the Apostle had seen for many years, with the eye of his faith, as a part of the Lord’s promise. He had, absolute confidence in the Lord and in the promise he had received from Him. That crown had been his cause of rejoicing for many years, not because of pride or ambition, but because of love and benevolence. He would love to receive that crown because it would be the mark of Divine appreciation and love for him; and a mark of his faithfulness. He esteemed it because it would afford him untold opportunity of blessing his fellowmen in association with his Lord and the brethren on the plane of glory during the Millennium.

He hoped for this crown, but did not hope to receive it at death. He knew the Bible teaching on the subject of the resurrection — that this was his God’s provision for the communication of His blessing, first for the Church, and subsequently for the world. He knew and taught that there would be “a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.” (Acts 24:15.) He desired to have a share with his Redeemer in all of His glorious Kingdom work, and he knew that it could not begin until he completion of this Gospel Age, when all the elect Church, as members of the Bride of Christ, would share in “His resurrection,” to glory, honour, immortality and glorious Kingdom privileges.

— Phil. 3:10, 11.

It was for this reason that he proceeded to declare that the crown was laid up for him —awaiting him — not at death, but at the time of his resurrection. That crown the Lord would give to him and to all others in the attitude of heart to appreciate His revelation at the Second Advent — “that day.” True, not many at the present time love His appearing. The majority, not only of the world, but also of Christians, seeking but not finding in pleasures, riches and honours of men, have certain ambitions along these lines which they would like to satisfy first, and then possibly they might be willing for the Lord to establish His Kingdom. But, no! by the time their lives have been spent in such pursuits they are usually thoroughly disappointed and bewildered and generally further than ever from seeking the Kingdom.

None but the faithful will receive this crown. Thank God, the remainder will not be tortured, but, on the contrary, will be blessed by their crowned brethren, from whom, as the Christ of God, will go the blessings of restitution through the agency of the Messianic Kingdom. Eventually all the blind eyes of understanding will be opened — eventually all will see the great Messiah, though invisible to the natural sight. Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.

St. Paul closes his exhortation by reciting that in his trial before Nero some in whom he had full confidence had forsaken him, and he concludes that the Lord, nevertheless, stood with him and strengthened him, and that he had every confidence in His care to the end of the way.

### **Tracts Available.**

The article—“Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ’s Return?” which appeared in last month’s “Peoples Paper” will be available shortly in tract form. Friends who can use these to good advantage are invited to procure these tracts which are supplied free from the Tract Fund. Various other tracts also available.

**Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).**—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

**“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”**—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

### **Greeting Cards.**

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid: orders may be placed by quoting numbers. as follows-

( 1 ) -Just for To-day,” (2) “One Here and There.- (3) • ‘How Readest Thou?,” (4) “The New Leaf , - ( 5 ) “The The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope--Love, - (6) -Drop a Pebble in the Water,”

( 7 ) “My Bible and I,” (8) “Love’s Victory,” (9) “The Touch of the Master’s Hand,-

( 10 ) -Some Worthy Attainments,

(11) “Come Unto Me,”

(12) “Somewhere the Light is Shining,”

(13) “The Secret of His Presence.”

(14) “Watching and Praying,”

(15) “Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,-

(16) “Not Seeing, Yet Believing,-

(17) “Hitherto and Henceforth,”

(12) “The Lord My Shepherd,”

(13) “Into His Marvellous Light,”

(14) “Right was The Pathway,”

(15) “This is My Will for Thee.-

(14) “Are Ye Able?”

### **Bible Study Meetings.**

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

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

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

Adelaide.-Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymoath Street.--Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

“Daily Heavenly Manna.”—A new supply of this helpful book is in stock. In good, strong binding, with birthday recording pages, this one dollar edition is priced at 10/6

Revised Standard Version.—A new edition of this Bible is now available in strong cloth binding at 19/9, plus 1/3 postage.



**Volume XLI. No. 9 MELBOURNE, SEPTEMBER, 1958 Price—  
Fivepence**

## **Is There a Connection Between Present World Troubles and Christ's Return?**

“THIS subject is surely most timely, for no person can deny that present world troubles are most momentous, and are causing grave concern to most people, especially to the world's leading statesmen, reigning monarchs, and heads of church systems alike.

We refer to the concern of reigning monarchs in particular, because it is now just a few weeks since the assassination of the young King of Irak and members of his family that precipitated the present spasm of turmoil in the Middle East, and brought the great powers of the world facing each other in more definite opposition than had been the case in recent months.

While all decently thinking people deplore the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of the young King of Irak and his household, and the taking over of the government of that country by the revolutionists in such a ruthless manner, a news report from London on 27th July throws some light on the situation. Under the heading —“Slain King's Gold Thrones”—the report states—“Two golden thrones, each valued at £10,000, which King Faisal of Irak had ordered for his wedding to Princess Fazilet, are to stay locked up in a London strongroom—perhaps for years. They were ordered shortly before the King was murdered in the 14th July coup.”

Commenting on this news report the next day, a columnist in one Melbourne newspaper stated—“I cannot sentimentalise over the two gold thrones, now reported to be gathering dust in London, which King Faisal ordered for his wedding not long before his death. Since each throne is valued at £10,000, and most of Irak's 4,800,000 people are miserably poor, the rugged style of King Faisal's removal from the scene becomes understandable, if not praiseworthy.”

From this news report and comment, we gather that some of the remaining kings in the world today are living in the past, when their subjects, lacking in education and initiative, were prepared to submit to almost any treatment in their ignorance. But times have changed, especially during and since the Second World War, and particularly amongst those who were previously the uneducated and under-privileged of the human race. This was well demonstrated in the overthrow of the King of Egypt in recent years (at least his life was spared), and in the taking over of the Suez Canal from the Suez Canal Company. This forward march on the part of the backward races of mankind is in evidence in a number of countries in the world, and that which creates the greatest difficulty is the excesses to which some will go in the exercise of their newly found power.

It may be asked, What is the reason for the change of outlook on the part of the more backward and darker races of mankind in the last 25 years or more? What is it that seems to be stirring these people to strive for their rights, real and fancied, and which has altered the world situation so considerably?

There is one well-known, Scripture which explains the position to a considerable extent, and that is Daniel 12 :4—“Seal up the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” We call to mind the quotation—“A little knowledge is a dangerous thing”—and increased knowledge in the hands of imperfect and selfish men can stir up sufficient strife to ultimately bring about revolutions.

This is what has happened in the country of Irak in recent weeks. Certain army leaders in that country have probably reasoned—What right has our young king to live in luxury, and order golden thrones at thousands of pounds, while many of our people are living in misery?—Our people who should be receiving a share of the wealth from our oil fields. Not that these army leaders may share the wealth to all, but at least that may be their claim, and we must admit there is a great amount of justice in their claims.

Who can doubt that we are living in the days which Daniel described as “the time of the end,” when “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased”? The increase of knowledge on all subjects during this century can be described as miraculous, and all classes of mankind have shared in this knowledge, because we have reached the period in God's Plan of the Ages designated by Daniel —“the time of the end”—in human history.

Coupled with the prophetic statement of Daniel 12:4 is the equally revealing words of verse 1 of this same chapter—”And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” The term “Michael” signifies—”who as God”—and Bible students are generally agreed that this refers to our Lord Jesus who is “the express image of the Father’s person,” and the representative of His authority and power.

In this connection, the Apostle Paul’s reference to our Lord’s return, in 1 Thes. 4:16, is most significant.—”For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.” A reliable commentator has this to say on this part of the verse—”With a shout”—as follows—”The Greek word here translated ‘shout’ signifies ‘a shout of encouragement.’ A shout implies a public message designed for the ears, not of a few, but of a mixed multitude. It is generally designed either to alarm and terrify or to assist and encourage. Or it may have the one effect upon one class, and the reverse effect upon another, according to circumstances and conditions.

“The aspect of affairs in the world for a number of years very strikingly corresponds with this symbol, in the outbursts of worldwide encouragement for all men to wake up to a sense of their rights and privileges as men, and to consider their mutual relationships, the principles upon which they are based and the ends which they should accomplish. Where on the face of the earth is the civilized nation that has not heard the shout, and is not influenced by it! The entire civilized world has, in the years just past, been studying political economy, civil rights and social liberties as never before in the annals of history ; and men are encouraging each other, and being encouraged, as never before, to probe these subjects to the very foundation. The shout of encouragement started by the increase of knowledge among men has encircled the earth, and under its influence men are banding themselves together, encouraged and assisted by men of brain and genius, to contend and, strive for both real and fancied rights and liberties; and as their organizations increase and multiply, the shout grows louder and longer, and will by and by result as foretold, in the great time of trouble and tumult of angry nations. This result is graphically described by the Prophet Isaiah—The noise of a multitude in the mountains (kingdoms) like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of battle.’ (Isa. 13: 4.)”

The following part of 1 Thes. 4: 16 reads—”With the voice of the archangel.” The name “archangel” signifies chief messenger, and our Lord Himself is Jehovah’s Chief Messenger. The voice of the Archangel represents Christ’s authority and command. This symbol, then, represents Christ as taking control, issuing His commands, His official orders. This is the same thought given by Daniel where we saw that Michael, the great Prince, would in this “time of the end” “Stand up.” To stand up signifies to assume authority, to give commands. Note the use of the word “ariseth” in Isa. 2: 19-21.—”When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”

Some people may reason—Why is it, that when the Lord, the great Prince, assumes command “in the time, of the end,” it is necessary “to shake terribly the earth”? They may ask, Isn’t our Lord the “Prince of Peace”? We answer, Yes, and He will speak peace to all the world later; but first of all, mankind must learn the lesson of complete submission to the Lord, and their man-made institutions must be shaken down. These include the financial, political, social and religious institutions.

We find also from various Scriptures that the symbol of “clouds” is used to describe the world-wide encircling troubles in connection with our Lord’s second advent. Notable amongst these is Revelation 1:7—”Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see (discern) him.” All mankind will recognise that the Lord has taken charge of earth’s affairs mainly by His deliverance from the “clouds” of trouble, after the humiliating experiences have done their work. “And they also which pierced him.” Yes, those who brought about our Lord’s death at His first advent will acknowledge the Lord when they are raised from the dead—not by natural sight, but by discerning His kingdom blessing for their good. (See Zech. 12: 10.) “And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” Instead of being converted when Christ is discerned in the “clouds”, first of all mankind will wail, but later will learn to love the righteous laws of the kingdom.

We read further in Psa. 97:2—”Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.” The Prophet Joel adds his testimony concerning world conditions at the time of Christ’s return, as follows—”Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble ; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness . . . there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it.” (Joel 2: 1,2.) From Zephaniah we also read—”The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness . . . Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath.” (See Zeph. 1: 14-18.)

It is of interest to note also how the symbol of “clouds” was used by God following the Flood in Noah’s day, and how He encouraged Noah and his sons by the “bow; in the clouds.” (See Gen. 9:8-16.) Again, when God delivered Israel out of Egypt, He used a cloud in a very special way, as recorded in Exod. 14:19, 20—”It was a cloud and darkness to them (Egyptians), but it gave light by night to these (Israelites).”

While to Noah and his sons the “bow was in the clouds”, giving them hope for the future; and the cloud which was darkness to the Egyptians had a silver lining to the Israelites, so the dark clouds of this “time of the end” have also a wonderful silver lining to God’s people today, as our Lord indicated in Luke 21: 25-28. —”Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity . . . Men’s hearts failing them for fear . . . Then shall they see ‘the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

We remember also that when our Lord ascended to heaven, after His resurrection, it is recorded—”And a cloud received him out of their- sight,”— out of the sight of the disciples. Then the disciples were informed by the “two men in white apparel” (angels), that the Lord “shall so come in like manner as ye have seen h,m go into heaven.” (See Acts 1: 9-11.) Quite often we have heard this Scripture used to imply that the Lord would return on a literal cloud in the sky, but that is not what the angels indicated. As we have seen, the cloud symbol portrays encircling troubles, through which our Lord will be revealed to all mankind. But to His own people these clouds have their silver lining, because they know of the glorious outcome to follow. From this standpoint the Lord’s people understand Jesus’ words in Matt. 24: 30, 31,—”He shall send His angels with a great trumpet of (truth), and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other”—from the lengths and breadths of the ecclesiastical heavens. This is a wonderful “gathering” to be sure, during this harvest of the Gospel Age.

We have this harvest work clearly revealed as being conducted by our Lord Himself in Rev. 14: 13-16.—”And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man.” We note a special point here—”behold a white cloud.” This does not indicate dark judgments upon the world; the “white cloud” is not discerned by the world of mankind, for it indicates the light of truth, the joys of the harvest message which the Chief Reaper has brought to His people throughout this “time of the end,” “the days of the Son of man,” the harvest of the Gospel Age. “The harvest is the end of the age.” —Matt. 13: 39.

So, while we hear today various preachers predicting the near return of Christ, because of present world troubles, we find from the Scriptures that present world troubles are the direct outcome of our having reached “the time of the end,”—the days of the presence of the Son of man. God, in His wisdom,, withheld the increase of knowledge until these days of “the time of the end,” knowing that the natural outcome would mean “a time of trouble such as never was,” and the Lord is graciously using the world troubles to usher in the Kingdom of His dear Son, by first of all removing the world governments which would not fit into His new order of things.

Thus it is, that we find the kings of earth becoming fewer and fewer, and ultimately all will be overthrown, as well as all other forms of governments, to make way for the new kingdom of Christ. How vividly did the Psalmist predict the very conditions which we have in the world today in his 2nd Psalm.—”The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed. Let us (Jehovah and His anointed) break their bands (the combinations of those who have banded themselves together to preserve the present order of things) and cast away their cords from us (by which they endeavour to retain control of their kingdoms). He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh . . . Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion . . . Be wise now therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth . . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.”

We see again, from the Apostle Paul, that while “the whole creation groaneth and trayaieth in pain,” yet “the earnest expectation of the creature (creation of mankind) waiteth for the manifestation (uncovering, revelation) of the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:22, 19.) So, while first of all the Lord “cometh with clouds,” yet ultimately “all the families of the earth shall be blessed,” for the Lord will then be as “the Sun of righteousness, with healing in his wings.” (Mal. 4: 2. See also Psa. 72:1-8, 17.)

“Clouds have silver linings”  
Is a proverb old;  
If we trust in Jesus,  
Ours are lined with gold.

## CLARIFICATION.

In last month’s “Peoples Paper” in the “Correspondence”, page 4, second column, 6th line from the top, the following appears—”as they do not acknowledge our Lord.” In case there could be a misunderstanding, these words are to be taken as applying only in the sense of the Jewish Christian Group not appearing to acknowledge to the full our Lord’s request to His servants—”This do in remembrance of me”—regarding the substitution by our Lord of the Memorial of His death instead of the former passover observance. No personal reflection was intended by the writer when on his visit to Israel, and this explanation is gladly presented, at his request.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 60/-. Same Bible with Concordance and Subject Index at 70/-.

## BOOKS WANTED.

Friends who may have the 7 volumes of “Reprints” for sale are asked to communicate with this office, advising the price expected.

Should anyone have the Vol. 1 of Edgar’s Pyramid Book for disposal would they please contact this office, *stating*, the price.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 5/- (60 cants) per annum, post paid.

## The Lord's Guidance.

*"I will guide thee with Mine eye."—Psa. 32:8.*

THE eye is one of the most important organs of the body with which to give( expression to the feelings. Either anger or pleasure are usually expressed by this means. One thought which we may take from the text is that one may be so desirous of doing the divine will that he will be continually on the alert to please, just as a dutiful child, being on the alert to do the will of the parent, would look at the parent's eye, not waiting for the rod. So all of God's dear children of the Church should be looking unto Jesus for the expression of the Father's will concerning them. They look to Jesus as the Author of their faith and the One who shall be the Finisher of it. They look to Him as the great Counsellor and Guide of life. As we sometimes sing:

"Oh, let no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!"

Another thought is that as the eye is the symbol of wisdom, so God guides all things in wisdom. He sees to it that His children receive the necessary counsel, the necessary aid. Since He is the All-Wise One, nothing can escape His attention. Still another thought is that as we recognise the Divine purpose, the Divine will, the Divine outworking of that will, we see that in the present time God is not trying to save the world, but only "the called," "the elect," who are obedient in sacrifice. All who are of the First-born should seek to follow the same course as God, to be coworkers with Him. They should have no will of their own, but do the Father's will.

One of the most important lessons for the spiritual Israelite to learn is to look to the Lord for leading in all of life's affairs—never to attempt any undertaking, either temporal or spiritual, without seeking to note the will of the Lord concerning it. We are marching toward the antitypical Canaan and know that other experiences are due us and must be undergone ere we can inherit the promises. The lesson for us is prompt and thorough obedience to the Lord's leadings without murmurings—with joyfulness; and this can be expected only on the part of those who have learned the lessons previously given them, and above all, the lesson of faith—confidence in the Lord's power and goodness and faithfulness.

## The Unjust Steward.

*(Luke 16:1-13.) "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."*

WHILE the previous parables of this dinner-table talk were addressed specially to the Pharisees, this parable, and the one following it, concerning a rich man and a poor man (Dives and Lazarus), were addressed not so exclusively to the Pharisees, but, as the first verse of our lesson declares, to the disciples also, as well as to the Pharisees at the same table. The reason why the first three parables were addressed to the Pharisees only, and not to the disciples, is evident—the disciples needed no such instruction, having no prejudice against the poorer classes, recognizing themselves as amongst the "lost" who were glad to be found by the Good Shepherd.

The steward of this parable corresponds to the elder son of the preceding parable, and to the rich man of the succeeding parable; it applies specially to the scribes and Pharisees, -who, as our Lord declared on another occasion, "sat in Moses' seat"—represented Moses, and the Law Covenant of which Moses was the mediator, and the blessing obtained through that covenant, of which Moses was the original steward, and they now the steward, as his representatives. In what did this stewardship consist? The Apostle Paul asks this question, and answers it, saying, "What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God," the knowledge of God, with typical justification and at-one-ment with Him, and an interest in the promises made to the fathers.

The Jews, as represented in Moses and his successors, failed of the stewardship—failed to use in a manner satisfactory to God the favors committed to their care. Nor, indeed, were they wholly to blame for this, as the Apostle Paul points out; they were weak through the fall, incompetent to be administrators of so great a trust; and God knew this when He gave them the stewardship—He knew that they would fail to keep the law perfectly. He had fully intended that in due time He would depose them from the stewardship and give it to the one whom He had foreknown—to Messiah.

Now the time had come when this change of administration was about to be effected, and God was calling upon the representatives of Israel to give an account of their stewardship, and informing them that a new dispensation was about to be ushered in. Our Lord Jesus in this parable wished to point out to them what would be the wisest course for them to pursue under the circumstances. He shows them what an earthly steward would do under such circumstances, and tells them there is wisdom in such a course, saying, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children -of light ;" you, as God's people, more favoured than any others with light on the divine character and plan, are not acting wisely as you would do if you were earthly stewards.

Here we are met with, the difficulty that the majority of people do not clearly comprehend — the scope of a steward's privileges in olden times. We have no such office today amongst civilized people. A steward's office was a confidential one; he had the liberty and full authority to do anything and everything that the owner himself could do with his goods. He could make presents, or cancel debts, or use in any manner he chose the goods under his care, and could not be held responsible as a culprit before the law, because the nature of his office as a steward was such that he fully represented and acted for his employer. The latter could discharge him from the stewardship as a penalty for

unfaithfulness, but this would be his only punishment, because in making him steward he fully authorized him to use his judgment.

In the parable the unjust steward—unjust in his previous use of his master's affairs; that is, unrighteous, unsatisfactory, imperfect—as soon as he realised the situation, made no attempt to defend himself, nor to claim that he had done perfectly; but before rendering up his accounts he dealt leniently with some of his lord's creditors, remitting parts of their indebtedness. (This may have been a wise course, as, for instance, today bankruptcy laws similarly release debtors from obligations which they could not pay; and similarly creditors frequently, in their own interest, agree to accept sixty per cent, fifty per cent, forty per cent, or some other proportion of the original sum as for the whole of a debt, seeing that the debtor is unable to pay the account in full, and with a view to his encouragement to do the best he can. The Jewish Jubilee year of full release from all debts was along the same line of leniency and wise business policy represented in the "Bankruptcy Law" of today.) It is not because of this last conduct of the steward that he is called unjust (unrighteous) in the parable, but because of his previous stewardship, not having come up to the full, perfect demands of his master.

Now, applying the parable to all of the Jewish nation, especially to those who sat in Moses' seat and had the control of matters, and who decided what was and what was not the proper interpretation of the law, our Lord intimated that if they were as wise as earthly stewards they would make use of their opportunities in a somewhat similar manner. Now how could they have done this—supposing that they recognised the fact that they had not fulfilled the requirements of God under the law and supposing also that they realised that the time had come for a change of dispensation, and that God was demanding an account of them and informing them that a new steward would take possession of matters—under such circumstances how should these in Moses' seat have acted? We answer, that in harmony with the lesson of the parable, they should have said to themselves: We realise that we ourselves have not kept the law of God perfectly; indeed that it is not within our power to do so. We realise that a change of dispensation is impending, and that we are called upon to make an accounting, and that we can only admit before God that we made a failure as respects the carrying out of the demands of His Law and the gaining of eternal life under it,—and as respects the use of the many advantages every way which God has given us. We have used our advantages in some respects well, but we failed on the whole to accomplish anything in the world, or to gain eternal life, either for ourselves or for any,—and we cannot dispute, therefore, that "By the deeds of the law no flesh should be justified in God's sight."

Since, therefore, it must soon be evidenced to all that our stewardship has resulted in failure and that we are dispossessed, the wise thing for us to do, is to turn about at once, and deal kindly and generously with these sinners (the prodigal son class) and, instead of denouncing them as sinners more than ourselves, we should say to them frankly, We cannot keep this perfect law of God, and we know also that you cannot do so, but now, instead of being hopelessly discouraged and cast down, do the best you can; we will remit part of the exaction of the law, admitting that you are unable to keep it perfectly, and will merely require of you that you keep it to the best of your ability—fifty per cent., or eighty per cent., according to your circumstances and conditions—according as you are able, keep the law.

Had the scribes and Pharisees taken this position they would have healed the breach as between themselves and the people, and their honesty in admitting that they themselves could not keep the law would have been a distinct advantage to them, subsequently, in connection with the new dispensation. And this very conduct of candid admission and of sympathy for others, and assistance in lifting their burdens would have brought them into such a condition of heart that they would have been ready for the Gospel; and the lower classes, from which they had hitherto held aloof as sinners, would have had a kindly feeling toward them, and as a result they would have retained a measure of their sympathy, at least, in the time of trouble which came upon them when their polity was overthrown.

But did the scribes and Pharisees follow any such course? By no means. On the other hand. they put on a brassy front, made broad their phylacteries, made still louder claims respecting their own perfection of heart and life, deceiving their own selves probably as much as or more than they deceived others. They boasted that they should ever continue to be stewards of the manifold grace of God; and, as our Lord declares, so far from lifting the burdens and condemnations of the law from the shoulders of the people, who were honest enough to confess inability to keep the perfect law, these scribes and Pharisees, on the contrary, bound upon the people heavy burdens. which they would not assist to lift with their little finger.—Matt. 23: 1-4.

Thus doing they became more and more hypocritical and case-hardened, until, in His later descriptions of them, our Lord declared them to be whited sepulchres, outwardly fair and beautiful, inwardly full of corruption, dishonesty, hypocrisy; knowing themselves to be infractors of the law they were outwardly claiming and boasting perfection. This not being said to the Pharisees alone, but to the disciples "also," implies that they were to notice how the parable fitted and how unwisely this steward class was acting. Even at the table the Pharisees, perceiving to some extent at least the trend of the parable, "derided"—being covetous. But our Lord pressed the lesson home to them saying, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts." You are the unjust steward and soon all will witness your rejection. "The law and the prophets (of which you are the representatives) was (recognised of God) until John (the Baptist); since that time the kingdom of God is preached (the new, the Gospel dispensation), and every one (should) press toward it." (Verses 14-16.) You, leaders of the people, however, not only will not enter yourselves, but those desiring to enter, you hinder. (Matt. 23: 13.) You should see that your institution is bound to Moses and the law as a wife to her husband—so long as it liveth. It is needful, therefore, that the law which you represent should die, that Israel may be liberated and thus be prepared to be united (married) to Messiah by a new covenant.—Verses 17,18; Rom. 7:1-4.

We are not informed that this parable had special application in the end of this Gospel Age, but since we know from other Scriptures that natural Israel and its harvest time were a pattern or illustration of spiritual Israel and this age and the present harvest time, therefore we are justified in looking for some parallel as between the condition of the unjust steward in our Lord's day and a similar class in this present time. And looking about us today for a class corresponding to those who sat in Moses' seat, we find a class today sitting in Christ's seat, as respects the Gospel church. This class is composed of elders, Sunday School teachers and superintendents, ministers, bishops, archbishops, etc. These as a whole are representing a great stewardship of divine favor as respects the Lord's people today. They perceive that a change of dispensation is upon us, that their creeds and traditions from the past are being called in question, and that they are being required to render up an account. They perceive that the account will not be a very flattering one, and that if the whole truth were known to the people as it is known to God, they would be found derelict, unfaithful to their stewardship in many respects. They fear the crisis; they put off the clay of reckoning as far as possible; they hush the murmurs of the people and the questions respecting creeds, and as the Lord said of the steward of His day, so it will be true of these: "That which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of God."— Verse 15.

These representatives of the nominal church, who hold a position of stewardship as respects the masses of the Lord's people, are disposed, as were the Pharisees, their prototypes, to put a bold face upon matters, to brave it out rather than to confess the truth. As for instance, in the matter of creeds that are being called in question: Many, even of those who were at first disposed to demand the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, have concluded that this would be showing the white feather, and admitting that they had been in error in the past, and imperfect in their interpretation of the divine Word, and hence calculated to discredit them with the people; and now the tide is rapidly turning and the same ones who were demanding a revision are now voting to the contrary, that the creed is good, thoroughly satisfactory to them, that they would not change it for anything. They are so anxious to be highly esteemed of men that they seem to forget altogether the one from whom they received their stewardship, and who is about to take it from them.

What would be the proper course for this steward class of the Gospel Age? We answer, that the proper course would be to do what our Lord recommended to the Jewish stewards; namely, they should candidly confess to the people the errors of the creeds and their own imperfection in attempted exposition of the divine Word, and their own failures in the past in respect of a proper use of the oracles of God and a proper application of the exceeding great and precious promises, and while acknowledging their own errors and shortcomings, they should modify the demands made of the people and bring them into conformity with their ability. For instance, they should say to the people, how much did we say that you owed to God, and what penalty did we say would be imposed upon you? If we said that you were to receive a penalty of eternal torment, count that now as being an error, and write down instead, "A just recompense of reward." If we taught you that your obligations to God are according to the Jewish Law, and as are represented in the Ten Commandments, and that unless these were kept perfectly in letter and in spirit you would have no hope of eternal life, alter and amend that feature of your faith, and write instead that God will accept the most imperfect works of those who have consecrated themselves to Him, providing those imperfect works are the best that they are able to offer; and providing they are offered in the name and merit of Him who loved us and who bought us with His own precious blood.

If the present stewards would follow such a course they would undoubtedly be respected through the future, but following their present course, the time is surely coming when they will be despised as hypocrites and blind guides, who mislead their confiding flocks into the ditch of skepticism and the great time of trouble.

This parable may be considered as ending with the 8th verse, the instructions which follow being separate and distinct, and along a somewhat different line, and addressed specially to those who accepted the Lord's teachings, His disciples.

### **"Ye Cannot Serve God and Mammon"**

This after-lesson is on the subject of the impossibility of having two masters, God and Mammon. Mammon represents earthly riches, not only financial wealth, but honor amongst men, etc.—the thing which was particularly hindering the Pharisees from taking the proper course and acknowledging their error and seeking for and obtaining mercy. Mammon still is a great hindrance to all who desire to be the Lord's disciples. Whoever worships Mammon — and it may be self or wealth or fame or position and honor amongst men, one or all of these — whoever worships Mammon cannot at the same time be a true worshipper of God, a true follower of Christ, because God and Mammon are rivals before our hearts. If we attempt to divide our love and attention, and to give part of it to God and to His service, and part of it to Mammon, the results will be unsatisfactory to God, unsatisfactory to Mammon and unsatisfactory to ourselves.

We must, therefore, decide either to live for self and earthly things, or to renounce and sacrifice these in the interest of God and of heavenly things. The worshippers of Mammon may have certain advantages as respects the present life, in the way of earthly prosperity, but Mammon cannot give eternal life. It is the gift of God, and those who would have God's gift must be God's friends, God's children; and He demands of such that they shall manifest their love and devotion to Him by renouncing Mammon, by joyfully sacrificing earthly name and fame and favor and interest, thus showing their higher appreciation of His love and favor, the riches of His grace, and the exceeding great and precious things which He has promised to give them in the life to come.

These are to "make to themselves friends;" in other words, to lay up treasures in heaven, by the sacrifice of the Mammon of unrighteousness;—that is to say, the sacrifice of the various interests of this present time of unrighteousness, "this present evil world."

Some may have very little of Mammon at their disposal to sacrifice; but the Lord encourages us all by saying that he that is faithful in that which is least, thereby gives evidence of how faithful he would be if he had much ; and the Lord accepts the little sacrifices which we are able to make as though they were greater ones. “She hath done what she could” is the best of testimony as respects the use of present opportunities in the Lord’s service, whether it refer to a mite or a million, a little influence or a great one. It is not the amount that God is seeking, but the character, the disposition of heart ; and whoever has the right disposition of heart and is careful in the small affairs of life, to serve the Lord with all that he possesses and-to the extent of his ability, such an one will have committed to him the true riches—the heavenly riches. Not merely may he expect to enter into the glories of the heavenly kingdom, but even in the present life he will begin to get a first-fruits of those riches in his own heart, in his own experiences ; for it is unquestionably a fact that the heirs of glory, those who are in the right relationship with God and running faithfully in the race, not only will get the prize at the end of the race, but already get blessings which the world can neither give nor take away ;—the joys of the Lord, the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts ; so that they can sing for joy, even in the house of their pilgrimage—even in the present unsatisfactory tabernacle condition, in which we groan also, being burdened with its weaknesses.

But if we are not faithful in the little things which confessedly are not our own, and merely given to us as a stewardship—the things, the opportunities, the talents, which are merely put within our grasp as stewards of the Lord, —if we are not faithful in using these with an eye single to the Lord’s glory, how can we expect that He will ever give us true riches of grace, to be our own forever, either in the future or in the present life. •

The sum of this lesson to the disciples, then, is that as no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, no more can we serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the “prince of this world.” All of the Lord’s consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God must be willing to become of no reputation, amongst those wile are not consecrated, and who, whatever their possessions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the heavenly kingdom. (From “Reprints”)

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## **Heirs Of God.**

(Romans 8:17.)

(Convention Address)

The thoughts of this address were born out of the amazement that was revealed while reading an article in a recent monthly truth journal. Never before had the depth of truth been realised, that we, Christians, are to be heirs of God, sharers or joint-heirs with Jesus our Lord and Head ; yet this truth is attested many times in the Scriptures.

Think how the natural man cherishes the thought of becoming heir to a fortune in material things. It may not be the lot of many to experience it, but nearly every man would covert the opportunity if it should present itself ; it is this desire that prompts the weekly ticket in "Tatts" with a large proportion of the populace. To inherit something for nothing seems to have strong appeal to the natural man.

However, let us try and think what it entails to be heirs of God—heirs of all the wealth of His riches and glory, knowledge and understanding, power, etc. In the major sense it is a tremendous beneficence on the part of our God to offer us heirship; but there is also another angle in which to view it. It will not be 'something for nothing' for all who receive it will be tested tried and proven. We who are offered the richest inheritance possible to receive were all sons of Adam and under the condemnation of the fall into sin. We were no better than other men, but the all-seeing eye of God seems to have discerned, that, coupled with an affinity for righteousness, was humility and teachableness. God can work wonders with the person whom is will to be taught, but he can do nothing with the self-willed, the proud and the haughty.

His first endowment was to give us a standing before Himself, for, as members of the fallen race we had none; we were all alienated from Him by wicked works (Col. 1:21), so He drew us to Christ, the One in whom it pleased the Father all fulness should dwell, and by whom, alone; any can be reconciled to the Father and share in any of His bounties, either earthly or heavenly, physical or spiritual. (Col. 1:19, 20.)

Those who respond to the Saviour's leading and teaching become His "brethren," and "sons of God," but the response to the exhortation to "Come unto me, and learn of me" must be sustained. We are in the "school of Christ" to be trained for our position, our inheritance. As any child of royal birth, in this present order of things, is trained from infancy with a view to the duties and privileges of the throne, so are we, but with much higher perspective.

The natural man does not like to admit ignorance; he is happy flaunting any knowledge he may have, and what he does not know he will conceal, or make believe that he does know, but cannot condescend to reveal it to any whom he considers "beneath him." However, there is no room for pride in the "sons" whom God has begotten into His family ; they must be filled with the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, meekness (teachableness), etc. With all our training we acquire great knowledge, but we do not get it all at once, nor is it after the pattern of a natural man's mind. The fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; yes, and the end of it too.

A lecturer of some little note, and apparently a man of good understanding, once said, "I never considered it a shame to have to answer, 'I do not know' to a questioner. Often I have had to do it ; I patiently wait for the answers. Every day brings the answer to something I could not answer yesterday. It will take an eternity to know an infinity." What wise words, and how doubly true when we apply them to ourselves as Christians, and to spiritual things. What a privilege it is to be able to go on learning, that we may be fitted for the position as heirs of God.

Though we are privileged as sons of God to know so much, yet we have the realisation of how much there is to learn. There are so many experiences of people around us, as well as our own, that we cannot explain; we understand so imperfectly why certain things should come to this one, or that, while others escape, at least in the same intensity. Almost all, Christian professors or not, look forward to "a beautiful isle of somewhere." In times of sorrow or sadness there is a hymn that many sing, the essence of which expresses a hope that a future time will reveal the meaning of present tears; then "sometime we'll understand." In the minds of most people, both "the isle of somewhere" and the "sometime" are very obscure, but true Christians who understand God's plan, have greater clarity as to where the

“isle” will be, and when the “groaning creation” will understand the meaning of present sorrows and tears. It will be right here on earth during the Millennial reign of Christ and His church ; the church comprising the present sons of God, (throughout the Gospel Age) undergoing training to become His heirs.

People generally still look forward to the realisation of their present vague hopes, but to the present “trainee” sons of God the “sometime” is today, tomorrow and every day. Today, or perhaps tomorrow, we understand why it was necessary for us to have had experiences of yesterday, a month, a year, or twenty years ago—the “sometime” of our learning is today, tomorrow and continual. So what a privilege it is to go on learning.

Think how much training we need to overcome impatience; God is long-suffering and His sons must learn this lesson too. Think of the training and experience necessary before we can exhibit mercy and love in anything approaching that of our Heavenly Father. We might be helped in displaying this to others, by constantly recalling how much has been extended to us. How easily we are roused to ire, to thoughts of malice; how slow to forgive.

When the Lord appeared in vision to Moses we read — “The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin . . . And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.” (Exod. 34:6-8.) The better qualified we become as God’s sons in the school of Christ, the more continually will we have Moses’ attitude.

One very helpfully explains the parable of the vineyard in Mark 12:1-12. From verse 12 it is clearly seen that our Lord directed the parable against the religious rulers of His day, and that they discerned it to be so. The man who planted the vineyard would be Jehovah, and the vineyard would seem to be the Jewish nation with all its privileges above all other nations of earth. The hedge about it would correspond to the divine law and the prophets—all the special supervision and guardianship that the nation enjoyed and which Gentile nations did not. A place for the winepress was provided, evidently picturing the temple worship etc., a place where God could expect to receive due returns from the vineyard. There was a tower too, a watch tower, seeming to represent the prophets and seers of Israel to give warning of any danger and to instruct in a right course. The “season” of verse 2 would suggest the time when fruit could be expected. The servant who was sent could well be a prophet or teacher sent to these “husbandmen”—the religious rulers, the scribes and Pharisees. The “fruit” the owner of the vineyard sought would be gratitude, love, obedience etc., for all He had done for them. He would look for meekness and teachableness, and He was disappointed at the results. Then He said, “I will send my son, surely they will pay more respect to him,” and we know who the “Son” was—Jesus. And what happened ? The husbandmen (the chief priests and rulers) said, “This is the heir”—this man claims to be the Messiah ; we shall have to do away with Him if the inheritance is to be ours, if we are going to retain our priesthood and power. (See verses 7 and 8 which are self explanatory.) And what did the owner of the vineyard do? See verse 9. All the time it was “fruit” that God sought; the Son, whom He sent, many times during His ministry expressed disappointment at the lack of it, where He had a right to expect it; and for that reason was Israel - rejected—”The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

For the scribes and Pharisees to desire to become and remain “heirs of God”, was commendable enough, but they sought the inheritance with a wrong heart condition. It was taken from them and given to another “nation,” but with the same proviso—it is paramount that the required “fruit” be brought forth. Are we heeding it well? The promised inheritance may be precious to us, but we will be disinherited if we do not make our calling and election sure by bringing forth the fruit that is precious in our Father’s sight, and without which character formation we would not be competent to be entrusted with His riches of glory as His heirs. Our Father has made every provision for His prospective heirs, and His Word is sure ; if we fail the fault will be ours entirely. Not one of the called ones can say that the way was too hard, or that the trials were too great.

The same lecturer already mentioned has further helpful thoughts that can be applied in a spiritual way. He said that obstacles are power stations in our lives when rightly viewed. To illustrate, he used the Mississippi River in America. Being an American he wrote of his own country, but the same illustration could be drawn from our own River Murray in Australia. A mighty concrete obstacle was built right across the path of the river. He said, “Watch the river ; it rises higher and higher until it sweeps over the obstacle and goes on its way. Result ; light and power are developed that vitalizes a valley and lights a hundred towns and cities. The light and power were latent in the river, but it took the obstacle and the overcoming to develop it and make it useful. Obstacles are often the power stations in our way. Moans one, ‘I am so unfortunate; I could do these great things, but alas ; I have so many obstacles in the way.’ Says the lecturer ‘You should thank God, for you are blessed of Providence.’”

We digress here to think of Paul in Rom. 5:3—”We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope,”—helping to produce the very “fruit” required to become “heirs of God.” The presence of obstacles means there is much light and power in you to be developed. Do not waste your opportunities.

The lecturer says, “I hear a person say, ‘I hope the time will soon come when I shall have no more obstacles to overcome.’ When that time comes they can ring up the hearse, for you will be a ‘dead one.’ “

Remember Paul—”I do not beat the air; I keep under my body,”—the exercise of self-control under stress. What an example was he! Did any Christian meet more obstacles? At the end he was able to say—”I have fought a good fight.” Yes, he fought, and it was a fight ; it was no armchair victory for Paul, but he won through ; he became an heir of God, the crown of righteousness was won, the required fruits were developed.

Many years ago when Thomas Edison had first success with phonograph recording, he was showing a friend the result of his long inventive work, and is reported to have said “I made over 7,000 experiments and failed each time before I hit upon that.” How many would have gone on in the face of 7,000 failures? Are we going on in the face of

our failures? We have all made them and are still experiencing them. Like Paul in his earlier days we can say, "I have not yet apprehended that for which God has apprehended me in Christ Jesus." But with our great Teacher at our side, and as our Advocate before the Father, we can go on and succeed at last, becoming heirs of God.

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## Correspondence.

Dear Brother.— We are very sorry in delay in sending the money for the "Peoples Paper"; it is just that we keep forgetting to send it. We enjoy reading the "Paper" also hearing the broadcast on Sundays; it is the only thing we can get to listen to. We do not get to the Class as the transport is not convenient, and we find at our age the hill is too steep to climb, so just have to be content to study at home. We trust you are keeping well; you will find enclosed £1. Praying God's blessing on your work. Yours in Christian love.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren.—Am enclosing \$2 to pay for my subscriptions; I don't know how much I owe you, or when the subscription expires. We love your little "Paper" and receive so much spiritual uplift. May God bless you brethren in your service to Him, our God and Maker. Our prayers and love to you all there. Sincerely,—  
(U.S.A.)

Dear Brother.—Warmest Greetings from "The Promised Land," in the name of Him who would have done so much for it, even in His earthly life. "How often would I have gathered you . . . but ye would not." Today, were you here (and I wish you could have been many times), there could be seen the foundations of a great future state. Even in the three years since my previous visit much has been done, especially as far as building and land reclamation is concerned. This is particularly noticeable as one journeys up to Jerusalem, where the once barren hillsides are being terraced and planted in vineyards, olive groves etc. In former times they were intensely cultivated, and the remains of the ancient terracing are still traceable with the eye.

How lovely this land will look after some hundreds of years in the Millennium, when we have reason to believe it will extend from the Euphrates to the Nile, and be the chief nation on earth. May those days hasten forward, for sin today is becoming a terrible weight on the nations, and even we ourselves, who strive in the "Narrow Way" groan greatly because of its shackles.

The Jewish Christian Group that was here in 1955 seems to have almost vanished in one way and another. They did not hold a Memorial, but the "Seder"; that is, a commemoration of their coming up out of Egypt. Much as I would have liked to have been with them, I was unable to do so, as they do not acknowledge our Lord. The commemoration was held on the Friday night. Your article on the Memorial was a very good one, and in perfect accord with certain statements made in the "Reprints" which remove any doubt about the matter in question . . . There are Jews here from nearly 30 countries, and it is an education in itself just to live here. Living conditions are quite good . . . With warmest Christian love. Yours in the Blessed Hope.

Script Writer, Frank and Ernest Programme, Dear Sir.—I was interested to hear part of your programme, a couple of Sundays ago, about the gates of hell being thrown open. I may have missed a few important points in the beginning of this programme but I gathered that you claim that some time in the period following our Lord's second coming the gates of hell would be opened to allow those within the privilege of eternal life with Christ. I cannot see how this could possibly be. If it were the case, then it would appear that the punishment for sin was only temporary and would be more than compensated for by the joy to follow. Does not the Bible contrast imprisonment in hell with eternal life when it says—"The Wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is Eternal Life." If the prisoners of hell are later to be released, then it seems to take away some of the motive of putting one's trust in Christ. I know that there should be love for the One who has loved us first, but I wonder how many of us would be Christians if we knew that we were to spend eternity in the same way as those non-Christians who are enjoying the pleasures of life which we must forfeit. The joy of the Lord is far greater, but most of us would be tempted to leave this for later and have a taste of the world first. Please send me a copy of the script of this programme as soon as possible. Yours in Christ.

(Literature is gladly supplied to all readers respecting the two phases of God's Kingdom—heavenly and earthly. The world of mankind, awakened from the death or hell condition, will, of course, not inherit the heavenly kingdom with Christ, but rather the earthly paradise restored, if they obey the laws of the kingdom at that time.—B. B. Institute.)

Dear Brothers of Frank and Ernest Bible

Discussion,—I have been interested in your Bible Discussions Sunday by Sunday, and have found much help in my Christian life. I have been a Christian for three years, and I am now 19 years old, and, God willing, I will enter an Institute to train for overseas Missionary Work.

Could you forward each Sunday's Bible discussion to me? You could send them weekly or monthly, and I enclose 10/- to help expense of postage and printing. These discussions will give me a lot wherein to get parts for sermons in services I hope to take. Yours in Christ's Service.

Frank and Ernest.—From time to time we have listened-in to your broadcasts with much interest, and were particularly refreshed and helped by that given today on "Your Adversary the Devil." Could you kindly forward a copy of same? I am anxious to forward it on to my daughters. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours very sincerely.

Dear Sir—I thank you for the printed copies of broadcasts from 2KY, copies of the monthly "Peoples Paper", the booklet "God and Reason," and your promise to send me the Bible study—"Divine Plan of the Ages" after you will get this letter from me.

I read carefully all sent literature and there is only one question I would like to ask you relating to the "God and Reason." I understand that the "seven times" of the Gentiles represent 2,520 years, but I could not find any reference to the Bible from where it could be seen that Gentile supremacy was prophesied to last "seven times." I am very glad to know that soon you will send me the Bible study "Divine Plan of the Ages."

I feel that I need guidance for my Bible Studies. I already found a way to make my Bible study easier. Knowing a few European languages, among them English, German, Latvian and Russian, I decided to use a couple of Bibles in different non-similar languages to be able to make difficult places in the Bible clear. From this point of view an English and a German Bible would not be good because of similarities of the English and German languages. I realised that I must look for two languages with no similarity. Therefore I have chosen an English and a Russian Bible. In this way I am able to make clear the most difficult texts in the Bible. Thank you for your help in my Bible studies. Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs.—I would be very obliged if you would send me your booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave," also any reading pertaining to reunion with our dearly departed. Your talks are most helpful and enlightening, and I wish you every success. Thanking you; Yours sincerely

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs.—I am a regular listener to your session on 2KY, and find it very interesting. If you would send me some literature I would be very grateful, also information concerning the "Trinity" to enlighten me about this subject would be a great help. Thanking you ; Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest.— On listening to your programme, I learnt many interesting facts from the Book of Revelation in the Bible. I would be extremely pleased if you could send me some of your literature to the above address. Hoping to receive the literature as soon as possible. Yours faithfully.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Please forward your free literature as described in the "Chronicle" to me at the above address, as I would like to know the answers to these questions on religion. Thanking you; yours truly.

## Children of the Promise

(Convention Address)

*"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of the promise." (Gal. 4:28.)*

OTHER translations express our text—"But you, brethren, like Isaac, are the children of a promise." In Romans 9:7, 8 we read, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." You will have noticed a great separation has divided two classes, the children of the flesh and the children of God.

The "promise" has come between. The Apostle Paul, in our Galatians text, has told us that these children of God are in some ways similar to Isaac. He was, of course, a "child of promise." He was born out of season contrary to all human wisdom. Abraham, Isaac's father, was in favour with God, for, some time previous to this he had shown his faith by his works, and had left his own people to sojourn in a strange land that he may know God the better. God had promised him that in him and his seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (Gen. 12:1-3.) He was seventy-five when he departed out of his own land ; he had varied fortunes but found things combined together for his good, and he always came out on top.

Yet, time was creeping on, and while Abraham had never forgotten the promise that in him and his seed the blessings would come to all, he probably imagined that it would come through the child born to him by Hagar. This was discounted by the messenger of God when Abraham was ninety-nine years of age, and this messenger confirmed the original promise. Both Abraham and his wife, Sarah, laughed at this "impossibility." There are many kinds of laughter; the kind here recorded for us limits the power of God to work His wonders according to our understanding of natural wisdom. It borders on the edge of disbelief. It laughs at a seeming impossibility. It measures God's ability by the strength of our own efforts, by our own works, as it were. And so, to emphasize what has been made so plain to us again and again through the Gospels and Epistles, the new life came into existence because of God's condescension and love towards us.

Isaac was born to the favored pair, and now it was clear that the "child of promise" inherited the chief favors. The difference between the two boys, the difference that separates, was that one was born according to the flesh and the other according to a "word of promise," outside the course of nature. Both were Abraham's offspring, one was taken

and the other left. Watch this principle of selection right down to the present time. It is God's work ; we are His workmanship. Heirs of the promise—children of God ; who are they, where are they? The covenant was made with Abraham and his offspring, and we have seen that it was offspring according to God's choice, not man's.

Look into the next illustration of the sovereignty of God in choosing whom He will. Isaac, the inheritor of the covenant promise is about to become the father of twin boys. Here was a problem. According to accepted tradition the elder inherited the chief blessing. But before these boys were born it was intimated that God's choice was that the younger should have preference over and above the elder. "The elder shall serve the younger" was the command. It could be argued with Abraham's offspring that one child was by agreement with Sarah's maid and so forfeited the right to the blessing that should go to the younger son Isaac. Yet with the later illustration of how God chooses whom He will, the same father and same mother are involved. None could gainsay this, and so it is Scripturally proved that not all are children of the promise just because of descent from Abraham. There has been a selection, and again God's choice differs from the way man would have chosen. "The elder shall serve the younger."

The blessing of the Lord that maketh so rich very often begins its work by making us very poor, dejected, isolated, in short miserable, and needing consolation, strengthening, and a confirming of faith. Abraham left all, not knowing where he was going or whom he would meet. A number of important incidents in Abraham's life seem to have been duplicated in the life of Jacob. He too, like Abraham, respected the blessing of the Lord and sought it with vigilance and determination. The inheritance that was rightfully his was so valuable in his sight that he would sacrifice his own goods, his comfort and security, for the sake of harmony. He desired harmony and agreement between the unfavoured one and the selected vessel of grace. "Sell me this day thy birthright." Is it any wonder that a "fornicator and profane" person "despised" an inheritance that needs discipline and sacrifice? (Heb. 12: 16.)

It is recorded that Esau's conduct was a "grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah." He sold his birthright, confirmed the sale with an oath, and when his father called him to bestow the blessing of the eldest he had the audacity to think it was rightfully his. Is it wrong to outwit a schemer and thief? The fraud practised this day belonged to Esau, and because he was thwarted in his deception he immediately became enraged, grieved, self-piteous, and in his own eyes justifies the murderous thoughts entertained towards his brother. Isaac was surprised at the early return of "Esau." "How is it thou art returned so quickly, my son?" Note this answer ; Jacob replied, as if it were Esau speaking, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." Why did he not say, "Because the Lord our God . . .", or "The Lord my God"? Simply because Esau had no respect to the God of his fathers. Isaac knew this; Jacob knew it ; Rebekah knew it. It matters not from which angle you view this matter, the deceiver this day was Esau, claiming something that he had already covenanted to sell, and confirmed the sale with an oath, and on top of that, claiming an inheritance in which he had not the slightest interest. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." There must be a separation, sooner or later. In some cases it is sooner, and in others it is later. This is the separating work going on today, just as surely as it separated Esau and Jacob.

Strange as it may seem if the "deception" that so many people believe belonged to Jacob, you would expect some recrimination or word of reproof at a later date from Isaac. Quite the reverse; when Jacob was about to depart, Isaac called him to his side, gave him some good counsel which amounted to this, "Do not on any account do as your brother Esau has done." No, with fatherly advice he concludes with his own benediction, and on top of that, "May God Almighty bless thee . . . and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and thy seed." You would hardly expect such blessings to be bestowed on the head of an "arch-deceiver" as many think of Jacob.

The harmony that Jacob desired was missing. In its place was hatred; so much so that his father and mother counsel him to go for a change of air. Here is Abraham's flight duplicated. Jacob sets off, fearing an attack from the rear by Esau and not knowing what each forward step would reveal. No wonder he is all but exhausted when he arrived at Bethel. Note what respect to the promise meant to him: privation, suffering, anxiety, separation. After these things fail to dim his love for righteousness, he is rewarded. God confirms His original covenant, and gives him abundant inspiration and courage to press on. Read the wonderful promise and protection that was guaranteed him in Genesis 28:12-16. No wonder he could take up his journey with a light heart, armed for not only the journey but for whatever experiences were ahead of him. Promises for the present and the future; who could want more when they are guaranteed by the Judge of all the earth? He, like his father, would understand that the blessing was not so much for him personally, but would unfold with later generations. Note particularly that although the chief blessing may be in the future, there is a lesser blessing that takes care of all today's worries. Are not the "children of the promise" enriched beyond understanding?

The succeeding days and years proved this beyond doubt in Jacob's life. Not only did he enjoy the Lord's protection, but others also came under its influence because of Jacob. The wily Laban quickly recognised this. Laban, who had little before the coming of Jacob, became one of the richest in the land. The account is in Genesis 30. Jacob had his worries, trials, and work to perform, but he also had that something that was missing in other men. Laban schemed and contrived to keep this man with him; "changed his wages ten times" and was loth to let him go. He admitted "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake."

It is interesting to note that Sarah, the beloved of Abraham, was barren. God intervened and then we have the problem of who is the rightful heir, since Ishmael was the elder. Next the rightful heir is pointed out, and he under singular circumstances marries Rebekah. That promise given to Abraham that in "thee And thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" had its worrying aspects when the rightful successor to Abraham also found his wife barren. Special intercession was made, and the prayer answered ; then we have the mix-up with Esau and Jacob. Who is the rightful heir? It is pointed out that Jacob is the successor to inherit the "blessing of Abraham." Next we have the

complications of tracing the seed with Laban's trickery. Rachel was certainly the beloved wife, but she too was barren. In fact, ten children Jacob could count as offspring before Divine providence again intervened and we have the birth of Joseph, who, without doubt, was the "firstborn" of the real affections, especially as the others, Reuben, Judah, and Co., all had blemishes against their names that excluded them from God's favor. The complications increase rather than diminish, and upon the death of Jacob the twelve brethren realise that the Abrahamic blessing is now a tribal, a national matter, "twelve brothers, and we are of one." It is common history how this little nation of Israel has been blessed of God right down through the ages, yet the mystery of the Abrahamic Covenant deepens rather than clears. "He came unto his own, but they received him not, but as many as did receive him to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name." "Ye must be born again."

It was the same with Joseph. God was with him, and despite all the suffering and varied experiences of Joseph, he knew "God had sent him before the others to preserve life." They may have intended it for evil but God intended it for good. It does us good to be reminded of these wonderful lessons.

However, the "child of promise" had now become "children of promise." Reuben, pleading before Joseph, said, "We are all one man's sons; twelve brethren, the sons of one man." The heads of twelve tribes that were to form the nation of Israel. Where are the children of the promise? They are to be found among these people. Yet "not all Israel which are of Israel." Neither because Abraham was their father are they heirs of God. God selects His heirs according to His own method, and one signal mark of acceptance is faith. "Have faith in God." "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

As a means of justification we have pictured for us in the lives of these ancient people the unbridgeable gulf separating works and faith. "By the deeds of the law," which rested solely on works, "shall no flesh be justified," because all have come short of the glory of God. Perfection is impossible because of our natural inheritance from father Adam and mother Eve. Some other way of reconciliation must be found if we are to inherit some of these blessings that belong to "the children of the promise." And another way has been found.

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Like these good works practised by the sincere folk in Israel, it left us with only a nasty taste in the mouth, and the more one honestly sought to do the works contained in the law the more apparent it was that instead of the Law becoming a blessing it became a curse.

When faith-righteousness opens its arms what joys and peace belong to the happy believers. "All the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus." Galatians the third chapter enlarges on this wonderful theme, and we now find that the "blessing of Abraham," that wonderful promise that God spake unto Abraham, confirmed to Isaac and then again to Jacob, carried on through selected vessels among Israel, right down to "as many as the Lord our God shall call," "for ye are all children of God (children of the promise) by faith in Christ Jesus."

Remember, there was the chief blessing, still future, and the lesser to be now enjoyed. This is it, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose." Jesus Himself declares, no man has left anything behind him but that he does not benefit now, and greater benefits later. Let us go forward, like Jacob, with this assurance, "I am with thee and will keep thee in all the places whither thou goest."

It was during the memorial service that our Lord used the endearing term "little children." Children of the promise, as Isaac was, born not according to the will of man, but according to the will of God. Paul is emphatic in Rom. 9:8 that the children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." These heirs may claim the rich title, "Children of the living God." (Rom. 9:26.)

"Children of the promise"; how can we define it? Remember the "Land of promise"? It is a land specially marked out for a special purpose. Other lands may be richer or more beautiful, more productive, abounding in natural resources, but there is a difference, a separation. The Land of Promise is a particular land; in our day we have seen it change from a barren waste to a productive and inhabited country. That is beside the point; the main point is that God intended this particular land for a special purpose. Many would possibly doubt the probability of Jerusalem becoming the capital of the world when they think of the commercial wealth and influence in London; the engineering and scientific glory of New York, or the rugged starkness and overcoming of natural disabilities of Moscow. Yet, if "the Word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem" as declared in God's Word, well, we can count it as good as done, and a new capital will arise to be a meeting place of these peoples needing direction to rebuild according to a city that has foundations. What blessings will flow from the "new Jerusalem."

So with "children of the promise", special people marked out by God for a special purpose. Where do we fit into this scheme of things? It will be nice to belong to either class, either those blessed or those blessing. The latter certainly have the chief blessings, the inheritance of the first-borns, the "children of the promise," or, as Paul has it, "children of the living God."

Consider the Land of Promise; the work put into it, from within and without, yet if God did not grant His increase the labor would be in vain. Exactly the same with the children of promise; it is not what they are that counts, but what God can make of them. There is the transforming work going on all the time, the work from within and without. Yet, if the increase is not granted by God, this work too will not be of lasting benefit. Yet if He adds His blessing, the blessing that maketh rich, what power or thing can thwart His purpose?

Another similarity among all these "children of promise." Have you noticed how they all must travel? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the nation of Israel; it seems none escape this necessity for travel. The believer of today is not exempt, for he, too, must "leave all", "forget also thine own people and thy father's house." (Psa. 45:10.) He may not be called to make the physical separation that so many have experienced, but he will have his "wilderness" experiences, when

that relationship between Father and child will become reality indeed. There will come experiences that you alone can solve; not even the nearest and dearest can sympathise with you. But once the relationship of God and child of promise is real, you will find help from every quarter; even the things that otherwise could be harmful will but accomplish God's will. Just as all these folk of olden times have enjoyed the blessing of the Lord, so we, too, may enjoy it to its full, and find "all things working together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."



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## **Will We Know Our Loved Ones in the Resurrection Day?**

(This article is published by request).

THE subject of the resurrection and the conditions which will exist at that time are surely so wonderful for us to contemplate. Here on earth we are surrounded with death, and the dying process, in even the healthiest of the human race. Is it any wonder, then, that the thought of the resurrection—an awakening from the condition of unconsciousness in death—should appeal so strongly to us, not only for our own benefit, but also for the benefit of all mankind?

We call to mind one of our friends, who, when anyone died, used to tell her little boy that the departed one would be brought back to life in the resurrection day, and the child was continually asking when they would be restored to life. Truly, the awakening from the dead has a strong appeal to all right-thinking people, and how wonderful this resurrection experience will be for the majority of mankind who were not aware of such a provision when living on earth, or at least had such a vague understanding of it. The majority of business men and women are thinking mainly of their financial state right up to the time of death. Some, possibly a good number, make provision for their death—to see that all death dues and funeral arrangements are covered—but have we heard of many making arrangements for their resurrection?

Our Lord gave His own disciples instructions how they may make provision for their resurrection to life with Himself, when He declared—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:19-21.)

How truly, then, did the Apostle Paul express the feelings of our hearts, also, when he stated—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But Paul, so fully assured that Christ had been raised from the dead and "become the first-fruits of them that slept" in his day, could declare with confidence—"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his presence." (1 Cor. 15:19-23.)

Let us now briefly examine the position of those whom Paul calls "Christ the firstfruits" in this wonderful 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. These are the "anointed firstfruits" of whom James declared—"Of his own will (God's will) begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1:18.) In Revelation 14:4 we also read—"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

What shall we say of this class of "firstfruits unto God" in the resurrection day? Shall they see and know their loved ones? Throughout the Scriptures there is one prominent fact made manifest, and which is, that first of all, the blessed hope and expectation of seeing the Lord Himself seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the Apostles. As an example, we read in Tit. 2:13—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." And again—"So shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes. 4:17.)

From the Apostle John we also read respecting our Lord's return—"When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.) What a wonderful prospect is this for all the worthy overcomers of this Gospel Age! However, while John was so enraptured with the thought of seeing the Lord, and being like Him in the resurrection day, he at the same time answers our question as to whether the overcomers will see and know their loved

ones in that resurrection time. For, notice that John clearly states—“We shall be like Him for We shall see Him as He is.” Thus in being like the Lord, and seeing Him *as He is*, all of this “We” class will be like each other, and will certainly know each other, as never before.

When our Lord commended those who had faithfully used the “five talents” and the “two talents” in Matt. 25:21, 23, His words were—“Well done, good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” And while we are not informed of the details of the “joys of the Lord” in the heavenly kingdom, we know they will include the joys of association with all other loved ones in the Lord’s heavenly family, in addition to being confessed before the Father, and before His angels. (Rev. 3:5.)

Later we shall consider if the faithful followers of the Lord may also know other loved ones in the resurrection day who have not been of the “anointed firstfruits” class, but just now we wish to examine some Scriptures which deal with those who will be in the earthly kingdom and which reveal their relationship to their loved ones in the same kingdom on earth.

On one occasion the words of our Lord showed the condition of heart of many Israelites at His first advent, and Jesus’ prophecy concerning their attitude when the Kingdom is established and they are raised from the dead is helpful in revealing that these Jews will certainly remember their former life, and their former associates. Thus, they will know those they loved, who were of the same mind as themselves. We refer to Luke 13:28, 29—“There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.” Undoubtedly Jesus referred here to the time of Christ’s kingdom on earth, when the prominent Jews who rejected Him at His first advent will be “thrust out” of the kingdom administration, when they are resurrected, until they acknowledge Christ and fall into line with the laws of the kingdom then in force. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets will be in the places of authority to guide and direct affairs ; and the reason that the Apostles are not mentioned is, of course, because our Lord was describing the procedure for the earthly phase of the kingdom only. (See also Matt. 11:20-24.) The fact that it will be “more tolerable” for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom in the day of judgment than for the Israelites who rejected Christ at His first advent, shows that all these nations will be resurrected, and, knowing of their former lives, will have opportunity to repent and come into the favor of the Lord, through His representatives, the Ancient Worthies.

Read Ezek. 16:48-55, 60-63. “Then (thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger . . . That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame.” In these verses from Ezekiel we find unmistakable evidence of the fact that Israel, as well as all other people, will remember very clearly their former life when raised from the dead in the resurrection. And if the former life is clearly remembered, so will be the former associates, especially the loved ones, and by obedience to the laws of the kingdom and rendering assistance to others, will progress be gauged under the administration of Christ’s kingdom on earth.

Using Israel as an illustration again, we read in Zech. 12:9, 10—“They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” Here we see that in the resurrection day, those who sanctioned our Lord’s death will clearly remember their part in His crucifixion, and will mourn as they look back on the sad event. However, the Lord will restore them to favor as they indicate a repentant heart condition. As shown by this prophecy, they will be in genuine mourning and bitterness because of their conduct. They will also remember their associates at the time of our Lord’s death, and will need to assist each other into harmony with the Lord and His spirit of compassion manifest towards them. Thus, the remembrance of the former conduct will be a great incentive to progress in accord with the requirements of the kingdom then in operation.

Another point regarding the world of mankind—They will also know some in the resurrection who were not their loved ones ; they will know some who may have been their enemies ! How will they react toward these? Their reaction towards past enemies will determine their worthiness, or otherwise, to receive the blessings of Christ’s kingdom. (See Matt. 25: 31-40, 45.)

The attitude of the Lord’s people, of course, will be quite different to that of the world of mankind in the kingdom. They will meet many in the heavenly kingdom who were not their loved ones on earth, but they will rejoice to associate with all in God’s heavenly family, and will love them just as much as those saints they knew on earth.

Then, there will be some in the earthly kingdom over whom the saints shall reign, and from whom they likely received persecution during the earthly life. How will the over-corners feel towards these? They will certainly have no ill feelings, but will be sympathetic, and desire to lift up and bless, that those who were persecutors may be gained for the Lord’s kingdom on earth. Where required, the Lord will rule with a rod of iron ; He will certainly require obedience, but His justice will be tempered with mercy wherever there are responsive hearts. (See Rev. 3:9.) And this disposition to bless even their persecutors, on the part of the Lord’s people, must be developed in this present life, or we may be sure that no heavenly inheritance will be gained. So, we realise that the followers of Christ must be truly overcomers of all wrong feelings, thoughts and actions, in this present life, by the Lord’s grace, while the world of mankind will eradicate these imperfections during the Kingdom, to be worthy of everlasting life on earth.

We think of the great example of Christ, as shown in Rom. 5:6-10,—“God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us . . . For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” So, as Christ had no enemies in His heart—because He died for them—we also must have no enemies ; none that we would not seek to bless and

encourage in the ways of the Lord, as we have opportunity. We must not allow the Adversary to stir up our minds or hearts against anyone, whether they be our brethren, or the world at large. We call to mind Paul's words in this connection—"For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief. Even so have these (Jews) also now not believed, that through your mercy (when the opportunity comes in the kingdom) they also may obtain mercy." (Rom. 11:30,31.)

What shall we say, however, about the relatives of the Lord's people who have no interest in spiritual things and who will be raised from the dead to inherit the earthly kingdom in the general resurrection? We know that there are close ties between the Lord's people and some of their earthly relatives, but because those gaining the heavenly kingdom will be spirit beings, we do not think of the two phases of God's kingdom as being greatly divided. We remember Paul's words—"In the dispensation of the fulness of times he (God) might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." (Eph. 1:10.) Also in Gen. 28:10-15, where the "Jacob's ladder" dream is recorded, we have an illustration of the co-operation which will exist between heavenly and earthly beings when Christ's kingdom is operative, and especially so when mankind are fully restored to perfection. We remember when Adam and Eve were perfect in the Garden of Eden, before the fall into disobedience, that God talked with them, and so, when mankind have gained human perfection, no doubt there will be definite communication between the overcoming saints of the Gospel Age and the perfect human family.

We realise, also, that there will be no thought in the minds of the Lord's people in the spiritual kingdom of showing preference to those who were their earthly relatives in this life; the saints will esteem all mankind equally in God's earthly family, with every member of it being appreciated according to their obedience to the laws of the kingdom. This principle was clearly demonstrated by our Lord when He was on earth. (See Matt. 12:46-50.)

We see, then, why our Lord could speak to His true followers as He did, when He declared—"Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19:28.) These will be worthy and qualified then to judge Israel and the world, in righteousness. The installation of Christ's true followers in their places of administration in the kingdom is shown also in the Parable of the Pounds, where the "good servants" were rewarded—"Have thou authority over ten cities," and "Be thou also over five cities." (Luke 19:11-19.)

What a wonderful prospect lies ahead for poor, fallen humanity during the time when "all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest," when "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Jer. 31:34; Hab. 2:14.) What a gracious prospect and privilege also lies ahead for the faithful overcomers of this Gospel Age, who shall be favored to participate in the work of the kingdom—"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," (Matt. 13:43),—to bless and uplift all who then respond throughout the earthly domain of Christ's Kingdom, that they may gain everlasting life, to God's praise.

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## The Institute's Work

IT is with thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings and favors bestowed upon the work of the Berean Bible Institute, throughout another year, that this brief annual report is presented at this time.

The co-operation of our brethren in the work of the Institute has continued as in past years, and sincere appreciation is extended to all who have assisted so freely, as unto the Lord, in the efforts from the centre here in Melbourne.

Each year the efforts continue mainly with the object of encouraging our brethren in Christ, wherever situated, in the Christian way to which they have been graciously drawn and called of the Lord through His word of truth. At the same time the presentation of the message of the kingdom is a general witness to others who have ears to hear and long for the glorious hope for the future, found only in the true Gospel of Christ. Our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" is the main means of contact with the brethren and interested friends throughout Australia and overseas, and many messages of appreciation of our periodical have been received throughout the past year.

As in former years, the contributions to the columns of the "Peoples Paper" are greatly appreciated, and this enables a number of brethren to have a part in this ministry, in the service of the Lord and His truth. Other friends who have helpful articles suitable for publication in the "Peoples Paper" are invited to forward them along.

The number of subscribers to our monthly "Paper" has been maintained, but the price of 5/- per year does not nearly cover the cost of production, so the deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund. However, as a considerable number of the "Paper" is distributed free to interested enquirers the expense is certainly well used in the service of the truth. All readers are welcome to extra copies of the "Paper" for distribution where good may be done, and some friends who forward subscriptions for others are helping very well in the work. The assistance in checking the proofs of the "Peoples Paper" by some friends is greatly appreciated, as is also the help in folding and wrapping of the periodical for despatch to our readers.

The distribution of tracts has been continued where opportunities offered, and supplies of various subjects are on hand for all who can use them to advantage in the days ahead. These tracts are supplied free from the Tract Fund. Consolation Cards are also mailed to the bereaved by some of our brethren, and a number of these have been returned

and suitable literature supplied ; other friends willing to co-operate in this work are invited to do so.

Throughout the past year, public lectures have been continued at regular intervals, and the brethren have shown good appreciation and co-operation by encouraging their friends to attend, and a number from the public have also shown good interest in the messages presented on these occasions. It was from the lectures that some of our regular brethren were first encouraged to appreciate the truth, by the Lord's grace.

The financial position for the general work is shown from the General Tract Fund below. and all the good assistance has been provided by the voluntary contributions of our friends, in the Lord's providence. This loving cooperation and assistance in the work is warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord. While looking back with gratitude and praise to the Lord, it is our privilege to look forward also with confidence and trust in the God of our salvation. The international situation continues to be of great interest to the Lord's people, and often trouble spots could produce another spasm of world-wide destruction, but for one thing — the time is not yet due in the Lord's timetable. While the Lord's time for "sudden destruction" may not be long delayed now, it is the privilege of His people to continue their service, with devotion to Him and His cause -- encouraging the brethren, and sounding forth the message of the kingdom, "glad tidings of great joy to all people" in His due time. The prayers of the brethren. are requested that God's guidance and blessing may be over His work in the hearts of His people, by His grace. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of 'love, which ye have showed towards His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. 6:10.).

#### GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/57	£25 10 3
„, Donations ..	.. 666 16 7
	£692 6 10
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples 1 5 Hall Rents, Advertising Circulars, Con- solation Cards, etc. ..	.. 40 1 8
General Expenses (Office, etc.) .. ..	49 15 0
Towards Personal and House Expenses	350 14 0 47 2 9
Pilgrim Work ..	.. 50 15 0
Free Books and Booklets ..	.. 5 5 6
Travel and Sundries ..	12 15 0
Credit Balance, 1/5/58 ..	35 16 6
	£692 6 10

## Radio Work

ANOTHER year's witness by means of the radio has been completed, and it is with gratitude to the Lord for His blessings on this feature of the work that this brief review is also presented. A number of our brethren have gladly cooperated in this witness work, and their good help is gratefully acknowledged, in the service of the Lord.

Throughout the year past, a considerable number of enquiries have been received, and many listeners state that they look forward with pleasure to each Sunday's broadcast and receive help and encouragement in their Christian life. The same radio stations have been engaged, namely — 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY/NA — and at the conclusion of each discussion printed copies of all that Frank and Ernest say are offered to all interested listeners as well as other Free Literature.

All enquirers to the radio sessions receive the "Peoples Paper" free for at least six months, and are thus introduced to other literature on the wonderful Plan of the Ages in which we all rejoice. A number of friends have been brought to a full knowledge and appreciation of the truth by this means, by the Lord's overruling. All friends within range of any of the radio stations are invited to encourage people to listen, especially those who are feeling after the glad message of the kingdom.

No doubt others of our friends would welcome the broadcasts on other radio stations nearer their homes, and there have been offers of further financial assistance if this were possible; however, at the present time, it seems almost impossible to obtain time, even on some of the country stations, so completely are their programmes filled on Sundays. However, it is a privilege to be able to sound a+ witness to the glorious truths of God's Word over four of the large cities of Australia and extending out many miles into the country in each of five states. The Lord is adding His blessing in the hearts of those who are truly seeking His truth in all sincerity. We are glad to acknowledge continued assistance from our brethren in U.S.A., in the supply of many of the subjects for broadcast, while others are prepared here in Melbourne. It is surely a great joy and privilege to be engaged in the service of the Lord in any capacity, by His grace.

The Radio Fund reveals the financial position of this feature of the work, and the very good assistance, by the voluntary contributions of our friends generally, is gratefully appreciated, as unto the Lord in His service. All expenses have been covered, by the Lord's providence, the brethren in Western Australia still taking care of the cost of the broadcasts over 6KY/NA. Would our brethren join in prayer for the Lord's blessing upon the witness over the air, that the results may be accomplished in accord with His good will.

## RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance, 1/5/57	£65 10 1
„ Donations ..	. 805 5 0
	£870 15 1
By Radio Stations 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ ...	£694 6 0 „
Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY .. . . .	60 17 6
„ Freight Charges .. . . .	8 7 2
„ Printing Dialogues .. . . .	20 14 0
„ Travel and Sundries .. . . .	9 5 0
„ Bank Charges .. . . .	1 10 0
„ Credit Balance .. . . .	75 15 5
	£870 15 1

### ***Bible Study Meetings.***

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

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

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

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

**Perth.**—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

### HELD OVER.

Some messages from interested friends were intended for this issue of “Peoples Paper” but are unavoidably held over till next issue for lack of space.

*It is my duty to distrust my own ability, that I may have reliance on Him that is stronger than all.—J.B.*

## **Consider Him—Lest Ye Be Weary.**

*“Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds.”—(Heb. 12:3.)*

THERE is a natural tendency amongst people to tire of a thing when the novelty wears off. Even the hearing of the truth, strange as it may seem, causes weariness to some after a time. It is the same way with the soldier. It is easy for him to enlist and march forward when the drums are beating and the bands are playing, and enthusiasm runs high ; but when the damp, cold weather comes, when ice forms in the trenches, and there is no martial music, he is liable to grow weary, and army life does not seem to be nearly so attractive as it appeared at first. This is true in our spiritual warfare—in fighting the good fight of faith. There are times when all around seem joyous, when the Christian soldiers are marching, and all are stimulated and encouraged ; whereas there are times when the clouds hang low and are dark, chilliness surrounds us, ardour abates, and we are liable to get discouraged. It is partly for this reason that the Lord has directed us to “consider Him,” that thereby we might be stimulated and encouraged to press on and to inspire others. He knew just what we would need.

“Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

The Apostle Paul exhorts us not to forget the assembling of ourselves together, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. Why so? Because “this day” has its peculiar trials, its difficulties, its attractions in various directions, and the story of the Cross will likely seem old, not as new as some things, and consequently we shall need to bear each other up. Because there is danger of becoming luke-warm spiritually, it is generally recommended that the Lord’s people meet together, for to do so is stimulating. In proportion as we seek to stir up others in the way of putting them in remembrance, we are thereby reviving our own minds. We can, therefore, see a wisdom in all of God’s arrangements with respect to the truth. In every congregation there is danger of growing weary in well-doing. Well-doing costs something. It means sacrificing. If you are serving the Lord’s cause you are denying yourself in some way. Unless we have some special love for the Lord and for the truth we might say, “This is a very tedious work ; I am pressed in many directions.” So many things come to you and to us all, that we might consequently be retarded, and slacken our efforts. The world, the flesh, and the adversary are pressing hard to draw us, not exactly from the prize, but from the narrow way that leads to the prize. They would slacken our zeal and beat our courage down ; they would make us faint, and cause us to say, “O, I am so tired ; I cannot do any more !” Doubtless we all have had such experiences. If we get faint in body we can rest ourselves, but if we get faint in mind it is more difficult to become refreshed.

What then shall we do in case we get weary and faint in our minds ? The Apostle tells, “Consider Him.” Whom? We all know that he is referring to our Lord Jesus, the one great “Him” in all the whole world. We are to consider how much He endured without getting faint or weary, without giving up the work which He undertook to do. He undertook

to do, a certain work, and so have we ! In some respects we have undertaken to do the same work that Jesus did. Let us consider Him, lest we get weary and faint in following in His footsteps.

Of course, the world is not exhorted in this. text, but merely those who have come into, the Lord's family, and have taken up their cross to follow Him ; those who have consecrated themselves to Him, those who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice, declaring that they will give all to Him and His service—that they will follow Him at any cost. These are to consider what He endured without fainting in carrying out the Father's will—what He. endured in the way of contradiction of sinners against Himself. This is the very kind of difficulty which we have in our endeavour to carry out the Father's will. If there were no devil, no sinners, and no trials, this would be a very pleasant world to go through. It is because we have to swim upstream, against the current,. when almost everything is going in the opposite direction, that we have such a difficult work. Watch the swimmer ! He must battle upstream against the down flowing current ; a moment's relaxation and the current carries him downward. With us there is a natural tendency, as well as in the currents of thought. and activity about us in the world, to pull us back in the opposite direction to which •we are trying to go.

Let us consider His example, His words, or else we' may become faint. There are many reasons why we might become so. One of them is that we might consider that the opposition against us is too great. Jesus had the opposition of all those of national influence in His day. He was continually misrepresented, until finally the slanders culminated in His being called a profane person, one who had spoken blasphemies against God, who had said that He was like God, and was as great as God. This was a part of the charge against Him. Although the accusation was not true, nevertheless He endured it, even though He had power to stop it. If He could cast out demons and open the eyes of the blind, then surely He could have done something to change things in His own case. Why, then, did He not do it? Because He was doing the Father's will, and it was the Father's will that He should bear witness to the truth, and demonstrate His loyalty in connection with it. Is it not the same with us? But why does the Father care about our loyalty ? Because He is seeking a certain class for a certain purpose. In Jesus' case, He was seeking one to be the Head of the Church. In our case, He is selecting those who will be members of the Body. He has a great plan which contemplates the overthrow of sin and the blessing of all the families of the earth ; and He is now looking for those who are in sympathy with all His plans and arrangements. He is seeking for those who would rather suffer death than violate His word or shrink from doing His will.

This is our glorious position, and we are considering One who never made a mistake in carrying out the Father's will. Yet He suffered as though He had made a great many serious mistakes. He suffered as a disloyal person, although He had always been most loyal. The Jews declared that He had no patriotism at all, yet He was loyal to His own nation in every respect. As Jesus said, "They hated Me without a cause,"

Turn these things over in your mind ! Consider Him ! This kind of suffering is necessary, for the Father would not be wise in exalting to such a high position anyone who was not thoroughly loyal. He could not give even His own Son the divine nature without a thorough testing. Our Lord, as a new creature, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was not tempted as a fallen man. The temptations which come to the new creature are different from those which come to the sinner.

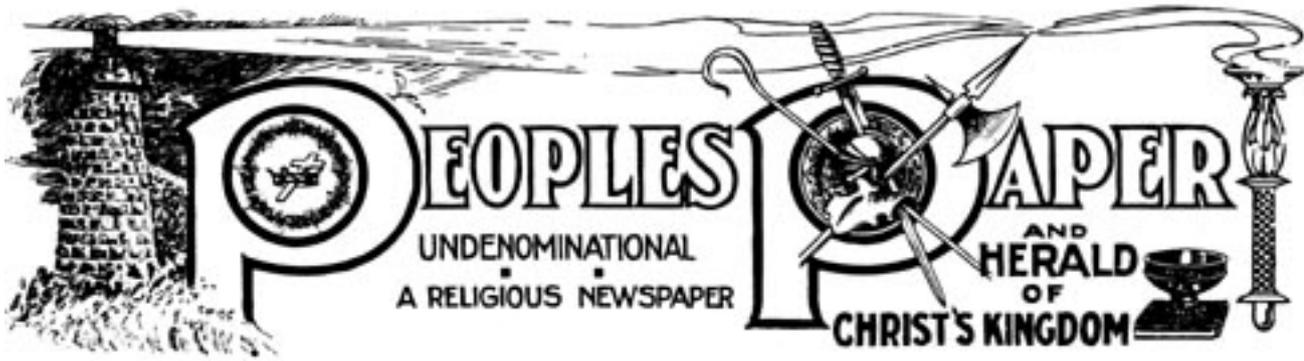
Jesus was tempted to grow weary and faint in His mind. This was one of the ways through which special temptations from Satan were placed before Him. Satan told our Lord that He would get rid of these difficulties if He would co-operate with him, and would avoid those things which would necessarily come to Him if He should continue in the way marked out by Jehovah. Our Lord's answer was, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" Another temptation was to show what great power He had received as a spirit-begotten son, to use this power either to gratify His own natural appetite or to make a display before the people. So it is with those of us who may wish to do things in a showy way, instead of in the humble way marked out for us. We may expect to have the same temptations that our Lord had. Therefore we should be on guard that we may prove loyal to the Father.

"If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." The reason why the Father is so careful in making the selection of the Church Class is that they are to reign. He could not take hypocrites or any disloyal ones, or even careless ones, to be rulers and teachers of the people in the coming kingdom. He would not select those who had not resisted sin. He must select those who had first learned humility before He could use them to teach humility to others. God desires such a company of priests and judges to be associated with His Son for a thousand years, in ruling and blessing the world, as will prove faithful under all circumstances—those in whom He can place absolute confidence, who have been tested and found faithful. This is the reason that He tests and proves, during this Gospel Age, everyone whom He will receive for that future work.

The call of this Gospel Age is therefore one to sacrifice. God does not hide this fact from us. He does not call us to simply stand up and say that we wish to be followers of Jesus. No ! Our Lord says, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." There is no deception about the matter. If we have been deceived it is our own fault. The Old Testament says the same thing: "Gather My saints together unto Me ; those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Whoever would follow Jesus must prove his faithfulness by his willingness to sacrifice.

In the past, false doctrines confused us, but now "we see Jesus," we see what He accomplished, and how He endured without growing weary or giving up. It makes our course plain when we consider Him. We sometimes say that we have not been careful enough in this or that matter, and have consequently made some mistakes. We can often find some fault in ourselves, thus demonstrating that we are partly to blame for our suffering. In our Lord's case it was different. He received the slanders, the misrepresentations, and everything else that came against Him, without having





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## The Kindness, Humility and Patience of Love.

*"God is love." (1 John 4:7-21.)*

(Convention Address)

IN the Scriptures the word love is used to express the complete whole of the grand and glorious qualities which make up the perfection of our Heavenly Father. God is the personification of love. To whatever extent anyone possesses this quality of love, to that extent he has character-likeness to God. Whoever is fully in God's likeness may be said to be love; for love is the great principle which represents most fully the divine character.

"God is love," our Lord Jesus is love, and when the church is perfect, each member of the body will also be love. This great principle will have full control of all that we do and say, even as now it has control in the hearts of the Lord's people, despite the weaknesses of the flesh which prevent its full expression. When all the imperfections are taken away, those who attain the prize of our glorious high calling will have the image of God, the image of the Lord. The hope of attaining the likeness of the divine character is the great ambition which inspires us to faithfulness of endeavour.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that faith, hope and love are fruits of the holy spirit. Although every good and perfect gift comes from the Father (James 1:17), nevertheless, there is a difference between a "gift" and a "fruit." Possession of a gift may be acquired immediately, but a fruit requires time in which to develop. So with the fruits of the holy spirit.

Here we see displayed the wisdom of God. Development is a gradual work. With those who have that earnest desire and determined zeal for righteousness which God wishes them to have, every word and every act has something to do with the development of this quality of love. Our Heavenly Father does not expect us to acquire perfection of love in the flesh, for its weaknesses and imperfections will not permit us to do so; but He expects to find in those who will be members of the body of Christ that earnestness of spirit and faithful endeavour which demonstrates that if they had perfect bodies they would always manifest love.

In order to reach this degree of development of character, we must train our minds to desire only those things which are true, pure, loving and good. We must not live after the flesh. We must resist the tendencies of the flesh, and cultivate the new mind. In this sense of the word we are to be copies of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Kindness** Not Always Love.

The followers of Christ have consecrated their own wills and have been begotten of the holy spirit, which is the spirit of love, for it is the spirit of God, who is love. Therefore their sentiment toward one another must be one of loving interest. Perhaps we are not always wise in knowing how to exercise loving-kindness; sometimes our fallen nature may lead us to think that a certain course of action would be the loving one, when it is the very reverse—the wrong course. Hence, we need to be on the alert to perceive to what extent we are using the spirit of a sound mind in our conduct and in our dealings with one another.

A person might manifest kindness in word and act without having the right motive. Sometimes kindness is prompted by motives other than love. It might be for selfish reasons, or for the purpose of entrapping another to his disadvantage. This form of fraud has become so common as to call for no particular comment.

The Christian's experience is a continual schooling. Daily we are learning more and more about ourselves and about the wisdom and justice of God. As we learn these lessons day by day, we are learning more to reprobate and correct in ourselves. In thus discovering our own imperfections, we should learn, as a matter of course, not to expect perfection in others; and we should give them credit for doing their best to exemplify the highest ideals which they have with respect to the unity and perfection required for membership in the body of Christ.

Love is always kind; love cannot wilfully injure another. The parent who loves his child will not do anything to injure that child. He might sometimes make a mistake and punish the child unjustly, but the motive behind a loving parent's action will always be kind and true.

Love might sometimes be regarded as unkind, for the principles governing the actions of the individual might be misunderstood. When our Heavenly Father forbade Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, He

had a wise reason for doing so. No doubt he would have eventually permitted them to partake of that fruit, but it was kindness on His part to keep them in ignorance of that fact. Thinking God to be unkind, ungenerous toward them, Eve thought to obtain her rights : So with us. If our Heavenly Father's kindness is not always understood, we may not be surprised if we have a similar experience. Although our spirit, or motive, may be right, yet we may not always have the ability to manifest it ; and so we must make due allowance when others misunderstand us.

### **The Power of Indwelling Love.**

Man was originally made in the image of God, but by reason of the fall of Adam, his balance of mind has been destroyed. Those who have the mind, or will of Christ are able to overcome some of the inequalities of their natural disposition and to think soberly of their own knowledge and ignorance and of that of others. This ability to appreciate the true state of affairs is the secret of much of our blessing in the Lord.

When we see others who have a smaller appreciation of justice than we have and who do things contrary to the principles of righteousness, we rejoice that we know better and are able to do a little better than they. The spirit of a sound mind shows us that we have more ability along some lines than have some others, and that others have more ability along some lines than we. Because of the fall of man, all are weak in one direction or another. The knowledge of the imperfect condition of humanity should humble us rather than puff us up.

Humility of mind comes only after the attainment of considerable knowledge of Christ. Knowledge puffs up because of selfishness of heart, because we are more likely to be conscious of our own good qualities than of those of others. Hence, those born with less selfishness have less to contend with, and those born with more of it have more to contend with ; and in proportion as we have the spirit of Christ, we are able to overcome the tendency to be puffed up with what little knowledge we possess. Indwelling love has the power to build up, to strengthen character, and to counteract the wrong effect of the fallen human nature.

### **Proper and Improper Causes of Provocation.**

The whole world has a tendency to recognise the principles of justice. Even those whose conduct towards others is far from just seem to crave an opportunity to fight against injustice, provided that the case is not one with which they are identified. This inclination often manifests itself in acts of violence, as when mobs vent their anger against some poor sinner who has done something to provoke their wrath. The least virulent amongst them have perhaps done wrong also, yet they seize the opportunity to show their indignation against wrongdoing and seem to take delight in punishing the offender.

The Lord's people should not possess this spirit of intolerance. We should have patience, sympathy and endurance when things go wrong, and should make due allowance for those who are transgressors. The more we possess of the spirit of patience, the more we have of the spirit of forbearance, the more difficult it is to arouse us to anger. Wherever the spirit of love prevails, its possessor is not easily moved to do or say anything unkind or unjust. Love makes us very patient with those with whom we are associated ; it is anxious to throw the mantle of charity over everything that seems to be wrong.

Love would have us remember that while another may be in error, it does not follow that he is at fault. He may not have understood a matter correctly or his judgment may not have been the best, owing to inherited weakness over which he has no control. Before condemning anyone we should make sure that he is at fault. Justice demands that we do no less than investigate before we condemn. Love urges us to be as merciful in the case as possible.

God is the very personification of love, yet the Scriptures tell us that He has been provoked at different times. While passing through the wilderness, the children of Israel aroused His indignation repeatedly. (Psa. 78:40, 56; 95:7-11.) The idolatrous tendencies of that nation brought divine wrath upon them and sent them into captivity to Babylon. (Jer. 7:17-20.) Finally, their rejection and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ brought upon them "wrath to the uttermost" and caused their dispersion into all parts of the earth.

### **Righteous Indignation a Proper Feeling.**

The Lord's people are not to be of that immovable kind that cannot feel any resentment of injustice. Lack of ability to have just indignation would imply lack of morals and of harmony with God. Of our Lord Jesus it is written that when He beheld the unrighteous condition of the rulers of His people, and saw the injustice of their conduct, He "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." (Mark 3:5.) Like Him, we should be wholly out of sympathy with everything not in harmony with God.

We are to love righteousness and hate iniquity. This word iniquity, which means the very opposite of love, is a strong expression. A person who is indifferent to matters of right and wrong is indifferent to the character of God, who is in opposition to all forms of iniquity. Of our Lord the Scriptures say, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness ; therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Psa. 45:7.) All who are cultivating character pleasing to God, all who are endeavouring to become exact copies of His dear Son, should put away every impurity, everything not right. Whatever is wrong should always be opposed by our new minds.

On the other hand, if we have love as the Lord has it, we shall hate the wrong, but not the individual that does the wrong. In proportion as love controls our hearts and minds, we shall feel sympathy for those who are in iniquity, for we remember that the race of mankind is fallen from the original perfection. We should think that to do evil is not their intention, their will, but that they are suffering from iniquitous disease. Love is patient and tries to find extenuating circumstances and conditions. It seeks to help the evildoers and is not easily provoked to anger.

But the word "provoke" signifies to incite to. In another place the Apostle says, "Provoke one another to love and good works." (Heb. 10.24.) Love should say and do those things that will incite to loving words rather than stir up

bitterness, which leads to anger, wrath, malice, strife and evil-speaking. (Eph. 4.32.) In other words, it is much better to be a peacemaker than a strife-maker. Yet we are not to have peace at any price ; rather, we should have peace if possible, where principle is not involved. We should stir up strife only where some good is sure to result.

The degree of love, the strength of love, may be determined by the ease with which it may be swerved and aroused to opposition or to impatience and anger. We have already seen that there may be times when patience might stand in the way of the real interests of the case and where love would take steps to correct what seemed to be an apparent evil; but we must remember that balance of mind, or judgment, is not ours by nature. Perfection of decision is a quality belonging only to our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Let patience have her perfect work.” (James 1:4.) The Father would not be provoked to anger with anything trivial. With us, however, our balance of judgment is so poor that generally we are too hasty. Very few of us take in the full circumstances surrounding ourselves and those with whom we have to do; therefore growth in grace and growth in knowledge will have to do with the degree of love exhibited by each one.

### **Generosity and Sympathy to be Cultivated.**

We are in the school of Christ, with the Great Teacher. We have the words of the Heavenly Father, of our Lord Jesus and of the Apostles recorded in the Bible ; therefore we should know the difference between right and wrong. On the other hand, we see that sin exists in the world. Mankind are imperfect in mind and morals. This condition is hereditary — the result of Adam’s transgression nearly six thousand years ago. Yet, with all our advantages of knowledge, we “cannot do the things that we would” ; consequently, we feel a measure of sympathy for ourselves, and we should extend the same to others. Indeed, we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, although the Lord’s Word says that we are not to condemn either ourselves or others. We cannot read the hearts of those around us and therefore are not competent to decide what motives prompt their actions, nor what degree of punishment should be meted out to them.

Nevertheless, we are to observe right and wrong conduct among our neighbours. We may know that they have, figuratively speaking, a bad tree and therefore bring forth bad fruit; and we should consider why they have a tree that produces such fruitage. Perhaps they were less favorably born than we. Perhaps they have never been in the school of Christ and have never heard the Great Teacher or the Apostles. If so, our sympathy should go out to them and our attitude of mind toward them should be such that we will not be provoked by their shortcomings, but should manifest generosity of heart toward them.

To attain this sympathy and generosity is a part of our instruction in the school of Christ, but we do not learn all pertaining to the subject in a day or a week. We get “here a little, there a little.” (Isa. 28:10.) If we are following on to know the Lord, our mental discernment will become clearer and our minds and hearts will broaden in sympathy for others. Thus we shall become more like our Father in heaven, for He is kind to the unthankful and just to the unjust, as our Lord pointed out. (Matt. 5:44-48.)

### **Pride a Cause of Much Irritability.**

Undoubtedly the causes for irritability and for being provoked vary in different persons. With some, it is because of a nervous condition of health, which renders them less easily able to control themselves according to the standards which they themselves recognise. With others, the cause of irritability is pride. In fact, pride is connected with nearly everything that is injurious to the people of God. Wherever pride exists, the person is susceptible to evil influences from every quarter.

Pride manifests itself in various ways. Sometimes it manifests itself as self-esteem, leading one to think too highly of himself and too lightly of others, even to the extent of imagining himself to be their superior. At other times, pride manifests itself as approbateness; anything that conflicts with the desire to appear well before others touches a tender spot.

We are not to be indifferent to these things. If we have pride or approbateness, we are to seek to control it with the spirit of love and sympathy for others, instead of letting the wrong spirit control us. The best way to do this is to practise generosity and to provoke others to love and good works instead of to anger. Let us remember that humility is one of the great lessons, one of the most important lessons to be learned in the school of Christ ; obedience to the instructions of the Teacher along this line has very much to do with our ever getting into the kingdom.

One of the best aids to the learning of this important lesson is to learn to judge ourselves —to scrutinise our own motives. If we find that we have acted unjustly toward another, we should go and make amends to the best of our ability ; we should properly scourge our own minds, and seek to make matters right with the one we have wronged. For a person who is proud, or who is sensitive to the good opinion of others, it is very difficult to apologize; but the best thing to do is to set the matter right as speedily as possible, and repeatedly, if necessary. Thus we may have help along the line where we should have it, by overcoming our pride and vanity.

The members of the body of Christ are all to be copies of God’s dear Son. This does not mean that God’s dear people will be able always to control their looks and words and actions, but that the heart must recognise this standard and strive to attain it. Every time a person who has some weakness along this line of pride or vanity will apologise for a wrong done, he will by that act show both God and man that his heart recognises the right principle. A great blessing will come to him because of his following very strictly the divine Word ; thus he will gradually overcome his weakness and strengthen his character.

### **Feet-washing as a Lesson in Humility.**

On the last night He was with them our Lord gave to the disciples, and to all the church, a valuable lesson in

humility. He waited until supper was being served (not ended as in the A.V.) ; then, arising from the table, He laid aside His mantle and got a basin and a towel and proceeded to wash their feet. This act was a pointed reproof for their neglect to wash His feet and one another's. When our Lord came to him, Peter said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Peter had too much reverence to wish the Lord to be his servant. But the Lord said to him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall understand hereafter. (See John 13:7-10.)

In all this the Lord was giving a deep spiritual lesson—that no one is naturally fit for the kingdom. Each one needs to be washed, to be cleansed, before he can be a joint-heir. Jesus said to His disciples, You have witnessed My humility in this matter, and now I want to tell you that you ought to have this attitude toward one another. You should have been careful for even the humblest one in your number.

The incident affords a lesson in humility to us as well as it afforded one to the apostles. We should be glad to do any service, even to the humblest of the members of Christ, in whatever way the opportunity may come.

### **Our Responsibility to One Another.**

This lesson suggests that the members of Christ's body should have a mutual watch-care for one another's welfare; to keep each other pure, holy, clean and to assist one another in overcoming the trials, temptations and besetments which come from the world, the flesh and the devil. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love—can we hope to be helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and in getting rid of the defilements of the world and the flesh.

It requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to assist each other in this respect. Before we can help others to cleanse their way of life in every little particular, so that every thought, word and deed shall be brought into subjection to the divine will, it is necessary that we have experience along the same lines. Only as we cultivate purity of thought, word and deed in our own lives, only as we put on the various graces of the spirit, can we wash the feet of the saints.

Many who would reject well-meant criticism of conduct, who would resent well-meant offers of assistance to a higher standard of character, as interferences with their private affairs, would be very amenable to the influence of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be indicated by the performance of some menial act. It is the sympathetic ones who are the most successful in helping the various members of the body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, how we should study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

How many opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of daily living, or in respect of some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life ! By love we are to serve one another, but not as a mere formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people has, we may be sure, the approval of the Head of the church.

Let us lose no opportunities of this kind ; let us remember the Master's example. Let us not merely assume the guise of humility, but let us actually have that grace of character which will enable us to do kindnesses and service to all with whom we come in contact. Then we shall all the more enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the body of Christ.

Thou sweet, beloved Will of God,  
My anchor ground, my fortress hill,  
My spirit's silent, fair abode,  
In Thee I hide me, and am still.

O Will, that wiltest good alone,  
Lead thou the way, Thou guidest best;  
A little child I follow on,  
And trusting lean upon Thy breast.

Thy beautiful, sweet Will, my God,  
Holds fast in its sublime embrace  
My captive will, a gladsome bird,  
Prisoned in such a realm of grace.

Within this place of certain good,  
Love evermore expands her wings;  
Or, nestling in Thy perfect choice,  
Abides content with what it brings.

Oh, sweetest burden, lightest yoke,  
It lifts, it bears my happy soul,

It giveth wings to this poor heart;  
My freedom is Thy grand control.

Upon God's Will I lay me down,  
As child upon its mother's breast;  
No silken couch, nor softest bed,  
Could ever give me such rest.

Thy wonderful, grand Will, my God,  
With triumph now, I make it mine,  
And love shall cry a joyous Yes,  
To every dear command of Thine.

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

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## **Fear Not Little Flock.**

*Luke 12:32.*

WHAT endearing words, so sweet, so simple, so full of meaning and what comfort they bring to the heart in this day of fear! They remind us of a mother, who, hearing a cry in the night, rises swiftly to tend the one she loves. Taking the trembling one in her arms and telling it to fear not, she rocks it to sleep on her breast.

How many times we are told in the Scriptures to fear not, and our Saviour must have realised the great power fear would have over the human mind when He told His little band of faithful followers so many times to fear not.

From whence comes fear, and what makes one fear? The first intimation we have of fear in the Bible is where Adam and his wife hid themselves in the Garden of Eden. So we see that fear comes from a knowledge of sin. Once sin enters the heart we fear. Job, in ch. 11:14, 15, says: "Put iniquity away . . . and thou shalt not fear." When iniquity leaves the heart fear departs with it.

What a persistent and formidable foe is fear. It attacks from every direction. It is the imp and progeny of sin, and where it hides the child of God may be sure that the Adversary is working very hard to stumble the unsuspecting one. Nevertheless, a godly fear is necessary in the composition of a true Christian character, for the child of God must fear to do evil, to wound the feelings of a brother, and should reverence and fear God. Fear makes a splendid watchdog, which should warn if any evil approaches the heart, but it should never repose in the heart.

How strange that in a day of full and plenty, with garners of wheat overflowing, fat cattle and sheep by the million, fruit weighing the branches to the ground, grapes in abundance in a land flowing with milk and honey, and everything that should gladden the heart of man, that fear grips the heart, leaving a dreadful feeling of unrest and insecurity.

Never in our lives do we need faith and perfect trust in God more than we need it today. Men seem to have lost faith in God, and evil and vice abound. What a vivid picture St. Paul paints of the men of today, when he declares that they would wax worse and worse; that in the last days trying times should come, for men would be lovers of self, money-lovers, boasters, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, accusers, without self-control, ferocious, rash, self-conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than God, having a form of piety but denying the power thereof; and from all such he exhorts us to turn away.

O, the blessedness and peace that reigns in the heart of the children of God, who look to the Father with the faith of a little child, never doubting that the Divine hand that has supplied the wants of today, will also provide the needs of tomorrow! As the mother runs to the aid of her sick child, even so, God will come quickly to the aid of those who call upon Him, and His best gifts are to those who have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. Our Saviour teaches this lesson. When He was with His disciples on the lake of Galilee, a storm arose, lashing the waves to fury; and in the midst of the tempest the boat had sprung a leak and the disciples were in great peril. In fear and dismay they ran to our Saviour and found Him sleeping peacefully. They awakened Him, saying, "Master, Master, we perish." Then, arising, He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and there was a great calm. And He said unto them, "Where is your faith?" In this case the disciples' fear was caused by a want of faith. Had they had perfect faith in their Master, they, too, could have slept peacefully and would have known no fear.

The Psalmist gives us a splendid pen picture of that storm in the words, "They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths. They reel and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the

Lord in their trouble and He delivers them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still” (Psa. 107:23-29). It may be that our Saviour had previously been discussing these powerful words of the Psalmist, and to try the effect of His teachings and to test their faith had permitted the rising of the storm. Even so it is today, amid all the gathering gloom and the banking of the storm clouds, when men stagger and reel under the power of the Divine hand.

Although the storms are of a different character, they are purposely sent by God to try our faith, and to see if we have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. O, if we could only have that sweet love and trust in God, which even little children teach us every day by their confiding faith in us.

We see many instances where our Lord tested His disciples and gave them warnings. After Peter had made his avowal of love, our Lord had warned him that he would deny Him, and we all know the result. Jesus, revealing Himself to St. Paul on the road to Damascus, told him plainly that he would suffer many things for His Name’s sake. And as we follow the Apostle Paul in all his wanderings, we see him buffeted from pillar to post, and treated by some as the scum of the earth. We follow him to prison, and in depths oft, five times he received forty stripes save one, thrice he was beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, in perils often, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, and yet, in spite of all this formidable list of fears and sufferings he counts them all as light afflictions. So real was his faith, so great his love and loyalty to his Master, that fear could find no place in that noble heart. We realise that the many things he suffered acted as the chisel of persecution that shaped that noble character into a gem of loveliness, which has so endeared him to all believers.

As we look back over the mist of years and recall the wondrous words of the Apostle which have shed a halo of glory around the cross of Christ, reaching numberless hearts, stimulating and comforting, and leaving an impression which is the reflex of Christ’s glorious character, let us step forward bravely and courageously into the future, and “fear not.”

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## **Christ’s Spirit of Comfort and His Second Presence.**

THERE appears to be a difficulty with some I to discern the difference between the Lord’s being with His Church throughout the Gospel Age, and His presence as Lord of the Harvest at the end of the Age—His parousia—unseen by man and discerned only by the eye of faith, as the signs of His presence are observable.

The Lord Jesus has certainly been with His suffering saints ever since Pentecost. He has so closely identified Himself with the members of His Body that He said to the man who went “breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples,” “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” “For by one spirit we are all baptised into one Body. All made to drink into one spirit” (1 Cor. 12), so that Christ is represented in His Body-members on earth, in whom the holy spirit operates. “He who receiveth you receiveth Me, and he who receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.” These have the privilege of suffering with Christ, of filling up the afflictions of Christ which are left over, so that *we* might be dead with Him and so might live with Him.

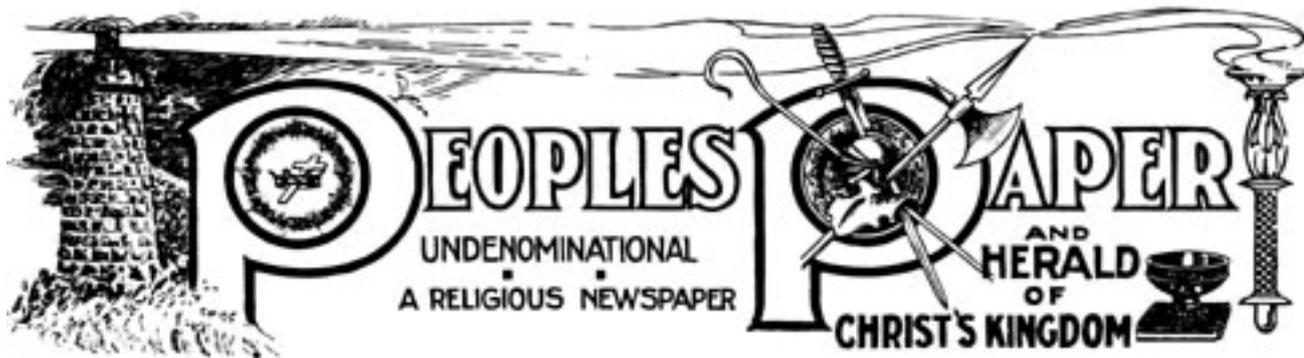
Our Lord is represented in Rev. 1:13, and 2:1, as “He that walketh amidst the candlesticks” and as being thoroughly acquainted with the varied conditions and circumstances of His Church—“I know thy works.” He is ever with His people in their trials, and renders aid by His spirit, through the Word of God, and through His people, sending comfort and strength in time of need.

This was His promise when taking leave of the disciples—“I will not leave you comfortless. I will pray the Father and He shall give you another comforter that may abide with you for ever.” “He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” “But the Comforter—the holy spirit which the Father will send in My name—shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” “But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall testify of Me.”—John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26.

It is in this way that the Lord has been with His people, sustaining them in trial, adversity, persecution and distress, by bringing to their remembrance His love, His care, His interest in their progress, and the many exceeding great and precious promises of grace to help.

As the young nobleman in the parable, our Lord went to a far country, to the heavenly courts, to receive the Kingdom, and then to return, to come again and receive His Church unto Himself, that where He is there they may be also. Then He will take His great power and order righteousness and peace in the earth.





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## **The Binding of Satan.**

THE vision of the conflict between good and evil in the Book of Revelation comes at length to a time when a mighty angel is seen descending from heaven with a great chain in his hands, and having arrived on earth he takes forcible hold of the great red dragon which alone survives of the enemies of righteousness, binds him with a chain, casts him into the abyss, and seals the entrance with the sign of Divine authority that the nations should be deceived no more throughout the thousand years—the Millennium. Ardent longing for that day has led many to watch earnestly the signs of the times, and the questions “Is Satan now bound? Is he in process of being bound? Is he yet to be bound?” are common.

What is this binding? Quite evidently it is closely connected with the restraint of evil which is a feature of the Millennial Age. Revelation 20:1 indicates clearly that its fulfilment is at the commencement of that Age. This does not necessarily mean, though, that the binding must take place simultaneously with the commencement of the Second Advent. The dragon of Rev. 20 is apparently the last enemy of righteousness to be dealt with after the other great enemies, the “Beast” and the “False Prophet” have been cast into the Lake of Fire. Now, since Rev. 19 dealing with the warfare between the Rider on the white horse and these two enemies, is evidently a phase of the Second Advent, the binding of the great red dragon, coming next in order, would seem to belong to a later phase of that Advent. That binding also coincides with the commencement of the reign of the saints, and since that reign does not commence until the saints have been “changed” and the marriage has been completed, and the Lord must return “for” His saints before the marriage feast and His subsequent revelation to the world “with” His saints, it would seem clear that the “binding of Satan” is to occur after all these things, at the time of the establishment of Christ’s kingdom in power in the earth. That time has not yet come.

From that time onward, the practice of evil shall be restrained. “Nothing shall hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain.” (Isa. 11:9.) Men will not be prevented from thinking evil thoughts or harbouring evil desires; some will yield “feigned obedience” (Psa. 18:44, marg.); but the power to inflict evil or harm, physical, mental or moral, upon another will be lost. We do not know how. Divine power will be exercised here in a fashion of which we have little, if any, conception today. But it will be true that although a man may formulate an intention to do evil to another, he will find himself physically or mentally powerless to put that intention into effect. That restraint will operate throughout the Millennial Age.

A little thought suggests that the same restraint must of necessity be placed upon Satan. He must be rendered powerless to influence the minds of men by evil suggestions. Hence the “binding of Satan” will be a restraint upon his power, at present enjoyed by Divine permission, of instilling evil thoughts and influences into the minds of men. His personal freedom of movement need not be limited any more than is the personal freedom of evilly disposed men on earth during that Age, but he will find himself quite powerless to reach men’s minds in any way.

A glance at daily events should make it clear that the binding of Satan has not yet taken place, and is not yet even in progress. The powers of evil have greater control today in earth’s affairs than they have ever had, except, perhaps, in the early days at the period of the Deluge. Many of the devices and acts of certain classes of men are characterised by a cold-blooded ferocity and disregard for human suffering which can quite literally be said to be devil-inspired. The fearful experiences through which so many of earth’s peoples must pass today are evidences that the archangel of evil is still the god of this world, and that his subjects still render him service. It is sometimes suggested that these facts are the results of Satan’s struggles to resist his binding, and are evidences therefore that the binding is actually in progress, but this idea is built upon a purely human conception of the binding, as though the Most High God finds it necessary to wage war and use the heavenly equivalent of physical force to achieve His end of rendering Satan powerless. Nothing of the sort, God is always master of the situation, and when in His wisdom the time comes for Satan to be bound and his influence to be restrained, one word from the Almighty and it will be done. It will not require battalions of angels drawn up in martial array, archangels in command of detachments and some spiritual equivalent of carnal weapons, with which to wage an invisible conflict with the hosts of Satan in the fashion in which fallen man wages war, today.

Against this view it is sometimes argued that the 12th chapter of Revelation does contain a very vivid description

of war in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting with the devil and his angels, resulting in the devil being cast out of heaven to the earth, and that this surely constitutes a detailed description of the binding or partial binding of Satan at the end of this Age.

It is suggested in this connection that Revelation 12 has nothing in common with Revelation 20, except that the same red dragon is a figure in the symbolism. The time of fulfilment of Rev. 12 is clearly much earlier than the end of the Gospel Age—the anal verses show that much, the picture closing with the dragon going forth to make war with the remnant of the woman's seed, which is quite opposite to the idea of binding and restriction. Whatever the teaching behind this symbolism of war in heaven between Michael and the dragon, it has no connection with the descent of the angel to bind Satan at the commencement of the thousand years. By some this vision in Rev. 12 has been made the basis of a view of the "binding" which declares that at some specified time in history the Lord Jesus Christ did engage in combat with Satan and expel him from heaven, in consequence of which the latter has come down to earth and is continuing the warfare against his opponent with this earth as the battleground. Whilst this view springs from a very sincere desire to explain the apocalyptic imagery of the Scriptures in terms of present-day events and expectations, it is none the less a form of interpretation which debases rather than enhances our understanding of the spiritual world to which we aspire and which we hope one day to enter. And Christians who believe in the propriety of war and conflict between spiritual beings for the suppression of evil forces can hardly complain if the powers of this world demand similar services in earthly armies, for the principle is the same.

It is important to realise that God is omnipotent. "He spake, and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast." Although He allows His ends to be achieved by means of orderly development, "first the grain, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear," and although He permits the continuance of evil up to a predetermined limit for a wise purpose, yet -when God's time to act against evil and evildoers has come, there is none that can resist His will. The fortunes of war—in earthly or spiritual realm—have no place in the Divine order. He brought the evil of the antediluvian world to an end instantly without calling upon the help of Noah. He destroyed the Cities of the Plain without using His heavenly messengers other than to convey the news to Abraham of what He himself was about to do. When the hosts of this world converge upon the Holy Land in the last great day of trouble it is to be God Himself, alone, who will act. As in the days of Jehoshaphat, "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle"; "For the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chron. 20:15-17). So with the binding of Satan. The vision is a picture of the power of God operating from the seat of His government to end, in one instant of time, every scrap of power and influence Satan may possess over men and spirit.

But, one may ask, is it not likely that Satan foresees this catastrophe, and is making preparations to resist his fate; and does this not imply something very much like war between him and the forces which will effect his binding? It may very reasonably be asked in reply whether Satan, a fallen being separated from God by millenniums of sin, really believes in his heart that he will be bound.

Consider man. Men today, in general, do not believe in God. They have lost this knowledge of God, and with it any vital belief in the power or at least the care of God. How common it is to hear—"If God does exist, He either does not care or has not the power to alter things, or He would have done so and put the world right long ago." That sentiment fairly expresses the considered judgment of the natural man who has been separated from God's presence by sin for many thousands of years.

Yet man at the beginning knew God, walked with God, talked with God, and believed in the power of God. That is clear from the Genesis story. What has wrought the difference? The separation wrought by sin! "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over . . ." (Rom. 1:28.) So that today man does not believe that God can or will put things right!

Is it not reasonable to think that the same principle must hold good in the case of Satan? He, too, had the privilege of knowing God, walking with Him, talking with Him, and appreciating His mighty power. He, too, fell into sin, and since nothing that is of sin can stand in the Divine Presence, he, too, from that day must have been banished, separated from God just as truly as was Adam. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil!" For thousands of years, then, Satan has been as far from God as has man, and through all that time has enjoyed full liberty to work out his evil designs. It is true he witnessed the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and knew that He at least had escaped his power—but it is in the highest degree unlikely that Satan has any nearer access to the resurrected Christ than has man, and two thousand years have passed since the Lord passed out of man's, and Satan's ken into the heaven of heavens from which He had come. Would it be surprising therefore, if Satan, like man, blinded by sin, has concluded that God cannot or will not complete His work on earth, and that Satan's rebellion will, therefore, continue its apparently successful course?

If this be the right conclusion, the great enemy of man will be busy with his plans, continuing still to wage war against all that is holy and true and lovely on earth, unbelieving until the hour has struck. In the heyday of his power, attendant angels carrying out his dark orders, men on earth busy about his fallen designs, the cry of his suffering prisoners going up to heaven, his powers will vanish as one snaps off the electric light. Like a certain modern dictator whose edifice of twenty years vanished overnight, he will stand bereft of power, of influence, of servants, of an empire—alone. Too late he will realise that the omnipotence of God has waited for this moment; that right has prevailed, and as the shades of the abyss close around him he will enter into the terrible solitude of an evil mind left entirely alone with its evil.

Can one picture that lonely spirit through all the thousand years of earth's jubilee? Free to roam through the vast spaces of God's creation; free to observe, to meditate, to scheme, but powerless to affect or influence in any way

the mind or the heart of the weakest or humblest of God's creatures. A being apart, seeing all, hearing all, unable to interfere. The seal of Divine authority marks him out and sets him apart like Cain—an outcast, an exile, one upon whom is the judgment of God.

Perchance his presence will linger around this earth until the knowledge of man's happiness under the Messianic kingdom, and the renovation of the once desolate earth, becomes unendurable, and drives him off to far recesses of our universe, where, other worlds in the making, other instances of Divine creative energy, recall to his dark mind the earlier history of our own planet when, a happy and righteous being, he may have been one of the morning stars who "sang together" (Job 38:7). He may translate himself from this material universe which glitters around us every night into that spiritual sphere which is beyond the scope of human sense or understanding, and wander through the celestial land as alone and as remote from the presence and the knowledge of God as when he presided over earth's destinies. He may come back, out of eternity into our realm of time and space, to find the thousand years of restitution still in progress ; but wherever he goes and whatever he does, Satan will be bound, altogether unable to interfere further in the plans of God for His creation.

Of the loosing again at the end of the Age we cannot write ; we know so little. It would seem that the thousand years of opportunity does not profit the Evil One, for a time is to come, when, freed from the restraints for a "little season," he attempts once more to deceive and enslave humanity. There is apparently no repentance, nothing but an irrevocable determination to fight against God.

And that determination, in God's due time, brings about the only possible sequel. "I will bring' thee to ashes upon the earth . . . and never shalt thou be any more." (Ezek. 28: 18,19.) (From "Bible Students Monthly"-1944.)

*The right temperature is maintained in the home by warm hearts and not hot heads.*

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## Convention News.

THOSE who were privileged to meet together at the Easter Convention in Adelaide received a rich blessing from the Lord. It is always good to meet together with those of "like precious faith," and we found the four days of fellowship a very happy and blessed occasion. True to His promise the Lord was "in the midst," and the blessing of His gracious spirit was much in evidence in the hearts of His people.

It was a pleasure to welcome to our Convention a number of brethren and sisters from Victoria, and one sister from Perth, W.A.; also a brother from a country centre in S.A.

The portions of Scripture chosen for our Bible Studies were much appreciated and proved helpful and profitable; these were as follows—Eph. 1 :3-10; Psa. 37:1-11 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 1-8, and Rev. 20:1-6.

The topics of the addresses given by various brethren were "The Kindness, Humility and Patience of Love"; "Children of the Promise"; "Paul's Conversion and After"; "Let This Mind be in You"; "Blood Atonement was Necessary"; "Will We Know Our Loved Ones in the Resurrection Day ?"; "Heirs of God", "At the Turning of an Age," and "Retrospection."

The hour devoted to "Hymns We Like and Why" was well spent, and so also was the time taken for the Praise and Testimony session. It was a pleasure to receive messages of Greeting from Classes and individual brethren, and at the close of the Convention the greeting sent to the brethren is found in Psa. 37:3-7.

The Convention closed with the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love," and "God be with you till we meet again," followed by the closing prayer of thanks and praise to God for all blessings received. So ended another very profitable and blessed Convention. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

## Memorial Observances

### Melbourne.

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered to observe the Memorial of Christ's death on the anniversary of its institution, in response to our Lord's request that this celebration be continued throughout the Gospel Age. The attendance was very good, though some members were hindered from attending by sickness and other causes.

Preceding the Memorial two studies in John 12:20-28 were very helpful in impressing the full devotion of our Lord Jesus to the will of His Heavenly Father. At no time did He consider any deviation from the supreme purpose for which He came into the world—to give His life a ransom for the fallen human race. While so doing, He also commenced the calling of a band of disciples to walk in His steps of sacrifice during this Gospel Age, as He declared—"If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." (John 12:26.)

It was a solemn remembrance as the appropriate hymns were sung, the prayers were offered up to God and the Scripture readings covered the eventful and tragic last hours of our Lord's life on earth. The address also brought clearly to our attention the great condescension of our Lord Jesus in becoming the "Lamb of God" to take away the sin

of the world, special emphasis being made of the favoured position of the “church of the firstborns” who are privileged to keep this Memorial, not only in remembrance of Christ’s sacrifice, but also as signifying their willingness to suffer with Him, if so be that they may reign with Him.

The emblems, picturing our Lord’s broken body and shed blood, were partaken of with thankful hearts for the gift of our dear Redeemer, and with prayer that our loving Father in heaven may bless and sustain all His dear children world-wide as they seek to “keep the feast” throughout the earthly pilgrimage, to His praise and by His grace.

### **Geelong, Vic.**

A small group of friends met together, as in previous years, to again obey our Lord’s request—“This do in remembrance of me.” With the knowledge of what was accomplished that night so long ago, there is everything to rejoice the heart of the Christian—Hallelujah! What a Saviour. However, as we gather on such occasion to remember and meditate upon the cost to our dear Lord, it is becoming that we meet with solemnity.

Four suitable hymns were sung, prayer was offered, and Scripture passages were read. One brother conducted the meeting generally while three others shared the readings from Psalm 22 and Matt. 27:27-50, and another gave the discourse preceding the partaking of the emblems. In the discourse we were reminded that we have not yet “resisted unto blood striving against sin” and of the constant need to “consider him.” (Heb. 12: 3,4.) Surely we discern from our Lord’s words to His disciples, just prior to the culmination of His great sacrifice, and as they are enlarged upon in the Apostolic writings, that it is the “inner circle” of those who appreciate His ransom sacrifice who are especially precious to Him just now—those who see the privilege of “sharing” His experiences, both now and in the kingdom.

In a pre-memorial study in John 12 we saw the “corn of wheat falling into the ground” to bring forth a fruitage in due time, to be a beautiful illustration. Surely it is a privilege to be “planted together in the likeness of his death,” and know already that we have been raised “to newness of life.” Just as the grain of wheat is not actually dead when sown, but continues to house and nourish the life of the plant until it assimilates its own life from the soil, so our “old man” is sown unto death, though still housing the “new creature” walking in newness of life. When our consecration “to be dead with him” is consummated in actual death of the human, the Lord will raise us up too with new bodies to share His glory. May we never forget the throne of grace to renew our strength, that we may come off conquerors through Him that loved us and gave His life for us, to participate with Him in the joy of drinking the cup anew with Him in the kingdom.

### **Adelaide.**

In accordance with our Saviour’s request, “Do this in remembrance of me,” the Adelaide Class kept the Memorial of Christ’s death.

This service is always a blessed one because it reminds us that all our hopes of future life and blessing are dependent upon the ransom sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It also becomes an occasion to revive and renew our consecration to be dead with Christ. Only if we “suffer with him shall we reign with him”; only if we “be dead with Christ shall we live with him.”

When we consider the great love of God which prompted Him to give His only-begotten Son for our redemption, and also when we think of Christ’s great love which endured the cross and despised the shame, we feel constrained to bend before Him in love and adoration, and we say in the words of the Psalmist —“What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?”

Gladly we yield our hearts to Him in grateful appreciation, realising that we are not our own, but we belong to Christ. We want to be found “abiding in Him” more trustfully, and allowing Him to “abide in us” more fully, so that we may daily grow into His blessed likeness. “Thanks be to God, for His unspeakable Gift.”

### **Perth.**

A group of ten brethren gathered together on the evening of the 3rd of April, to remember our Lord’s death and admonition to partake of the emblems as He showed the apostles.

With appropriate hymns and an address we had our minds exercised in that great sacrifice of our Lord’s, culminating at Calvary. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13.) “Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.” Our Lord’s sacrificial offering was perfect, satisfying God’s justice, but when our Lord invites His followers to sacrifice with Him they realise the grace by which they stand, and wish that their offering were not so small.

By the service we realised again what it is to be “dead with Christ,” and that our sacrifice must be on the altar at all times, never to be taken back. May we be ever ready to have our bodies presented as living • sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service.

### **Sydney.**

Although the largest city in Australia the attendance was not large ; however, it was a privilege indeed to attend the Memorial Service held in Sydney.

The reading of suitable Scripture by the chairman and a lucid address by another brother contributed to the solemnity of the occasion.

Several brethren travelled long distances to be present, and doubtless were well repaid, as with others present they meditated upon the antitypical Lamb whose sacrificial death will deliver the “groaning creation” from their pitiable plight.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,

And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;  
And counting present life and all things loss,  
We find in death to self the life of God.

## Queensland

The Lord, through His goodness and mercy, gave us strength to travel 127 miles to hold this sacred feast with our brethren. There were eleven of us who took the emblems, two brethren conducting the service. We used a special tape recording for the talk on the Memorial that was received from the "Dawn" and which was enjoyed by all. In the afternoon we played a tape on "God's Great Gift", or as Paul puts it, "God's unspeakable Gift." It is a wonderful talk and just the thing to direct our thoughts to what was to take place at night.

## Pilgrim Way Ended.

Word has been received of the passing of our elderly Sister Haynes of Christchurch, New Zealand, some weeks ago, after having been laid aside for some months with a dread disease.

Our dear Sister Haynes had corresponded for many years, having appreciated the truth for at least thirty years, and had first been contacted through our late Brother Nicholson during one of his pilgrim visits to New Zealand.

Sister Haynes gave evidence of a truly Christian life, having developed largely of the Christian graces, and while somewhat isolated in New Zealand was always cheerful and ready to serve the cause of truth at every opportunity.

In recent years our Sister Haynes had resided at a nursing home, and when unable to write herself had received assistance in doing this, so that she may continue to assist in the work, as unto the Lord. With the trials and pains of the earthly way in the past, we can rejoice that our dear Sister Haynes will have entered into her reward, by the Lord's *grace*. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death (daily dying) of his saints." (Psa. 116:15.)

### "Rest in the Lord."

"If Thou art mine, Eternal God,  
Let fraud or malice, storm or flood,  
Bear all besides away.  
The soul's best treasure lies too deep  
For spoiler's arm or fortune's sweep,  
Or time's more sure decay!

"Death, that all meaner bliss destroys,  
And if his stroke can sever  
Robs not the spirit of its joys,  
The fleshly zeal, 'tis but to bring  
The living waters from their spring,  
And bid them gush for ever."  
—Selected.

## Pleasing God.

(Convention Address)

IN the natural world if one loves other persons or has high regard for them, there is always a desire to please them. We observe the same with a child and its parents; when love is genuine there is always a desire to please. Conversely, we notice how children will often shrink from strangers. A person may try all kinds of persuasion to gain a young child's confidence, but until it has learned something of the person, has gotten to know their manner etc., it will exhibit varying degrees of aloofness.

There is a kind of creed taught in the professing churches that "all men are brothers, and that all are children of God," but that is not so, as yet. We can look forward to the day when it will be true, but many changes will need to occur. Proportionally few people now regard God as their loving Heavenly Father and seek to please Him. A somewhat greater number may regard Him as the great supreme Being and seek to pay allegiance to Him, but it could hardly be said that they are motivated by love. They seek to serve Him and hope to please Him because they fear certain consequences to themselves if they do not. These are well described in Isa. 29:13 as people who draw near the Lord with their mouths; the lips honor Him but the heart is far from Him. The verse further reveals that this condition of feigned worship arises from false philosophies taught by men whom the following verses imply ought to have known better.

Further verses in Isa. 29, as well as other passages in God's Word, suggest that He looks down with a certain amount of pitying regard upon those who are wrongly taught regarding His character, and in verses 14-19 of this same chapter they go on to tell how, after the Lord has caused upheavals that will uncover the falsity of man-made theories and doctrines, men will have their ears and eyes opened so that in a general way they will rejoice in the Lord as they had never done before, verse 24 showing that then, those who had previously erred shall come to a proper understanding.

The result will be, that, beginning to know the true God, men will desire to please Him as never before—to please Him because they love Him, not because they fear Him. That will be a wonderful time, the culmination of God's purpose or plan to reveal His great love to men, evidenced in the sending of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, in two advents, to be their Redeemer and Deliverer.

More particularly, now, let us consider those who have learned about the true God during this age, the noble ones who have cleaved to God's Word, doing resolute battle with the forces of evil, and who are able to attest God's faithfulness in assisting them in their struggles, so that the light of Truth has continued, and is continuing to shine more and more for them each day. We have learned to love God; to love Him so much that our daily, yea, hourly desire is to please Him. We have tasted (merely tasted) the blessedness of fellowship with Him when we have done the things that please Him; it has whetted our appetite and we yearn to please Him more and more that our fellowship with Him may deepen and increase.

How can we best please Him? In Heb. 11:6 we read, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Whatever else may be needed, this is an essential requirement. This chapter of Hebrews is one long narration of how the ancient worthies exercised faith in God, and how Christians were meant to be profited by their examples. As the Apostle says, in Heb. 12:1, that they are a great cloud of witnesses to us.

Let us refer briefly to one of them. Read Heb. 11:24,25. We remember how Moses was miraculously spared when Pharaoh's decree went out to destroy all male infants. He was brought up as the son of the daughter of Pharaoh in a position of luxury in the king's palace. During his childhood, youth, and young manhood he would want for nothing. He was in a position to receive the very best education that it was possible for one of that time to have, and being a very capable and sensible young man Moses seems to have availed himself of it to the utmost. Josephus, the historian, says of Moses—"He was a man of extraordinary mental powers, and quickness of apprehension." His outstanding education is summed up in a few words in Acts 7:22.

Heb. 11:24 takes up the story at a period "when Moses was come to years"—about 40 years of age. What lay before him in the way of worldly advancement we can only imagine; the adopted son of the king's own daughter, he doubtless could have had a high position of state, a life of ease and luxury, with wealth untold. He refused it all and threw in his lot with the despised, down-trodden people of God—his own countrymen by actual birth. He knew that trial and danger, want and care might follow his course; that it meant the sacrifice of all the honor and comfort he enjoyed in the king's court. He was not driven away from royal circles and its aggrandisements, he deliberately chose to leave because he loved his God and His righteousness and the people who were the friends of God. He believed that this God would supply all his need once he elected to serve Him.

How does our faith measure to the test in this our day? Can we learn any lessons from Moses? If we are true Christians, endeavoring to learn of, and follow Jesus, close watching unto prayer, and are diligent students of God's Word, we will sooner or later be apprised of "present truth," i.e., truth particularly revealed by God for His people in the last days of this Gospel Age.

This truth will reveal denominationalism, with all its conflicting creeds etc., for what it really is—Babylon—and we will be required to make a choice. If we stop in Babylon we can enjoy its emoluments of the hour—social standing, many friendships, luxurious appointments, etc., for Babylon is not lacking in a worldly way; verily, she is rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing (Rev. 3:17.) But if we see Babylon as the Lord sees her (Rev. 18:2,3) and heed His voice to come out of her (verse 4), what will be our lot on earth? Will it not be similar to that of Moses—trials, hardships, dangers, persecution, scorn? It will mean identifying ourselves with a despised people. Instead of a stately cathedral to worship in, we will likely find the bare boards of some upstairs room.

Here we would quote what one has said of Moses—"Moses deliberately made his choice, and in all the trials which succeeded it; in all the cares he shouldered as a result of it; in all the ingratitude and rebellion of his people as he led them towards the Promised Land, he never once wished himself back enjoying 'the pleasures of sin' in Egypt."

We would ask, Has any Christian, coming to the knowledge of truth and acting upon it in faith in these last days, repented of throwing in their lot with the Lord and His people? No, indeed! Each of these has learned to say with the psalmist—"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psa. 84:10.) Not that the initial step of faith is all that is necessary; like Moses, situations will repeatedly arise calling for the exercise of faith, and like him we must endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

According to scholars, the literal rendering of Heb. 11:27 is—"For he looked away from that which was before his eyes toward the reward." In other words, we are to look away or beyond our present circumstances and conditions to that which is to be—to exercise faith in what God has told us.

Paul expressed the matter another way, saying we should count any hardships as light afflictions which are only momentary in the working out of eternal glory. If Moses had chosen the court of the Egyptian king, its honor and glory according to worldly standards could have endured at the best for this short life only. He chose instead present worldly disadvantage, and has secured the "better resurrection" which will bring satisfying life forever.

What of our reward; does not God's Word testify that He has prepared some better thing still, for as (Heb. 11:40) ? Yes, the spiritual reward must be a wonderful one. As the Apostle John expressed it—"It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." That is a wonderful thought—"we shall be like him." John goes on to say (1 John 3:3), that every man that has this hope in him, purifieth himself, so that he may be truly like Jesus.

Undoubtedly this pleases God more than anything, that we become like Jesus, for that means becoming like God

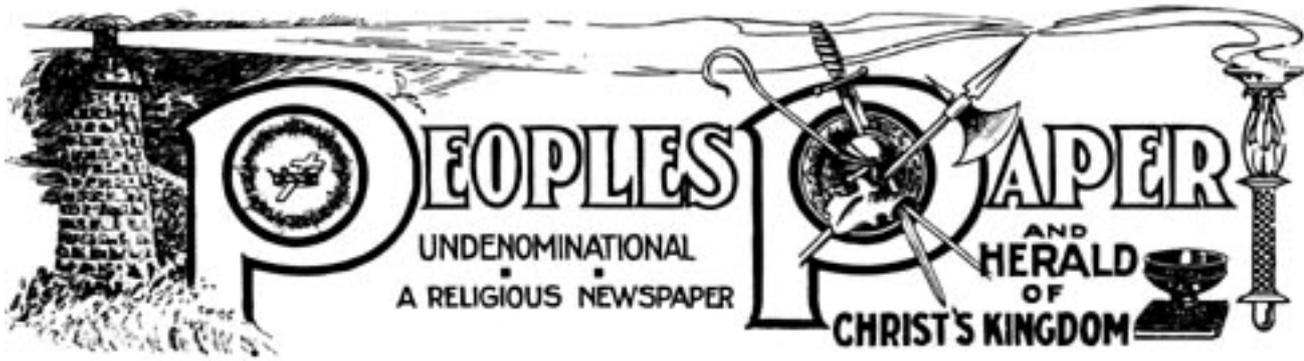
Himself. No man has seen God at any time, but Jesus declared Him or manifested forth God's true character. We Christians who live now, have not seen Jesus either, but from His recorded life and teachings, and from the examples of those who followed Him, and particularly as all this is made real to us by the power of God's holy spirit, we do know Him.

There are many Scriptures that tell of the great reward that Christians will receive; of reigning with Christ as kings ; of joint heirship with Him in a wonderful rule; of crowns to be worn ; of clothing of kingly array; of cities with streets of gold and so on—symbols no doubt to illustrate to terrestrial minds the King and the kingdom's glory. However, none of these things enthuse so much as the thought and desire simply to become like Jesus. To be able more and more to put away the earthly, fleshly traits that mar the image of His likeness in us — fleshly desire, the selfish spirit, the hasty temper, the ill-considered word, impatience, and love of this world's empty glories—and instead, find these replaced with an ever increasing godliness and contentment, this is the only "gain" worth seeking. Can anything be compared to it; the truly spiritual mind knows that there is nothing. "O, happy Zion; what a favored lot is thine." Verily, we can say with the Apostle Paul that "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

Why do we love Him so much and preach His name so enthusiastically ? Because as Paul answers in the next verse (2 Cor. 4:6) "God . . . hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." To become like Christ, therefore, is to become God-like. There is not one of the divine perfections which is not revealed in Jesus. If the divine character is to be seen at all, it is to be seen in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. Did not Jesus so explain it to one who asked Him, "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus replied (how we can rejoice in its meaning), "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also ; and from henceforth ye know him,"—simply because it would be impossible to know Jesus and not know the Father. Verily, how true were Jesus' words—"I am the way, the truth and the life."

How full are the Apostle's words in 1 Thes, 4:1, 3. "We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus ... how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more . . . . For this is the will of God (that which pleases Him above all else) even your sanctification." God-likeness in the absolute is not possible this side of the veil, but the Scripture teaches that we can approach unto it more and more; that seems definitely to be the Apostle's intimation when he said—"That I might know him and the power of his resurrection." Our resurrection life begins on earth, and will be consummated in heaven, when we shall be partakers of the divine nature itself. (Phil. 3:10; 2 Pet. 1:4.)

The thought of rewards to a truly spiritual mind is not like the earthly ; we find no special delight in anticipating power to rule for its own sake ; our joy will be in being with Jesus and made fully like Him, assured that whatever work we perform, when thus associated with Him, will be so God-like as to satisfy us to the full, nothing more could we then desire; we will be pleasing Him in entirety. Finite minds cannot gauge the immensity of the rewards of joy in having part in bringing the whole human family to a knowledge of the glory of the Lord, and seeing the majority of men respond to the desire to live and walk pleasing to God.



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## **A Voice Behind Thee.**

*(Isa. 30 :19-21)*

(Convention Address)

ALTHOUGH the words of our text were addressed to natural Israel and apply to the time when their long season of chastisement shall be at an end, nevertheless, there are helpful lessons here for spiritual Israel also.

We are glad there is to be a highway opened up for Israel, and for all mankind, the dead and the living. There is no such highway now; the way given to Christians now is a narrow way, beset by many foes ; but the reward at the end of the narrow way is so much grander, leading to joint-heirship in the Millennial Kingdom.

The highway is a public thoroughfare. In Isa. 2:2 we read—"All nations shall flow unto it." Verse 3—"And many people shall say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." In Rev. 21 this government is described as a city. The city is represented as having one street only—a public thoroughfare—a highway. There is one way only to eternal life, and Jesus said, "I am the way." We often hear people say, "All the various denominations lead to the same place," but the Scriptures do not support this wishful thinking.

As a body of consecrated people of the Lord we also are indeed favoured with a wonderful, comforting hope—a spiritual hope—and standing in a position from which vantage point we may look back over our past Christian experience and say with the Apostle Paul—"Now is our salvation nearer than when we (first) believed." (Rom. 13:11.) We can say also with David—"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." (Psa. 23:6.)

We are convinced that the Lord has been, and still is, fulfilling His many promises of His Word to us, and for all who love Him in sincerity and truth. He is still faithfully guiding and instructing us in the way we should go; the voice from behind us is like a father walking behind his children, saying—"This is the way, walk ye in it"—not the other way, the popular way.

It is the voice of wise counsel and the kindly tone of it has arrested our attention and given us quiet and contented assurance. So David has said of his own experience—"Thy gentleness hath made me great." (Psa. 18:35.) Not great from the standpoint of this world and its attainments—philosophy, or possessions, or worldly learning; colleges and universities do not afford the education required for the development of God's elect.

By God's grace we have made a better choice, and experienced the enlightening and transforming power of God's holy spirit. We are disciples of Christ, learning in His school; we have heard the voice from behind us saying—"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; let not the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment (justice R.S.V.) and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." (Jer. 9 :23,24.)

We can glory that we know Him from this standpoint; once we did not know Him in this light. He has favoured us with a knowledge of His Plan of the Ages, formed in the anointed Jesus our Lord. We now see therein the exercise of His loving kindness, justice, righteousness, power and wisdom. These qualities will be more fully displayed in the age to come, when every eye shall discern them,— "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:10,11.)

These qualities have appealed to us now, and so the Apostle Paul says—"The goodness of God leadeth us to repentance." (Rom.2 :4.). Also the Apostle Peter declared that "God has appealed to us by his glorious perfections." (2 Pet. 1:3, Weymouth and Diaglott). David also testifies to the perfection of God's law, when he stated—"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart ; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." (Psa. 19:7-11.) This is indeed the right way—"Walk ye in it." These instructions are profitable unto godliness.

Nevertheless, there are many strange voices calling from the right and from the left; these have come down to us through the ages and past dispensations; these had their beginning in the Garden of Eden, as recorded in Genesis 3. In verse 8 of this chapter our first parents “heard the voice of God walking in the garden,” and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of God. No doubt they were accustomed to this voice; it was fellowship to them, for it was the voice of their Benefactor. But why did they hide themselves on this occasion from the presence of the Lord? Fear had entered their hearts; fear had its *beginning* there, and has plagued mankind ever since, and very acutely in these latter days.

Why did Adam and his wife hide themselves; why were they fearful? They had heard and taken the advice of a strange voice in the garden—the voice of the adversary, contradicting the voice of the Lord God. This strange voice said, “Ye shall not surely die, if ye partake of the forbidden fruit.” (Gen. 3:4, 5.) This is where the first lie was told, the first murder committed. Jesus reveals the character of the adversary in John 8:44. He says—“He was a murderer from the beginning (brought about the death of our first parents), and abode not in the truth (this implies he was once in the truth), because there is no truth in him (*suggests* total depravity). When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh **Ills**, own; for he is a liar, and the father of it.

But the naked truth is manifest everywhere, as is stated in Gen. 2 :17—“In the day thou eatest thereof (of the forbidden tree) thou shalt surely die.” The plain truth is that death reigns over all, and this is painfully manifest everywhere. Satan, back there, laid the foundation of the false theory, the immortality of the soul—“Ye shall not die,”—and later he added to this the doctrine of eternal torment; for, it is implied, immortal souls must live on somewhere. Satan, back there, laid the foundation of all future errors, misrepresentations, false doctrines opposed to the Scriptures and misrepresenting the character of the Creator.

Today, after about 6000 years since that contradicting voice uttered that lie, nearly all Christendom and all heathen nations believe there is no death, but life continues on after the body dies, they say. Strictly speaking, the body does not die. We speak of many inanimate things and say they perish, become useless; our garments perish, we do not say they die; the body returns to dust (perishes) from whence it was taken. Even though the body can be preserved, and recently human bodies were discovered in freezing temperatures in good condition, and had been so for a considerable time, yet in warm temperatures these would perish. However, no one would say that those bodies died, but the persons died, represented by the bodies. It was the union of the prepared body with the breath of life that produced the sentient being, the living soul.

The Lord did not address the body but the living soul, or being He had made when He declared — “In the day thou (Adam), eatest thereof (disobey my command) thou shalt surely die.” The living soul, Adam, in due time ceased to exist. “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” (Ezek. 18:4) Adam was a soul; the Lord did not put a soul within him, as many people seem to think, and so the Apostle Paul understood it—“As it is written, (he refers to the Genesis’ account for the record of man’s origin). The first man Adam was made a living soul.” (1 Cor. 15:45.) “Man became a soul”—Gen. 2:7.

“The wages of sin is death” is the declaration of the voice behind us. This has never been disproved ; Adam was not threatened with eternal torment if he disobeyed. No, Satan appears as a teacher of truth and tries to prove that life continues after death. For the wicked this would mean life in torment forever, according to this erroneous teaching, but the doctrine of eternal torment does not lead to repentance; nevertheless, this error is preached, and in spite of this threat wickedness and irreverence has increased alarmingly, as can be seen by the daily newspapers. errors, wrong teachings concerning the Creator do not sanctify; only the truth of the Scriptures can sanctify the life, and Satan knows this. He does not want people united to the Creator ; neither does he want people to appreciate the benevolent character of the Creator. Through this one act of disobedience on the part of Adam, sorrow, evil, pain, sin and death entered, and was permitted by the Creator for a wise purpose for a limited time, and upon this tiny planet, our earth.

The voice behind us has also told us how the Creator will remedy this, and He is working according to His plan formed before the foundation of human society. His foreknowledge. enabled Him to plan in advance, and from time to time in various ages and dispensations He has communicated His purpose to such as have had faith and obedience. “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant.” (Psa. 25 :14; Amos 3:7.) The things written aforetime were written for our learning, and we are able to discern that the majority of the prophecies are fulfilling, with a few yet to be fulfilled.

The voice of prophecy is behind us. Its voice has become clearer and more distinct; through the enlightening influence of the holy spirit we see more clearly the outcome of the present distress of nations, and its relationship to the second advent ; both events go together—the second advent of Christ is the cause of the present distress of nations.

The prophetic voice predicted clearly all the events connected with the Lord’s first advent. It was the voice of prophecy, the voice behind the New ‘Testament writers, which enabled them to see Jesus’ birth, mission, miracles, His betrayal, His arrest, the manner of His trial and the nature of His death and resurrection as the means of identifying Him with the prophecies—to recognise Jesus as truly their Messiah, the Son of God. To them, at that time, the Old Testament Scriptures were very much up to date, even though these predictions concerning Jesus’ first advent were recorded hundreds of years before. The light travelling down the ages shone upon this advent ; the voice spoke and the light clarified.

This same voice still speaks clearly and truthfully to us today; the light reveals and shineth more and more unto the perfect day. A few students of the Scriptures, godly men, have lived ahead of their generation ; one of these who wrote about eighty years ago foresaw the things we are witnessing today in the distress of nations—the present perilous times and end of the age. He was at that time referred to scoffingly as a prophet of woe. Living and preaching ahead

of the times he was much misunderstood and persecuted by the generation then living, but his opponents' booklets written in opposition to his teachings make strange reading today, now that we are witnessing events he foresaw in the prophecies pertaining to the end of the age.

As late as 1913 the Paris Peace Conference went down in history as a World Peace Conference, and later still, in 1920, the League of Nations was hailed in some quarters as "the political expression of God's Kingdom on earth." These events, it was said, made it almost impossible for one nation to go to war against another. Still later, in 1928, there was the Kellogg Peace Pact and still more recently it was announced "Peace for our time" — but this was short lived. Now we have the Atlantic Pact, but all these fail to bring about peace and security. But the light shining down the ages is focused upon our day, the end of the age, and the voice behind us announces — "Then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time ; no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." (Matt. 24:21, 22.)

Godly men have heard the voice of prophecy in advance of the majority of people, and have announced its message and its implications. The prophetic voice of the inspired Word of God is still very much up to date; events are rapidly coming to pass, one upon another. The voice behind us, the voice of prophecy and the voice of woe are more meaningful today than ever—not peace and safety, but destruction is announced—and now mankind is truly fearful of it.

Some of these prophecies are a thousand and more years old. Take one as an example --Daniel 12:1-4 "At that time shall Michael stand up and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time.....Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." This prophecy is approximately 2550 years old. He would be a foolish man who would venture to say that there is no evidence of fulfilment. It is the increase of light and knowledge that brings about the trouble with which this age closes.

This voice of prophecy concerning our day began fulfilling about 100 years in the past though not so distinct then as 'nowadays. Nevertheless, it was heard in the distance, in the end of the 19th century; it has now become louder, and mankind seem to sense the possibility of destruction. A piece of history may illustrate this. During the Indian Mutiny in 1857, at the siege of Lucknow, when the few British in India were attacked by Indians many were massacred ; a remnant held out in the town of Lucknow, but the position became hopeless. A Scottish girl among them had a dream; she heard a sound which others could not hear—the sound of bagpipes of the Scottish Regiment approaching in the distance. "Can ye no hear them?" she said. "The bagpipes, can ye no hear them? the Campbells are coming." Sure enough later they arrived and great was the joy.

For several decades the end of the age has been announced ; some have heard the announcement and recognised the signs of the end, but the majority of professing Christians are dull of hearing. The announcement was not that the end was coming, but that we are already in the end, and are now approaching the final climax. A few all over the world have heard the glad tidings of the near approach of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, and dissolution of the old order is under way. The voice of Scripture has in our day become nearer and louder. Zeph. 1 :14 states—"The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord : the mighty men shall cry there bitterly."

The second advent of Christ and the end of this evil dispensation are being announced ; signs of the second advent of Christ are present, as we read in Luke 21 :26—"Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken." This has meant an increase of joy and gladness to the defenders of the faith. Luke 21 :31—"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

To others it is the voice of alarm. Joel 2:1-3 reads — "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain ; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them." This prophecy reminds us of similar words from the Apostle Paul in 1 Thes. 5 :3—"Sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall not escape."

The voice of prophecy is behind us in the sense that these things were predicted hundreds of years ago; nevertheless, it is very much up to date. Its warning is very clear—"This is the way, walk ye, in it," i.e., take heed to its light. Zephaniah 2:3 gives sound advice, —"Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

Those who do stand on higher ground are represented in the Scriptures as standing upon a sea of glass mingled with fire (with judgments). Read Rev. 15:2-4. The spiritual • vision of those who have gotten the victory over the beast and his image (counterfeit Christianity) is very clear as to the events transpiring in the world today and the final outcome. These are standing at the very end of this age and looking beyond to the glorious Millennial Day—the light shineth more and more unto that perfect day. The celestial city is in view, as the poet has stated it:

"Come all ye saints to Pisgah's mountain,  
Come see the view beyond the tide;  
Millennial Canaan is before us,  
Soon we'll sing on the other side."

Here in Rev. 15 these are represented as having their harps, i.e., the Word of God, and they sing the song of Moses,

and the song of the Lamb—the harmony of the Law and the prophets and the Gospel—saying, “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty  
..... Thou art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgements are made manifest.”

## **Passover Memorial, 1958**

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, agreeing exactly with the Easter season this year. While the Lord did not request that the Remembrance of His death be kept on the exact date each anniversary, the brethren arrange their services as near as possible, in keeping with the spirit and sacredness of the occasion.

### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne —Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Thursday, 3rd April, at 8 p.m., at 100 Harbourne Street, Wembley, W.A.

Sydney.-Thursday, 3rd April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

## **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

This announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren are to hold their usual Convention this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 4th to April 7th, in the Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends who may be able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

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## **Wholesome Counsel.**

*(Prov. 16:22, 23).*

*“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Prov. 16 :25.*

IT is a solemn warning against self-deception —against pursuing a course of conduct which is radically wrong, being opposed to the spirit and intent of the divine law, and yet which may be made to seem right by a line of false reasoning, suggested by the will of the flesh, and apparently founded upon the Word of God, yet denying its fundamental principles of righteousness. The delusions of Satan also greatly help along such deceptions, and thus the blinded one is urged along in a course which seems to him to be right, but the end of which is death.

Christians should above all things guard themselves against the folly of this way. To do this, let us ever remember that, even though through Christ we have a reckoned standing of justification before God, the human heart which we still have is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17: 9), and that it requires constant watching and purging to enable us to put into practice the Apostle Paul's rule, “In simplicity and godly sincerity, have your conversation in the world.” (2 Con 1 :12). To do this requires humility, sobriety, godliness. If the heart be puffed up with pride, or ambitious for vain glory, or if it be selfish, or in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world, then beware, for there is great danger of getting into that way that seemeth right to a man, because blinded by his own perverse will or fleshly mind.

The best safeguard which a Christian can have against the snares of Satan, is that understanding which is here (vs. 22) described as a “well-spring of life unto him that hath it.” Such understanding is not merely that of the head, but of the heart. specially; for, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness,” and “out of the heart are the issues of life.” If the heart be wrong, the head will seek to justify it, and in so doing will pervert judgment and truth. Therefore, take heed, and “keep thy heart with all diligence.”

Not only will the “wise and understanding heart” keep the feet in the paths of righteousness, but also “the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips” (verse 23), so that he shall speak forth “words of truth and soberness,” words of wisdom, of kindness and of love. How important that the fountain should be sweet, that thus the stream that issues from it may be healthful and refreshing to all within the range of its current! Truly, “pleasant words (of wisdom, of counsel and of loving kindness) are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones (in that they refresh and comfort and stimulate courage, and thus fortify the soul and strengthen it to noble deeds).” Verse 24.

How different is the picture of the ungodly man! (verses 27-29). “An ungodly man diggeth up evil (apparently finding a morbid satisfaction in searching for it), and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife, and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good. He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips, he bringeth evil to pass.” Thus, as Isaiah says, “The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” (Isa. 57:20, 21.)

But blessed is the man that hath learned the right ways of the Lord, and walketh therein with a perfect heart. Such a

one, unlike the wicked, who go about digging up evil, delights himself in doing good, and in speaking forth the words of truth and soberness. He is slow to anger, and studies carefully how to rule his own spirit, which is surely a great work and worthy of the ambition and effort of every Christian. (verse 32.) How blessed (verse 31) are the closing years of a long life, devoted to this most worthy end of ruling one's own spirit in harmony with the principles and precepts of the Word of God, when, as Mr. Whittier has beautifully expressed it :—

“All the jarring notes of life  
Seem blending in a psalm,  
And all the angles of the strife  
Are rounding into calm;”

and when the hallowed influences of ripened Christian graces are manifest to every beholder. Truly “the hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness.” But if not, it is but a monument of folly and its ripened evil fruitage is most undesirable.

The statement of verse 33 is to the effect that God's overruling power takes cognizance of even those things which men may regard as mere chance, and that nothing can come to pass without His knowledge and permission, and that eventually all things will be overruled to the accomplishment of His purposes.

## **Pilgrim Way Ended.**

Towards the close of February our dear elderly Sister Blaby of Melbourne finished the pilgrim way after a long life in appreciation of the Lord's wonderful plan of salvation through the sacrifice of our dear Saviour.

Our Sister Blaby had lived in the country of Victoria for a considerable time, and after coming to Melbourne to live with her daughter and family for the past sixteen or more years our dear Sister had not contacted many of the brethren on account of being a semi-invalid. However those who knew her best can testify to her gentle and loving disposition, and sincere appreciation of the truths of God's Word.

Though having reached the age of 961 years and the earthly vessel becoming weary and worn out, yet there was the same spirit of devotion and patient submission to the Lord in evidence, and which was lovely to see. While almost too weak to speak in the last days of the earthly life, the words — “Our Father” — gave evidence of the hope and trust our dear Sister held of being taken “Home” to be forever with the Lord.

Sincere sympathy is extended to all the bereaved members in the family circle as the life of a devoted ‘Christian mother, grandmother and great grandmother is brought to a close, and the words of the prophet seem so fitting in these days of the harvest of the Gospel Age—”They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” (Mal. 3:17.)

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*A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.—Prov. 29:23.*

A humble heart is a vessel of all graces. It doth better the soul and make it holy, for the soul is never fitter for God than when it is humbled. It is a fundamental grace that gives strength to all other graces. So much humility, so much grace ; for, according to the measure of humiliation is the measure of other graces, because a humble heart hath in it a spiritual emptiness. Humility emptieth the heart for God to fill it. If the heart be emptied of temporal things, then it must needs be filled with spiritual things; for nature abhorreth emptiness, grace much more.—Sibbes.

## **Building-Praying—Keeping**

*(Jude 20, 21).*

*(Convention Address)*

THIS text from the Apostle Jude conveys an idea which is common among the New Testament writers. It is used by Paul and also by Peter. This great and important work of gaining a character similar to that of Christ's is likened to the work of producing a building. When the construction of a vast building is planned, a great deal of care and attention must be given to the foundation. Sometimes great concrete pillars are required and they go down to the solid rock, in some cases many feet below ground level. This is necessary to support the great weight of the building.

Now, our building has a firm foundation. (1 Cor. 3:9-11.) Yes, faith in the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus Christ is all-important. Then we must see to it that our faith is of the right kind. We must have a faith like that of our father Abraham. We must have an obedient faith—a faith which leads on to full and complete surrender of heart and mind to God. (Eph. 1:13.)

Our Lord said that those who heard His words, and obeyed them not, may be likened to a man who built his house upon the sand, a building which will not withstand the strain and testings. How different is the case of the man who hears the Master's words and exercises obedient faith in them. (Matt. 7:24-27.) He is likened to a man who builds upon the rock foundation. “On Christ the solid rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.” The Apostle Peter makes it very clear that this matter of building refers to the development in ourselves of a Christ-like character. (See 2 Pet. 1:5-7, Rev. Ver.)

The development or building up of the Christ-like character in the members of the body of Christ is a very important work. It requires nearly 2,000 years to accomplish this great work of changing the warped and marred, and more or less ignoble and selfish hearts and minds of the believers into the pure, unselfish, lovely and lovable qualities which

are displayed in the glorious Head of the Body of Christ. Of course, as far as the individual members are concerned, this great work of transforming or building up a Christ-like character must take place within the limits of one's lifetime; it may be 10 or 20 years, or even 60 or 70 years, as the case may be.

The building up of the Christ-like character in the New Creation is said by Paul to be the work of God. (See Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13; 1 Cor. 3:9.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is said to be the "beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14.) Our Heavenly Father is the supreme Architect of the Universe, but in the accomplishment of His gracious designs He is pleased to use various agencies. The Heavenly Father's chief agent in the development of the church is His well-beloved and only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. By His faithfulness in taking man's nature, and laying down His life in sacrifice, even unto the cruel death of the cross, our gracious Redeemer has gained the privilege to be Head of the New Creation: He is also the grand Example provided by the Father as a pattern for His body members. (Eph. 1:20-23 ; 2 :20-22.)

As God's Foreman, or right-hand man, our Lord Jesus has a very special relationship toward the New Creation as a whole, and toward each member in particular. (See Eph. 5:23.) Christ is the Head of the church, being Himself the Saviour of the Body. (Verses 25-27.) God also has other means which He is using to build up the Body of Christ. (See Eph. 4:11-16.) Here we have a list of agencies which God is using in His work of building up His New Creation. (See also Eph. 4:4-6.)

In 1 Cor. 12:12-27 the Apostle shows that all the various members of the Body need each other. It will not do •for one member to say to another—"I do not need your help." The hand cannot say to the foot, "I have no need of you." All Christians have frailties and weaknesses of the flesh, but, notwithstanding these, the Lord has graciously covered the defects and imperfections with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and made us scented in the Beloved. God loves His children because He sees in our hearts the desire to do His will. He sent His Son to die for us, even while we were yet sinners. (See Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4-10; 1 John 4:7-12.) If God so loved us, we ought to love one another. In 2 Thes. 3 :5 Paul prays that the Lord may direct our hearts into the love of God. We surely need divine help to direct our hearts into an understanding and appreciation of this great love of God.

The Scriptures show that the church is God's "workmanship"; she is God's building, God's "temple." This is true of the collective aspect; then it is true also that each individual member is a "temple of the holy spirit." (1 Cor. 6:19.) There is a work of preparation to be done in each individual member of the New Creation, and the Apostle Paul shows that we each have the privilege of co-operating with God in this matter. (See Phil. 2:12.) Yes, with God's help, and *by His* grace, and under the direction and guidance of His holy spirit through the Word, we are to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," i.e., with great carefulness. We are to be very careful to see that our efforts are in line with the directions of God's Word. (See 2 Pet. 1:5-7.)

Let us keep in mind the word of wisdom in Psa. 127. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." What an amount of wisdom, patience, faith, love and humility of heart and mind is required, and we find we get the necessary lessons and disciplines in our day by day experiences. How much waiting on God is needed to bring us into line with the requirements of the great Divine Architect. It surely takes time and much of the Lord's grace to develop in our hearts the meekness and gentleness and Christ-like love necessary to qualify us to become associates of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our text speaks of "praying in the holy spirit," and it may truly be said that there can be no real, proper building of Christ-like character without prayer. Prayer is one of those God-given privileges designed to assist the pilgrims in the narrow way. Almost the last command given by our Lord to His disciples was—"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." (Matt. 26:41.) Again He said in Luke 18 :1-8—"Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Our Lord's example provides us with a very forcible lesson along this line. He was a man of prayer, and let us remember, too, that He was an absolutely perfect Man. He had an absolutely perfect mind and heart; He also enjoyed the fulness of God's holy spirit, yet He saw the need of spending much time alone with God.

Our Lord gave His disciples some directions concerning prayer. (See Matt. 6:5-15.) Also in Matt. 7:7-11 Christ urged His disciples to earnest perseverance in prayer. Note the-thrice repeated exhortation — "ask," "seek," and "knock." Observe how He uses words which mean almost the same thing, and each time repeats the promise so distinctly,— "Ye shall receive; ye shall find; it shall be opened unto you." Our Lord desires that we grasp this lesson — "Everyone that asketh receiveth." Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give the holy spirit to those who ask than are earthly parents to give good things to their children. (See Luke 11:13.)

In Mark 11:24 we have another encouraging exhortation from the Master, — "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." In order that our prayers shall be acceptable to God, we must come before Him with reverence — "Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name." Our first thought is to be not a selfish one concerning our own or other's need, but "Thy Name, Thy Kingdom, Thy will be done." Then follows the requests for supplies, for mercy and grace, and protection and guidance, etc. For our prayers to be acceptable to God they must be to His glory, in full surrender to His will, in full assurance of faith, in the name of Jesus and with earnest perseverance.

Our Lord gave us some very important and definite promises in respect of prayer. (See John 14:13,14; 15:7,16; 16:23,24,26,27.) In regard to these wonderful promises of our Lord, we need to keep in mind that they are made to His disciples ; we should say, to His fully consecrated footstep followers. These, having submitted their own wills to God, and having accepted the guidance of His holy spirit, have learned that there are certain blessings which the Lord is willing to bestow upon us. In this connection, see John 5:14, 15.

Our prayers to be acceptable to God must express reverence for Him, and submission to His will. We must be

abiding in Christ, and our prayers must be offered in full assurance of faith. (See Heb. 11 :6.) Then when the answer seems to tarry, we must have perseverance; for a lesson in perseverance see our Lord's words in Luke 18:1-8. We must not allow the seeming delay in the answer to our prayers to cause us to lose faith ; the very delay helps to exercise our faith and patience, and makes the answer more sweet and precious.

The Apostle Paul, in his beautiful letters to the various churches, has recorded some fine examples of prayer. (See Eph. 3:14-21; Col. 1 :9-11 ; 1 Thes. 3 :9-13; 2 Thes. 1 :11-13.) Then, this grand servant of God, the great Apostle Paul, shows his humility and lowliness of mind when he earnestly requests the brethren to remember him in their prayers. (See Rom. 15 :30, Eph. 6 :18, 19; Col. 4 :2-4 ; 2 Thes. 3:1,2.) It seems impossible to over-estimate the value and importance of prayer. Let us remember the Apostle's injunction to—"Pray without ceasing." We can keep our hearts in the attitude of prayer, and cultivate an attitude of mind which is dependent upon the Lord. (See Phil. 4:6.)

As we give earnest heed to the Scriptural injunction to "build ourselves up in our most holy faith," and make full use of our privileges of prayer, we will find that this very exercise will tend, by God's grace, to "keep us" in the "love of God." As children of God we do want to have more of the true spirit of sonship. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Example and Elder Brother, said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." We want to have a larger measure of the spirit of Christ, the spirit of sonship, the spirit of willing obedience. We have some wonderful promises from our Lord in John 14:21,23; also John 15:10. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," etc. Here we see that the spirit of obedience is necessary in order to the enjoyment of the love of God and Christ.

In this connection let us look at our Lord's words in Matt. 5:43-45. Our Lord tells us to "love our enemies, and do good to them that hate us that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Also in 1 Pet. 1 :14 we are urged "as obedient children" to co-operate with the Lord in exercising ourselves in the ways of holiness, in all our manner of life.. Again in Eph. 5:1,2 we have the exhortation to be "followers of God, as dear children," etc.

The latter part of Jude 21 has these words—"looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." If we would enjoy the blessing of mercy from the Lord, we will need to cultivate and exercise this quality in all our intercourse with our brethren and with our fellow creatures in the world around us. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (See also Col. 3:12-14; Phil. 2:1,2; also "Manna" text and comment December 14.)

May the Lord help us and bless us each one and prosper the work of His grace in our hearts, and cause us "to increase and abound in love, one toward another, and toward all men," that thus we may be developed in all the graces of His spirit and "be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

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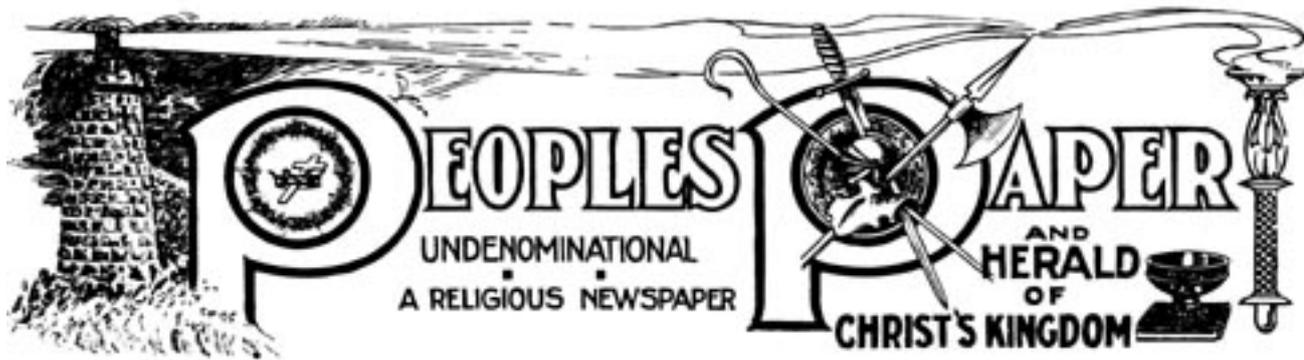
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## **In Remembrance of Christ.**

EACH year, as the Anniversary of our Lord's death recurs, the propriety of its commemoration is more and more impressed upon the Lord's true followers, as they particularly bring to mind the Master's own words at the institution of the Memorial, and such as written by the inspired Apostle—"Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us."

Various Scriptures clearly show that Jesus, "the Lamb of God," was the antitype of the Passover lamb, and that His death was as essential to the deliverance of "the Church of the first-born" from death, as was the death of the typical lamb to the first-born of Israel. Thus, led of the spirit, we come to the words and acts of Jesus at the last Passover, which He ate with His disciples.

Jesus knew the import of the Passover, but the disciples knew not. He was alone; none could sympathise, none could encourage Him. Even had He explained to the disciples they could not have understood or appreciated His explanation, because they were not yet begotten of the spirit. Nor could they be thus begotten until justified from Adamic sin—passed over, or reckoned free from sin, by virtue of the slain Lamb, whose shed blood ransomed them from the power of death.

Thus alone, treading the narrow way, which none before had trod, and in which He is our Forerunner and Leader, what wonder that His heart at times was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. When the hour had come, they sat down to eat the Passover and Jesus said unto His disciples:—"With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." (Luke 22:15, 16). Doubtless He longed to have them understand how it would begin to be fulfilled a little later on in that very day, by the slaying of the real Lamb.

Probably one reason why He specially desired to eat this Passover with them was, that He there designed breaking the truth of its significance to them to the extent that they could receive it; for, "As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave to them and said, Take (eat), this is my body." (Mark 14:22). "This is My body, which is given for you: This do in remembrance of Me." "And He took the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves . . . This cup is the new covenant, in My blood, which is shed for you." Luke 22: 17-20.

We cannot doubt that the design of the Master was to call their minds from the typical lamb to Himself, the antitype, and to show them that it would be no longer proper to observe a feature of the Law which He was about to fulfil. And the bread and wine were to be to them thereafter the elements which, as remembrancers of Him, would take the place of the typical lamb. Thus considered, there is force in His words, "This do in remembrance of Me"—no longer kill a literal lamb in remembrance of a typical deliverance, but instead, use the bread and wine, representatives of my flesh and life, the basis of the real deliverance, the real passing over. Hence, let as many as receive Me and My words henceforth, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

### **The Import of the Emblems.**

Of the bread, Jesus said:—"It is My flesh:" that is, it represents His flesh, His humanity, which was broken or sacrificed for us. Unless He had sacrificed Himself for us, we could never have had a resurrection from death, to future life as He said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man . . . ye have no life in you." John 6:53.

Not only was the breaking of Jesus' body thus to provide bread of life, of which if a man eat he shall never die, but it also opened the "narrow way" to life, and broke or unsealed and gave us access to the truth, as an aid to walk the narrow way, which leads to life. And thus we see that it was the breaking of Him who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Hence, when we eat of the broken loaf, we should realise that had He not died—been broken for us—we should never have been able to come to the Father, but would have remained forever under the curse of Adamic sin and in the bondage of death.

Further, the bread was unleavened. Leaven is corruption, an element of decay, hence a type of sin, and the decay and death which sin works in mankind. So, then, this symbol declares that Jesus was free from sin, a Lamb without spot or blemish, "holy, harmless, undefiled." Had Jesus been of Adamic stock, had He received the life principle in

the usual way from an earthly father, He too, would have been leavened, as are all other men, by Adamic sin ; but His life came unblemished from a higher heavenly nature, changed to earthly conditions, hence He is called the bread from heaven.—John 6:41. Let us then appreciate the bread as pure, unleavened, and so let us eat of Him ; eating and digesting truth, and especially this truth ; appropriating by faith His righteousness to ourselves we realise Him as both the way and the life.

The Apostle, by divine revelation, communicates to us a further meaning in this remembrancer. He shows that not only did the loaf represent Jesus, individually, but that after we have partaken thus of Him (after we have been justified by appropriating His righteousness), we may, by consecration, be associated with Him as parts of one loaf (one body) to be broken for, and in a like manner, to become food for the world (1 Cor. 10:16). This same thought, of our privilege as justified believers to share now in the sufferings and death of Christ, and thus become joint-heirs with Him of future glories, and associates in the work of blessing and giving life to all the families of the earth, is expressed by the Apostle repeatedly and under various figures; but when he compares the church as a whole to the “one loaf” now being broken, it furnishes a striking and forcible illustration of our union and fellowship with our Head.

He says, “Because there is one loaf we, the many (persons) are one body; for we all ‘partake of the one loaf.’” “The loaf which we break, is it not a participation of the body of the Anointed One?” 1 Cor. 10:16, 17.—Diaglott..

The wine represents the life given by Jesus, the sacrifice—the death. “This is My blood (symbol of life given up in death) of the new covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins” ; “Drink ye all of it.”—Matt. 26:27, 28.

It is by the giving up of His life as a ransom for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a right to life comes to men. (Rom. 5:18, 19). Jesus’ shed blood was the “ransom for all,” but His act of handing the cup to the disciples, and asking them to drink of it, was an invitation to them to become partakers of His sufferings, or, as Paul expresses it, to “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Co1.1 :24). “The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a participation of the blood (shed blood —death) of .he Anointed One?” (1 Cor. 10 :16.—Diaglott) . Would that all could realise the value of the cup, and could bless God for an opportunity of sharing it with Christ that we may be also glorified together.—Rom. 8 :17.

Jesus attaches this significance to the cup elsewhere, indicating that it is the cup of sacrifice, the death of our humanity. For instance, when asked by two disciples a promise of future glory in His throne, He answered them :—“Ye know not what ye ask; are ye able to drink of the cup I shall drink of ?” On their hearty avowal, He answered, “Ye shall indeed drink of my cup.” Wine is also a symbol of joy and invigoration: so we share Jesus’ joys in doing the Father’s will now, and shall share also His glories, honor and immortality—when we drink it new with Him in the Kingdom.

Let us then, dear brethren, as we surround the table to commemorate our Lord’s death, call to mind the deep significance of the Memorial; and being invigorated with His life, and strengthened by the living bread, let us drink with Him into His death and be broken in feeding others. “For if we be dead with Him we shall live with Him; if we suffer we shall also reign with Him.”-2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

“According to Thy gracious word,  
In meek humility  
This will I do, my dying Lord,  
I will remember Thee.  
Thy body, given for my sake,  
My bread from heaven shall be;  
Thy testamental cup I take,  
And thus remember Thee.  
When to the cross I turn mine eyes,  
And rest on Calvary,  
O, Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,  
I will remember Thee.”

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.  
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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

## Passover at First Advent.

THE question as to whether our Lord and 1 His disciples had kept the Jewish Passover on its usual date at the time Jesus instituted the Memorial of His death has exercised the minds of the Lord’s people for some considerable time.

From an article in the “Reprints” of 1901 the following is a quotation—“There can be no doubt from the account that our Lord and His disciples ate the Passover Supper on the day preceding the one on which the Jews in general ate it; for in John’s Gospel we read (John 18:28; 19:14) that when our Lord was before Pilate in the Judgment Hall, which was after He had eaten the Passover, the Pharisees, His accusers, had not yet eaten it—nor would they eat it until the

evening after His crucifixion.”

We may wonder why our Lord had eaten the Passover on that occasion a day earlier than the Jews in general, and while most Bible students have probably concluded that, it was for the purpose that He could fulfil the antitype of the Passover lamb on the exact day—becoming the Lamb of God on the 14th of Nisan—yet the particular details how this could have been accomplished have perhaps not been evident throughout the years.

Last year a series of articles appeared in a weekly publication from the pen of a Bible commentator, and these were brought to our attention by one of our friends. It is thought that the following extract offers a helpful and enlightening explanation of the celebration of the Passover on the year of our Lord’s sacrifice. The quotation is as follows:

“The Last Supper was taken on Thursday evening and the first three Gospels say that it was a celebration of the Passover. On this point they appear to conflict with John’s Gospel, which says that Passover eve was on the Friday—the actual day of the crucifixion.

“There is, in fact no conflict. When, as it sometimes did, the festival coincided with the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath—and it did so this year—it became a question of which was to be given priority, the Passover or the Sabbath.

“Another school of thought regarded the Passover as a public sacrifice, seeing that the festival was a national commemoration, and such sacrifices overruled the Sabbath law. So they would keep the Passover on its proper day, even if this was the eve of the Sabbath.

“Thus, at this fateful Passover, there was a slaying of ‘the lambs and eating of the Passover Supper on both Thursday and Friday, according to which authority was followed.

“Again we see the careful planning of Jesus, so that He would both keep the Passover with His disciples and also suffer the next day in the character of the Lamb of God.”

### **Passover Memorial, 1958**

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, agreeing exactly with the Easter season this year. While the Lord did not request that the Remembrance of His death be kept on the exact date each anniversary, the brethren arrange their services as near as possible, in keeping with the spirit and sacredness of the occasion.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early March, and please *state* the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth—Thursday 3rd April, at 8 p.m., at 100 Harbourne Street, Wembley, W.A.

Sydney.—Thursday, 3rd April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

*He wakeneth morning by morning. He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear.—Isaiah 50: 4, 5.*

Lord, in the stillness of the dawn  
Before’ the world breaks in  
To flood the mind with *its* concerns  
Its hurry and its din,  
Let me breathe deep of heavenly air,  
And may my inner ear  
The music of the heavenly land  
In all its sweetness, hear.

**Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).**—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these **books are** priced at 24/• post paid.

## **“The Man Christ Jesus” as Viewed by Unbelievers.**

THIS description of the Person of our Saviour appeared in the pages of “Peoples Paper” some years ago, but it is thought it will be of interest again, especially to new readers, as well as to those acquainted with it.

The following was taken from a manuscript now in possession of Lord Kelly, and in his library, and was copied from an original letter of Publius Lentullus at Rome. It being the usual custom of Roman Governors to inform the Senate and people of such material things as happened in their provinces, in the days of Tiberius Caesar, Publius Lentullus, President of Judea, wrote the following epistle to the Senate concerning our Saviour :—”There appeared in these our days, a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted for a Prophet of truth, but his own disciples call him the Son of God—he raiseth the dead and cureth all manner of

diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverend countenance, such as the beholders may both love and fear—his hair of the colour of chestnut full ripe, plain to the ears, whence downward, it is more orient and curling and wavering about his shoulders. In the midst of his head is a seam or partition in his hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead plain and very delicate ; his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a lovely red; his nose and mouth so formed as nothing can be reprehended ; his beard thickish, in colour like his hair—not very long but forked; his look innocent and mature, his eyes grey, clear, and quick. In reproving he is terrible ; in admonishing courteous and fair spoken, pleasant in conversation, mixed with gravity. It cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. In proportion of body, most excellent; his hands and arms most delicate to behold. In speaking, very temperate, modest, and wise. A man, for his singular beauty, surpassing the children of men.”

Not merely the devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have recognised His wisdom and grace, and noted that He was “filled with all the fulness of God,” but even His opponents recognised Him as far beyond the ordinary of our race, as we read, “And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” (Luke 4:22.) Others said, “Never man spake like this man.” (John 7:46.) And Pilate, loth to destroy the life of the noblest Jew he had ever seen, endeavoured, as a last resort, to placate the malevolence of the multitude, perceiving that it was instigated by the Scribes and Pharisees, who were envious and jealous of our Lord’s popularity. Pilate finally caused Jesus to be brought forth to face His accusers, evidently with the thought that a look upon His noble features would turn back their hatred and their malice. So presenting him, Pilate exclaimed, “Behold the Man !” with an emphasis on the words which is not apparent in our English translation, unless the word “the” be read with emphasis—”Behold THE man!” as though he would have said, “The man whom you are asking me to crucify is not only the Jew above all other Jews, but the Man above all other men.” And it was concerning our Lord’s manhood that John declares, “The Logos was made flesh . . . and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”—John 1:14; 19 :5.

And in this connection let us remember the oft-quoted and well-known eulogy of “The Son of the Man,” and His teachings, by Rousseau, the celebrated Frenchman, as follows :—

“How petty are the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the work of men? Can He whose life they tell be Himself no more than a man? Is there anything in His character of the enthusiast or the ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in His ways, what touching grace in His teachings! What a loftiness in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His words! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in His replies! What an empire over His passions! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die, without weakness, without display? My friends, men do not invent like this; and the facts respecting Socrates, which no one doubts, are not so well attested as those about Jesus. Those Jews could never have struck this tone or thought of this morality. And the Gospel has characteristics of truthfulness, so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that their inventors would be even more wonderful than He whom they portray.”

Surely the perfect man Christ Jesus, anointed with the spirit of the Highest, was so different from the imperfect race of which He took hold, for its redemption, that the world is certainly- excusable for questioning whether He was not more than a man. Assuredly He was more, much more than a mere man—much more than a sinful man; He was separate from sinners, and, as a perfect man, was the very image and likeness of the invisible God.

## “And Ananias Went His Way.”

(Convention Address)

THE chief design in this discourse is to stress the importance of the need the stronger ones have of the weaker. Indeed, all have need one of another, but the insignificant, those who may be more or less conscious of their shortcomings (and who among us is not?) are as necessary today as they were at the beginning of the age. As if the head could say of the feet, “I have no need of thee.” The weak and insignificant are always loud in their praises and need of the strong parts ; yes, these members are surely necessary, but Paul says these members which are thought to be more feeble are much more necessary. We can all take heart, then ; on the one hand, the strong “not thinking of himself more than he ought,” and the feeble not despising that very small, necessary part he is able to play.

Ananias questioned God’s wisdom when told he could be of assistance to one named Saul. Who was Ananias? One of those small, faithful members in Christ, ministering in a small way to a little band of believers. He had reason to question God’s direction. God reassured him that He could manage the lofty Saul, who was now a chosen vessel for Him, and now the Lord would say, “Ananias, go along and do this for me—Go thy way. Do not be over-concerned with Saul’s way.” We remember in this connection the case of Peter who was rebuked for his inquisitiveness, and told not to mind about John, but “Go thy way”.

“And Ananias went his way.” That which was apportioned to him he did. It was not beyond him, nor will it be beyond you to do God’s will. It may be you are a wife or mother, a husband or father, a servant, a nurse, a builder, a laborer or farmer, a secretary or senior executive, you in your place serving Christ, and you will come to the point where you can be not only faithful, but a blessing to others, that they in their turn will also bless others. “And Ananias went his way.” Let us aspire to no greater height than this, for it is the full measure of any Christian believer. He went his way; did as he was directed by the Lord. Let us be “faithful in little” before we can be faithful in much.

This account seems to gain more purpose if it is told backwards. Instead of beginning with Ananias and Saul, and

how Paul began his ministry after the baptism by Ananias, let us look briefly first at Paul. Paul, the Apostle, a special vessel chosen of God, to take the message of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Paul, the preacher, eloquence unsurpassed, commanding attention by all and sundry, from the peasant to the king. Agrippa complains, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Is there one among us who entertains the idea that he could be a preacher like Paul? He was a fluid linguist,— "more tongues than they all."

Paul, the missionary. The hardships, the endurance, the fortitude, the patience, the suffering, "flesh that had no rest, troubled on every side," shipwrecked, a night and a day in the deep, beaten with rods and the lash often, all kinds of perils, hungering and thirsting, covering on foot thousands of miles under the blazing sun, biting cold, working his way as he went. (Read 2 Cor. 11:22-33.) Does any one of us aspire to be a missionary like Paul?

Paul, the writer. What a wealth of matter in his epistles. Even his enemies acknowledged that his "letters were weighty." The secret of his success as a writer must be attributable to the ability to write, as he spoke, "with understanding." Rather than use thousands of words that could only cloud an issue he employed brevity with understanding. This was so successfully used that he could say of believers, that they "were his epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men." (2 Cor. 3:2.) Do you aspire to be a writer such as Paul?

When we at last see the height of his accomplishment, the extent of his endurance and suffering, the ability and faithfulness of this "chosen vessel" some may become discouraged. His was such a glaring example of ability and faithfulness that it would not surprise if some missed the main point of his ministry, that "the body is not one member, but many, and we being many, are members one of another." (Rom. 12:5.) The Apostle had his "off" moments, too; he needed fellowship and consolation the same as you and I. He needed reassurance—"God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforteth us by the coming of Titus." You will remember the good news that Titus brought back from Corinth, how they ministered unto him, and greatly desired to do the same to Paul.

Innumerable examples may be quoted how lives are linked with other lives. Some may limit the influence to those of like precious faith, but it is our desire to remind you how the lives of extreme difference were linked—Paul, sometimes known as Saul. Incidentally, if this gulf of difference was bridged in the one person why cannot it be bridged in separate people? The inference here is that we all are linked with other lives, sometimes not of our own choosing, like Saul and Ananias. And strangely enough, the lesser blesses the greater.

Have you ever considered the havoc and destruction this persecutor of the faith wrought among the Lord's disciples? We all know he was a prime mover for the death of Stephen. The Word records the conditions in Jerusalem at this time, that "There was great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, Stephen was slain, great lamentation was made over him. Saul was further incensed with the saints, and he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, haling men and women, committing them to prison." That is, those who remained in Jerusalem for reasons not given, who were unable to flee before this unmerited onslaught. Saul, suppressing the truth in his own heart, redoubled his fury against the suffering saints, scattering them abroad through neighboring regions.

The Apostle at a later date, in pleading his own cause, recounts some of the things he did contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. "Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, putting some to death; he punished them oft in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them he persecuted them to strange cities." (Act. 26:9-11.) Saul approached the High Priest for authority to hound the Christians down, which was promptly given to him. If you meditate for a moment here you will discover Saul had in his hands, in his own hands, authority that was vested only in the Sanhedrin.

Let us pause for a moment and look into any Christian home at Jerusalem at this time. The breadwinner, the wife, the children; men and women cast into prison; children being cared for by other friends until the persecutor brought them into the range of his persecutions. What shall we do? Those having been bruised and tasted of Saul's fury, beaten with rods, and remembering Stephen's fate, they knew what to do. "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into the next," was our Lord's own advice. Hastily packing what valuables or food such as could be carried by foot, the little band at Damascus was reinforced with these refugees, safe from this marauding tyrant, temporarily out of danger.

So they came to Damascus with what belongings they could carry, along with their bruises, aches and pains, which they were forced to carry. It was in this condition the church at Damascus received them. Worse was to come; news was brought that Saul had received this unthinkable commission. of being permitted to hunt them down and, if needs be, exterminate them. Ananias, who could have been an elder in the church, and his companions did not know of the incident on the road to Damascus; the incident that was to turn Saul into Paul. They did not know, they could not know, of this happening. All they knew was that Saul was on his way, exceedingly mad.

What would be your reaction if you were in such a predicament, awaiting with fear and trembling the arrival of the spoiler? What if you were asked to go along and do him a good turn? Is it, any wonder Ananias sought to be reassured 'that his ears had heard aright when he was told to go along to the house in which Saul was to be found, without doubt a house not friendly to the Christians? Was this not a cunning ruse on Saul's part to be introduced right into the inner circle of the Christians, that with one swoop he might bind them all with one blow? What a test there was on this quiet, humble, devout man. Do you, in all your ambition to be faithful to your calling, seek a bigger test than was Ananias' that day? He did not falter to the request of God, "Go thy way." As though God would say—Never mind about Saul; I have plans for him; My plan for you is to do this.

At this point, dear friends, we can apply the lesson for ourselves. Do not be overworried about God's arrangements for others; the chief thing is to find out what God has in mind for us. He has "set" you in a particular position; can you recognise this position? One thing is certain; He does not want us for Apostles. The twelve He chose as His inspired mouthpieces have done their work. Our task must be complementary to theirs. The high example these men set us is

worthy of our deepest admiration, but to aspire to such heights may bring disappointments, leading to frustration. Yet we can all be like Ananias. He went his way, faithful in that which was committed unto him. Could anyone do more? To do it will mean a full surrender of the heart you call your own. The Truth frees each one to be himself. The question we now ask is the same as Saul asked, the same as Ananias asked, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

When honest-hearted people ask this question they are quickly ushered into the presence of each other, as Saul and Ananias. Saul, with authority exceeding that of the High Priest himself, humbled to the dust. Ananias, with fear and trembling needs reassurance to encourage him and deliver him from the "fear of man which bringeth a snare." Determined in their own hearts to serve God, each needs the service and fellowship of one another. Ananias "laid his hands on Saul," embraced him as a brother, took him to his own house, baptized him into Christ, and prayed that Saul might be filled with the holy spirit. Could you aspire to greater heights of service than this? This can be your portion of the Christian ministry.

Was ever a faithful soul more obedient than Ananias? Many have been equally obedient to the heavenly vision. Saul was. Yet it is recorded in the Word that "Ananias went his way." To sink your will into Christ's will could also mean that you too, "went your way," or "She hath done what she could." Can anyone do more? This should inspire the meekest and the humblest of our number, as well as encourage and stimulate the "strong" ones as "members one of another."

After Damascus, after the laying on of hands of Ananias, we find the zealous Saul a changed man. As zealous as ever, but in a very different way- for a different cause. He began to preach Christ and to suffer himself the trials he so efficiently meted out to others. This did not deter him. The atmosphere of persecution in Damascus becomes so hot Saul is induced to leave and return to Jerusalem. (Act 9:26.)

The next contrast is interesting. The saints in Jerusalem, possibly some of whom had returned from Damascus, knew of the exploits of Saul, knew of the fellowship Ananias had extended; but with Saul's return to Jerusalem they could not bring themselves to receive him as a brother. He assayed to join himself to the disciples ; but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. In the face of good reports they believed not. In the face of evil reports, confirmed with evidences of the blows, Ananias believed God. The saints associated with Ananias were probably like those back in Jerusalem, like most of us, fearful and disbelieving, looking at the things that are seen, rather than the principles of righteousness that are unseen. Perhaps we need reassurance as Ananias did, as Jacob did, as many others did, and have continually been reassured by God that He has everything under control.

Look at the test on Jacob. The famine, of which Joseph prophesied in the revealing of the dream to Pharaoh, was getting worse and worse. Jacob had sent to Egypt for relief once; he was obliged to do so again, and after this second plea for help he was invited by Joseph to pack up and come to Egypt, where he would be cared for. What was this horrible doubt gnawing into Jacob's faith; so much so that, he needed to be reassured by God that this was His Will.

But was it God's will to lead Jacob out of the land promised to Abraham and his seed? Was it God's will to go into the land of the enemy? He would recall how Abraham went there and the resultant difficulties and embarrassment. He would recall how Isaac was on the point of going to Egypt, and he was restrained by the hand of God. (Gen.26:2.) And now did God intend Jacob to vacate the promised land with which were associated all the promises? It worried Jacob; he needed reassurance; Ananias needed reassurance; we need reassurance. The vision at Beersheba was given to Jacob. "Fear not . . ." (Gen. 46: 2-7.) With this reassurance Jacob was at rest ; he packed up all his belongings, and with all his families, cattle and goods, left the land of promise. The inference is plain. While we do not expect visions today, we can expect reassurance, and what is more, we get it. So many right down through the ages have received it; why not you or I? And this is it; as we look into the lives and faith of men like Saul and Ananias, who both went their ways, we may learn the lesson of being faithful in that which is committed to us.

Every life, in some way or another, is linked with another life. Indeed, it will be strange if many lives are not linked to yours, in some way or another. When both play their parts what a happy result. Think for one brief moment of the happiness that must have been Ananias' when, after he had baptized Saul, he could tell to others with added reassurance, the power of the truth—We now have in our ranks the lofty Saul. If this were possible, what cannot God do when He purposes a thing? If he does not purpose something we in our natural-mindedness may think would be nice, who are we to question God's wisdom? Let us learn from this account that God is able to work all things after the counsel of His own will, and has made every contingency for those things that seem to be harmful or oppose His will.

What HEIGHTS of rapture must Ananias have felt that day. Saul, what must have been his quiet and convincing conviction that day. How differently he now would view the believers. Since he had opposed them so violently, how gently he would act henceforth. What DEPTHS of love and compassion were now his.

Surely each and all can see the force of that blessed promise (after looking into Saul's and Ananias' life) that God will "work all things together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Do you love God, like Saul professed, in a tyrannical or opposing manner? You will be brought face to face with an Ananias.

Do you love God as did Ananias, seeking to please Him, needing to be reassured every so often? You may be needed to console such as Saul. Why should we grow weary or tired? It is neither a disgrace nor lack of faith to need reassurance; contrawise, it is a necessity. May God grant us the wisdom and strength, each and all of us, to go our way, that it may be written in faith and love, if not in ink, that we, too, went our way, just as did loving, faithful Ananias, for "Ananias went his way."

## Question Box'

*Question.—Will you kindly explain Heb : 12: 14, "Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." And Rev. 1: 7, "Every eye shall see him."*

Answer.—The Greek word from which the word "see" is translated is the same in both instances, as also in Matt. 5:8. It does not necessarily mean to see with the natural eye, but in each case would seem to refer rather to discernment of mind or to see by the eye of faith. It is the pure in heart, those with a single eye to God's glory, those who are not looking to build up some peculiar ideas of their own, but are desiring only the truth, these shall see God. They shall understand God, perceive His will and purpose and teachings. The Master has put it in other words : John 7:17, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

The apostle's exhortation in Hebrews 12: 14 is in line with this—"pursue peace and holiness" (sanctification), pure desire for God's will only; without this no one will be able to grasp the things of God, will not perceive His purpose or understand His teachings. This was an exhortation to the Church during this Gospel Age.

Rev. 1 : 7, speaks of the time when the Lord will come and command the obedience of the world of mankind. He will come in clouds of trouble which will make all men realise that a great change has taken place. They will come to see that Satan has been bound and that Christ is King over all the earth in that day. They will no more see Christ then, with the human eye, than they see Satan now, but they will perceive the prince of evil has been restrained and that the prince of righteousness and peace is in control. Jesus distinctly said, "The world seeth (that is with the natural eye) Me no more." (John 14: 19.).

*Question.—What is the Apostle's thought in 1 Thes. 5:23?*

Answer.—To quote from the writings of one: —The terms body, soul and spirit are figuratively used of the Church collectively. The Apostle says, "I pray God (that) your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This prayer must be understood to apply to the Church as a whole—the elect Church whose names are written in heaven. The true spirit has been preserved in the little flock. Its body is discernible today also, notwithstanding the multitude of tares that would hide as well as choke it. And its soul, its activity, its sentient being is in evidence everywhere, lifting up the standard for the people, of the cross, the ransom.

In no other way could we apply the Apostle's words ; for, however much people may differ respecting the preservation of the individual spirits and souls of the people addressed, all will agree that their bodies have not been preserved, but have returned to dust like those of others. Besides, the words body, soul and spirit are in the singular, not in the plural.

### **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

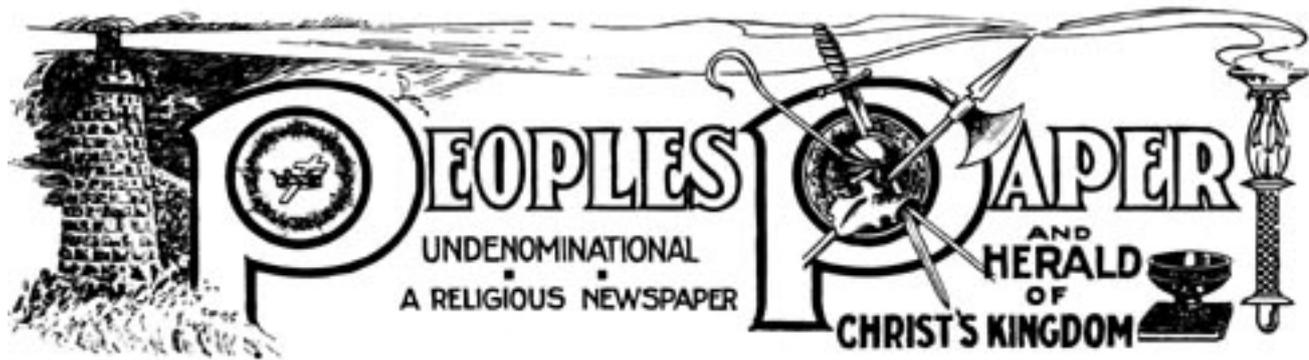
This announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren are to hold their usual Convention this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 4th to April 7th, in the Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends who may be able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

## **A HOLY LIFE.**

"Oh, for a life to please my God  
In every little thing,  
A holy life that day by day  
To Him will glory bring.

"A life lived only unto Him,  
No double aim in view;  
The outcome of a Christlike heart,  
By God made pure and true.

"Jesus, complete thy work in me,  
The work Thou hast begun.  
Each day may I grow more like Thee,  
Until my race is run." —Selected.



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**Price—Fivepence**

## **The Issues of Life.**

*“Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”—Prov. 4:23.*

WE realise that our heads need keeping, and some of us at one time might have been inclined to say, “Keep thy head with all diligence, in line with the doctrines of Christ, and thy heart will be all right, for God will keep it.” This, however, is a mistake. God has stated the matter correctly. We are not competent to keep our heads. We are competent and responsible for the keeping of our hearts. If we diligently keep, watch, guard our hearts from evil, and in full harmony with the divine Word and its spirit of the truth, righteousness, love, God will do the rest. He will guide our imperfect reasoning faculties, and we shall know His doctrines.

Keeping the heart signifies keeping guard over our sentiments. It signifies a critical inspection of every motive of life. Why do we speak? What is the object desired? Why do we do this, or not do that thing? Is the motive honourable, just, loving? Do we love righteousness? Do we hate iniquity? Is the love of God being more and more shed abroad in our hearts? Is it increasing God-ward, and man-ward, and towards the brethren? This is watching, “keeping our hearts,” and implies that if a selfish thought or motive or ambition be found lurking anywhere, or seeking to guide in act or word, it should be promptly expelled—that the heart may be pure, clean. Keeping the heart means also activities in love, benevolence, helpfulness and the cultivation of thoughts and sentiments in accord with the divine. It means not only the purifying of the heart, but the garnishing of it with the fruits and graces of holiness and love, that it may be acceptable to the Lord. So surely as injustice or sin or impurity is harboured to any extent, the heart is proportionately defiled and proportionately unacceptable to the Lord, and in the way leading towards repudiation by Him.

The words, “the issues of life,” would remind a lawyer of the fact that when a case is tried in court the jurors are sworn to do their duty in respect of the issue joined—the decision, to be reached. So all the Lord’s consecrated people are on trial. The issue has been joined. It means—(1) Life or death eternal; and (2) additionally to those who win life is another issue, namely, whether that life eternal shall be on the highest plane—of the divine nature and joint-heirship with Christ—or on the lower spirit plane of the great company—like unto the angels. Do we realise the issue joined in this trial, the outcome of which is so vital? If we do, and if we believe the Lord’s declaration that the issue or result will depend upon our heart condition, then we see a reason why we should use “all diligence” in keeping our hearts pure, sweet, tender, loving, “a copy, Lord, of thine.”

Once, when our eyes of understanding began to open and we discerned the length and breadth and height and depth of love divine, and the wonderful plan of salvation, we inclined to think that the number who would fail to attain life everlasting, either in this age or in the Millennium, would be a small number. We would even have inclined to the Universalist view that all would ultimately be saved, had it not been for certain texts of Scripture which clearly intimate that, according to the divine fore-knowledge, there would be some who would see the second death, as a result of the “sin unto death.” “There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye shall pray for it”—1 John 5:16.

But as we have become more and more familiar with the mind of the Lord as presented to us in His Word, we discern that none will be granted eternal life, except they shall attain a certain character development, and that that character development means not merely an outward loyalty and restraint from sin, but a heart loyalty and love for righteousness, and hatred towards iniquity. During the Millennium, outward perfection will be standard, yet ultimately in the end of that age, the heart development will be the test, which will determine who may go beyond to eternal life, and who may not.

The heart test may now be said to be the only one, because our flesh, justified, then consecrated to death, is not the new creature which hopes for glory, honour and immortality, but merely its imperfect servant or tool. The new creature’s heart or affections must be loyal to the very highest principles of justice and love, and, according to its development along these lines, will be the divine decision for life or for death—on some plane of being. The great company must have the Christ-like character as well as the little flock. We are not to understand that there will be, for any of the consecrated, any further trial or testing after the present trial is ended. No one will be in either the

little flock or the great company, except those who are in loving loyalty to God, to the brethren, to the principles of righteousness; all others will be condemned as unfit for life eternal.

Perhaps the worldly might say to us: It must be a great strain upon you and make your life miserable to be obliged to think continually of the right or the wrong of every act, and every word, and every thought, and to be obliged to repudiate and disown every sentiment not entirely just and loving. We reply, that at first it might have so appeared to us, but the Lord leads His people gently, graciously, step by step, to an appreciation of the principles of righteousness and love. Following on to know the Lord means, to such, continual growth in grace as well as in knowledge. We are glad that we see distinctly the issue joined in our case—that it is for life or death. To us this is the chief consideration—the making of our calling and our election sure, to life eternal. As we get a glimpse of the wonderful things which God has in reservation for those who love Him, earthly pleasures, self-denials, self-sacrifices, all lose their weight and power, and gradually we come to the place where we “delight” to know and to do the Lord’s will—to the mental attitude in which these divine regulations are not grievous to us, but really joyous. This means that our minds have been “transformed,” so that the things which we once loved, now we hate; and the things which we once hated, now we love. Yet we approached this position gradually. Those who come into present truth now have advantages in many respects, but we must also remember that as the time of testing grows shorter, it signifies that the tests themselves will be the sharper.

### **Life unto Life or Death unto Death.**

The Apostle, contemplating the situation of those who have been saved by faith, through the knowledge of the Lord and of His gracious plans, declares that the message becomes to such a life or a death message. The demands of our consecration to some appear onerous, burdensome. They have an odour of death that may lead on to second death. To others the ways of the Lord and the requirements of His holiness have a sweet odour, a life odour, bringing refreshment. Such an appreciation of the divine goodness and of the divine plan, the Apostle refers to as a sweet odour of life, and tending and leading up to the glorious life condition which they shall share in the resurrection of the blessed.

The Apostle realised that the message he was preaching would have one or the other effect upon all who had the spiritual ears. It would be to them either a savour of life unto life or of death unto death. Then he adds, “Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor. 2:16.) There is a tremendous strain of responsibility upon all who minister the Lord’s truth. Who is sufficient for these things? How can any of us fully grasp and comprehend the value of present opportunities? And how can those who, in the name of the Lord, present His message, sufficiently realise the weight of responsibility attaching?

Summing up, then, let us each know that if we do not keep our hearts from the leaven of malice, envy, hatred and strife, the issue with us will be the second death, and in the interim assuredly we would lose much of the light and spiritual blessings which we once enjoyed. If, on the other hand, we keep out the evils referred to, and put on the graces of the Lord’s spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love—the decision in our case will be life, eternal life. And in the interim, while waiting for our resurrection “change,” our experience will be continual growth in grace, in love, and in knowledge of the things freely given of the Lord to such as are in this heart condition. These shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free—not with the freedom of the unregenerate, but with the liberty of the sons of God—liberty to do right, liberty to suffer injustice for righteousness’ sake; liberty to lay down our lives for the brethren, and, in general, for the truth, and in doing good to all men as we have opportunity.

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

A cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

## **Convention News.**

IT is with thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings upon the Annual Convention held in Melbourne over the Christmas period that this brief report is presented at this time. It was freely expressed by the brethren in attendance that these gatherings were most profitable indeed, as the various friends contributed, under the Lord’s providence, in making it such a season of spiritual refreshing.

In opening the Convention the chairman expressed pleasure in extending a cordial welcome to so many visiting brethren who gladly assembled in the Lord’s name to enjoy the spiritual food at His table. Each of the Australian states was represented, and throughout the various sessions the contributions of the visiting friends added much to the spiritual blessings received. Messages with greetings from other brethren, far and near, were also received, manifesting the good interest of many who were unable to attend in person, but who were present in spirit. As it was, the attendance was very good, being greater for an Australian Convention than for many years past.

The Bible Studies were well conducted by the chairmen on the selected Scripture passages—Hebrews 12:22-29; Psalm 51:10-19 and Romans 11:25-36. Each of these portions of the Bible gave scope for much investigation by the students prior to the Convention, and of course the greatest benefits are received from all Bible study classes when the

studies are well prepared beforehand. Then, coming together to compare or query thoughts with others much blessing is gained by all the assembly, but especially by those who have studied well and applied their hearts to the Scriptures under review. At most Convention Studies the time available is usually insufficient to cover the passages in any detail, yet the main points are brought out, and the studies at this Convention were very profitable indeed. Our readers will have the opportunity of gleaned some of the thoughts presented at the studies from the Convention Notes which are printed separately.

Throughout the four days of Convention a number of brethren served the gatherings with addresses, and each in their own way contributed much to the helpfulness of the assemblies. The variety of subjects dealt with meant that the Bible truths were presented from many angles, and the interest in these addresses was very manifest. The titles for the addresses were :—"The One Thing Needful"; "The Love of God"; "Pleasing God"; "A Voice Behind Thee"; "Godliness With Contentment"; "Jesus"; "Calamities"; "The Author and Finisher of Our Faith" ; "Precious Promises"; "The Four Gospels"; "A Saviour—Christ the Lord"; "And Ananias Went His Way" and "Building—Praying—Keeping." An outline of the thoughts from these addresses will also be found in the Notes on the Convention, while some of these will appear in full in the pages of the "Peoples Paper" for the benefit of all our brethren.

Three Fellowship Meetings, comprising Praise and Testimony, and a Hymn Service, were also much enjoyed by the brethren. It is encouraging to hear the testimonies of the brethren who have experienced the Lord's blessing and keeping throughout the past year, and to realise their confidence and trust in Him for the future as they yield their lives to His love and care day by day. The "Hymns We Love and Why" were most refreshing; truly the sentiments expressed in some of our lovely hymns and set to appropriate melodies are most uplifting, and the brethren manifest much feeling as they sang the selections in spirit and in truth. We were reminded in the study taken on New Year's Day in Rev. 3:7-13 (following the Convention proper) that a great number of our lovely hymns were given to the Christian world during the Philadelphian period of the church's history—covering the Reformation and onwards to about the middle of the last century.

As a message of encouragement to all brethren in other parts of the Lord's harvest field, and in appreciation of the messages received from our brethren, the Convention assembly sent the words of Hebrews 12:22-24, 28 with Greetings of Christian love with visiting friends returning to home Classes and to friends in every place.

The happy Convention gatherings were concluded with the usual Love Feast, during which all partook of the little symbol of cake, and bade each other farewell with a parting handshake while singing "Blest Be the Tie." The closing hymn "God Be With You Till We Meet

Again," and a prayer of thanksgiving to the Giver of every good thing, with request for His blessing and guidance to be over all in the days ahead, brought the Convention to a fitting conclusion. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

### **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

This announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren are to hold their usual Convention this year (D.V.), from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 4th to April 7th, in the Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a cordial invitation to all friends who may be able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. Further particulars from the secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

### **Passover Memorial, 1958**

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, agreeing exactly with the Easter season this year. While the Lord did not request that the Remembrance of His death be kept on the exact date each anniversary, the brethren arrange their services as near as possible, in keeping with the spirit and sacredness of the occasion.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 30th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Master Builders Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

### **Books Available.**

"Most Holy Faith"—£1.

"Tabernacle Shadows"—6/-.

"Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages-10/6.

"God's Promises Come True"—£1.

"Emphatic Diaglott" — New Testament — 18/-.

"The Book of Books"—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages"—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"-1/-. "Manner of Christ's Return"-1/-. "Christ's Return"-1/-.

"Some of the Parables"-1/-.

"Hope Beyond the Grave"-1/-. "God and Reason"-1/.

### **BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE.**

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne,

## Looking Back We Praise the Way.

IT is fitting that the Lord's people should continually keep in mind the mercies and blessing they enjoy, otherwise the pressure of the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches would so crowd in upon our minds and hearts as to cover from our observation and ultimately choke up completely the springs of divine grace, which, kept open, minister continually to our joy and refreshment in the holy spirit.

To this end it is appropriate that we have a daily review of the blessings we enjoy—that every evening we call to mind the privileges enjoyed, the providences which have guided our way, and the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which have come to us ; some of them in common with the world in general and others of a special kind known to and appreciated by those only who know the Shepherd and are known of Him.

It is appropriate, too, that we take weekly reviews, looking at the same mercies and blessings from a still broader standpoint of observations, reminding us of the rest into which we have entered through faith in the precious blood, and also of the rest that remains for the people of God, whereof God has given us assurance in that on the first day of the week He raised up Jesus from the dead.—Heb. 4:3, 9.

But it is with special appropriateness that at the close of the still larger cycle of a year we should take a still broader and more comprehensive view of our experiences, looking circumspectly at the way we have travelled and considering well which have been steps which have hindered progress, and which have been proper steps in the footprints of Jesus, bringing us nearer to the goal—the “mark” which we must surely attain if we would be accounted worthy of a share in the promised Kingdom.

Such an advanced Christian looks back through the year and recalls life's storms as well as its sunshine, its sorrows as well as its joys, its tears as well as its smiles, and sorrows not as others who have no hope. His troubles have been divested of their fearful features, and minimised by the spirit of a sound mind, and the instruction of God's Word, which assures all such that the trials, difficulties slid adversities of life, rightly accepted as lessons, are blessings in disguise—which will work out “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” in the life to come.—2 Cor. 4:16, 17.

He will perceive, too, that his joys have been of a purer and a more solid kind than any he ever knew before he was begotten of the holy spirit. They have not had commingled with them the bitterness of envy, malice and hatred, but have been unalloyed ; because they have not been rejoicing in iniquity, but rejoicing in the truth. Moreover, they have been much more numerous than ever before ; because he not only is able to joy in the Lord, joy in His Word, joy in the holy spirit, joy in the fellowship with brethren of like precious faith, but by the grace of God he has been enabled additionally to joy in tribulation also—not because he loved tribulation, but because he loved the patience, the experience, the character, which God assures us are a fruitage which all tribulations must yield us under His providence, if we are rightly exercised thereby.—James 1:3, 4; Rom. 5:3.

Of whom are all these things true? Not of everyone, surely, for we know many who have no such experience—the world that lieth in darkness knows not God. Nor are these experiences true of all people of intelligence—nominally Christians. Comparatively few of those who profess the name of Christ enjoy these precious experiences, or will be able to look back upon the year with satisfaction of this kind, realising that God has crowned the year with His goodness. This is so, because they have not taken the necessary step of full consecration to the Lord, to bring them under His protecting care and under the enlightening influence of His Word through His spirit; or, having taken the step of consecration, they have not been performing their vows, but seeking to serve both God and Mammon, without pleasing either, and without receiving satisfactory blessings from either.

The class which can and does look back through the year from the standpoint that we have described—the class which looking back can see that God's goodness has crowned every feature of life throughout the year, is the “little flock,” the true Church, whose names are written in heaven—the body of Christ, the Bride class. They are the true Zion, which shall shortly be set up, filled with divine glory, the joy of the whole earth, and the divine channel of blessing to all the families of mankind ; “For out of Zion shall go the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” These are of the elect Church, of which Christ is the Head, and are the faithful “feet” members who, now fulfilling their vows of sacrifice, are companions in the suffering of Christ, as by and by they shall be His companions also in the glory that shall be revealed. (Rom. 8:17, 18.) They are God's choice, or His “elect,” for, as the Apostle informs us, God has predestined that this class whom He is selecting shall all be copies of His Son. (Rom. 8:29.) They shall dwell in His house—they will be members of the great Temple which the Lord God is building of spiritual stones, in and through which He will bless the world with a knowledge of Himself and His grace.—1 Pet. 2:4-8.

Is it any wonder that these can rejoice in spirit saying, “Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits”? “He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the loving kindness of our God.” Surely, then, these, in looking back, can see in the year that is past that that which has blessed and rejoiced them in every sense of the word has been of divine goodness, and that thus God has crowned the whole year with His favor toward them through Christ Jesus, and they thus appreciate it to the full.

## The Four Gospels.

(Convention Address)

*“For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth ; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in*

*the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa. 55:10, 11.)*

THESE words from the prophet comfort us with the assurance that God is graciously willing and abundantly able to accomplish His loving purpose which He has revealed through His Word ; and also that His Word itself has a function to perform. Not only does God’s Word reveal His plan ; it is also used by Him to accomplish much of His plan.

Some of the most important parts of God’s Word are the four Gospels, wherein we have pictures of our Lord Jesus, especially of His earthly ministry. We may consider it strange that God provided four records of what our Saviour said and did instead of one complete, connected account.

One reason, doubtless, has been to hide some of the truth from all but those who would carefully search His Word as for hidden treasure. We can see that it is more difficult to obtain a clear outline of our Lord’s ministry from four accounts (each being different in some respects) than from one full and complete record. This would be one of many ways in which God has hidden His truth from the wise and prudent and revealed it to those of more humble mind—”unto babes”—as we read in Matthew 11:25.

The Gospel according to Matthew is generally understood to have been written in the first place for Jews, and as the Jews especially thought of their coming Messiah as a great king, Matthew’s presentation is that of a king.

The genealogy of Matthew, chapter 1, shows Jesus through his foster father, Joseph, as descended from Abraham, through King David.

Matthew alone gives the account of the visit of the three wise men from the east to Jerusalem who asked, “Where is he who is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”

Matthew’s Gospel makes particularly prominent the teaching concerning the kingdom. It records that both John the Baptist and Jesus opened their ministry with the announcement —”Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17.)

Matthew gives more of the parables of the kingdom than any of the other evangelists, and is the only one to quote the prophecy of Zech. 9:9—”Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee ; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an’ ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” (See Matt. ‘21:5.) In the days of the prophet it was customary for kings and kings’ sons to ride upon white asses. Jesus was a king as well as a King’s Son. He, therefore, in harmony with the prophet’s words, adopted this custom when presenting Himself to Israel as their King.

Matthew alone gives a picture of the day of judgment, or the great assize as it has been called—”When the Son of man shall come in his glory,” and the church with Him, as we read in Matt. 25:31-34 ; and 16:27. Finally, we have in Matthew’s account Pilate’s question, “Art thou the King of the Jews ?” To which Jesus in substance replied, “What you say is correct.” It is helpful to read through Matthew’s Gospel with this thought in mind of Jesus as King.

In Mark’s Gospel we have quite a different picture of the Son of God. It is said that Mark wrote his gospel in the first place for Gentiles, and for Romans in particular. He omits all reference to the Jewish Law, and gives no genealogy of our Lord, and in several places has put in little explanations which Jews would not have needed.

Mark gives us the picture of Jesus as the servant of Jehovah. He opens his account by quoting from Isaiah 40:3—”Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.” In Isaiah 42:1 Messiah is particularly pictured as the servant of Jehovah—”Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” And in Isa. 52:13, and 53:11, we also find Messiah referred to as a servant, and again in Zech. 3:8. In Phil. 2:7 the Apostle Paul also tells us that Christ Jesus took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

Mark uses the word “straightway” nineteen times, suggesting the prompt way in which a servant would carry out his master’s command. Matthew uses the same word translated “straightway” seven times, and Luke only three.

Mark’s Gospel is not so much a record of moral and spiritual teachings, but is an account full of the works of Jesus. Mark shows our Lord’s days as being full of service. In chapter 3 we see that even the sabbath was frequently occupied with good works ; and in chapter 6 :31 the Lord says--”Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile ; for there were many coming and going and they had no leisure so much as to eat.”

Mark 4:36 reads—”And when they had sent away .the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship.” It is said that the original here gives the thought that our Lord was so exhausted from His labours, that He just allowed Himself to be carried into the boat “as lie was.” We may recall too in this connection that they had to awaken Him of sleep lest they perish in the wind-storm which arose.

In chapter 6:14 Mark shows that it was the works of Jesus, rather than His message, that came to the notice of Herod—”And king Herod heard of him, and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.”

Then in chapter 10 we have Jesus’ own words—”Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Just as Matthew presents Jesus to us as the great King of kings, and Mark portrays Him as the servant of all, Luke’s Gospel calls special attention to the fact that He was the Son of man: It is a common belief that Luke wrote especially for the Greeks, and they thought a great deal about the beauty and perfection of human form. In fact, led by their great men, they almost worshipped, not the moral but the physical beauty of the human being and were continually looking for the human ideal. Luke takes advantage of this natural trait in the character of the Greeks and presents Jesus as the ideal, the perfect man—the very image of God in the flesh. He shows our Lord’s perfection in all His human relationships—perfection in the midst of imperfection.

Luke records our Lord's genealogy, not from Abraham, but goes right back to Adam, thus showing that Jesus belongs not to one nation, but to all. He is the Son of The Man, the heir of all that Adam lost.

Luke relates how carefully God prepared for the birth of both John the Baptist and Jesus. In chapter 1:80 his account relates of John—"And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit." In chapter 2 he writes of Jesus—"And the child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." And again—"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

Describing the first sermon which Jesus preached, Luke writes in chapter 4—"And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." And in verse 22 he records—"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." The people were impressed with our Lord's presence, as well as with what He had to say.

In Luke's Gospel, more than in the others, we are shown our Lord's association with publicans and sinners, not to condone their ways, but to draw them back to the paths of righteousness, and to the Father's house. So much was this true of Jesus that the slur of being a friend of publicans and sinners was cast upon Him. As we see in chapter 15 Jesus replied with the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Silver, and the Prodigal Son, in which we see how highly the Heavenly Father values genuine repentance.

Finally, we might note the parable of the Good Samaritan, a parable peculiar to Luke, in which is shown the godlike qualities that should be possessed by humanity in the image and likeness of their Creator.

John's Gospel, written some time after the other three, presents Jesus as the Son of God—in the beginning with God, and as the Father's agent, the creator of all things. Chapter 1:3 reads—"All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." He is shown as having come forth from the Father, and who has now returned to the Father.

Matthew traces the descent of Jesus from Abraham, Luke takes His genealogy back to Adam, but John shows Him to be the Son of God. If Jesus were nothing more than a natural descendant of Adam, Abraham and David (as the Jews expected their Messiah to be), He would have been born an imperfect man, under condemnation to death like the rest of us; whereas the divine plan required a perfect man—"holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners,"—who would thus have an uncondemned life to give in sacrifice for the condemned life of Adam, and all condemned in him. This the Father accomplished by transferring the life of the Logos from the spiritual condition to be born a perfect human being through His mother, Mary. The angel Gabriel addressed Mary,—"The holy spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Just as John shows that the great anointed Redeemer came from heaven to earth, that He was with the Father before the world was, so he shows much more than the other evangelists that Messiah's Kingdom (in which the Lord's followers are invited to share) is a spiritual kingdom which will follow the destruction of Satan's unholy, invisible kingdom.

It is helpful to note a few Scriptures, which, among many others, show the truly exalted origin of Jehovah's King, the Messiah. John 5:18—"The Jews sought to kill him because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father." John 5:22, 23—"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." John 6:38—"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John 10:36—"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God." John 17:24—"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

The object John had in writing his gospel is summed up in chapter 20 :31—"These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Thus, from the four evangelists we have pictured Jehovah's King, Jehovah's Servant, Jehovah's perfect human Son who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and finally, Jesus, the Son of God, the beginning of the creation of God, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and who now has been highly exalted to the divine nature, "being the effulgence of the Father's glory, and an exact impress of His substance," as we read in the Diaglott, Heb. 1:3.

From Israel's earliest days as a nation her priests offered typical sacrifices for sin which were repeated year by year continually, for the blood of bulls and goats could never really take away sin. This arrangement, doubtless, caused some of the nation to realise the need for a greater priest than Aaron or any of his line. From the days of Samuel onward God gave Israel a line of kings, a few of whom were good kings, but the larger number were failures. And even the very best of these rulers, such as David, Hezekiah and Josiah were imperfect, dying creatures, unable to continue by reason of death, and who failed to carry out for Israel all that they desired. The divine records faithfully reveal their mistakes (some of which were of a very serious character) as well as their good qualities. Such experiences would, doubtless, cause Israelites indeed to realise their need of a greater king than any yet given to them.

God also gave to Israel a long line of prophets who, as imperfect men, could teach the people only imperfectly. Israel needed a still greater prophet to show them how to keep God's laws. The New Testament, therefore, shows Jesus as the ideal Priest, Prophet and King, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him, as we read in Heb. 7:25.

Soon the mystery of the Gospel Age will be finished—the many members of Christ having been found—and then





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## **Good Tidings-Great Joy-To All People**

(Luke 2:1-20)

THE message of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God's great plan of the ages, that prophetic message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be too frequently called to the great event which lies at the foundation of that message— our Saviour's birth.

For four thousand years and more the promises of God, clothed in more or less of obscurity, had been given to mankind, intimating that ultimately the great curse of sin and death which had come upon the world through Adam's disobedience in Eden would be rolled away, and instead of a curse, a blight, would come a blessing of the Lord with life-giving refreshment. In various types, figures and shadowy promises this lesson had come down through the ages to the time of our Lord's birth, especially amongst the Jews, who were the divinely favored and covenanted people. And since the Jews were of a commercial spirit, many of them were to be found in all parts of the civilized world ; and thus amongst every people the faith in the one God and the hope of Israel through a Messiah were more or less made known, so that at the time of our Lord's birth, we read, "All men were in expectation" of a soon-coming Messiah. Doubtless, this expectation was built upon the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, which we now see clearly marked the year of our Lord's majority, when He was thirty years of age and made His consecration' to His work and received the begetting of the holy spirit, His anointing as the great antitypical High Priest and as the great antitypical King over Israel and the world.

### **The Angels and the Shepherds**

Noble shepherds those must have been to whom the Almighty sent the angelic message respecting the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, which has rung down the ages and reached our ears—the message which thrills us the more in proportion as we are able to grasp its meaning. First a single angel appeared to the shepherds and allayed their fears saying, "Fear not; behold I bring you good tidings." It would appear that fear is one of the dominating impulses of the human mind, especially in conjunction with any revelations from the Lord. Men realize—even the best of the race—that they are imperfect and that the Almighty and His laws are perfect. Instinctively the world seems to realize that a curse or condemnation of the Almighty rests upon it, and instinctively it fears a further curse and further condemnation, realizing its continual and increasing sinfulness. The same is true today with all except the comparatively few who are well informed respecting the divine character and plan. Thus the subject of religion is generally obnoxious to the world in general—a subject which they prefer to avoid, because of a feeling of guilt and a dread of further knowledge and condemnation.

It is for the true children of God today, as it was for the angels at that time, to assure the world that God is better than all their fears—that God so loved the world as to redeem them from the just sentence of death, the curse that came upon all as inheritors of Adam's imperfections and sentence.

"Good tidings" is another translation of our word "gospel." How beautiful the thought that the Gospel is really and truly good tidings. Alas, for the misrepresentations of God's plan, under which so many of His professed people misrepresent His character and His Word, and apply the term "Gospel" to their various messages from the dark ages, teaching purgatory and eternal torment as the portion of the race. Let us get away from this false thought and get the truth that the Gospel is good tidings. The angel elaborated, saying that his message was good tidings of great joy, which should be unto all people. Ah, thank God, His plan is wider and deeper and higher and grander than anything we had ever conceived. The Gospel is not merely to be good tidings to the comparatively few that now have ears to hear and eyes to see its beauties, but in God's due time it is to be good tidings of great joy to all people.

As every member of Adam's race shared in his fall and in the curse of death which came upon him as a result, so every member of the race was included in the great redemptive sacrifice which our Lord Jesus offered and which was finished at Calvary. God's plan in Christ, as it is being worked out and shall ultimately be accomplished, will mean great joy for all people, and the tidings of this were given at the very moment of our Lord's birth, because He was the

one through whom all the glorious things of the divine purpose and plan shall ultimately be accomplished.

Although over nineteen centuries have rolled away since that angelic message was delivered, it has not yet been fulfilled except in a limited measure by faith to those who have the eye of faith and the ears of faith, in all a "little flock." But the tidings of great misery for nearly all people has been spread abroad in the name of Christ, much to the discredit of the divine plan and to the dishonor of the divine character. Instead of carrying joy the message has very generally carried grief and sorrow, especially to the kind-hearted and more generously disposed. Indeed we may say that no message of the Lord Jesus either true or false, has ever reached all people. Even today, after nineteen centuries of propaganda, only a comparatively small portion of the human family has ever heard of the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved—"nor is there salvation in any other."—Acts 4:12.

What, then, shall we say of the salvation which is come to those who have truly accepted Christ as their Saviour, and who are today rejoicing in Him as such, and who by faith are seeing the salvation of God begun in their own hearts and yet to be fully accomplished under the whole heavens? This the Apostle calls the salvation by hope. His words are, "We are saved by hope." (Rom. 8:24) We are not saved actually; we are still surrounded by sin, pain, sighing, crying and dying; the curse is not yet rolled away. All that the best of the Lord's people have received is salvation by hope, by faith. Yet this anticipation of the future salvation, of the resurrection from the dead, of a participation in the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature promised to the faithful, is so strong, so clear, that those who possess it are enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, even in the midst of trials and difficulties and weaknesses and unfavorable conditions incident to the curse upon the race.

### **A Prophecy of Good Things**

Yes, the angelic message was a prophecy of good things to be accomplished for the Church, and also for the world during the Millennial Age. The church is to have the first blessing. The first resurrection is to be composed only of the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ during the Millennium, the thousand years in which Satan shall be bound, and when the good influences of truth and righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth. The declaration of the Scripture is that the deliverance of the Church will come first, as the prophet declares, "God will help her early in her morning."—Psa. 46:5.

But much as we rejoice in the glorious hopes of the Gospel set before us who now see, who now believe, who now rejoice with joy unspeakable, we are glad that the divine mercy and love are of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths as to encompass the whole world of mankind, and to provide a blessing for every member of Adam's race through Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

It will be during the Millennial Age that this prophecy of the angel will have its fulfilment, and the great Saviour who has already redeemed us by His sacrifice will stand forth as the King, the glorified Messiah, and establish His dominion of righteousness in the world for the blessing and uplifting of every member of the race. In harmony with the words of the Apostle, those will be times of restoration, "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:20, 21.) If the Lord had based the hope of the world upon some works of merit or righteousness of the world's doing, then indeed we might have feared—indeed the more we know of the world, the less hope we would have. But, on the contrary, the Lord has based the entire proposition for the future blessing not upon our worthiness, but upon the worthiness and sacrifice of His Son—to you is born a life-giver, which is Messiah the Lord,

How it adds to our enjoyment of the coming *age* blessings to know that the trials and difficulties of this present Gospel Age are subject to the divine supervision in the interest of the little flock that is now being gathered in advance from amongst men—the "elect," the Church. We see how the present trials and difficulties are the chiselings and polishing necessary to our development in the fruits *and* graces of the holy spirit in the character-likeness of God's dear Son, our Lord, our Hope, our Bridegroom. How joyful the thought that soon the elect number called from the world to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, will be completed and enter into her glory. How precious the thought that then they shall be privileged with their Lord and Master to extend the divine favour of blessing and uplift to the world. What higher honor or privilege or blessing could possibly come to any?

It was after the giving of the message of good tidings and great joy by the heavenly one that a host of angels appeared to the shepherds, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." This, too is a prophecy. It is not yet true, but will be fulfilled in every particular in God's due time, which we believe is now nigh, even at the door. Not yet does God receive glory in the highest, not yet is there peace amongst men. Quite to the contrary. God's name is blasphemed, not only by those who vulgarly and in ribald jest take the divine name in vain, and not merely by the heathen who worship devils and think they are Gods, but even by Christian people, God's name is blasphemed every day. For be it known that blasphemy is any dishonorable misrepresentation of another. God be merciful to us, for at some time or other every one of us doubtless has blasphemed the holy name in this manner—by misrepresenting the divine character and divine plan, by picturing the God of love and mercy and justice and truth as the originator, the planner, the perpetuator of the eternal torment of the great mass of His creatures, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, born to sin as the sparks fly upwards.

But the Lord had mercy upon us because we did it ignorantly. And we also should have compassion upon others who still ignorantly misrepresent our God, and our energies should be continually bent to their assistance that the eyes of their understanding might open more widely to perceive the lengths and breadths and heights and depths and know the love of God which passeth understanding.

Noting that peace on earth and goodwill to men have not followed the Saviour's birth thus far, and not discerning that this is a prophecy of what is to be accomplished during the Millennium, many have been inclined to change the

translation of this verse so as to have it read, "On earth peace amongst men, in whom he is well pleased." However by thus changing it, the statement would not be true, for even the Lord's people have no peace on earth. Whatever peace they have is in their hearts, and based upon their faith in the Lord and in the glorious things which He promised. Our Lord Himself and the apostles testified to this, assuring us that whosoever in this present time would live godly should suffer persecution, that a man's foes would be they of his own household, etc. (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 10:26.) Let us not confuse ourselves nor abridge the testimony of the Word, but with the eye of faith look forward to the day of Christ in which all these glorious things shall have their fulfilment, in which peace shall indeed fill the whole earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord; bringing divine favour and rolling away the curse from the entire groaning creation, as pointed out by the Apostle.—Rom. 8:22.

Not even with the inauguration of the Millennium will this prophecy be fulfilled: not until its close, when the human family shall have been lifted by the Kingdom regulations out of sin, sickness, pain, sorrow and death up, to all that was lost in Adam—not until then will there indeed be glory to God in the highest, not until then will there be a peace amongst men. Nor are we to understand that the entire race will be appreciative of the divine love and favor even after they have fully seen the righteousness of God manifested in Christ. On the contrary the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there will be a class who will then prove unfit for life eternal, unappreciative of the divine favor and we learn that all such shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people in the second death. Thus eventually by the close of the Millennium, Satan and all wilful wrongdoers having been destroyed, the time will come as declared in the Scriptures when all voices in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard praising God, Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb forever and ever. Hosanna! Glory to God in the highest! Peace and goodwill to men, will be the final shout of a redeemed race when the great salvation shall have been fully outworked according to the divine plan set forth in the Scriptures.

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## Fellowship in the Truth

IT is always a pleasure for the Lord's people to associate with others who are also rejoicing in the truths of God's Word, and it is apparent that the fellowship of kindred minds is one of the means the Lord has used to encourage and build up the members of His family all down the Gospel Age, and we may say He is especially using in these last days—during the harvest of the age.

While there are some who almost discount the possibility of new friends becoming interested in the wonderful Divine Plan of the Ages and consecrating their lives to the Lord's service in these days, it is evident that such an outlook is not scriptural and is far from being healthy spiritually. Those with this trend of mind may be elderly, either actually or in mental outlook, and, perhaps weary themselves, are apt to conclude that everyone else is weary as respects spiritual things. Having this attitude of mind many opportunities of service are lost, being overlooked. Others may conclude that as there are few appreciating the Bible truths in their particular restricted locality the same must be true over wider areas. Yes, it is possible for some to almost wish to terminate the Lord's work of the harvest, which could result in the grieving of the spirit in their hearts and prove a great hindrance to progress in making their calling and election sure.

Truly, activity in the service of the Lord has always been required both as respects one's own spiritual life and service towards others, and, will continue to be required of the follow of the Master in all the days ahead. Ho-, refreshing, indeed, it is to associate with those who, whether advancing in years or otherwise, are fully alert to the privileges and joys of serving the Lord through the brethren or newly interested friends, and do so with praise and thankfulness to the Lord.

Such an opportunity to associate with various brethren, also with a nice number of new friends who have been contacted through the radio stations in Sydney and Brisbane over recent years was possible last month when a three week's visit was paid to the two northern States. Having corresponded regularly for some time with most of those visited, it was a great joy to meet them personally, and to note how the truths of God's Word are held in sincere appreciation and thankfulness to the Giver of every good thing. When our brethren realise that our new friends are the comparative few from the hundreds of enquiries received from the radio witness, they will understand readily that this is just what to expect in the harvest of the age, and rejoice the more with those whom the Lord has drawn and called into the fellowship of His dear Son, through His Word of truth.

During the first week, after renewing happy acquaintance with some of the brethren in the Sydney area, a visit was made to the country where a helpful weekend was spent in fellowship with those who are appreciating so well the glad message of truth with the assistance of the volumes and periodicals etc. It was at this time that one member, having made full consecration to the Lord, joyfully took the symbol of water baptism, thus indicating the heart's desire to be faithful in death baptism in the steps of Christ. We truly rejoice with this dear member who has joined the family of God whose supreme object in life is to fulfil the vows of consecration by the Lord's grace.

Returning from the country of New South Wales, on the way it was a pleasure to greet again two elderly brethren who have been rejoicing in the truth for many years, and continue to do so in hope of the kingdom at hand. While rather frail in the flesh, it was good to realise that the spiritual life was very real indeed with these dear brethren.

Following visits to interested radio listeners, the journey to Queensland was taken, and it was a great pleasure to fellowship with those who have been in the truth for many years. For two days a number of contacts were made with others who have appreciated the message over the air and through the literature supplied ; it is hoped that the interest was also encouraged further, by the Lord's overruling.

The second weekend was spent in the country of Queensland where a little band of interested friends dwell amidst the sugar-cane, pineapple and banana plantations, and it was a great joy to fellowship with them in their homes for two days, with a meeting arranged in the town on each evening. The various truths were freely discussed, and the zeal and interest manifest was a delight indeed ; truly, the first love for the Lord and His truth is very precious, and it was most refreshing to witness the deep appreciation on the part of these friends.

There was further joy with an expressed desire on the part of another friend to take the symbol of water immersion, thus symbolizing full consecration to the Lord, and we rejoice with this dear member also in the privilege of responding to the invitation to sacrifice with Christ, so that there may be the great favor of living with Him in the glorious kingdom to come.

Various contacts were made on the way south and in the Brisbane area, and those already interested were encouraged to continue in appreciation of the only message which gives real satisfaction to both heart and mind. It was a pleasure also to visit two other brethren in the country again, and to enjoy their hospitality and fellowship in the truth, while at the same time being taken to view some of the most extensive mountain scenery to be found in Australia.

The journey south was continued in good time to allow the third weekend to be spent with the friends in the Sydney area, and to visit again some unable to leave their homes. There was good fellowship with the brethren at the meeting, and in the homes, and in the remaining few days there was further encouragement to find other interested friends who are really alert and in earnest about the Bible truths. Truly it is most refreshing to realise how the message of truth lightens up the faces of those who are making it their own, as they feast upon its treasures of goodness, mercy, hope and salvation through Christ, not only for the church at this acceptable time for the heavenly kingdom, but also for all mankind who will be granted the opportunity of gaining the earthly kingdom by obedience to the laws then operating throughout the world.

Much assistance was freely given by a number of the friends as we journeyed along, all of which was very much appreciated as from the Lord's hand. Looking back upon the happy season of conversing together on the truths of the Bible with numerous friends, we lift up our heart in thankfulness to the Lord for the privilege enjoyed of partaking and sharing in His good treasures from His Word of truth. May the blessing of the Lord continue with all *His* dear people who look to Him and desire the indwelling of His spirit to guide and *sustain* in all the days ahead, to His praise.

### **Booklet for January's "Peoples Paper"**

It is expected that a booklet will take the place of the January, 1958, "Peoples Paper," and this will be posted out with the February issue.

## **Greeting Cards.**

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid ; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows-

- (1) "Just for To-day,"
- (2) "One Here and There,"
- (3) "How Readest Thou ?,"
- (4) "The New Leaf,"
- (5) "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,"
- (6) "Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
- (7) "My Bible and I,"
- (8) "Love's Victory,"
- (9) "The Touch of the Master's Hand,"
- (10) "Some Worthy Attainments,"
- (11) "Come Unto Me,"
- (12) "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
- (13) "—The Secret of His Presence."
- (14) "Watching and Praying,"
- (15) "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,"
- (16) "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,"
- (17) "Hitherto and Henceforth,"
- (18) "The Lord My Shepherd,"
- (19) "Into' His Marvellous Light,"

- (20) "Right was The Pathway,"  
 (21) "This is My Will for Thee."  
 (22) "Are Ye Able?"

*Books Available.*

- "Most Holy Faith"--£1.  
 "Tabernacle Shadows"-6/-.  
 "Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages-10/6.  
 "God's Promises Come True"—£1.  
 "Emphatic Diaglott" — New Testament —18/-.  
 "The Book of Books"—Reviewing the Bible as a whole-10/-.  
 "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.  
 "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"---1/- "Manner of Christ's Return"-1/-. "Christ's Return"-1/-.  
 "Some of the Parables"-1/-.  
 "Hope Beyond the Grave"-1/-.  
 "God and Reason"-1/.

**Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th. in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary—Mr J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

**Unto the pure all things are pure:**

*"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful nothing is pure; but both their minds and conscience are defiled: they profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work worthless."—Titus 1:15, 16.*

NOT sinners, not the worldly, are thus spoken of by the Apostle, but those who have enjoyed the truth, and who have enjoyed at least the first step in heart purification; namely justification, and whose hearts have become defiled through a failure to maintain in them the law of love as the ruling principle. Instead of being filled with love, selfishness, with its defilement, has been received back as the ruling principle of the heart. Such have the spirit of the world, and sometimes exercise it with a much greater degree of animosity than the world exhibits. They are specially ready, as the Apostle intimates, to impugn the conduct and motives of others; being selfish themselves, they attribute selfishness to every one else; being impure themselves, they attribute impurity to others; having lost the spirit of love which thinketh no evil, their hearts rapidly fill up with selfish, envious, uncharitable, ungodly, unkind sentiments, toward those who are true, sincere and noble.

The Apostle suggests of -such that not only their minds become corrupted, but also their consciences, so that they will do evil, speak evil, think evil, and yet their consciences do not reprove them; because their consciences and minds work in harmony, and, as the Scriptures declare, they become blinded, self-deceived. What a terrible condition this is, and how careful all of the Lord's people should be not only to have pure hearts, pure minds, but also to keep their consciences very tender, in close accord with the Word of the Lord. This condition can only be maintained by judging ourselves, and that strictly and frequently, by the standard which God has given us, His law of Love.

"I want the first approach to feel  
 Of pride or fond desire;  
 To catch the wandering of my will,  
 And quench the kindling fire."

As the Apostle points out, those whose minds become impure, poisoned by ambition or pride or selfishness, the spirit of evil, professing to have known God, are apt to profess as loudly as ever, sometimes, indeed, becoming boastful of how much they know of God, and of His Word and of how wise they are as respects its interpretation. Not by boasting of professions, therefore, can we always judge who are of pure minds and of good consciences and in full harmony with the Lord. Rather by their fruits we shall know them, as the Master said, and by their works, as the Apostle here points out. If any profess to know God, and yet by their works renounce Him, we are fully justified in questioning whether or not they may be self-deceived, whether or not their consciences, as well as their minds, may have become defiled.

To renounce the Lord in our works does not necessarily mean a resort to murder, robbery, licentiousness, etc. It means, rather, in the beginning at least, that from the hitherto good fountain of a cleansed or renewed heart or will, from which issued purity, truth, sweetness, kindness, encouragement and refreshment for all who drank of its waters, in the home and family and neighbourhood, and amongst the Lord's people, would issue instead bitter waters, producing bitter feelings, watering and nourishing roots of bitterness, stirring up malice, envy, hatred, strife, etc.

No wonder the Apostle says of such that they are abominable! All who have the spirit of the Lord must abominate the spirit of evil, however surprised and grieved they may be to find it issuing from one who previously gave forth sweetness, love, kindness, good works.

As the Master declared, if the professedly sweet fountain send forth bitter waters, we may know that there is something wrong,, something defiling in the fountain, and are not to deceive ourselves respecting its waters, and to partake of its bitterness.

Commenting along the same line, the Apostle James declares, “If any man among you seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that man’s religion is vain.” Because the tongue is the index of the heart, because “out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh,” therefore the unbridled tongue, speaking selfishly, enviously, bitterly, boastfully, slanderously, proves that the heart from whose fulness these overflow is unsanctified, unholy, grievously lacking of the spirit of Christ—hence, whatever religion it may have attained is thus far vain, as that heart is not saved nor in a salvable condition. No wonder the Apostle comments in our text, that such are “disobedient ;” only by disobedience to the law of the New Creation, love, could anyone reach such a condition of heart and conscience defilement after he had been purified through faith in the precious blood, and consecrated to the Lord.

The final statement of our text is that such a one, having lost the spirit of the truth, and having obtained instead a spirit of bitterness, rancour, evil, having a poisoned or defiled mind and conscience, is “to every good work worthless.” No matter what work such a one might undertake to do, it would surely be spoiled, because the spirit of evil, the spirit of pride, the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of malice and envy, are so violently in opposition to every feature of righteousness and goodness and truth **and** love, that there can be no peace, no co-operation between them. This reminds us of our Lord’s words, to the effect that those who are His people and who have His spirit are “the salt of the earth”—preservative, so long as they have this spirit ; but, as He suggests, if the salt lose its saltness—if the Christian lose those peculiar features of the spirit of Christ which constitute him different from the world, separate from the world, and a preserving quality in the world—if he should lose these, what? He would be worthless as bad salt, “to every good work worthless.”—Titus 1:16.

What course should be pursued by those who find themselves possessed of impure minds—minds inclined to surmise evil rather than good, envious minds, selfish, resentful, bitter, unforgiving minds, which love only those who love and flatter them? Is there any hope for these? Would God not utterly reject such?

God is very pitiful, and it was while all were thus “in the very gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity” that He provided for our redemption. There is hope for all such who see their defilement and who desire to be cleansed.

“His blood can make the foulest clean;  
His blood avails for me.”

But true repentance means both contrition and reformation; and for help in the latter we must go to the Great Physician, who alone can cure such moral sickness ; and of whom it is written, “Who healeth all thy diseases.” All of His sanctified ones, it is safe to say, were at one time more or less diseased thus, and proportionately “worthless” for His service. True, it is worse for those who were once cleansed, if they, “like the sow, return to the wallowing in the mire” of sin—but still there is hope, if the Good Physician’s medicine be taken persistently the same as at first. The danger is that the conscience, becoming defiled, will so pervert the judgment that bitterness is esteemed to be sweetness, and envy and malice to be justice and duty, and the “mire” of sin, to be beauty of holiness. Then only is the case practically a hopeless one.

### **Some of the Good Physician’s Antidotes for Heart Impurity.**

The Good Physician has pointed out antidotes for soul-poisoning—medicines, which, if properly taken according to directions will sweeten the bitter heart. Instead of envy it will produce love ; instead of malice and hatred and strife, love and concord ; instead of evil-speaking and back-biting and scandal-mongering it will produce the love which thinketh no evil and which worketh no ill to his neighbour; which suffereth long and is kind, which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, which never faileth and which is the spirit of the Lord and the law of the spirit of life in Christ .Jesus. Let us all take these medicines, for they are good, not only for the violently sick, but for the convalescing and the well. The following are some of the prescriptions:

(1) “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he (the Lord) is pure.”-1 John 3:3.

The hope mentioned is that we have been adopted as sons of God, with the promise that if faithful we shall be like Him and see Him as He is, and share His glory. As our minds and hearts expand with this hope, and we begin to measure its lengths and breadths, its heights and depths, it surely does set before us the Heavenly Father’s love and the Redeemer’s love in rainbow colours, and we more and more love the Father and the Son because they first loved us. The divine form of love becomes more and more our ideal; and as we seek to reciprocate it and to copy it, the cleaning and purifying of our hearts follows: for looking into the perfect law of liberty—love—we become more and more ashamed of all the meannesses and selfishness which the fall brought to us, and once seen in their true light as works of the flesh and of the devil, all anger, malice, wrath, envy, strife, evil-speaking, evil-surmising, backbiting and slander become more and more repulsive to us. And finally when we see that such as to any degree sympathise with these evil qualities are unfit for the kingdom and to every good work worthless, we flee from these evils of the soul as from deadly contagion. Our hearts (wills, intentions) become pure at once, and we set a guard not only upon our lips but also upon our thoughts—that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable to the Lord.

(2) “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people

zealous of good works.”—Titus 2:14.

We might theorise much and very correctly upon how and when and by whom we were redeemed; but all this would avail little if we forget why we were redeemed. The redemption was not merely a redemption from the power of the grave—it was chiefly “from all iniquity.” And the Lord is not merely seeking a peculiar people, but specially a people peculiarly cleansed, purified. This medicine will surely serve to purge us from iniquity if we are anxious to make our calling and election sure.

(3) “Pursue righteousness, fidelity, love, peace, with all who call upon the Lord with a pure heart.”-2 Tim. 2:22.

We not only need to start right, but also to pursue a right course. We may not follow unrighteousness even for a moment ; whatever it may cost, justice and righteousness must be followed. But here a difficulty arises with some : they do not know how to judge righteous judgment. They are too apt to judge according to rumour or appearances, or to accept the judgment of Scribes and Pharisees, as did the multitude which cried “Crucify Him ! His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Had they followed righteousness they would have seen the Lord’s character in His good works as well as in His wonderful words of life : they would have seen that so far from being a blasphemer, He was “holy, harmless, separate from sinners ;” they would have seen that His accusers were moved by envy and hatred.

It is just as necessary as ever to follow the Lord’s injunction, “Judge righteous judgment,” and whoever neglects it brings down “blood” upon his own head and becomes a sharer in the penalty due to false accusers. For as the Lord was treated, so will His ‘brethren’ be treated. The more pure our hearts the less they will be affected by slanders and back-bitings and evil-speakings, and the more will we realise that those who have bitter hearts from which arise bitter words are impure fountains in which is the gall of bitterness and not the sweetness of love.

Next comes fidelity, that is, faithfulness. The Lord declares His own fidelity or faithfulness, and declares Himself a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And even the worldly recognise fidelity as a grace, and by such it is often given first place, for many would commit theft or perjury through fidelity to a friend. But notice that God’s Word puts righteousness first. Fidelity, love and peace can only be exercised in harmony with righteousness, but unrighteousness not being proven against a brother our fidelity and love and peace toward him must continue, and indeed must increase in proportion as envy and slander and all the fiery darts of the Adversary assail him “without a cause.” This valuable prescription will help to keep our hearts free from the poison and roots of bitterness which the Adversary keeps busily planting.

Justice is purity of heart—freedom from injustice. Righteousness is purity of heart—freedom from unrighteousness. Love is purity of heart—freedom from selfishness.

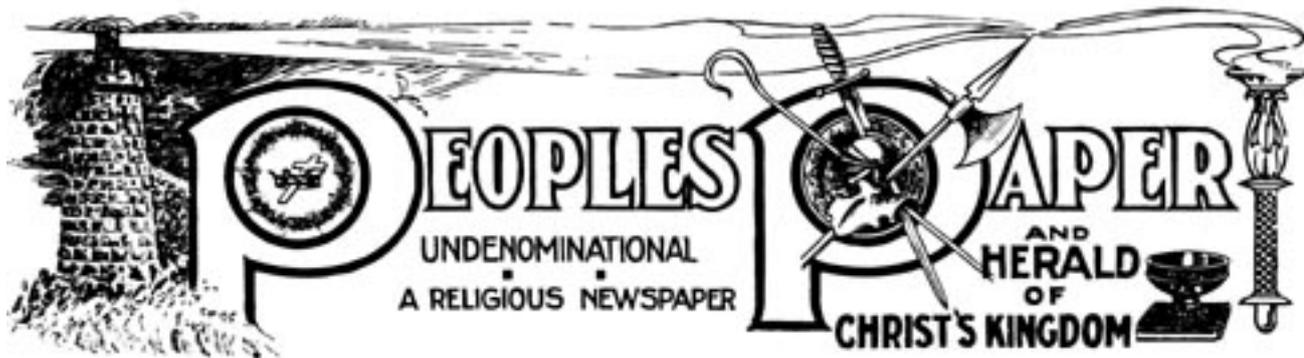
(4) “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit (the spirit of the Truth) unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently.”-1 Pet. 1:22.

This medicine is for those who have used the other prescriptions and gotten clean. It points out that the purity came not merely through hearing the Truth, nor through believing the Truth, but through obeying it. And not merely a formal obedience in outward ceremony and custom, and polished manner, but through obedience to the spirit of Truth—its real import. All this brought you to the point where the love of the “brethren” of Christ was unfeigned, genuine. At first you treated all with courtesy, or at least without impoliteness ; but many of them you did not like, much less did you love them ; they were poor or shabby, or ignorant, or peculiar. But obeying the spirit of the Truth you recognised that all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to the dear Redeemer and seeking to follow His leadings are “brethren,” regardless of race or colour or education or poverty or natural grace. You reached the point where your heart is so free from envy and pride and selfishness, and so full of the spirit of the Master that you can honestly say I love all the “brethren” with a love that is sincere and not at, all feigned.

Now having gotten thus far along in the good way, the Lord, through the Apostle, tells us what next — that we may preserve our hearts pure—“See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently (intensely).” Ah, yes, the pure heart must not be forgotten, else it might be but a step from pure love into a snare of the Adversary, carnal love. But the pure love is not to be cold and indifferent ; it is to be so warm and so strong that we would be willing to “lay down our lives for the brethren.”-1 John 3:16.

With such a love as this burning in our hearts there will be no room there for any selfish, envious thoughts or words or deeds. Oh, how blessed would all the gatherings of the “brethren” be if such a spirit pervaded all of them! Can we doubt that, if it held sway in one-half or one-third or even one-fourth, it would speedily exercise a gracious influence upon all—for righteousness and fidelity and love and peace, and against every strife, malice, slander and back-biting?

Let all the “brethren” more and more take these medicines which tend to sanctify and prepare us for the Master’s service here and hereafter.



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## **The Third Heaven.**

*“It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth ;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for man to utter.” (2 Cor. 12:1-4.),*

BEFORE investigating these verses which describe the wonderful experience of the Apostle Paul it is fitting to examine, to some extent, the extraordinary event of this Apostle’s conversion on the Damascus road. The full account is given in some detail in Acts 9. Briefly stated, the record reveals that while Paul was on a mission intent on persecuting the followers of Christ, he was confronted with a most amazing situation, as stated in verses 3 to 6 as follows—”And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus ; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest ; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”

In Damascus the Lord instructed a certain disciple, Ananias, to contact Saul and inform him that he was a chosen servant to serve His cause forthwith. Ananias at first objected that Saul had come on a mission of persecution of the Lord’s people, but the answer from the Lord was unmistakable—”Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Paul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou tamest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the holy spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” (Acts 9:15-20.)

Later, in Paul’s ministry for the Lord, in his defence before king Agrippa, we find the same information beautifully revealed by the Apostle. (See Acts 26:12-20.) In verse 19 we read—”Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” No, indeed ; what a lovely witness! This spontaneous acceptance by Paul of the Lord’s revelation to him, no doubt gained for him additional favours and blessings with increased revelations, which clearly marked the Apostle Paul as the most enlightened of all the apostles, next to the Lord Jesus Himself.

Again, in his letter to the Galatians, we find further helpful reference to Paul’s ministry under the influence of the holy spirit, as follows—”But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ . . . Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days . . . Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.” (See Gal. 1:11-24; 2:1, 2.)

We gather from the above references that the Apostle Paul was so fully under the guidance of the Lord, as a specially chosen vessel, and we are, then, somewhat prepared for his amazing statement contained in our text. Quoting another translation of this passage in 2 Cor. 12, it reads—”I am obliged to boast. It is not profitable, but I will proceed to visions and revelations of the Lord.” Then, in verse 11, he declares—”I have descended to folly, but you have compelled me. Why, you ought to have been my vindicators ; for in no respect have I been inferior to the pre-eminent apostles, even though I am nothing.” The Apostle seemed to feel he was foolish in being required to boast of his prominence in the service of the Lord through visions and revelations, but he claimed he was compelled to do so because of the Corinthians’ lack of appreciation of himself as the Lord’s representative and the vital message of truth

which he brought them. Even though Paul may have felt self-conscious in his boasting to some extent, yet, of course, he did all things as in the service of his Lord, and there can be no doubt that the record he sent to the Corinthian church has been most beneficial to many others as well, including ourselves.

Before examining our text, another statement from the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians is appropriate, as it is closely related to our subject. (See 1 Cor. 15:1-10.) Verse 8 reads—“And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” This occasion when Paul saw the Lord would seem to be when he was on the way to Damascus, and the Lord called a halt to his mission of persecution of the saints. Truly, it was “as of one born out of due time,” because the brilliance of our Lord’s appearance would have struck Paul dead, but for the protection given by the Lord Himself. However, He allowed just sufficient effect from the experience to give Paul the required lesson, and direct his zeal and devotion to the service of the true God.

The expression—“born out of due time”—implies that the Apostle saw the Lord, even though for a moment, just as he would see Him when raised to the spirit nature. Thus, Paul was given that privilege as though he was, for that moment, “born of the spirit.” Also, in 1 Cor. 9:1, we read—“Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?” So, while Paul had not seen Jesus while He was on earth, he did see Him in this most wonderful way, in glory—“as of one born out of due time.” Knowing thus of the Apostle’s extraordinary experiences at the time of his conversion on the way to Damascus and after, we can the better appreciate his words in our text passage in 2 Cor. 12—“I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.”

In reviewing the circumstances respecting these wonderful visions and revelations received by the Apostle, it is interesting to compare the early days of his Christian life, following the Damascus conversion, with the early part of Jesus’ ministry. In Matt. 3:16, 17 we read of Jesus’ baptism and receiving of the holy spirit, and in chapter 4 we find that our Lord was “led up of the spirit into the wilderness,” and that He fasted forty days—no doubt in communion with His Heavenly Father, that He may know and understand the Father’s will for Him during His earthly sojourn. Likewise, we have noted that Paul did not seek instruction from the other apostles when entering upon his ministry, but he “went into Arabia,” no doubt there to commune with the Lord and be guided in his important ministry. It would seem, then, that while the Apostle Paul was granted to see the Lord at the time of his conversion on the Damascus road, it would probably be in the Arabian wilderness that he received the amazing revelations we are about to examine in 2 Cor. 12.

From verse 2 we read again—“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell ; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth.” So amazing was this experience that Paul could not tell whether he was transported bodily, or carried away in the spirit, to behold what he relates as—“such an one caught up to the third heaven.”

There has been much speculation as to what Paul meant by being “caught up in the third heaven,” but from other Scriptures we are able to understand this matter quite clearly. Turning to 2 Pet. 3:5-13, we see how the Apostle Peter explains the various “heavens and earth” of the past, of the present, and of the future.

From verses 5 and 6 we read—“By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water ; whereby the world (kosmos—order of things, comprising heaven and earth) that then was, being overflowed with water, perished,”—at the time of the Flood in Noah’s day.

The Apostle Peter continues — “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, (at the time Peter wrote—`this present evil world’), by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men . . . The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works of man that are therein shall be burned up,”—symbolically speaking. (Verses 7, 10.) ,In this connection we call to mind the words of Jesus—“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matt. 24 :35.)

The Apostle adds — “Nevertheless we, according to God’s promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (Verse 13.) To sum up the matter from the Apostle Peter we find

The first heavens — prior to the Flood in Noah’s day.

The second heavens—from Noah’s day to the second advent of Christ.

The third heavens — the new heavens or spiritual ruling power in the age to come.

So, the Apostle Paul was carried forward in spirit on the stream of time to the third heaven, or period of the Kingdom Age, and it is little wonder that he could not tell whether he was taken bodily, or caught away in spirit.

In verses 3 and 4 of 2 Cor. 12, the Apostle repeats that he did not know how his “third heaven” experience was revealed, but—“He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” This is of added interest to us, that Paul mentioned he was “caught up into paradise,” as well as “caught up to the third heaven.”

In Rev. 2:7 we read—“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” This is a reference to the heavenly paradise, the inheritance of all the faithful overcomers of the Gospel Age. We can but wonder at the splendour of that heavenly paradise, but apparently Paul was given a preview, so to speak, and heard “unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter.” Yes, we can well realise that it would not be fitting to convey the scene of the heavenly paradise to earthly language, but this revelation was apparently given to Paul because of the great importance of his ministry to the early church, and throughout the Gospel Age, for the upbuilding of the church which is the Body of Christ. Even though we are not able to visualise the heavenly paradise, it does us good to contemplate the grandeur of that celestial scene with the various planes of

spirit beings, all doing loving and faithful service to God and to Christ on His Kingly throne of glory, encircled by His Bride. Then there would be the Great Company serving before the throne, and the multitude of heavenly hosts, including those who were restored to obedience through the judgment of Christ and His church.

Further, Paul would behold the earthly paradise restored, the whole earth being like the Garden of Eden, and mankind restored to the "image of God" from which Adam fell because of disobedience. We are reminded of the earthly paradise by the words of Jesus to the thief on the cross—"Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise." (Luke 23: 42, 43.) What a wonderful picture the restored world of humanity would also present to the Apostle in this revelation of the third heaven—"caught up into paradise." Surely we can rejoice as we contemplate the restored paradise on earth, as well as that of which we can grasp but little as respects the heavenly paradise.

We are reminded also that the Apostle John was given many wonderful visions by our Lord on the Isle of Patmos, so that he might record the Book of Revelation. He also was apparently carried forward on the stream of time to the "Lord's day"—the Kingdom Age—and looked back upon the scenes of this Gospel Age. (See Rev. 1:10.)

While the Lord's people generally are not granted visions and revelations such as Paul experienced, especially in this end of the age, yet they have much spiritual enlightenment and blessing from the Lord while still in the house of their pilgrimage, as they seek to know more and more about the wonderful heavenly treasures, as expressed by Paul—"God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And again—"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." (Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:12, 13.)

### **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary--Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

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## **Knowledge Shall Increase.**

THE wonderful achievement of the Russian scientists in hurling the earth-satellite into space to encircle the earth at the rate of about 18,000 miles an hour, at a height of about 560 miles, is certainly capturing the attention of millions of people throughout the world. The fact that this satellite has been seen by the naked eye quite readily, adds interest to such an accomplishment, which, along with so many happenings of this twentieth century, would have been thought sheer nonsense had it been deemed possible even twenty of thirty years ago.

A great number of people apparently have good cause to fear the ability of a foreign power to launch an earth-satellite, because it has been definitely stated that the mechanism to accomplish this could also launch intercontinental missiles. Thus it would now be possible to hurl projectiles capable of destroying the largest cities of the world from the other side of the globe. We are not surprised that a columnist in one of our Melbourne daily papers writes as follows :-

"Nearly two years ago, nine famous scientists, including Einstein, issued a warning to the world. 'Here, then, is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful and inescapable,' they said. 'Shall we put an end to the human race? Or shall mankind renounce war?' The presence overhead of an earth-satellite means the time to answer those questions is almost here."

The consideration of such startling inventions of our day is surely most appropriate for all thinking people, and to know the Plan of God respecting the outcome of all the achievements of mankind, which God in His wisdom has permitted at this particular time in the history of the human family, is truly most heart satisfying, and which the greatest inventions of man cannot disturb or terrify, for the simple reason that God's Plan is being worked out partly by the very accomplishments of His human creatures. A review of events leading up to present-day achievements and the ultimate outcome, as seen from the Bible record, is now presented from the study—"Divine Plan of the Ages"—which, it is thought, should prove both interesting and helpful to our readers. The extracts are as follows :—

"From a human standpoint we can account for modern inventions thus: The invention of printing, in A.D. 1440, may be considered the starting point. With the printing of books came records of the thoughts and discoveries of thinkers

and observers, which, without this invention, would never have been known to their successors. With books came a general education and, finally, common schools. Schools and colleges do not increase human capacity, but they do make mental exercise more general, and hence help to develop the capacity already possessed. As knowledge becomes more general and books more common, the generations possessing these have a decided advantage over previous generations; not only in that there are now a thousand thinkers to one formerly, to sharpen and stimulate each other with suggestions, but also in that each of the later generations has, through books, the combined experience of the past in addition to its own. Education and the laudable ambition which accompanies it, enterprise, and a desire to achieve distinction and a competency, aided by the record and descriptions of inventions in the daily press, have stimulated and brightened man's perceptive powers, and put each upon the alert to discover or to invent, if possible, something for the good and convenience of society. Hence we suggest that modern invention, looked at from a purely human standpoint, teaches, not an increase of brain capacity, but a sharpened perception from natural causes.

“And now we come to the Scriptures to see what they teach on the subject ; for while we believe, as suggested above, that invention and the increase of knowledge, etc., among men are the result's of natural causes, yet we believe that these natural causes were all planned and ordered by God long ago, and that in due time they have come to pass—by His overruling providence, whereby He ‘worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.’ (Eph. 1:11.) According to the plan revealed in His word, God purposed to permit sin and misery to misrule and oppress the world for six thousand years, and then in the seventh millennium to restore all things, and to extirpate evil—destroying it and its consequences by Jesus Christ, whom He hath afore ordained to do this work. Hence, as the six thousand years of the reign of evil began to draw to a close, God permitted circumstances to favor discoveries in the study of both His Book of Revelation and His Book of Nature, as well as in the preparation of mechanical and chemical appliances useful in the blessing and uplifting of mankind during the Millennial Age, now about to be introduced. That this was God's plan is clearly indicated by the prophetic statement: ‘O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; (then) many shall run to and fro, and KNOWLEDGE (not capacity) shall be increased,’ ‘and none of the wicked shall understand (God's plan and way), but the wise shall understand ;’ and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time.’—Dan. 12:1, 4, 10.

“To some it may appear strange that God did not so arrange that the present inventions and blessings should sooner have come to man to alleviate the curse. It should be remembered, however, that God's plan has been to give mankind a full appreciation of the curse, in order that when the blessing comes upon all they may forever have decided upon the unprofitableness of sin. Furthermore, God foresaw and has foretold what the world does not yet realise, namely, that His choicest blessings would lead to and be productive of greater evils if bestowed upon those whose hearts are not in accord with the righteous laws of the universe. Ultimately it will be seen that God's present permission of increased blessings is a practical lesson on this subject, which may serve as an example of this principle to all eternity—to angels as well as to restored men. How this can be, we merely suggest:

“First: So long as mankind is in the present fallen or depraved condition, without stringent laws and penalties and a government strong enough to enforce them, the selfish propensities will hold more or less sway over all. And with the unequal individual capacities of men considered, it cannot possibly happen otherwise than that the result of the invention of laboursaving machinery must, after the flurry and stimulus occasioned by the manufacture of machinery, tend to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. The manifest tendency is toward monopoly and self-aggrandisement, which places the advantage directly in the hands of those whose capacity and natural advantages are already the most favorable.

“Secondly: If it were possible to legislate so as to divide the present wealth and its daily increase evenly among all classes, which is not possible, still, without human perfection or a supernatural government to regulate human affairs, the results would be even more injurious than the present condition. If the advantages of labour-saving machinery and all modern appliances were evenly divided, the result would, ere long, be a great decrease of hours of labour and a great increase in leisure. Idleness is a most injurious thing to fallen beings. Had it not been for the necessity of labour and sweat of face, the deterioration of our race would have been much more rapid than it has been. Idleness is the mother of vice; and mental, moral and physical degradation are sure to follow. Hence the wisdom and goodness of God in withholding these blessings until it was due time for their introduction as a preparation for the Millennial reign of blessing. Under the control of the supernatural government of the Kingdom of God, not only will all blessings be equitably divided among men, but the leisure will be so ordered and directed by the same supernatural government that its results will produce virtue and tend upward towards perfection, mental, moral and physical. The present multiplication of inventions and other blessings of increasing knowledge is permitted in this ‘day of preparation’ to come about in so natural a way that men flatter themselves that it is because this is the ‘Brain Age ;’ but it will be permitted in great measure to work out in a manner very much to the disappointment, no doubt, of these wise philosophers. It is the very increase of these blessings that is already beginning to bring upon the world the time of trouble, which will be such as never has been since there was a nation.

“The prophet Daniel, as quoted above, links together the increase of knowledge and the time of trouble. The knowledge causes the trouble, because of the depravity of the race. The increase of knowledge has not only given the world wonderful labour-saving machinery and conveniences, but it has also led to an increase of medical skill whereby thousands of lives are prolonged, and it has so enlightened mankind that human butchery, war, is becoming less popular, and thus, too, other thousands are spared to multiply still further the race, which is increasing more rapidly today, perhaps, than at any other period of history. Thus, while mankind is multiplying rapidly, the necessity for his labour is decreasing correspondingly ; and the ‘Brain Age’ philosophers have a problem before them to provide

for the employment and sustenance of this large and rapidly increasing class whose services, for the most part supplanted by machinery, can be dispensed with, but whose necessities and wants know no bounds. The solution of this problem, these philosophers must ultimately admit, is beyond their brain capacity.

“Selfishness will continue to control the wealthy, who hold the power and advantage, and will blind them to common sense as well as to justice ; while a similar selfishness, combined with the instinct of self-preservation and an increased knowledge of their rights, will nerve some and inflame others of the poorer classes, and the result of these *blessings* will, for a time, prove terrible—a time of trouble, truly, such as was not since there was a nation—and this, because man in a depraved condition cannot properly use these blessings unguided and uncontrolled. Not until the Millennial reign shall have rewritten the law of God **in** the restored human heart will men be capable of using full liberty without injury or danger.

“The day of trouble will end in due time, when He who came to the raging Sea of Galilee will likewise, with authority, command the raging sea of human passion, saying, ‘Peace! Be still!’ When the Prince of Peace shall ‘stand up’ in authority, a great calm will be the result. Then the raging and clashing elements shall recognise the authority of ‘Jehovah’s Anointed,’ the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together ;’ and **in** the reign of Christ thus begun ‘shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’

“Then men will see that what they attributed to evolution or natural development and the smartness of the ‘Brain Age’ was, instead, the flashings of Jehovah’s lightnings (Psa. 77:18) in the day of his preparation’ for the blessing of mankind. But as yet only the saints can see, and only the wise in heavenly wisdom can understand this ; for ‘The secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) him ; and he will show them his covenant.’ (Psa. 25:14.) Thanks be to God, that while general knowledge has been increased, He has also arranged that His children need ‘not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord’ and in the appreciation of His plans. And by this appreciation of His Word and plans we are enabled to discern and to withstand the vain philosophies and foolish traditions’ of men which contradict the Word of God.

“The Bible account of man’s creation is that God created him perfect and upright, an earthly image of Himself ; that man sought out various inventions and defiled himself (Gen. 1:27; Rom. 5:12; Eccl. 7:29) ; that, all being sinners, the race was unable to help itself, and none could by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him (Psa. 49:7, 15) ; that God in compassion and love had made provision for this ; that, accordingly, the Son of God became a man, and gave man’s ransom-price ; that, as a reward for this sacrifice, and in order to the completion of the great work of atonement, He was highly exalted, even to the divine nature; and that in due time He will bring to pass a restitution of the race to the original perfection and to every blessing then possessed. These things are clearly taught in the Scriptures, from beginning to end, and are in direct opposition to the Evolution theory; or, rather, such ‘babblings of science, falsely so called,’ are in violent and irreconcilable conflict with the Word of God.”

## Correspondence.

**U.S.A., Aug. 13th, ‘57**

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren—Loving Christian Greetings. Once more it is my privilege and pleasure to be able, by our dear Lord’s goodness, to herein send you my check for            to help in a small way with the publishing of the little paper, “The Herald and Peoples Paper.”

Now, as I’m becoming so old (in 83rd year) I shall appreciate your continuing the sending of the “Paper” to me without my sending in renewal notice from time to time. Memory is not so good as formerly, and I do not wish to miss any copies of the pamphlet. It is my hope that you at the office may be able, by God’s grace, to go on publishing the paper for some time to come. By the obituary notices in different truth publications I note that so many of our dear brethren are going “Home,” or else health is failing, so that they are not able to continue with the work, and certain journals have ceased publishing, therefore we are becoming more dependent upon the few still able to continue sending out the truth as we learned it so many years ago.

I have been very sick since July, but some better now, praise the Lord. Please pray for me as I daily do for you all. Commending you to our Heavenly Father’s love. Your Sister in Him.

-----  
**England.**

My Dear Brother—Greetings in the Name of Jesus, our Dear Saviour. I almost feel ashamed of myself at times when I come face to face with my correspondence, which I am afraid I neglect very badly. Last Sunday evening I spent on the Notes of the Adelaide Convention, which made me feel very close to you in “Spirit and in Truth” even though we are separated by so many miles, and I resolved that I would get down to send you a few lines of acknowledgement for your letters.

It was very sweet of you to take so much trouble over my enquiry about the book “The Treasure of the Humble,” and I do sincerely thank you and the dear friend in Adelaide who so kindly procured it and sent it along via your good self.

Melbourne always brings back to me memories of my childhood days at the Church of England Sunday School which I attended with great regularity and at which I was awarded a book in which was a picture entitled “Christmas in Australia,” the picture being of children picnicking on a lovely sunny hillside in Melbourne.

Am sorry to say that I agree with your comments on the book ; that it is rather disappointing in its reading and does

not contain much to add to the precious truths which we so much treasure in these closing days of the Gospel Age ; certainly not in doctrine, and very little with which the Garments of Praise can be adorned. How blessed indeed we have been to have our eyes opened to the wonderful Harvest Truths which it has pleased our Loving Father to reveal in His own appointed way through channels of His own appointment.

We must not be like the little boy who was told to hold his brother's hand when crossing the street and insisted that he would be alright, he would hold his own hand and thus he crossed the street full of self-confidence. Our Father has had many faithful servants down through the years whom it has pleased Him to use, in various ways and not the least of them has been many of the hymn writers. The little incident of the boy and his self-confidence brings to mind that dear hymn No. 132 in the "Bible Students Hymnal"—"Hold Thou my hand! So weak I am and helpless," and the closing verse of that same hymn brings home the thoughts which must have impregnated the mind of John Bunyan in his "Pilgrim's Progress" which contains some thoughts which are bound to be helpful to one whose heart has been opened to the knock of the Master, and recognised in Him—"The Way, the Truth and the Life."

400.)

On August Bank Holiday Monday I went to Ilford to the Convention of the Aldersbrook Class at which there was an Immersion Service in the morning (4 candidates), and spent a lovely and inspiring day with about 80 dear ones of like precious faith. (A very sound Class there.)

With Acts 20:32 I must conclude, sending you sincere Christian Greetings in which my dear wife joins, and our prayers continually ascend to the throne of heavenly grace with Numbers 6:24-26 on our lips for you and all His dear saints everywhere. Pray for us also; we need them and your love in Christ. In whom I remain your Brother, by divine favour.

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Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I have recently been introduced by an old friend to some of your literature. I have read "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and it interested me greatly. I am afraid my brain has become rusty of late years, as I do not grasp things quickly. Without help I find the Bible difficult to follow, but I would give much to find that peace of mind and spiritual happiness I have seen in some few others. I "gave away" all churches years ago, because I felt they had nothing to offer; I still think the same . . . .

We are living "in the bush" and as I have young children, it is not easy for me to get out very often. Finances at the moment are "below par" so I cannot send anything to you, but my friend assured me there was no "Welles Scheme" attached to your group, so may I leave it to you to send me whatever papers you think would be helpful to me.

I do not now send my children to Sunday School, as I refused to force them, and also I am not in favour of what is taught at any of them, but it does worry me. What am I to teach them? I do hope you can give me some help, it's awful to be just drifting on any old current. Yours very sincerely.

(The Bible stories "God's Promises Come True" and other smaller books are most helpful to assist in conveying the truths of the Bible to children.—B.B.Institute.)-

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Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother—I have received the parcel of books, "Divine Plan of the Ages" and the booklets for which I am truly thankful. I would like you to send me if possible "The Book of Books" reviewing the Bible as a whole. Enclosed please find cheque, any balance from this and my other letter please put it forward as a donation for the work. Thanking you again. Yours sincerely in Christ.

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Dear Sir—Would you please accept the enclosed small donation to the cost of 3GL Sunday morning broadcasts. They remind me very much of the books "Divine Plan of the Ages" which I read many years ago with great profit. One does not expect the broadcasts to be successful in a commercial sense, but it is nice to know they are appreciated; hence this letter. Yours sincerely.

-----  
Dear Friend—Thank you very much for the last package of Frank and Ernest Biblical Dialogues and copies of the "Peoples Paper" you sent me. Thank you also for the book you left the last time you were out—"The Atonement Between God and Man." It is a wonderful book, and has made things clear to me that I did not understand before. Have you any other similar book you could let me have? I particularly like the sound of the one listed—"The New Creation"—but would be quite happy to receive anything else instead that you care to send. Small covering cheque enclosed. Once again my most grateful thanks. Yours very sincerely.

-----  
Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly send me a copy of the discussion given this morning from radio station 3GL? I listen to your broadcasts whenever possible, and find them very helpful. This morning a friend called while the session was on and I was able to hear only the beginning and the end. If still available may I have a copy of the talk "The Lamb that was slain" and the one of the following Sunday. Thanking you in anticipation and blessings on your witness. Yours sincerely.

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Frank and Ernest—I listen to your broadcasts on 3GL Geelong on Sunday morning, and find much help in my Bible study. "The Lamb that was slain" was a topic taken by you last week, and I would like a copy of it please.

Can you also explain to me what the holy spirit is ; and is this the spirit people say they have when they love God as their Saviour and govern their life by His laws? To find a place in the Kingdom of heaven is it necessary to be baptized





**Volume XL. No. 10 MELBOURNE. OCTOBER, 1957**

**Price—Fivepence**

**A Practical Self-Examination on Love.**

*“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves.”-2 Cor. 13:5.*

IT seems impossible to describe love, this wonderful quality without which nothing is acceptable in the sight of God! The Apostle does not attempt to define love, but contents himself with giving us some of its manifestations. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it. The fact is that love, like life and light, is difficult to define ; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of its effects. It is of God ; it is godlikeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts — supervising all the human attributes and seeking to control them. Where love is lacking, the results are more or less evil; where love is present, the results differ according to the degree of love, and are proportionately good.

In the Christian an outward manifestation of amiability, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., is not sufficient, either in God’s sight or in his own. These graces must be produced by the spirit of love, filling and expanding within his own heart. Many of the graces of the spirit are recognised by the unregenerate and are imitated as marks of good breeding, and in many cases are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments wholly antagonistic to the holy spirit of love.

The measure of our appreciation of divine love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of divine love enters the heart, before that grace is manifest in all the thoughts and words and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may, without the grace of God within, have many of the outward refinements. None but Him who reads the heart is competent, therefore, to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts ; but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten of this holy spirit, love, should seek to let its light so shine out, through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify his Father in Heaven and “show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.”-1 Pet. 2:9.

Amongst the “gifts” of early Apostolic times, prophecy, or oratory, was one highly commended, and large faith was reckoned as being amongst the chief of Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and Love were absent, he would be nothing — a mere cypher—not a member of the new creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature.

What a wonderful test this is ! The Apostle Paul counsels, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves.” Let us each apply the test to himself: Whether I am something or nothing in God’s estimation is to be measured by my love for Him, for His brethren, for His cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, rather than by my knowledge, or fame, or oratory!

Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy spirit of love ; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measure of character, therefore, we are to put Love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness to and acceptance with the Lord.

**Love is the Secret of True Politeness**

Having given us such a conception of the importance of Love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates and how it does not operate, or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself and inquire within:

Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerably and for a long time, and yet to be kind? Am I patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions? Am I patient even with those who are out of the way, realising that the great adversary blinds the minds of the masses and remembering that this manifestation of love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus, who was patient with His opponents?

Am I kind in my thoughts, seeking to guard my manner and my tones, knowing that they have much to do with

every affair of life? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts? Do I think of and am I considerate of others? Do I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle in the home, in his place of business, in the Church—everywhere. In proportion as perfect love is attained the constant effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of patience and kindness. With the child of God these qualities are not to be mere outward adornments, they cannot be ; on the contrary, they are fruits of the spirit—growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, having learned of Him, received of His spirit of holiness, of love.

Have I the love that “envieth not,” the love that is generous, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if, for a time, my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is true generosity, the very reverse of jealousy and envy, which spring from a perverted nature. The root of envy is selfishness; envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love rejoices with them that rejoice, in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and in the divine service of all who are actuated by the divine spirit.

Have I the love that is humble, that “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up”? the love that tends to modesty, that is not boastful, not lifted up? Have I the love that would prompt to good deeds, not to be seen of men, but that would do the same if no one saw or knew but God only? that boasts neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the

Father? And do I make return to Him in love and service for every mercy? Boasting over self-esteem has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is the spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate one’s self, and not to think too highly of his character and attainments.

Have I the love which is courteous, “doth not behave itself unseemly”? Pride is the root out of which grows much of the unseemly conduct, impoliteness, so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Politeness has been defined as love in trifles ; courtesy as love in little things. The secret of politeness is either surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have heart-love which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love which is unselfish, which “seeketh not her own” interests exclusively, which might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others? or have I, on the contrary, the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the conveniences, comfort and rights of others ? To have love in this particular, means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and will prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong; to suffer an injustice than to do an injustice.

### **Love Begins at Home**

Nothing in this signifies that one should neglect the caring for and providing in every way for those dependent upon him by the ties of nature, in order that he may do good to others. In every sense, “love begins at home.” The proper thought, as we gather it, is that men and women, possessed of the spirit of perfect love, would not think exclusively of their own interests in any of the affairs of life. Put into exercise, this element of Love would have a great influence upon all the affairs of life, inside as well as outside the home and family.

Have I the love which is good tempered, “not easily provoked” to anger—love that enables me to see both sides of a question, that gives me the spirit of a sound mind, which enables me to perceive that exasperation and violent anger are not only unbecoming but, worse than that, injurious to those toward whom they may be directed, and also injurious in their effect upon my own heart and body?

There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and ...his might come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense, in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised for a loving purpose for doing good, but, it should be exercised then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not either with our lips, or in our hearts, in which, at no time, may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments towards those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offence. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love ; and whoever is on the Lord’s side and seeking to be pleasing to Him and to attain to an overcomer’s position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered, or willingly harbored, or not fought against, it becomes an evidence of a deficiency and imperfection of our development in the holy spirit of our Father, and of the deficiency of our likeness to our Lord Jesus, our Pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive from one’s self as much kindness and as many excuses for their continuance as this one. But however much natural depravity and heredity and nervous disorders may tend toward this spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord’s spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage . a good warfare against it.

It will not do to say, “It is my way,” for all the “ways” of the fallen nature are bad ; and it is the business of the new creature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the devil. In few ways can we show to our friends and households more than in this the power of the grace of love. This grace, as it grows, should make every child of God sweet tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

## **Love Thinks No Evil**

Have I the spirit of love which “thinketh no evil,” which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, not attributing to them evil motives? Have I the love which seeks always to interpret the conduct of others charitably, to make all possible allowance for errors in judgment rather than to impugn the motives of the heart? Perfect love is good intentioned itself; it prefers and, so far as possible, endeavors to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. “Faults are thick where love is thin” is a very wise prover.).

But where love passes over offences and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this does not mean that love would treat evildoers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper, or even necessary, to take some notice of the offences to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested — nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible, doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

### **“Love Rejoiceth Not in Iniquity”**

Have I the love that is sincere, that “rejoiceth not in iniquity (in-equity), but rejoiceth in the truth”? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with right, and so out of harmony with the wrong, that I am grieved with evils wherever encountered and sympathise with all who fall into evil or who are beset with temptations? Am I so opposed to wrong that I would not encourage it even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests?

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the holy spirit, perfect love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness or goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect “love rejoiceth not in iniquity” under any circumstances or conditions and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own advancement.

The love of God, which the Apostle here describes as the spirit of the Lord’s people, is a love which is far above all selfishness and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more distinctly discerned and always firmly adhered to at any cost. However profitable error might be, love could take no part in it, and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the truth of divine revelation, however unpopular the truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cost the loss of friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of love has such an affinity for the truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the truth or its servants. In the Lord’s estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of Him or ashamed of His Word; and of all such He declares that He will be ashamed when He comes to be glorified in His saints.

Have I the love that “beareth all things”? that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin, and everything that is contrary to Love? that is both able and willing to endure, for the cause of God, reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death? “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith”—the very life and centre of which faith is the holy spirit of love for the Lord and for those that are His and, sympathetically, for the world. Perfect love can bear up under all circumstances and, by God’s grace, bring us off conquerors and “more than conquerors through him that loved us.”-1. John 5:4; Rom. 8:37.

### **Love is Not Suspicious**

Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced to do so by indisputable evidences? that would rather believe good than evil about everybody? that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Perfect love is not suspicious, but is, on the contrary, disposed to be trustful. It acts on the principle that it is better, if necessary, to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspect even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition, as applied to thoughts; and of it the Master said, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matt. 5:7.) The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct towards others.

Have I the love that “hopeth all things,” perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that “endureth all things,” that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance? Perfect love is not easily discouraged. This is the secret of Love’s perseverance: having learned of God, and having become a partaker of His holiness, it trusts in Him and hopes undismayed for the fulfilment of His gracious covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings.

This hopeful element of love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged or put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. Love’s hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the veil, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages.

Let us, Beloved, with all our getting, get love—not merely in word, but in deed and in truth—the love whose roots are in the new heart, begotten in us by our Heavenly Father’s love, and exemplified in the words and deeds of our dear

Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross unless, with all, we secure love. (From "Reprints.")

## **Melbourne Christmas Convention.**

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. }ham, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

### **Greeting Cards.**

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards. The price is 3/- per dozen, post paid; orders may be placed by quoting numbers, as follows

- (1) "Just for To-day,"
- (2) "One Here and There,"
- (3) "How Readest Thou?,"
- (4) "The New Leaf,"
- (5) "The Best of Wishes—Faith—Hope—Love,"
- (6) "Drop a Pebble in the Water,"
- (7) "My Bible and I,"
- (8) "Love's Victory,"
- (9) "The Touch of the Master's Hand,"
- (10) "Some Worthy Attainments,"
- (11) "Come Unto Me."
- (12) "Somewhere the Light is Shining,"
- (13) "The Secret of His Presence."
- (14) "Watching and Praying,"
- (15) "Thus May He Bless and Keep Thee,"
- (16) "Not Seeing, Yet Believing,"
- (17) "Hitherto and Henceforth,"
- (18) "The Lord My Shepherd,"
- (19) "Into His Marvellous Light,"
- (20) "Right was The Pathway,"
- (21) "This is My Will for Thee."
- (10) "Are Ye Able?"

### PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, post paid.

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

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

## **Christian Fellowship.**

(Excerpt Convention Report, 1929.)

. . . . Toleration is not enough. Sometimes we hear the value of toleration praised in high terms, and we certainly agree that toleration is a great deal better than intolerance, but toleration is not fellowship. What kind of a time would I be describing to absent friends if I told them of the wonderful way in which the friends at this Convention had tolerated me? They would not think that I had had such a wonderful time after all, would they? It would be apparent that only by a considerable strain on their Christian forbearance had the conventioners managed to put up with me for three days. My experience would not be exactly what we would understand by the word fellowship.

When the Apostle John (1 John 1:3) speaks of fellowship with "us," I understand that he had reference to the fellowship of spirit which exists in the Christ Company. As our first thought in this connection let us consider 2 Cor. 5:16, 'Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh.' We are still in the flesh, each of us trying to "keep the body under," and the fellowship we have is the fellowship of spirit. If I meet with brethren who are striving to walk in the footsteps of Christ, handicapped as we all are by reason of birth, education, environment, etc., the fellowship I have with them is not after the flesh but in our mutual attempt to grow more and more like Christ. So with the Psalmist I rejoice to say, "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee and keep Thy precepts."

In Phil. 2:1 the Apostle speaks of fellowship of the spirit. As illustrating this: Suppose I have been absent from a brother for a year or so, and during that time I have been seeking to grow more and more like Christ, to develop more of His spirit of humility and of truth. I have been trying to get more of the spirit of holiness in my life, more of the spirit of liberty, more of the spirit of joy in bearing the fruit of the spirit and in helping others, more of the spirit of patience, more of the spirit of peace.

Suppose, when I meet this brother, I find he has been striving likewise and that as a result the mellowing influence of God's holy spirit in him is manifest to me as the mellowing influence of God's holy spirit in me is manifest to him. Is there not fellowship of spirit? There is, indeed. There is nothing else on earth quite like it.

There are some places where they are not so well educated—they spell the word fellowship differently. In the dictionary it begins with “f,” but there are some who begin it with “g,” and they go on in this way—g-o-s-s-i-p spells fellowship. That is not the kind of fellowship with which we wish to have anything to do.

Another point I have noted down for myself is, try and be a better listener—to listen in a way that shows I am giving full attention. If one's mind is preoccupied he may appear to be listening when others are speaking to him when actually his mind is too much filled with other matters to be of any real comfort to the one who may be seeking sympathy or attention. A father was reading a newspaper when his little child wished to tell him something, and he attempted to hold conversation with her while still reading the newspaper. “Listen, Father,” said the little girl, tugging at his coat sleeve. “I am listening,” he said, continuing to have his eyes glued to the newspaper. “Ah, but I want you to listen with your eyes, too,” she replied. And so in order to have more of the fellowship of my brother in Christ I am determined to give more of my fellowship to him and this will empty my life of all the things that centre around self, that I may be free indeed to fellowship with my brethren in a way that will mean something to them.

### **Books Available.**

“God's Promises Come True”—11.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages”—Cloth bound 4/6; paper covers 2/9.

“Emphatic Diaglott” — New Testament —18/-.

“Our Lord's Great Prophecy”—1/- . “Manner of Christ's Return”—1/- . “Christ's Return”—1/- .

“Some of the Parables”—1/- .

“God and Reason”—1/- .

**Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.**

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19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.**

## **Know of the Doctrine**

*“If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.”—John 7:17.*

WE are living in a day when the very word doctrine seems to be offensive to the majority of Christian people. Each denomination realises that its own system of doctrines is imperfect, unsatisfactory, undependable. And the same is believed in respect of all other doctrines. Hence, by mutual consent Christian people seem disposed to henceforth and forever ignore doctrines ; for they believe that, if after nineteen centuries they are thus confused, the matter never was clear and never will be clear to anybody.

All this is a great mistake ; the doctrines of Christ, as presented by the Great Teacher and His Apostles, was a great message, of which none of them was ashamed. The difficulty with the Lord's people today is that we gradually fell away from those doctrines—we gradually put darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus gradually got into the spirit of Babylon, and into the spirit of bondage to human traditions and creeds. Instead of shunning doctrines, we should realise that they are the very things needed to cause the scattering of our darkness and superstitions, and to draw all of God's people nearer together.

The doctrines of Christ and the Apostles are what we need to inspire us to break down all our creed fences, which so long have separated us as God's people, the one from the other, in various denominational folds, all which are contrary to the Divine arrangement ; for God has but the one fold for all His “Sheep” of this Age, as He will have another fold for the Restitution “sheep” of the next Age—the Messianic Kingdom Age.

Can we doubt that if as God's people we put away sectarianism and the creed spectacles of our forefathers, and if we go with pure, sincere hearts to the Lord and His Word, we will there find again the “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father over all, and one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” and “one Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven”? (Eph. 4:5,6; Heb. 12:23). Let us hearken to the words : “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward,” “But remember the former days, in which ye endured a great fight of afflictions ; partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and by afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.” “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” (Heb. 10:35, 32, 33, 36).

The time seems long to all of us, even though we remember that “a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” When we think of the fact that it is thirty-nine hundred years since God's promise to Abraham that his Seed should bless all the families of the earth—when we think of the fact that Israel did not receive that great privilege of being the spiritual Seed from which primarily that blessing should go forth, and that the “elect” are receiving it ; when we think of the fact that God has been over nineteen centuries in selecting the “elect” from Israel and from all nations, it is enough to

stagger our faith unless we hold firmly to the Divine promise and remember that God confirmed it with an Oath. By these two immutable, unchangeable things, the Divine Word and the Divine Oath, we know that the Seed of Abraham is to be developed, and that eventually it is to bless all the families of the earth. It is the Divine will that we allow our faith in this great promise of God to be “an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil.”—Heb. 6:19.

What we all need as God’s people is to put away human theories and other gospels and take hold afresh on the Gospel of Christ. These other gospels are other messages of hope, aside from the one which the Bible presents. For instance, Theosophy is one of these ; Evolution is another ; New Theology is another. These all hold out a different gospel from that which Jesus and the Apostles presented; the one that was given to us for our sanctification, and through the holding fast of which, and the obedience to The Faith, we are to be saved and given a share with Messiah in His glorious Empire of the world.

The doctrines of Christ mean those doctrines presented in the Bible by Jesus and His mouthpieces, the Apostles. These doctrines relate to the Church and to the world, and God’s blessing for each ; these doctrines relate to sin and its forgiveness; the terms of that forgiveness, the basis of that forgiveness—the death of Jesus—and the hope of that forgiveness, release from Divine condemnation, fellowship with God, and everlasting life obtained through a resurrection of the dead.

But some one will inquire, Why is it so difficult to understand the doctrines of Christ? Why are there so many different denominations of Christians? Why do they all so misunderstand the matter—that the different denominations have resulted from the differences of theory respecting the teachings of the Bible? The simple explanation is that, shortly after the death of the Apostles, when the Church began to be in a measure of prosperity, the Adversary came in and sowed the seeds of false doctrines, using human lips and human pens in his service, through pride and ambition. The darkness became so great that, looking back today, we speak of the period as the “Dark Ages.”

The various denominations of Christendom are evidences of honesty, perseverance and love of the Truth, because our forefathers, who made these creeds, were each trying to get more and more out of the dark and back to the “True Light.” They all made the mistake, however, of holding too much to the creeds and theories of the past. Let us not make the same mistake; let us cut loose entirely from every authority outside the Word of God. Whoever can help us understand God’s Word—we should be glad to have his assistance ; but we cannot acknowledge as inspired or authoritative the teachings of the “Fathers” of the early times however conscientious they may have been, because we cannot recognise that there were any such authorised successors to the Apostles.

God, who foretold through the Prophets this long period of darkness, and who has blessed and guided His saintly children throughout it, without removing all of their blindness, has promised that with the end of this Age will come a great blessing and enlightenment upon His people, when the “wise virgins” will find their lamps burning brightly, and be able to understand and appreciate the deep things of God: “The wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand.” In the end of this Age the curtain was to be drawn, and the “true light” was to shine forth, scattering all the darkness. We are in the close of this Age today, and therefore may see much more clearly than did our forefathers, the Divine character and Plan for human salvation.

Our text is a message from the Master’s own lips. He gives us the key to a clear knowledge of His doctrines, namely, that the student must be fully consecrated to God and fully desirous of knowing His Will and His Plan. In order to see light in God’s light—to see the Truth, from the Divine standpoint of the Divine revelation, we must draw near to God in the spirit of our minds, consecrated in our heart. We must will to do His will.

But what does this mean? What is it to will to do His will? God’s will represents actual perfection of thought and word and deed, toward God, toward our fellows in the Body of Christ, and toward all mankind. This is the Divine Standard set up, but we are no more able to fill its demands than were the Jews. As St. Paul declares, “We cannot do the things that we would.” Weakness of the flesh, frailty and imperfection, we all have with the world; the best that we can do is to will to do right, and to the best of our ability carry out that covenant with the Lord to do His will. At the very best all will come short of perfection.

But for those who have come into harmony with God, through Christ—for those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice—for those who have Jesus for their Advocate, a provision has been made, whereby the willing, all desiring to do the Divine will, and manifesting endeavors so to do, are counted as righteous—as though they did the Divine will perfectly. This class, in the Scriptures, is known as the “saints”; they are the prospective members of the Body of Christ. It is to these that the promises of our text apply, that they shall will to do the Divine will, shall know whether Jesus merely made up these teachings of Himself, or whether He was the active agent of Jehovah in what He did and in what He taught.

Shall we not, then, determine to give our hearts, our wills, fully to the Lord—determine in our wills to do God’s will? If so, following the instructions of the Word of God, we shall doubtless be blessed and enabled fully to know, to appreciate, to understand, the doctrines of Christ—the deep things of God, which are revealed to this class by the spirit of God.

### **Bible Study Meetings.**

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

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

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

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.  
Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

## The Find.

“Mother, I’ve found an old dusty thing  
High on the shelf—just look!”  
“Why, that’s a Bible, Tommy dear,  
Be careful, that’s God’s book.”  
“God’s book,” the child exclaimed,  
“Then, mother, before we lose it.  
We’d better send it back to God,  
For you know we never use it.”  
—”The Churchman.”

## RADIANCE

The shining face is no mystery. Centuries ago the Psalmist knew the secret, and wrote, “They looked to him and were ‘radiant.’” “It comes to those whose faces are always turned toward Christ, as a flower turns toward the light. It was said at the time the Boxer rebellion that Chinese Christians could not be disguised—the light in their faces betrayed them. The pity of it, that every Christian may not be known by the shining of his face!

## Dwelling in the Lord.

TO dwell in Christ means to be in the closest relationship with Him; there must be agreement, harmony, and unity of purpose, producing a feeling of confidence and goodwill. The closeness of this relationship is shown clearly in the beautiful illustration of the vine and its branches. The vine is the stem or trunk that produces and supports the branches which bear the fruit. The branch is part of the vine, with which it must remain connected. “Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” (John 15:4.) Here the word “abide” has the same meaning as the word “dwelleth” in 1 John 3:24, for we surely dwell in God as we continue to abide in Christ.

We dwell or abide in Him by doing His will, keeping His commandments, and He abides or dwells in us. This union is a double one—we in Him and He in us. To establish and maintain this union it is necessary to keep His commandments; God cannot dwell in us unless we dwell in Him. “If a man love me, he will keep my words ; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23.)

In Psalm 37:3, we read, “Trust in the Lord, and do good ; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.” Here also is implied a spirit of concord without which God’s bounty could not be enjoyed. His commandments must be kept, then the promise of peace and plenty would be fulfilled.

Further the prophet says, “He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly ; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil ; he shall dwell on high : his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks : bread shall be given him ; his water shall be sure.” (Isa. 33:15, 16.) Again the condition attached to the promise is righteousness, and he who does righteously has the spirit of God and dwelleth in Him. Under the dispensation existing at the time of the Psalmist and Prophet, the promises were earthly, and to enjoy God’s favour it was necessary to keep His commandments, just as it is now, if we would receive His spiritual favours.

“And hereby we know that he abideth in us by the spirit which he hath given us.” In Rom. 8:9 and 14, we read: “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you ; for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Being led by the spirit of God is abundant evidence of the inward presence of God’s spirit which leads us to seek those things which are above rather than mind the things of the earth..

## Christian Way Ended

Word has been received of the passing of our elderly Sister Thorpe, who had resided with her son and family in Gippsland, Victoria, since coming to Australia from England about eight years ago.

Sister Thorpe had attended one of the Melbourne Conventions a few years ago, and made the acquaintance of a good number of the brethren; her sincerity and love for the Lord and His truth was very manifest indeed. Our dear Sister had rejoiced in the truth for many years prior to coming to Australia, and we trust for her an abundant entrance into the Kingdom by the Lord’s grace.

Failing health in recent years had prevented Sister Thorpe from leaving the home in Gippsland, but her letters were always cheerful, and one of the Apostle Paul’s lovely texts was always in her mind; she certainly rejoiced in it, and quoted it freely—”And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.” (Rom. 8:28.) Sincere sympathy is extended to our Sister’s relatives, who also appreciated the Christian qualities shown by Sister Thorpe during her sojourn in the home. “Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

“He always wins who sides with God,  
 To him no chance is lost;  
 God’s will is sweetest to him when  
 It triumphs at his cost.  
 Ill that He blesses is our good,  
 And unblest good is ill;  
 And all is right that seems most wrong,  
 If it be His sweet will.

—Farrar.



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**“A Full Reward.”**

*“Look to yourselves that ye lose not the things that we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward.”-2 John 8 (R.V).*

THE Scriptures tells us in regard to the A Gospel Age, that while the special purpose of God has been the choosing of the New Creation—the Little Flock ; yet when the Age ended there will be manifest two complete classes—not only the little flock, but also a great company—the latter made up of candidates called to be of the little flock, but who, having failed to attain through not completing their covenant, will be brought, through the grace and provision of the Lord, into a place of servants of the Church—the overcomers. Little prominence in the Scriptures is given to this class, because no one is called to belong to it. “Ye are all called in one hope of your calling.”

We find them, however, pictured frequently ; as in the calling of the bride of Isaac—which pictured the calling of the Bride of Christ ; Rebekah here pictured the Church—Christ’s Bride, and those maids or companions who accompanied her picturing the Great Company—”the Virgins, her companions that follow her.” Psalm 45.

Again, in the two sons of Rachel—Joseph and Benjamin, the former, who attained to Kingdom power and authority, etc., picturing those who shall inherit the Kingdom; whereas Benjamin, the second son, was born through a period of severe travail on his mother, whose death resulted : and pictured the birth of the Great Company—the tribulation class ; at the time of whose deliverance the present Age and Order will “die” and vanish away.

And this one calling—what is it? It is something which can only be realised by faith, and personally claimed as one’s own, because we see it so clearly set forth in the Word of God, and have in ourselves the witness of the holy spirit marking our adoption, and being to us a pledge of our future inheritance. “If sons, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.”

It is manifest that the New Testament writers would have, us both fully and constantly realise our calling of God, the favour of it, the greatness of it, and the standard character for it.

The favour of our calling is referred to by Eph. 2:7: “That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us in Jesus Christ.” “No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron.”

Thinking of the greatness of our calling, we read of it as a heavenly calling, a high calling; and again, “Eye hath not

seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love Him.” And Paul’s prayer of Eph. 1:8 is that we might know “what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.”

Can we grasp with all seriousness and solemnity our standing, our hope, God’s purpose in regard to us ; for we have been “apprehended” by God, seized hold of by Him. He has called us, which manifests He sees in us the possibility we may become of the Kingdom class ; or we would never have been invited of Him. How inspiring are the words of Paul and his example, “I, too, am seeking to apprehend that for which I have been apprehended of God. I can see His work in progress. I realise what it all means, and I am going to do all in my power to attain, working out my own salvation with fear and trembling.”

How the Apostle seeks to urge us to realise the necessity for a walk in keeping with our calling; that our conduct might correspond to, and manifest a realisation of our great favour, great calling; the high requirements of us. Examples of such exhortations occur in 2 Cor. 7 :1; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; Eph. 4:1 ; 1 Thes. 2:11, 12. If, then, we are to daily recognise what we have been called to, and for what we are on trial, how serious is our position—what dignity, caution, reverence, we need. What manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godliness!

When we realise that all who are called may attain the prize (for their calling signifies this), when we think that God has promised to supply all things needful through Christ Jesus, and when we think (as it seems but reasonable to think) that all who clearly see the wonderful prize, would earnestly desire it ; yet to be warned that the majority of those who run for the prize fail to attain; what grave dangers must surely lurk in the way—subtle snares and foes. And any failure can only be attributed to ourselves, for “God is faithful.” And it is proper for us to recognise the danger of failing; to fear lest a promise having been left us of entering into His rest we should seem to come short of it. (Heb. 4:1.) And Paul himself declared (1 Cor. 9:27) ; “I keep my body under lest by any means after I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway.”

The Word of God as a faithful chart indicates where the dangers of our course lie, telling us where many make shipwreck and others are seriously detained. What, then, are some of the causes tending to the missing of the full reward? All of us seem alert to the danger of a complete falling-away; the danger of the second death through an insurrection of the flesh; or wilful sinning; but we seem less alert to the second line of danger—that of missing the full reward. Many of us seem even to have ourselves allotted to the great company, feeling so keenly the greatness of the high calling standard. However, our calling and possibility are of the Lord; hence it seems that we should earnestly hope and strive to attain the full reward, even that for which God called us.

In the verse above quoted (1 Cor. 9) Paul says, “I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, lest I myself should be a castaway.” Again we read (1 Cor. 5:5) : He hands one over to Satan “for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved.” What is the danger here indicated? It is “the flesh”; the danger of not crucifying the flesh entirely. What is our position in this connection? Our covenant of sacrifice unto the Lord signifies that we have let go of the things of the flesh, renounced them, become dead to the human hopes, aims and ambitions. “Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.” “Not to ourselves again, not to the flesh we live.” This is spoken of as a crucifixion of the flesh. (See Gal. 5:24.)

Like any covenant or contract, the arrangement entered into is a binding one. God on His part is faithful, and to us He has given witness of the holy spirit, a pledge to us of God’s faithfulness and speaking to us of a spirit birth and heavenly glory—if we carry out faithfully all the terms of our contract. Ours is a serious position, requiring determination, zeal, faith and love.

And here we see the danger confronting us, and see where the great company come in, for many fail to adhere to their covenant ; they do not wilfully break their agreement, but are not just sufficiently particular and careful. And while such, as are pictured away back in the scapegoat of Israel, are specially dealt with in mercy and goodness and brought to a position of “servants before the throne,” yet the lesson stands plainly before us, that the terms of the spiritual hopes are the sacrifice of the flesh ; there can be no holding back.

A second point of danger is indicated in Rev. 7, where in speaking of the great company and of God’s dealings with them, it is said that they wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. The washing signifies that the robes had become soiled, and we think of the message to us to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world.” “Ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world.” Ye are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people, called out, separated, sanctified. Right through the age many of the Lord’s people have tended toward the world, as a result of which we see the great system known to men as Christendom and in God’s Word as Babylon ; and surely we can all see our individual responsibility to maintain a separateness from the world ; the line cannot be too tightly drawn nor too cautiously guarded. “The friendship of the world is enmity with God.” But how many get entangled and retarded by striving to walk pleasing to the Lord and to the world also. How impossible a task ; how can we, who have been translated out of this kingdom or world, any longer walk in harmony with its spirit ?

Let us beware also of the defilements of sin and guard ourselves, letting not the spots of sin remain upon our robes, but applying continually the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, so that we may eventually be of that happy company, presented “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” And then, on the other hand, how many helpful suggestions are given to us ; how much advice to enable us to be of the full reward class. What characteristics mark this class and are factors in their attainment?

(1) Decision is undoubtedly a big help. If we have with clearness of mind taken up the matter to realise what our consecration really means, and can constantly, clearly keep a proper viewpoint—God’s viewpoint ; if we can realise we have cut ourselves off from the flesh and the world; let neither of these then influence our decisions or actions. Our

position leaves no room for debate; we are serving God after the spirit.

(2) Closely allied is the thought of singleness of purpose. "This one thing I do." Paul did not attempt to serve other masters nor to divide his service with self. In the obtaining of the pearl of great price everything else must go.

(3) Paul's words and example are continually of value to us, as in Philippians 3. He tells us that he was forgetting the things behind; and no doubt Paul found it hard, like many of us. But hardness did not count; it was necessary to the attaining of the prize, and that was the all-important point. Sometimes with ourselves, when things go hard and the troubles come hard and frequent, we are apt, if not watchful, to sigh and look back. But let us look right onward, not backward; neither on the trouble and things around. "While we look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen."

(4) In Heb. 12:1 we are urged to lay aside every weight. And here Paul is showing the absolute necessity of laying aside every fetter and obstacle; anything which might unduly and contrary to God's will occupy our time, attention and affection. To be of the full reward company, it is manifest we must not allow ourselves to be interfered with, whatever the natural tendencies or weaknesses may be, and that our mind be quite free and open to serve God, unfettered by allegiance to any earthly head; free in heart and mind for a personal, independent, sincere, acceptable worship and service of our God.

(5) We are frequently exhorted also to "run with patience." Continuance, surely, is one of our biggest lessons and needs and the thing that will have much to do in the testing of the saints. "Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things that we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." "You have been led into the path of life, properly started on a proper basis; you have made a measure of progress; but now continue, for otherwise your work and our work will be spoiled. The prize is not for starting only, but for continuing to the end." We are reminded here, too, of Paul's earnest appeal to the Galatians: "What doth hinder you? Ye did run well." "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" And looking round today on the Lord's people, the question comes to many, who hath bewitched you, you who are straying into bondage again? What 'cloth hinder you? Ye did run well. He who was so wonderfully used of God to enlighten and feed us, though dead, speaks to us, saying, "Look to yourselves that ye lose not those things that we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." Particularly numerous are the exhortations to continuance, and with them watchfulness of our steps is, of course, implied. (See Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:2.) And surely the steady faith, determination and patience are essential that we might keep on. Since we are being tested out, it will be only the Lord's true people, full of love for Him, who will have the qualities to enable them to go right on to the end and be more than over-comers.

Living where we are today, and seeing the Lord's purpose clearly in progress in His people, as in the world, let us take to ourselves all exhortations from the Word; all warnings, all examples. Let us carefully guard all dangers and avail ourselves of all means of grace, clad in the whole armour of God. May God enable us all to clearly see and realise our position, understand the real meaning and responsibility of our consecration, having a comprehensive survey of our course; then endeavouring to forget the things behind and to lay aside every weight, let us strive for a clearer perception of the things ahead, with a richer joy in them and a brighter hope as to the attainment of them. And let us not be weary in well-doing, but let us, as a good ship, homeward bound, keep straight on, riding safely, despite the storms and disturbances which God sees we need to have, determined to finish our course despite all the assaults of the great adversary, trusting ever in our God, whose own Word declares, "God is faithful."

## **RETURN, OH WANDERER.**

Return!

O fallen, yet not lost!

Canst thou forget the life for thee laid down,

The taunts, the scourging, and the thorny crown?

When o'er the first my spotless robe I spread,

And poured the oil of joy upon thy head,

How did thy wakening heart within thee burn!

Canst thou remember all, and wilt thou not return ?

—F.R.H.

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

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

## **She Stood At His Side.**

UNDER the above heading the following appeared in the columns of one of our Melbourne newspapers, in the section of questions and answers conducted by a person who answers life's problems.

An incident that happened some years ago has remained in a man's mind. He is wondering if others have had such an extraordinary experience.

"Faithful" writes: "Ten years ago I visited Mauritius and met a girl with whom I fell deeply in love. She was only 19, so we decided to wait 12 months before marrying.

"We kept up a regular correspondence and if possible, grew more attached. A few months before she was due to come to me, I had a strange sensation that she was in the room.

"I looked up and saw her standing by the table. She did not speak, but looked at me lovingly. Later I discovered she had died at that time.

"I like to think she is waiting for me, but sometimes wonder if I imagined I saw her. Have you heard of a similar experience? It would give me further hope to learn of it."

To the above enquiry the reply was: "I am satisfied there is no death and the closer the link in life the more certain to us is our belief that death is not permanent separation. Perhaps some of our readers will be able to relate an experience that will supplement your belief."

The above account of the apparent appearance of a close friend at the time of her death in another country reveals how subtle and deceptive are the methods used by the great adversary to try and uphold the statement made to Eve in the Garden of Eden—"Ye shall not surely die."

What a variety of methods are used to appeal to the sentiments or affections of people to seek to deceive respecting their departed loved ones, and the majority of people, unacquainted with the plain statements in the Bible, are so easily led to believe that which is in direct opposition to the words of Christ, His apostles and prophets throughout the entire Bible.

How clearly the matter is stated in Gen. 2: 17—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Right throughout the Bible this truth is declared—"The soul that sinneth it shall die," and "The wages of sin is death." (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23.) Of our Lord it is also stated so definitely—"That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." And again, "He by the grace of God tasted death for every man." (1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Heb. 2:9.) Inasmuch as Christ "died for our sins," then of course the penalty is death, and not life in any other realm, and all who have died must await the resurrection morning to again receive life, as the Apostle declared—"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Life in the resurrection is a gift from God because it would have been quite just for God to have left mankind in the death condition for all time, but God so loved the world that he sent Christ to pay the penalty for all the human family, and so we read—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.)

What a terrible deception it is when Satan, through his wicked associates, the fallen angels, so dramatically affects the mind of anyone that he feels that a loved one departed has visited him, giving the impression that the deceased was alive and lovingly waiting for the time of reunion again. It is in this way also that spiritualists are likewise deceived by the evil spirits working through mediums that are under their control.

It is really little wonder that the person who answered the enquiry in the case above reported, stated, "I am satisfied there is no death," when even most ministers of religion today who are supposed to know the truth of the Bible hold the same unscriptural view. Truly, as our Lord declared of the religionists of His day, so the same applies today—"They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14.)

No wonder that the Lord, in this harvest time of the age, is calling His people out of the systems of Christendom (Rev. 18:1-5), where such gross errors are taught that really "deny the 'Lord that bought them,'" for if those who have passed away are not dead, then the sacrifice of Christ was quite unnecessary to redeem them from death. Truly the ransom sacrifice of Christ is the doctrine upon which theories can be tested as to whether they are truth or error. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.)

## **The Spirit of Courage, Love and of a Sound Mind.**

*"For God hath not given us a spirit of timidity, but of courage, of love and of a sound mind."*—2 Tim. 1:7.

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

faithful, courageous, over-comers in respect of the spiritual matters to which we have been called.

Sometimes we realise our deficiencies, and are not able to locate the cause. Someone says, I want to be an overcomer, to gain the victory over the spirit of the world, over the tendencies of my own fallen flesh, and over the wiles of the adversary, but somehow I cannot ; I fail. Such should learn to look for the source of failure, the deficient element, and should fortify himself in respect of the same. Let him ask, first, Is my failure to overcome due to a lack of courage? Am I fearful, and hence unable to fight the good fight of faith and, by the Lord's assistance, to gain the victory? If he has the courage, he may find that he has not been sufficiently trusting in the Lord, but leaning too much on his own strength. Such should remember the Apostle's words. "When I am weak, then I am strong;" reversely, "when I am strong in self-assurance, I am then weak," because the Lord wishes me to rely not upon myself, but upon Him, His strength, His grace. If the courage be found deficient, the reason evidently is that the faith is lacking, and if so, there is a reason for it ; either a lack of knowledge on which to build faith, or a lack of exercise and development of faith. The knowledge is to be sought from the right quarter, in harmony with the Lord and His Word, and the faith is to be exercised continually, recognising the Lord's interest in us as His children, as testified to by His Word, and by noticing the leadings of Divine providence in our daily affairs.

There is a proper fear or reverence and disinclination to offend our Heavenly Father and our Redeemer, which we wish never to lose. Perfect love will not cast out this fear, but rather intensify it. The fear which love casts out is timidity, a servile fear or dread of the Lord, or of Satan, or of the fallen angels, or of men, and what they might do to us. Perfect love cannot be attained without knowledge, faith, courage, and overcoming. It is the result of the exercise of all this Divine arrangement that brings us nearer to God, and makes us truly thankful and appreciative of His gracious purposes and omnipotent power for their accomplishment.

The spirit of courage needs special cultivation by the Lord's people. And this cultivation means growth in all the graces. For instance, if calamity befall us or threaten us, we should immediately think of the fact that our Lord assures us that an insignificant sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our Father's notice, and that we are of much more value than many sparrows. This thought at once strengthens the heart, nerves the arm, quickens the pulse of endeavour, provided we can realise that God is for us, that no earth-born cloud intervenes between our souls, and the love for us, which He has declared. If a cloud does obscure the Father's love we must the more earnestly, the more persistently get from behind it by getting our hearts right with the Lord, by going to Him in prayer, by confessing our trespasses, and by requesting mercy and grace to help and restore us to His favour.

"Be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart" is one of the blessings assured us in His Word. In the Divine order, courage is necessary in order to gain strength and victory. Someone has said, "One with God is the majority." With the courage to grasp this thought, and to hold it, things almost superhuman seem possible to the Lord's people, while without this courage they may naturally be weak and easily vanquished.

Never before, perhaps, was courage so needed, as it will be needed in the evil day just before us ; but the Prophet's descriptions of the great troublesome time before us are very figurative when they speak of fire and cloud and pillars of smoke, saying of this time, "I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke," etc. But the consecrated children of God need have no timidity in respect of these matters if they have the proper courage, developed by proper exercise and built upon proper faith, founded upon the knowledge of Divine revelation. His attitude of heart will be, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Whether, therefore, storms, financial, political, religious, or demoniacal, come his way, the child of God may rest secure, and be of good courage. The Lord is both able and willing to care for his interests, and bring him off victor. Love for the Lord, based upon a knowledge and appreciation of His truth, will lead such to triumph courageously over all the wiles of the adversary and his hordes.

The Scriptures abound with testimonies to the effect that the severe trials of the near future will be along the lines of deception. They speak of lying angels and deceivableness of unrighteousness, and "lying wonders," and tell us that the Lord will send or permit a strong delusion that many may believe a lie. If we gain a right conception of the matter, these deceptions are to affect the whole world, including its wise men, and, indeed, practically everybody except the "very elect," and the "very elect" will be preserved, not through their own wisdom or superiority, but through the power of God, "For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the "very elect." Matt. 24:24.

Our Lord, in the parable of the wheat and the tares, tells of the harvest work, and how, in the present time, He would gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (Matt. 24:31). It is by thus gathering them that they will be protected in the time of strife and trouble, when others will be deceived. But they are not to be gathered physically into one place, but spiritually ; their minds, their hearts, their affections are to be gathered together, centred. Our text tells us that our Lord is the great Centre to which His elect must all be gathered, if they would have rest or peace, if they would overcome the world, the flesh, and the peculiar snares of the adversary, which will be laid for the feet of all, and will more or less entrap all except the elect class.

Figuratively, all of these "very elect" ones are to be gathered, and the place is thus described, "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge; in Him will I trust"; and again, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. 91:1). Ah! no wonder that we also read, "No harm shall come nigh them." How could harm come to any who are thus close to the Lord? "A thousand shall fall at thy side; ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee; because thou hast made the Lord thy refuge; thou hast made the Most High thy habitation" (Psa. 91:7).

This nearness to God, into which His "very elect" will be gathered, will be the source of their protection. And the

dangers to others will be in proportion to their distance to this great citadel of strength, this fortress, this refuge or tower.

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

## “Fear Not, Little Flock”

*Luke 12:32.*

WHAT endearing words, so sweet, so simple, so full of meaning and what comfort they bring to the heart in this day of fear! They remind us of a mother, who, hearing a cry in the night, rises swiftly to tend the one she loves. Taking the trembling one in her arms and telling it to fear not, while she rocks it to sleep on her breast.

How many times we are told in the Scriptures to fear not, and our Saviour must have realised the great power fear would have over the human mind when He told His little band of faithful followers so many times to fear not.

From whence comes the fear, and what makes one ‘fear? The first intimation we have of fear in the Bible is where Adam and his wife hid themselves in the Garden of Eden-So we see that fear comes from a knowledge of sin. Once sin enters the heart we fear. Job 11: 14, 15, says: “Put iniquity away . . . and thou shalt not fear.” When iniquity leaves the heart fear departs with it.

What a persistent and formidable foe is fear. It attacks from every direction. It is the imp and progeny of sin, and where it hides, the child of God may be sure that the Adversary is working very hard to stumble the unsuspecting one. Nevertheless, a godly fear is necessary in the composition of a true Christian character, for the child of God must fear to do evil, to wound the feelings of a brother, and should reverence and fear God. Fear makes a splendid watchdog, which should warn if any evil approaches the heart, but it should never repose in the heart.

How strange that in a day of full and plenty, with garner of wheat overflowing, fat cattle and sheep by the million, fruit weighing the branches to the ground, grapes in abundance in a land flowing with milk and honey, and everything that should gladden the heart of man, that fear grips the heart, leaving a dreadful feeling of unrest and insecurity.

Never in our lives do we need faith and perfect trust in God more than we need it today. Men seem to have lost faith in God, and evil and vice abound. What a vivid picture St. Paul paints of the men of today, when he declares that they would wax worse and worse ; that in the last days trying times should. come, for men would be lovers of self, money-lovers, boasters, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, accusers, without self-control, ferocious, rash, self-conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than God, having a form of piety but denying the power thereof ; and from all such he exhorts us to turn away.

O, the blessedness and peace that reigns in the heart of the children of God, who look to the Father with the faith of a little child, never doubting that the Divine hand that has supplied the wants of today, will also provide the needs of tomorrow! As the mother runs to the aid of her sick child, even so, God will come quickly to the aid of those who call upon Him, and His best gifts are to those who have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. Our Saviour teaches this lesson. When He was with His disciples on the lake of Galilee, a storm arose, lashing the waves to fury; and in the midst of the tempest the boat had sprung a leak and the disciples were in great peril. In fear and dismay they ran to our Saviour and found Him sleeping peacefully. They awakened Him, saying, “Master, Master, we perish.” Then arising, He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and there was a great calm. And He said unto them, “Where is your faith?” In this case the disciples’ fear was caused by a want of faith. Had they had perfect faith in their Master, they too, could have slept peacefully and would have known no fear.

The Psalmist gives us a splendid pen picture of that storm in the words, “They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters ; these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths. They reel and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and He delivers them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still” (Psa. 107:23-29). It may be that our Saviour had previously been discussing these powerful words of the Psalmist, and to try the effect of His teachings and to test their faith had permitted the raising of the storm. Even so it is today, amid all the gathering gloom and the banking of the storm clouds when men stagger and reel under the power of the Divine hand.

Although the storms are of a different character, they are purposely sent by God to try our faith, and to see if we have perfect faith and implicit trust in Him. O, if we could only have that sweet love and trust in God, which even little children teach us every day by their confiding faith in us.

We see many instances where our Lord. tested His disciples and gave them warnings. After Peter had made his avowal of love, our Lord had warned him that he would deny Him, and we all know the result. Jesus, revealing Himself to St. Paul on the road to Damascus, told him plainly that he would suffer many things for His Name’s sake. And as we follow the Apostle Paul in all his wanderings, we see him buffeted from pillar to post, and treated by some as the scum of the earth. We follow him to prison, and in depths oft, five times he received forty stripes save one, thrice he was beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, in perils often, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, and yet, in spite of all this formidable list of

fears and sufferings he counts them all as light afflictions. So real was his faith, so great his love and loyalty to his Master, that fear could find no place in that noble heart. We realise that the many things he suffered acted as the chisel of persecution that shaped that noble character into a gem of loveliness, which has so endeared him to all believers.

As we look back over the mist of years and recall the wondrous words of the Apostle which have shed a halo of glory around the cross of Christ, reaching numberless hearts, stimulating and comforting, and leaving an impression which is the reflex of Christ's glorious character, let us step forward bravely and courageously into the future, and "fear not."

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## **Rules for Conduct.**

Rule 1.—Let each resolve to mind his own business. If we have not sufficient of our own and the Lord's business to fully occupy us there is something wrong that needs careful and prayerful study of the Word to set it right. This doesn't mean that we should not take a sympathetic interest in the affairs of others.

2.—We should exercise patience with others more than in dealing with ourselves and our own shortcomings. This means a great deal.

3.—Do not be touchy or easily offended. Take a kindly charitable view of the words and acts of others. Throw a mantle of generosity over the faults and offences of others, realising that they are mostly unintentional.

4.—Do not slander. If we have been slandered it will serve no good purpose to slander in return. Let us not render evil for evil, reviling for reviling. If we should try to rectify all the errors and misstatements of slanderers the adversary would keep us so busy that we should have no time for development.

5.—Do not indulge in evil speaking, backbiting or slandering, even if the statement be true. Many are led into this trap not with any desire to do harm, but out of the love of gossip. Both the laws of God and man recognise this to be thieving, even as Shakespeare says: "He who steals my purse steals trash ; but he who steals my good name steals that which doth not make him rich, but leaves me poor indeed."

6.—Avoid pride as a most deceitful enticement. This fault comes out in so many ways that it needs to be specially watched, for pride caused Satan's downfall, and we must watch lest it entraps us. It is even possible to be proud of our knowledge of present truth, deceiving ourselves that we must be good, noble and wise persons to have been able to comprehend something of God's Plan, forgetting that the Lord has chosen the weak and foolish things to accomplish His will, that it should not be of power or might, but by the spirit of the Lord.

7.—Be sure to maintain a conscience devoid of offence toward God and man.

8.—While treasuring and seeking to follow the various specific Scriptures, let us not lose sight of the character and principles of God as a whole, so that we may attach due weight to each portion of the Word.

9.—Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the disposition of Christ. While it is necessary that we have sufficient firmness of character to contend earnestly for the Faith, let us avoid unnecessary contentions about non-essentials, and with persons whom we know we shall be unable to influence for good.

10.—Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, strife, keeping our hearts in an attitude of love for God and all of His creatures.

11.—Do not trust your conscience ; if it were a sufficient guide, the Lord would not have given us the Scriptures. Educate and regulate your conscience by the Word.

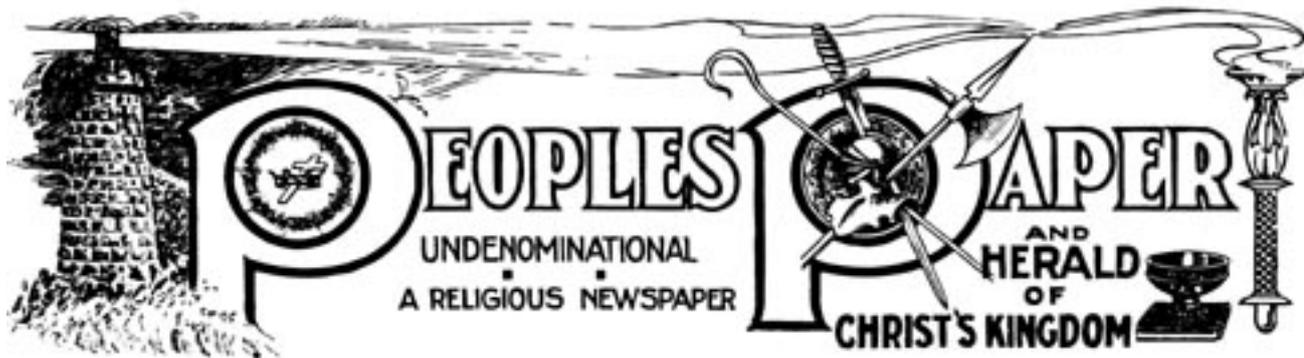
12.—Do not be bold except in the cause of Christ, righteousness and truth.

We shall find it a great help in this matter if we get a clear view of the purity and beauty and loving benevolence of God and Christ, and instead of arguing with the tempter say, No, with finality. I want to be like God or Godlike, or as we have heard some take as their guide, the question: "What would Jesus do?" and the answer will assuredly take us on the right path. In other words, let us seek first the Kingdom of God, continually setting our affections on things above.—Selected.

## **The All-Seeing Eye**

On the ceiling of many Greek churches may be seen painted an enormous eye. This is intended to represent the Eye of God. It is well to be reminded that this Eye is upon us in church, but we must not think that we are more seen there than elsewhere. Perhaps the difference between a truly religious person and one who is not, consists in this: that the first feels he is always being watched over. He looks to the Eye of God for guidance, reproof, correction, encouragement, in all times and places; he thinks of a loving Father watching over His child.

The second, when he thinks of it at all, only feels that he is watched with a view of future punishment—Clipping.



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## **Gideon's Brave Three Hundred.**

*(Judges 7:1-8, 16-23)*

*"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts."—Zech. 4:6.*

A STUDY of the above passage of Scripture shows an army of 32,000 from the various tribes of Israel with Gideon at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at Harod Spring—a little lake which drains off eastward to the Jordan. On the farther side of the lake were the Midianites, numbering about 135,000. An invading host, they had for some time been pillaging the Israelites unmolestedly ; but now they learned that Gideon's army was gathering; and they assembled themselves to crush it.

While Gideon was feeling that his army was far too small for such a battle—one to four—the Lord directed him to the contrary—that the army was far too large, and that there would be danger that the victory which He purposed should come might not be appreciated as being from the Lord, but be thought to indicate the dexterity of Israel's warriors. Accordingly, by divine direction, Gideon gave word to his army of 32,000 that as many of them as were fearful and preferred to return home might do so. Many were fearful—22,000. The name of the spring, Harod, signifies coward ; and it has been assumed that the name was given it because of the fear manifested by the 22,000 who went home.

Surely the faith of Gideon was tried as his little army melted to 10,000 men ! But the Lord said to him, There are yet too many. Cause the host to go down to the spring to drink ; and discern between those who drink directly from the pool, kneeling down and putting their mouths into the water and sucking it up, and those who, bending over, lap from the hands as a dog laps with his tongue.

There were three hundred of this latter class left by this test ; and the Lord declared these to be the proper ones to especially win the victory. The remaining 9,700, however, would later join in the pursuit of the enemy.

The custom of lapping water with the hand is still common with the people of Palestine—shepherds, etc. They become very expert at it. Symbolically, this act would seem to signify alertness and obedience. An ox drinks by putting his mouth into the water and sucking it and, when thirsty, gives his entire attention to the sucking of the water, refusing to pay any attention to the commands of his owner, and even resisting the use of the rod upon his flanks. The dog, on the contrary, while lapping the water with his tongue, is all alert, with his eyes watching in every direction, seeing everything about him, and ready to quit the water at any moment in pursuit of obedience to duty.

If water here, as elsewhere in the Bible, be understood to represent the truth, these two companies of Gideon's army would represent two classes who love and appreciate the truth. Both classes drink of the water of truth, but the one class more for their own satisfaction. The other class, watchful, attentive, drink according to their needs, and do not neglect alertness in the Master's service, keeping eyes and ears open for the guidance of divine providence at all times. This latter, wiser class are represented by the three hundred who were with Gideon, himself representing Jesus, the Captain of our salvation.

Armies in olden times evidently did not keep so strict a watch as do modern armies. At all events, Gideon and a trusted companion were able to penetrate in the darkness of the night amongst the tents of the Midianites. Listening, they heard one relate his dream of how a barley loaf rolled down a hill and did havoc. Another offered the interpretation that this was Gideon and his small army, which was likely to be their undoing. The incident shows that the Midianites were fearful, apprehensive. Gideon was confident ; his faith was strengthened by this little experience which the Lord permitted him to have.

After midnight, shortly after the hour of the changing of the guards amongst the Midianites, was the time appointed for Gideon's attack. The method of warfare was novel. The three hundred were divided into three companies, and spread out over a considerable space near the Midianites. In addition to their usual armor, sword, etc., Gideon and his three hundred had new weapons. Each in his left hand had a pitcher of earthenware, each pitcher had in it a lamp, and each soldier had in his other hand a ram's horn trumpet. The instructions to the three separated bands were that those

who were immediately with Gideon should do as he did ; and that the other bands, hearing should imitate, breaking the front of their pitchers to let the light shine out ahead, shouting aloud, “Jehovah and Gideon,” and blowing in the ram’s horns.

The Midianites, waking out of sleep, beholding the flashing lights, hearing the clash of the pottery like the sound of armor, hearing the shouting of voices and the blowing of trumpets, imagined themselves surrounded by a great host; and half-dazed, they fled. They fought each other, mistaking each other for foes. Gideon and his three hundred pursued and were soon in the fight, assisted by the remaining 9,700. The victory was a great one. The Lord was recognized to be the deliverer; and Gideon, His servant, was honored accordingly.

Referring to the Old Testament matters the Apostle declares, “These things were written aforetime for our instruction.” (Rom. 15:4.) In addition to the lessons learned at that time the Lord, through some of these experiences of the past, gives certain spiritual lessons to spiritual Israel. Gideon’s call resembles the Gospel call for volunteers on the side of righteousness — of right against wrong, truth against error.

Many in the world hear the message, have sympathy with it and respond, purposing to become soldiers of Christ ; but before they are fully accepted, the voice of Jesus calls to them, saying, Sit down and count the cost ; it is better not to put your hand to the plow and become a servant of the Lord than afterwards to look back and wish that you had not become one.

The sight of the enemy, the “fear of death” (Heb. 2:15), causes them to walk not with the Master, because it is too much. When they first responded to the call, they thought of the glory and honor, but overlooked the fact that these could be obtained only at the cost of hardship and endurance. These cowards who turn back, and never really take the vow of consecration, are perhaps no worse off than if they had never responded. But they will not share in the great victory—the laurels will not be theirs ; the crown of life will not be their portion.

Then comes the second test—that of obedience and loyalty. One class of the Lord’s people, like the faithful dog, put obedience to the Master’s voice first, alert to do His will. Another portion of the Lord’s consecrated people heed less the Master’s voice, and even the rod ; and being less alert to the service of the Lord, they are less used of Him.

Compared to the world, the most alert ones are but as very few. It is those of the Lord’s people who are alert that He chooses and grants the greatest opportunities for service. These are the ones most willing to break the earthen vessel—to use their present earthly lives in the service of the Lord—that the light of truth may shine out, and that the cause of truth may have a victory. These zealous ones are most faithful in blowing upon the trumpet, representing God’s Word. These have the blessed opportunity for letting their light shine. Their zeal entitles them to special privileges and opportunities.

The victory of the Lord is attained by the antitypical Gideon and His little band of faithful followers, “not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.” The Lord’s spirit is represented by the light of the lamp shining from the broken vessel. The broken vessels of Gideon’s host represent how the Lord’s people present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, in His service—in letting the light shine out—in fighting a good fight against the hosts of sin.

We are doubtless near the time when the great victory, the antitype of Gideon’s, will be accomplished, when the hosts of sin, the powers of evil, will fall upon one another for their mutual destruction. The present distress of nations is the beginning of this, but not its end. According to the Bible, the climax will be a temporary reign of anarchy, which will fully prepare the world for Messiah’s glorious reign of righteousness. (From Reprints.)

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But warm, sweet, tender even yet,  
A present help is He;  
And faith has still its Olivet,  
And love its Galilee.                     —Whittier.

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## The Mystery of the Kingdom

THE salvation open at the present time has been obtainable only through faith, and faith is dependent upon a measure of knowledge, or revelation, and this knowledge, or revelation, came to us from God, for said St. Peter, “Holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit.” God in this Age is calling a class possessed of ears of appreciation for His Message. These are mainly the weary and heavy laden and sin-sick, chiefly the poor of this

world, rich in faith.

It is not enough that they hear the Message, not enough that additionally they accept it, turn from sin and consecrate their lives to God and His service and be accepted of Him, through the merit of Jesus, and be begotten of the holy spirit. From that moment they may be said to be saved and to have everlasting life, if they follow a certain course. That course includes a continual study of the Divine instructions and promises and the exercise of faith and prayer, and obedience and trust, even unto the end.

The point of this lesson is to show the importance of having the right kind of spiritual food, and of using it and not allowing the new nature to become choked by earthly hopes, aims or ambitions. Such as thus overcome will be inheritors with Jesus of His glorious Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years, which is to bless Israel and, through Israel, all the families of the earth.

Jesus gave the parable of the Sower of the “good seed,” some of which fell by the wayside, and was devoured by the fowls ; some fell on rocky ground where it had no depth of earth, and brought forth no fruitage; some amongst thorns, which choked it; some into the good ground, which yielded thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold. The disciples were perplexed and unable to understand it and inquired of the Great Teacher its meaning.

His answer was that He was quite willing that they should understand the parable, and that it related to the Kingdom of God, but that it was not to be understood by outsiders. He explained that it was for this reason that He always spoke in parables, so that the general public might see and hear and not understand, because the masses even of the Jews were not in a hoar, condition to understand and be profited by these lessons respecting the Kingdom. Only such persons as desired to become members of the Kingdom class and were also willing to undertake the stringent conditions of the “narrow way”—only such were to fully and clearly understand the parables of the Kingdom. This is in harmony with all of God’s dealings in the present time. We read again, “None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise (toward God) shall understand.” And again we read, “The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant.”

In Mark 4:13, the Master indicates that this parable would serve as a general key to His followers for their interpretation of all His parables. “Seed” does not mean literal seed, “birds” do not mean birds, “thorns” do not mean thorns, etc. Proceeding, the Great Teacher expounded the parable as follows :

(1) The seed that was sown represents the Word of God. More than this, it represents that particular element or feature of God’s Word which relates to the Kingdom.

This is shown by St. Matthew’s account of the same parable (Matt. 13:19) : “When anyone heareth the Word (Message of the Kingdom), and understandeth it not, then cometh the Wicked One and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that receiveth the seed by the wayside.” Our lesson says that the Wicked One meant is Satan. Satan and his evil agents are therefore represented in the parable by “birds,” and the lesson is that however much of the Gospel of the Kingdom we may read or hear preached, we lose the benefit of that which we do not understand.

Evidently then, much of the Bible study and much of the religious reading is lost, because not understood. The secondary lesson is that one reason why the “good seed” does not enter into the understanding is that the heart is not in a receptive attitude. Like the wayside path, it is hard. Such hard hearts, selfish hearts, proud hearts, are of the kind which the Saviour does not wish to have understand His parables nor understand the glorious Kingdom Plan which they expound.

(2) The seed sown in the stony place represents those who, when they hear the Message of the Kingdom are delighted. They say, how good that sounds. What a grand time there will be when Messiah rules in righteousness to bless the world and lift up the poor, degraded members of Adam’s family ! And how great is the privilege of becoming members of the Bride of Christ, to be associated with Him in His glorious Kingdom work! But the class represented by the stony ground have little depth of character; they are merely emotional.

The “Seed,” or Message of the Kingdom, which these heard with such delight at first, never matures in their hearts, because they are too shallow, too superficial in their love of righteousness. Below the surface these are hard hearts and selfish, and so, when they find that the good Seed of the Kingdom is unpopular and that it will bring them a certain amount of reproach and contempt and perhaps persecution—then all their ardour fades out, their zeal is at an end, The Kingdom Message fails to produce in them the fruitage desired. The trouble was not with the Seed nor with the Sower, nor with the sun of persecution necessary for the ripening—the fault lay in the fact that their hearts were not right ; they were hard, stony.

(3) The seed sown in the thorny ground represents those who have good hearts and have heard the Message of the Kingdom and appreciate it and rejoice in it, but their hearts are divided. They allow the cares of this life and the love of riches to have such a share of their heart’s affections that the Kingdom Message does not have the opportunity to bring forth fruitage as will be pleasing to the Lord.

Let us note carefully that these thorns do not, as some suggest, represent gambling devices, card parties, saloons and other places of ill-repute, nor secret sins and vices. None of those things should appeal to Christians at all. The Master distinctly tells us that the thorns represent “the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches.” Thus every Christian man or woman who has received the Message of the Kingdom and has allowed the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke and frustrate his prospects as respects the Kingdom is represented in this parable. Very nice people, hospitable, educated, etc., belong to this class of the parable represented by the thorny ground.

(4) According to the parable there will be three classes of believers who will attain the Kingdom—or we may say,

they will all be one class in the sense that they will bring forth the one kind of fruitage and be acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs in His Kingdom, but the differences between them will be in the amount of fruitage such yield—some thirty fold, some sixty fold and some a hundred fold.

The Lord does not explain the differences between these fruitages, but we may well understand that the amount of fruitage will be measured by the amount of love and zeal in the heart. The fully appreciative and the fully loving will be the most energetic to know and to do the Master's will, and they will bring forth the largest fruitage — a hundred fold — and they, too, will have the chief places in the Kingdom.

St. Paul declares that as star differs from star in glory, so it will be with those who attain unto the First Resurrection—all will come forth glorious, but some will blaze with a more resplendent brilliancy, because of their great zeal, and therefore their great likeness to their Redeemer and Lord. Jesus likewise mentions the distinctions amongst those who will sit with Him in His Throne. He assured James and John that, if they were willing to drink of His cup and be baptised into His death, they should surely sit with Him in His Throne; but as to whether or not they would have the chief places of honour and distinction was not for Him to say. Those places will be given according to the Father's determination ; that is to say, according to the principles of justice, of merit.

Those will have the places of honour next to the Redeemer, who, in this life, will manifest to God the greatest harmony with His character, in their zeal, their love for God, the Truth and the brethren.

We are not to understand that those people represented by the thorny ground and the wayside will suffer eternal torments because of their unfaithfulness in respect of the Kingdom, nor are we to understand that others, who do not hear about the Kingdom in the present life at all, will on this account suffer eternal torment. They will all, however, lose the grand privilege and glorious blessing of participating in the Kingdom, whatever they may obtain under the restitution blessings which that Kingdom will inaugurate for the blessing of mankind in general.

## **Candle Light to Sun Light.**

*(Mat. 5:15, 16; 13:43.) (Convention Address)*

A LIGHT of any kind in darkness is a wonderful boon. Most of us can recall times when some unexpected occurrence found us endeavouring to perform a task in darkness when we would have given much for a light. It was a wonderful step forward in the creative plan when God said, "Let there be light." The common blessings of God we accept without much thought, but what a really wonderful thing is light; in a sense we could say, Light is life, for mankind could not maintain life without it.

In our texts candle light and sunlight are used to illustrate something else. Christians are not actually candles, nor will they ever be an orb like the sun, but they are likened to these, in that they can create an influence upon society—similar in effect upon another kind of darkness, the darkness of this present evil world.

After man, as represented in Adam, fell, he walked on in his earthly course in darkness, but not entirely without hope, for God had given a promise that some day light would come to them, a means whereby they would be guided into the place of favor again. The promise was vague, but every true believer in God kept hope in it, for since God had promised it they knew it would come. In course of time the Law given to Moses shed some light upon man's pathway. The New Testament in later years refers to it as the "shadow" of better things to come, and that, perhaps, is how we can view the light of the Law, shaded and obscure. All who hailed it as light were compelled to acknowledge its lack in delivering from the darkness of sin and death.

However, to earnest and true souls who continued to walk in its shadowy light, a truly great light burst upon their sight. John the Baptist was ordained to introduce it. (See John 1:6-9.) We all know to whom reference is made—John 8:12 makes it plain. Luke 1:76-79 also gives a graphic description of this great light as it entered the world, which please note. The prophet Isaiah, long years before, had prophesied of it also. (See Isa. 9:2.)

Alas, so fallen was man that only a few hailed this great light graciously sent to them; the masses of men were not lifted out of the darkness and condemnation so heavy upon them, so accustomed had they become to the darkness in which they dwelt that they actually preferred it. (See John 3:19-21.) The only bright spot in this ungracious action of mankind was that a few "doers of truth" were glad to come to this light and they received great blessing. Their hopes continued high that this Light around which they rallied would soon quell the turbulent opposition of the hosts of darkness and compel them to accept it also. But no, the darkness seemingly won and they put the Light to death ; how dark, indeed, then appeared the lot of the few dear lovers of God's righteousness. Shortly after, their sorrow was again turned to joy as their resurrected Lord and Light explained to them the meaning of these things, and that in a future day He would become the light of every man that cometh into the world.

Meantime, this wonderful light was to continue to shine through His followers, as Matt. 5:14 states—"Ye are the light of the world," but in comparison to the great light of Jesus we are as but candles. Maybe we should think more of the truths—God's truths—that we teach, as representing the light, more than any example of conduct, etc. In the flesh we are so imperfect that we often do and say things that do not reflect the perfection of Jesus, but the truths of God's Plan are beautiful, and to learn them, obey them and teach them, sends out light indeed.

Before a candle can give light it must be lighted. We could liken them to being fired or filled by the holy spirit. We remember Jesus telling His apostles to wait until power from on high should be conferred upon them, and then when the day of Pentecost was fully come, we know what happened—they were lighted alight and began to shine immediately so that people took notice that they had surely been with Jesus. We are reminded of the hymn many of us

learned in childhood—"Jesus bids us shine." "First of all for Him . . . . Like a little candle burning in the night."

There is an interesting verse of a psalm in this connection also. (See Psa. 18:28.) Yes, it is very necessary for God to enlighten our own darkness before we can shine for Him, and this takes time, and we should be sure we are ready to shine before others. Even when we do, let us never forget that in this life we can never legitimately be more than "candles" shining out more or less from obscurity. In some measure early disciples were impatient, they could not wait—"We trusted that it was he who should have redeemed Israel." They wanted things done; they could not bide the shadows.

Modern disciples are often similar. The world is so dark, and it is difficult for anyone to see very much merely by the light of a candle; surely the world wants a clearer, brighter guide—so we may want to urge the work along, put it in the public eye, become a great, organised, sectarian body that can speak with some authority, and be "great and shining lights" now. All who have adopted this course eventually have ceased to let the light of Jesus shine out from them. Matt. 6: 19-23—Hearts become set on other treasures, sects, organisations, etc. The eye is no longer single to the glory of God, and how great becomes the darkness.

We think of the saying, "Patience is a virtue, possess it if you can." From time to time, in daily events of life, it is impressed how difficult it is to possess it. Especially today, humanity cannot wait a minute. Christians often forget the real work of this age which is inward preparation of each one to Christ-like character. We may have the urge "to reign before the time" and change the world about us. We seek something more tangible in our fellowships, and tend to impatience with our twos and threes and the "wilderness" experiences that are necessary to prepare us for a later work. Yes, it is difficult to abide as mere "candle" lights, for we are so anxious to have our Father's name vindicated and His truth to go abroad in the earth that we may be apt to forget that there is a proper time for this.

We note in our text that when these Christian "candle" lights are lit, they are set up so as to give light to "all that are in the house." We might think of this as referring to God's house, to those who are in closer proximity to Him than others. At this end of the age, perhaps, there are fewer than ever in God's house, so the "candles" do not attract, or give light and help to many. Another once referred to a Christian's witness as a beacon light on the ocean. The ocean is so vast; not many see it, and of those who do, its true value is assessed only by the ones looking for it to guide them in their journey over the waters. However, the candles' shining is not limited solely to God's house, although that is where most good will be done during this age.

The 2nd verse of our text tells us that they are to let the light shine before men, and we might think of this in a more general way. It says, "So that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The world may see our good works now, but few are moved by them to glorify God. That will not be till a later time—the time of "their visitation." Then they will recall the good examples set them and will thank God for the help they received. But meantime, many will treat the candle lights as they did the great Light of the world; they will persecute them to death.

Our Christian witness may not impress many now, more likely you will be considered a fool in every respect. Even some who do appreciate, more than others, will still regard you in many respects as a "weak" character. They like a more aggressive spirit and cannot understand the philosophy of the Apostle that a Christian must not strive, but be gentle to all, and must not oppose the powers that be, but continue in subjection to all that God ordained, for in due time He will set everything right.

In depicting the condition of his people in his day the prophet Isaiah seems to show how true Christian witness will be observed by the world right down the age. See Isa. 59:14, and half verse 15; margin—"Is accounted mad"—which is what one said to Paul—"much learning hath made thee mad."

Eph. 5:13 says that all things that are reprov'd (margin—discovered) are made manifest by the light. Yes, even candle light will uncover enough to make evil doers uncomfortable; therefore, they seek to snuff out the candles.

We note in Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer. 25:8,10), that because God's professing people in his day did not live in obedience they were going to meet the punishment and be scattered. In verse 10 we see some of the things they were going to lose, amongst them "the light of the candle." (See verse 10.)

Turning to Rev. 18:23 we see how God's punishments affect professing Christendom at the end of this age. So we see all the true "candles" are to be separated from Babylon. This separation is important, too, in keeping our candle light clear and bright. To stop in Babylon and try and let our light shine would be like putting a bushel over it. (A bushel being an empty, wooden or metal box used in the olden days for measuring purposes). No light can emanate from Babylon, for the Lord has spued it out. (Rev. 3:16.) Particularly at this time the light must be set on a hill—elevated to a place or position where it can be seen. The very fact that God's true people stand separated from all sects and denominations in these last days draws attention to the message they have, the light they let shine.

There is a verse in Zeph. 1:12 that is interesting. Yes, the Lord still searches Jerusalem—His professing people—with "candles." He does not do great things, highly spectacular. No, He works through humble, devoted servants, and humility is required by any who would hear the voice of the Lord.

Our second text portion in Matt. 13:43 tells us that when the kingdom comes it will be different. Christians then will shine forth as the "sun" in the glory of the kingdom. In fact, we notice these words were spoken immediately following the explanation of the wheat and tares parable, which pictured the separation of God's true people from Babylon during the harvest of the end of this Gospel Age. From this point of time the light that the saints emanate seems to increase until it becomes as bright as the sun when the kingdom is fully ushered in.

The Apostle Paul also tells us that in the resurrection to this glory some will shine brighter than others—"as star differeth from star"—and we can be sure that those who will shine the brightest then, will be those who never sought

to be more than “candles” in this life. To those who were faithful in that which was least the Lord will richly reward.

## Question Box

Question.—Do you think it possible that 1 Thes. 4:16, 17 may be fulfilled by the remaining saints being instantly all together caught up bodily in the air to meet the Lord?

Answer.—Such seemed to be the general thought of Bible exponents of the past, but along with many other advent truths, this matter would seem to have become clearer, and is viewed today in what seems to us a more reasonable Scriptural way, more in accord with the usual developments of the Divine Plan.

It is in accord with Scriptural usage that prophecy respecting our Lord's return, or future events connected with the Church, is stated in figurative or symbolic language. This appears to be so whether Paul, Peter or John be the writer, or whether the speaker be the Lord Himself. We will probably all agree that Revelations is practically all symbolic, and that 2 Pet. 3 is the same, as also is our Lord's great prophecy of Matt. 24, etc.

The passage in question would also seem to be in highly symbolic terms. It does not seem that it can reasonably be taken in a literal way. Paul declares that what he said was “by the word of the Lord,” and it does not appear that the Lord ever described His second advent but in figurative language. He says, “Those who will be alive and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord shall not precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then those who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (in the heavens).”

The Diaglott translation of this verse is misleading in stating that they “shall at the same time” with them be caught away. While the Greek word “hama,” according to Dr. Strong, properly means “at the same time,” he points out that it is freely used as a preposition or adverb “denoting close association.” It is in this sense that it is here used, and the Diaglott translates the same word correctly in the next chapter (1 Thes. 5:10). A careful study of the subject of our Lord's second advent will, we believe, reveal the fact that He is to be present for some time before the world, and also before even many Christians will be aware of it. May be we should first quote Matt. 24 :30-31 :— “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with the sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other.”

If the Son of Man were to come visibly and literally riding on the literal clouds and with the sound of a literal trumpet, there would be no need for a sign of His presence—a sign is only necessary when the one signified is unseen.

Then note that the saints or the elect have not been instantly all caught away to be with the Lord, for after His arrival He will give command to His messengers to sound a trumpet and gather His elect who are still in the religious systems in all directions.

Again, the tribes of the earth are to see His coming in the clouds of trouble. If He were to come like a flash of lightning, they would not have time to see His coming. The Greek word “erchomai” signifies the act of arriving, and men can today discern that the strange happenings in the world portend a change of dispensation—they see that some great change is working and some will even say that the second coming of Christ must be at hand.

Next we may refer to Luke 17:26, “As in the days of Noah so it will be in the days of the Son of Man.” If we compare this with Matt. 24:37-39, “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming (Parousia, i.e., presence) of the Son of Man be.” Luke shows us that the word “parousia” has the meaning, not of the act of arriving, but of having arrived, and being present. The world will be ignorant of the fact, eating, drinking, buying, selling, marrying, building, etc., unaware of the great storm of trouble in which all will be involved. Just as they ignored the preaching of Noah for 120 years the world generally ignore the preaching of the second presence of Christ, and so they will be taken unawares by the great time of trouble which will close down the present age, just as the destruction of Jerusalem was the final scene of the Jewish Dispensation.

The Lord follows the prophecy of Matt. 24 with three parables, which appear to be significantly in order.

(1) The parable of the Virgins indicates two classes who would be waiting and watching at the time of Christ's arrival.

(2) The parable of the Talents again shows very distinctly that the saints are still here after He has come, and that His first work appears to be the calling of His people to account for the use of the talents entrusted. When this is all accomplished and the elect have all been gradually changed from mortal to immortality, then the Kingdom will be set up.

(3) The parable of the sheep and the goats then shows the work of Christ and the Church judging the world of mankind. “Know ye not the saints shall judge the world.”

The Lord gradually accomplishes the closing down of the Gospel Age and prepares for the Kingdom Age, and then takes up His great power and reigns with His saints for the blessing of all families of the earth.

By referring to Phil. 2:12; 2 Cor. 10:10, and Phil. 1:26, it will be seen that the word “parousia” should be generally translated “Presence.” That is the thought contained in the word.

With these thoughts in mind we come back again to the question: How do we understand 1 Thes. 4:16, 17? As we have seen, it cannot be that the Lord's waiting people are all to be literally caught away in one instant, at the moment of our Lord's arrival, for they are indicated as being still on earth. Then one cannot see any reason why the Lord





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## **The Good Paymaster.**

(Convention Address)

YOU have heard of the Lord as a Good Teacher, for did not Nicodemus confess when he came to Jesus by night, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." You have heard of Him as a Good Shepherd, for He says "I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." You have heard of Him as the Good Physician,— "The sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his beams." "Bless the Lord, oh my soul ; who healeth all thy diseases." He is also a Good Builder, giving us the blue-prints of a temple, whose builder and maker is God ; a Good Guide, "I will guide thee with mine eye . . . the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way," (Psa. 25:9) . and a Good Master, "You call me Lord and Master, and so I am."

However, the Scriptures present Him to us in many instances as a Good Paymaster. In the form of a paymaster He is presented from two angles—(1) As being very fair, just, faithful ; and (2) as being generous, kind, compassionate, or good.

Generally speaking, and as pertaining to mankind in a large way, He is presented as being Justice itself. Let us glance at a few of these laws that affect every living person in some way or another — the laws of justice, keeping in mind God as being the paymaster.

Most men in this day of grace work under some award or other; be it ever so poor, and be there ever so much room for improvement, the conditions under any award are, better than those under none. Under the latter arrangement, men are exploited without mercy by unscrupulous employers, whereas, under an award, there has been a bargaining of conditions and payment for services rendered. Under these terms the working conditions of today are probably the best ever experienced in man's history. We know there is still much room for improvement, otherwise strikes and lockouts would never occur. To be working under a good award is the aim of most men ; they are glad to have constant employment, with its consequent remuneration, and the concessions and liberties enjoyed by some over and above the remuneration aspect, such as holidays, sick leave, and in some cases long-service leave. Some even enjoy pensions on retirement, and even still better, generous employers remember their employees in their wills.

God is a very good Employer, too. He has an award also, under which men receive concessions or privileges, or hardship and privation; it all depends upon our co-operation. We sing

"While joyfully in Thine employ . . .  
Henceforth my chief concern shall be.  
To love and speak and toil for Thee."

He also pays over and above award rates—to some. Long-service leave is also cumulative. Pensions are generous ; and a share in a future inheritance is also ours because of the legacy in the will of His dear Son.

God, the Supreme Paymaster, keeps account books for every individual. With the keeping of these books He has economised to a large extent by charging all on the debit side to one man by the name of Adam; he was the one who plunged us all to death, with its pains, aches and sicknesses. It was Adam who consigned us to the great prisonhouse of death. We had no choice at all, irrespective of whether we followed righteousness or sin. (Rom. 5:12,14.)

It is most important to note that, even with the pronouncing of the sentence of death, God's goodness can be recognised — "Cursed is the ground for thy sake . . . in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." Work. What a blessing is here in disguise. Exercise ; strange, if men do not get it in their work their bodies cry out for it and they embark on the daily constitutional, or visit gymnasiums, or get busy in the gardens, to enjoy better health. Who will doubt that we have a Good Paymaster?

Is God obliged to give us fruitful harvests and bountiful seasons, whether we work hard or little? No. And if, after we gaze about us, we see His goodness on every side, we look into His plan and see there His great mercy, how He could find a way in condemning us. and at the same time a way for our escape, does not all this goodness, all this mercy, all this undeserved consideration affect us somewhat? Does it not lead us to the point where we cry out with almost frustration, "What can we do?" Does it not lead us to repentance? It was nothing else but the "goodness of God that led us to repentance." This is a good step. Instead of fighting against God, of complaining ignorantly about His laws, of finding fault with His administration, of questioning His judgments, we are convinced that what He does is good, is for our betterment, to lead us step by step closer to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift."

Let us ponder, briefly, to consider those pronouncements against us, uttered in the Garden of Eden where eternal life might have been our heritage. The penalties for disobedience and unfaithfulness are recorded for us in Gen. 3 :17—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." "In sorrow" must mean in a comparative sense ; compared with what might have been our happy lot, the present condition is inferior. Consider a similar pronouncement of "in sorrow." "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children," was a curse put on the woman, but look at all the joy that accompanies that marvellous event, even as our Lord declared—"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow . . . but as soon as the anguish is past she has joy that a man has been born." (John 16:21.) Note the mixture of sorrow and joy, God being kind and merciful even in His punishments. The same with the eating of our bread with sorrow ; this also is mixed with joy, especially after one has been consoled that God is pleased with our works—Eccles. 9 :7—"Eat thy bread with joy."

The curse — "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" is also a benefit, as many a farmer can tell. It is the rich ground only that will produce the vigorous weeds, as well as the good crops. It means that conditions or circumstances of life now pronounce for us WORK. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." What a blessing in disguise is this. It was during the late depression, when work was so scarce, that one put it so nicely—"If work be the curse of God what must His blessing be?"

It seems that the "sweat of thy brow" enforces exercise for our good. Natural exercise is beneficial, as many find out for their good during these days of easy living. The exercise we miss out in earning our bread we are forced to get in other directions. In short, what we dodge naturally we have to make up in other ways. Another name for work, of course, is exercise, which in turn affects our respiratory systems, so necessary for good health. How often do we open our lungs to inhale good draughts of air? If only we knew these benefits we would esteem it a duty to give them more attention, slothful creatures that we are. God gave us the penalties for our good and we are too beguiled by lying deceptions to recognise them. Is it wise to breathe continually impure air? Who is at fault when we suffer from such folly ? Surely in our ignorance we charge to God in many cases what is merely the reaping of our own folly.

Another part of the curse is—"Thou shalt eat the herb of the field." It is not suggested we should, like Nebuchadnezzar, because of his continual offending in the eating part of his life, be turned out to graze on grass, to rectify the condition of his stomach ulcers or whatever it was. No, but pause for one moment ; count up what proportion of your diet consists of some leafy material, some natural plant that comes under the category of "herb of the field." Be honest, we are companions of the many who have endeavored to lift the curse before its time, instead of putting our necks under God's penalties, for our own good. If you really want to know how far we have got away from His pronouncement, all to our hurt, have a look at Gen. 1:29 and consider how much it concerns you. We wonder why things go wrong, why our hospitals are overflowing, why parasites grow up among us. All because we tickle our palate with the "nice" things of society. Look into Daniel's habits.

"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet" and "Lord, if he sleepeth, he doeth well." Sleep and rest seem related; if we miss out on this necessity in a natural way, we are forced to get it in an artificial way. What mental disorders are the direct results of insufficient rest, either from worry, anxiety, or maybe we have not had the happy medium of natural exertion. Do we use sufficient of the correct lubrication to keep these machines of ours, our bodies, on the road? There is no need to study all the intricacies of the workings of our bladders or kidneys ; sufficient to plead just the natural springs of earth, unpolluted with any discoloration or impurities. God has made provision for our occasional offending His laws in these matters ; the wonders of healing properties astound us, but His laws become a little harsher if we persist in offending. Look at the sunlight ; what healing properties are in its rays. God gave us clothes and houses ; we ignore His counsel if we choose to remain cooped up like pigeons in a cage.

And now the last, but not least of His injunctions, but probably the most complex of all, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4 :4.)

The foregoing constitute the "Conditions" of our award, with God being the Supreme Employer. Whether we like it or not, we are in prison, the prison house of death. Faithful subjects, like Joseph, Daniel and his friends, made the best of prevailing conditions, not like Cain, who rebelled and was confined to another part of the prison while undergoing detention.

There was at one time a class of people whom God favored greatly, and He said to them—"You may have more of my favors than these heathen (isolated) people. You may pictorially present annually and in feasts and ceremonies My plan for all mankind to be delivered from sin. This should benefit you immensely, and prepare you to receive the King of the earth." They misappropriated His favors for their own aggrandisement and excellence among the other prisoners in this huge prison house. Had they been faithful in their duties there were other high favors to be won. Others were invited to enjoy these favors, and they should be careful to appropriate God's favors for the purpose given. In short, we should study the terms and conditions of the new award under which we are working. These extra favors do not exempt us from responsibilities. We are subject to the general conditions prevailing in the prison. To enjoy these

favors puts pleasure into work, whether it be housewife, servant, bricklayer, carpenter, office worker, employer or janitor.

God is a generous Paymaster ; give what we may to Him in the form of faith, work, trust, zeal, love, service, and what do we get in return? We are rewarded over and above all that we ever give. Sometimes it may be to the extent of twenty, thirty, sixty, or even a hundredfold we are rewarded. But it is always returned with good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over. There are many glaring examples of this principle operating in the lives of the Ancient Worthies ; we think of Job, Jaccia, Joseph, Daniel, etc.

Let us bring it nearer home: "Give God the thanks," says Jesus. We thank God for our blessings, but ours should be a continual thanking Him for all His benefits—"in everything give thanks." Have you noticed that when you are thankful you miss out on a lot of trouble? Compare the disposition of a disgruntled person with that of a thankful one ; the former is sour, bitter, and there is no pleasing him. The latter is happy ; he cannot help but be happy if he is thankful. If we knew of the hidden mysteries of how a state of mind can affect our stomachs, and thy in turn our health, we should be very careful to bow to God's will in everything, and accept it as being best for our welfare. A troubled or worried person is more apt to find an accident round the corner than one who is free from worry and thus keen and awake to all the hazards of the day.

We do not seem able to thwart the operation of God's law that "As ye sow, so shall ye reap" and that He will reward every man according to his works, for "every man shall receive his own reward." It is no use our professing one thing and acting another. If we say we are glad to cast our cares upon Him and act as if we cannot trust Him to solve or ease our burden, what else can be the result but disadvantageous?

"With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Fair enough in anyone's language, but it brings us up with a jolt to discover as we examine this rule or law, chat, the thing that really offends us most in our brethren is the thing of which we generally are most conscious in ourselves. If you are of the complaining kind, look inwards and see if you have not grounds for complaint nearer home. It is so easy to see the "mote," the tiny splinter that is in our neighbor's eye and miss altogether the "beam," the huge failing in our own make-up. God takes note of all this, and rewards us accordingly. You will discover that even in His chastisements there is sympathy, consideration, and they come with the desire of correcting our waywardness rather than a punitive punishment for misdeeds.

We have so much for which to be thankful there should never be an occasion for murmuring. Human nature being what it is, we find in ourselves as well as in Scriptural records, the grumblers are there. Martha was "Cumbered about with much serving; overcareful and troubled with many things," complained about her sister . . . the laborers in the field contracted to work for a specified sum and complained about others coming in later in the day and all receiving the same reward . . . the elder brother of the Prodigal Son complained when his younger brother was shown a favor.

All of God's laws are for our benefit and protection, even if we should suffer injury through them in some way or another. What if we should place a rickety chair on a table to fix the hole in the roof, fall and sprain or break a limb. Whose fault? God's law of gravity is for our protection, not our destruction. Yet we can, quite properly, ascribe our injury to the law of gravity. The point is, that we should examine these laws with our intelligence and develop in understanding, so that we may use them all to our advantage. Many by-laws govern the complete Law of Existence. We should note, as intelligent creatures, their effect upon us, and correct that part where we may suffer, like the insecure rung of a ladder, that we do not fall to earth rather suddenly.

"The Lord is merciful and gracious ; He hath not rewarded us according to our iniquities. If Thou Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who could stand ?" These beneficent mercies are gracious provisions incorporated in the general terms of God's award under which we strive to be good servants, or employees. But He also has decreed that "As ye sow so shall ye reap." As we receive His mercies we are counselled to pass on the good grace—"Freely ye have received, freely give." The strange thing about this retributive action of receiving and giving is that no one ever becomes poorer by giving to others what God has given to him. For example, to pass on love, kindness, gentleness, etc., makes us the richer in those qualities rather than the poorer. On the other hand, to pass on bitterness, sourness, etc., does not lessen our complaint, but contrary, we become worse.

Some folk are easily discouraged, mostly on account of sins of ignorance, selfishness, wilful dispositions. Fault-finding comes quickly. To excuse their selfish approach they say, "What's the use ? Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may be dead." This unthankful attitude can hardly blame God for the ill results.

Some think they are unjustly treated and become despondent and discouraged ; they lose the zeal and zest for a thankful heart. They complain that the aim is too high. Consider what cause for complaint had the thief on the cross upon whom Jesus had compassion. This man, we are told, was arraigned for stealing, and yet his penalty for such malpractice was crucifixion. The penalty, to any fair-minded one, seems far in excess of the crime. Think, crucifixion for theft! Yet this man cried out for mercy, for compassion, saying, "We receive the DUE REWARD for our deeds." Of a truth Paul declares, "There is none righteous, no not one."

Because of exceedingly rich promises God has now lifted the death penalty as far as we are concerned. Faith-righteousness sees now ahead of it eternal life, a full reward for full obedience. And John exhorts us to look to ourselves, "That we receive a full reward." (2 John 8.) Whether it be a full or partial reward, it will be over and above that which we should have received. Surely we have a Good Paymaster.

## The Institute's Work.

IT is a pleasure at this time to report another year's work being completed for the Berean Bible Institute, and our foremost thought is that of thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessings upon the efforts undertaken in His name together with our brethren who have co-operated in the service of the Lord in this part of the harvest field.

Our friends generally will realise that the efforts from the Institute, here in Melbourne, are directed along similar lines each year, the main object being to encourage our brethren in the Lord to press on along the Christian way in appreciation of the truths which have drawn them to the Lord and each other in, these last days of the Gospel Age, and also to witness to the message of the kingdom that others feeling after the Lord may be found and supplied with the precious things that have been such a blessing to our own hearts. To this end, our monthly "Peoples Paper and Herald of Christ's Kingdom" goes forth throughout this land and overseas, and it is encouraging to know that its contents have been appreciated generally, both near and far.

Contributions to the pages of the "Peoples Paper" have been gladly received and warmly appreciated, and it is our desire that this messenger for the Lord's truth may always contain just those things that will build up in Christian faith and doctrine, and promote the development of the graces of the holy spirit wherever it is read. It is realised that the harvest 'truths are of special importance, and these find a prominent place in our journal from time to time.

Subscriptions to "Peoples Paper," which are now 5/- per year, do not cover the cost of production, but quantities are distributed free to those interested in spiritual things, and so the witness in this way is considered a good investment, in the Lord's service, for the deficiency in cost which is made up from the General Tract Fund. Our readers are welcome to extra copies of the "Paper" for distribution where good may be done, and those who provide subscriptions for others, or encourage others to subscribe for themselves are assisting helpfully in the work, and these efforts are greatly valued. The good help rendered in the checking of proofs, folding, wrapping and despatching of our monthly "Paper" by some friends is also appreciated very much.

During the past year quantities of tracts have been distributed and supplies of various topics Are available to those who desire to cooperate in this work. The mailing of Consolation Cards is another means of witness to those who have suffered bereavement, and in which our friends may assist.

Public lectures have been given regularly throughout the year in co-operation with our brethren, and it has been encouraging to note the interest and appreciation of the messages from the Word of God, presented along the line of the Plan of the Ages, by some new friends, as well as by our brethren who are rejoicing in these truths.

The General Tract Fund Account reveals the financial position of the general work, and all the good help has been provided, in the Lord's overruling providence, by the voluntary contributions of our brethren generally. Such loving co-operation is greatly appreciated, as unto the Lord, and is most encouraging in the efforts to serve the Lord's cause of truth.

Looking back over the year we have much cause for praise and gratitude to our Heavenly Father. It is certainly a privilege to be free from the trouble and distress which is prevalent in some countries of the world, and this gives us further opportunities for service amongst our brethren and towards all who have ears to hear. The prayers of our brethren are requested that the Lord's guidance and blessing may be upon His work, that His will may be done in our hearts, and amongst others with whom we come in contact, either personally or through the mails, to His praise. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal ; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (John 4:36.)

### GENERAL TRACT FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/56	£54 3 2
„, Donations ..	570 15 10
	£624 19 0
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples	£98 2 3
Hall Rents, Advertising Circulars,	36 10 6
General Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	52 8 2
Towards Personal and House Ex-	
325 0 0 41 11 4	
Pilgrim Work and Assisting Brethren	27 2 0
Free Books and Booklets ..	5 7 6
Travel and Sundries ..	13 7 0
Credit Balance 1/5/57 ..	25 10 3
	£624 19 0

## Radio Work.

THE witness work by means of the radio has also continued steadily, over another twelve months, and we lift up thankful hearts to the Lord for His blessings in connection with this feature of service in which it has been a privilege

to engage with others of our dear friends in various parts.

A goodly number of enquiries have been received throughout the year past, and it is a pleasure to report that from this number quite a few in the different States have appreciated the truth message very sincerely. During the past year the same radio stations have been used, namely-3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY/NA and after each broadcast complete copies of the discussions by Frank and Ernest are offered free to all interested listeners, as well as other free literature.

To all enquirers to the radio sessions free copies of the "Peoples Paper" are also forwarded for several months, and in this way full opportunity is given to encourage the interest of all who are feeling after the truths of God's Word. Our brethren within range of the radio stations would be performing a good work by encouraging people to listen, and advertising slips for this purpose are gladly supplied.

Looking back over the 14.1 years since this witness work commenced in Australia it is encouraging to realise that a number of brethren were first contacted by this means of service, and by the Lord's grace, have continued to rejoice in the truth. It is fully realised that the spirit of the Lord draws earnest hearts to appreciate His truth, but what a privilege it is to be used in any small way in the service of our Lord who has done so much for us.

The financial position for the work over the radio is shown by the Radio Fund Account. The good assistance to this branch of service by voluntary donations is warmly appreciated, and has met all costs, by the Lord's providence. Our brethren in Western Australia continue to cover the cost of the sessions over 6KY/NA. It is desired that the prayers of the brethren be offered for the Lord's blessing upon this avenue of service also in the days ahead, that all may be accomplished in harmony with His good will, to His praise.

#### RADIO FUND.

To Credit Balance 1/5/56	£80 10 4
„, Donations...	756 19 2
	£837 9 6
By Radio Stations 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ	£692 3 1
Additional Recordings for 3GL, 2KY, 4KQ and 6KY	49 0 10
Freight Charges	13 6 2
Printing Dialogues ..	8 5 0
Travel and Sundries ..	
Bank Charges ..	65 10 1
Credit Balance 1/5/57	
	£837 9 6

## Study in Hebrews 10.

THE wonderful plan of God, by which He forgives the sins of all mankind and establishes His new covenant with Israel and ultimately with all the families of the earth, is outlined so clearly and helpfully throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews by the Apostle Paul.

To those who have made an examination of this masterly presentation by the Apostle of the typical and antitypical priesthoods of God, the truths of God's Plan shine out in added beauty, and appeal in ever-increasing grandeur as the various features are grasped and appreciated as coming only from the mind of our gracious Heavenly Father.

In the tenth chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews the Apostle presents so beautifully the explanation of the antitypical sin offerings which were prefigured on Israel's day of atonement by the slaying of the bullock and the Lord's goat, and the sprinkling of the blood of these animals, in succession, upon the mercy seat in the Most Holy of the tabernacle.

Israel's day of atonement was a 24-hour day, but the antitypical day of atonement lasts the whole of this Gospel Age. So, says Paul, as it is "not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins, wherefore when he (Christ) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. 10:4,5.) We surely rejoice that "Jesus was made a little lower than the angels (made flesh) for the suffering of death . . . that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.)

Our Lord's sacrifice of His humanity to "taste death for every man" constituted the ransom price to take away the sins of the world, and the way in which this valuable price is made applicable to cancel the sins of all mankind is revealed by the sin offerings, so ably presented by Paul in this 10th chapter of Hebrews in particular. Jesus was the antitypical bullock, and, as in the type, the bullock's blood was sprinkled on behalf of "himself and his house" only, and not for all Israel, so our Lord's sacrifice was applied for His body and household of faith only, and not for all the world when he "appeared in the presence of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.)

As it required the sprinkling of the blood of the Lord's goat, in the type, to cancel the sins "for the people" — all the remainder of Israel—(Lev. 16:15), so in antitype the Lord's people follow in the steps of Christ's sacrifice, and having His merit making their sacrifice "holy, acceptable to God," they are the secondary offering for sin during this Gospel Age. So, we see a secondary meaning in the words of Heb. 10:5—"a body hast thou prepared me." God had prepared the Body of Christ, His Church, representatively in the Apostles and other brethren who were offered in sacrifice at Pentecost. All the Gospel Age other members of the Lord's body are also "filling up that which is behind of the

afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24.)

So, the Apostle declares—”He taketh away the first (the typical sacrifices) that he may establish the second (the antitype, the real sacrifices for sin). By the which will we are sanctified (set apart to holy, sacrificial service) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (the members of His Body, offered representatively of the whole, at Pentecost). For by one offering (in two parts—the Christ, Head and Body) he hath perfected those being sanctified. Whereof the holy spirit also is a witness to us.” (Heb. 10:9,10,14,15.) Yes, “the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8:16), and being sanctified more and more during the daily presentation (offering) of ourselves as members of the Lord’s goat class in His service.

Paul then proceeds in verses 16,17 of Hebrews 10, to refer to the wonderful transformation that will be effected in the lives of Israel (and later all mankind) by the establishing of the new covenant with Israel “after those days” — after the “seven times” or 2520 years of chastisement upon Israel, ending about 1914-18. We are not to conclude that this new covenant should have been established fully with Israel immediately the “seven times” expired, but rather from that time the Lord’s favor would begin to return to Israel, and ultimately “I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

The Apostle had mentioned this new covenant in more detail in Hebrews 8:8-13, so the reason for again bringing it forward in chapter 10 seems to be to show the connection between the “offerings for sin” of the Gospel Age, and the blessings to follow under the new covenant in the Millennial Age, still future. For, says Paul, in verse 18—”Now where there is forgiveness of these (forgiveness of sin for Israel and the world under the new covenant) an offering for sin is no longer needed.” No, indeed, the antitypical offering for sin will be completed before the new covenant can become operative, for the very good reason that the secondary antitypical sprinkling of the heavenly mercy seat must be accomplished before the High Priest can “appear the second time without sin (without a sin offering) unto salvation.” (Heb. 9:28.)

How clearly, then, has the Apostle established the fact that the new covenant is to be made with a natural, earthly people, and is not operative with the Lord’s people of this Gospel Age, who are developed under the Abrahamic covenant, as shown by Paul in Gal. 4 :28—”Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”

However, the main purpose of Paul in stressing the benefits to be received under the new covenant, by the forefathers of those to whom he wrote his Hebrew’s epistle, seems to be to impress the goodness and mercy of God, so that they may be the more encouraged to press on in their privileges as the “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling” (Heb. 3:1), and to esteem the opportunity of being counted in with the sacrifice of Christ as the greatest favor ever offered to any of the human family. To us also, in this end of the Gospel Age, does the Apostle’s reasoning appeal, as he seeks to lead us forward to grasp more and more of the inestimable favor of being called into the Body of Christ, prepared for sacrifice first of all by our loving heavenly Father, and later, by His grace, to enter into the antitypical Most Holy, “whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” (Heb. 6:20.)

## “I TOLD THEM OF . . . THE KING’S WORDS”

There is no more precious talent entrusted to us with which we may trade with certain success and splendid increase than the words of our King. A simple text passed on may be the immediate means of wonderful help and quickening, and the comfort whenever we ourselves are comforted of God (not some otherwise concocted comfort) may comfort many who are in any trouble, without even one word of man as its vehicle.—F.R.H.

What is the Cross ? I questioned.  
‘Tis bearing every day  
The trials which the Father  
Permits along the way;  
‘Tis sharing the reproaches  
Your Master meekly bore  
While those who claim to love Him  
Revile you more and more.

**Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music)**—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

“**Hymns of Dawn Music Book.**”—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

**Swallowing angry words is a lot easier than having to eat them later.**

## Excerpt Convention Report 1930.

HAVE we ever stopped to really think seriously just how the Saviour would view matters and what He would say to us were He visibly to appear in our midst in these times? Some have said, "Oh! how I wish the Master would visit us as He did with those disciples long ago; how I wish I might consult Him with regard to many questions that have so troubled me ; I am sure, if the Master were right in our midst, we could soon have the burning, vexing problems and issues that have disturbed us in these recent years quickly settled." But, brethren, is there any question, problem or difficulty before us today that the Master has not already answered in one or another of His many sayings when He was here long ago? Has He not through the spirit in the Apostolic messages dealt with all the present issues?

But still someone says, "If He were here I would like to ask Him who has charge of His Church today, and whom He has put over His people to control and direct them with power and authority." How would Jesus reply to this question? I believe that we already have His answer to that question—My dear disciples, I have never vacated the position which the Father gave to Me in the beginning of the Age. As I then said, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," so now I say that I alone have charge of My Church, and I have never delegated authority to any man or company of men to rule over the Church or to interfere with the individual liberty of each member.

Another might ask: Master, tell us what great movement or work have you authorised your people to carry on in the earth today ; what great pronouncement is there to be made in fulfilment of your will? Again we may be sure the Lord would answer in harmony with what He established as the mission of the Church when it was instituted, and that answer would be: I have not authorised any great movement or any great work to be achieved during this dispensation, for "My Kingdom is not of this world." I remind you that in the beginning of the Age I said that My people would be scattered here and there throughout the earth. I never authorised My disciples to organise any great and wonderful work while yet in their earthly pilgrimage. Was not this the sum of the teachings of Christ and the Apostles with regard to what was authorised or expected of the faithful Church all along through the centuries until her glorification?

Another question might be: Master, will you not tell us just who and where your people are to be found in the earth today so that we may be numbered among them and thus enjoy fellowship with the true saints. We believe the Lord would answer, saying. "My followers are those who do the will of My Father in heaven; they are those who possess My spirit; they are such as are consecrated—surrendered—to My will; they are those who deny themselves and have taken up their cross to follow Me; in fact, whoever will do the will of My Father the same is My Brother, My Sister, My Mother." And, dear brethren, should not this reply of the Master be satisfactory to us? Do we not really love all who love the Lord Jesus and possess His spirit? As many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God.

All our perplexities of today can be settled if we properly take them to the Lord and enquire what the spirit has long ago said unto the Church.

Why should we do ourselves this wrong,  
Or others,—that we are not always strong,  
That we are ever overborne with care,  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious, or troubled,—when with us is Prayer,  
And Joy and Strength and Courage are with Thee!  
—Matt. 28: 20. R.C.T.

**BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.**

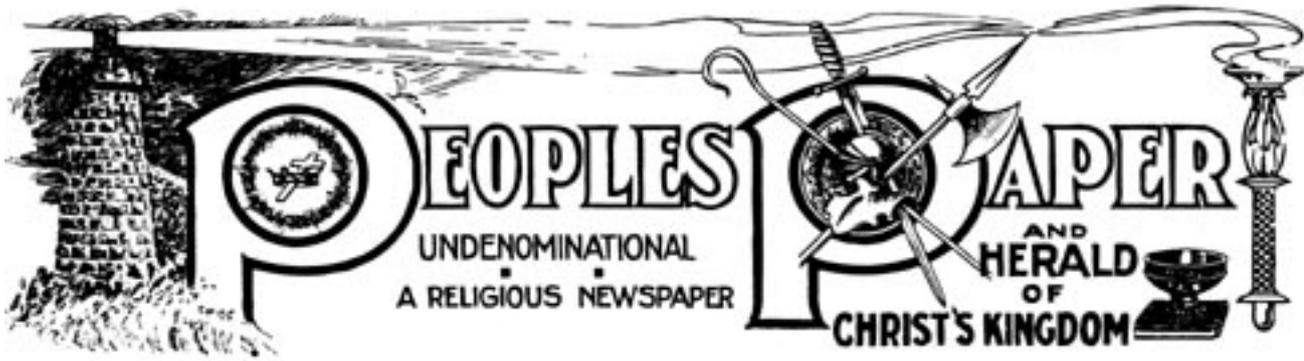
## “THAT MUCH.”

A little girl who was in hospital recovering from a severe operation, was visited by her mother every day. The mother noticed that the child was careful to keep her handkerchief in a place where she could easily get it. There was nothing strange about that, but her mother also observed that whenever the nurse brought her a clean handkerchief the little girl would transfer to it something that was tied up in the corner of the other one. At length the mother gently asked the child what she was guarding so carefully. With tears in her eyes, the little sufferer answered, "I found it in the drawer at home, and wanted that much with me."

The mother untied the knot, and found rolled up in the handkerchief part of a leaf from the Bible containing the text, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God."

The child wanted "that much" with her to take to the operating-room; she could hold "that much" in her hand when the dressings were made and the stitches taken out, and it meant, oh, so much to her!

Oh, for the faith and trust of a little child!



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**Price—Fivepence**

## **Why are the Dead not Raised to Life in Healing Campaigns Today?**

(This article is published by request).

OUR subject is chosen on account of the great interest being shown, in recent times especially, in the claims that it is quite the right thing to expect the Lord to heal bodily ailments or disabilities of those who exercise faith in Him.

One thing that is noticeable is the fact that not only those who specialise in faith healing, etc. (such as those of Pentecostal or Apostolic beliefs), are stressing this matter of bodily healings, but also some of the other denominational churches are joining in and declaring that it is correct to seek, and expect the Lord to heal by miracles those who are suffering illness of one kind or another. This is certainly something new, but it all goes to show that anything of an outward appeal or demonstration is very attractive and captivating to those who do not study the Bible correctly, nor understand the Plan of the Ages for this present Gospel Age, and for the ages to come.

It seems as though some of the leaders in some of the church systems are being stirred up by the campaigns of others who have started organizations in more recent years with special stress upon the healing of bodily sicknesses, and, apparently, not wishing to be left out of anything that seems to be "catching on" with a great number of people, we have now what might be called an epidemic of faith-healing propaganda which is often accepted at full face-value without examination of the Bible to prove whether it is truth or error.

In coming to the Bible for help in respect of any subject, how important it is to keep in mind that what may be true and appropriate for one age in God's Plan of the Ages, need not necessarily be true in another age, or every age. In other words, while there are fundamental truths which do apply at all times, there are other truths which apply only, and especially, for certain periods during the outworking of God's plan and which are termed "present truth" in the Bible; the thought being that a certain teaching was applicable to the time then present, as expressed by the Apostle Peter—"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." (2 Pet. 1:12.) It is of interest to note that the Greek word from which our English word "present" is translated in the text just quoted, means, "to be near; at hand, or time being."

During our Lord's first advent He performed quite a variety of miracles, as we know, in the turning of water into wine, feeding the multitude from a few loaves and fishes, curing ailments of various kinds in some people, and even raising the dead. These miracles were also carried over into the activities of the early church, for the reason that the same conditions applied for some years after our Lord's death as applied when He was on earth. So, the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 2:3,4 referred to the "So great salvation," and "God bearing witness with signs and wonders." (See also John 2:11.)

We wish now to examine the words of our Lord at the time of one of His most outstanding miracles, found in Luke 7:11-16. From verse 12 we read—"Now when he (Jesus) came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier (coffin), and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother." What a wonderful demonstration of the power of God was thus manifested by our Lord on that occasion, and no wonder the people "glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people."

Reading on in Luke 7:17-23 we find a most helpful statement from Jesus respecting John the Baptist and the information He sends to John that he may know that Jesus is really the Messiah. Verses 22, 23 read—"Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

We note from verse 11 that "many of his disciples went with him, and much people," therefore the raising of the widow's son was well known, so in sending John's disciples to him in prison our Lord could well say—"Go your way,

and tell John what things ye have seen and heard.” And amongst the most startling things they had seen and heard was the raising of the widow’s son from death, by stopping the funeral procession. What would we think if we had been present and saw Jesus raise the widow’s son to life from the coffin in which he was to be buried? Would we not also say, in the words of verse 16—”A great prophet is risen up among us; and, that God hath visited his people?” We surely would. And be it noted that this manifestation of God’s power, in the hands of Christ, of raising the dead, was one of the important signs expressed to John the Baptist in prison, that he may know that Jesus was the true Messiah, and that he need not “look for another.”

It is of interest in connection with our subject to mention that recently one of the faith-healing people, in dealing with these words of Jesus to John the Baptist, stressed the importance of healing of people and used the Lord’s words —”Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me”—implying that those who do not agree with their healing campaigns today are offended, and rejecting the Lord and His witness. Yet, this man ignored altogether the words of Jesus respecting the “dead being raised,” and the “blind receiving sight” as part of the witness by which John could be sure that Jesus was the Messiah. And those who are today stressing the importance of healings for the sick quote the words of the Apostle Paul in Heb. 13 :8—”Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever”—in support, claiming that what the Lord did then, **He is** now doing today. But who has heard of anyone being raised from the dead by the Lord today? Who has heard of any of those who claim -that the Lord’s power is the same yesterday, today and for ever in their healing campaigns ever attempting to raise the dead to life? Why do they not attempt to raise the dead, when they claim the same conditions exist today as when Jesus was on earth? They know very well that they have not got the Lord’s power to do such things, despite their claims that His power is operative as at His first advent, but they know that they have some power to do a measure of healing, and to speak in tongues, etc., and are deceived into thinking it is the Lord’s power.

What about the Apostles who saw the miracles of Jesus—raising of the dead, giving of sight to the blind, etc.—were they able to do the same? Yes, they did, because they were true disciples, and particularly, because it was still the appropriate time for such manifestations of God’s power, while the church was in its infancy. From Matt. 10:5-8 we read—”These twelve Jesus sent forth . . . . And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils ; freely ye have received, freely give.” Do we ever hear a present-day faith healer quoting these verses and claiming to do exactly what the Apostles did in the name of Christ? No, indeed, because those instructions cannot be carried out today, for the Lord does not work always in the same way. As we saw previously, there is some truth which is “present truth,” for the time only when it was uttered.

However, what of the apostles; did they raise the dead in their day? Yes, they did. In Acts 9:36-42 we have the record of Peter restoring Dorcas to life from the dead, surely a most wonderful exhibition of God’s power working through His servant in a special way that has never been repeated since the days of the apostles. Also we have the record in Acts 20:9-12 of Paul restoring the life of a young man who fell from the “third loft” and was killed. This surely was another marvellous manifestation of the Lord’s power at the hands of His faithful apostle. If it had been God’s will that these miracles of the apostles were intended to continue throughout the Gospel Age, surely Peter, after raising one from the dead, would have been full of exhorting others to do the same. But what do we find in Peter’s writings? We find no references at all to any of the “gifts” of the spirit, but rather exhortations for the development of the “fruits” of the spirit. (See 2 Pet. 1:5-11.)

This agrees very fully with the particular advice of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians. In 1 Cor. 12:28-31 the apostle mentions the order in the early church and that there were gifts of the spirit operating at that time, some of which were more desirable than others, and yet he would show them “a more excellent way” than even the best of gifts. This he proceeded to do in chapter 13, showing that the development of the fruits of the spirit was the all-important attainment for the Lord’s people. In verses 8-11 in this 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians we see how the Apostle is clearly revealing the progressing elimination of the “gifts of the spirit” as the church developed and sought fuller appreciation of spiritual truths.—”Charity never faileth ; but whether there be (gifts of) prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be (gifts of) tongues, they shall cease; whether there be (gifts of) knowledge, it shall vanish away . . . . When I was a child, spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

How often we find reference being made to James 5:14-16 in support of physical healings today, but a careful examination of the context in James shows that bodily sicknesses are not referred to at all. It is of interest to find that the Greek word translated “sick” in this passage in James is the same as that translated “wearied” in Heb. 12:3—”Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” Yes, some become spiritually sick, and need encouragement and prayers of others to assist them back into harmony and fellowship with the Lord. “Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way ; but let it rather be healed.” (Heb. 12:12,13.)

To safeguard the Lord’s people against the many deceptions the Apostle Paul, in 2 Cor. 11:13-15, revealed that there would be “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” How significant are the words—”Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” By deceiving our first parents Satan brought all the sorrow, pain, sickness and death upon mankind; now, he would seek to cure the very conditions he brought about—”as an angel of light,”—and this is very attractive and appealing to those who are not established in the truths, of God’s Word, but are thinking more of temporary fleshly advantages which it is not the Lord’s will to impart in this Gospel Age.

So far from expecting bodily healings today, the Lord's people are invited to walk in the steps of their Master, sacrificing the human life, walking by faith and not by sight. The Apostle Paul's own experience is a wonderful guide to Christians today, as well as when he wrote to the Corinthian church. He declared—"Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2. Cor. 12:7-10.) There can be no doubt that this was a physical disability, and the great apostle, who could even raise the dead by the Lord's power, found that God's will for him was that he may be sanctified and mellowed by the "thorn in the flesh," as His grace was realised sufficient, for the Lord assured him—"My strength is made perfect in weakness."

If it had been God's will to heal His followers in those days, and since, surely the Apostle Paul would have been healed immediately, and how easy it would have been for Paul to have healed Timothy—See 1 Tim. 5:23. But no, it was not God's will, neither is it His will today that His people should be healed by miracles. How noticeable it is that to the Corinthian church only does Paul mention the "gifts" of the spirit, and he seeks to wean them away from the outward show of gifts, and exhorts them to cultivate the "fruits" of the spirit. When writing his epistles to those churches which were not in danger of being deceived by continuing in the use of the "gifts of the spirit" the apostle does not even mention them. These brethren had developed from those outward manifestations, and were being built up in the "inner man," as they gladly sacrificed their human lives in the service of the Lord. As the apostle set the example, so all the Lord's true people gladly "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24; see also Rom. 8:14-18.)

Let us not be misunderstood, however, in claiming that the Lord does not heal by miracles today. Surely, the Lord's blessing upon the sick and suffering of mankind is most fitting, and it is pleasing in His sight that we offer up sincere and fervent prayers for His blessing and comfort to be upon all ailing ones, while at the same time we do our best with the assistance of medical men, and correct foods, etc., which the Lord has provided for our well being, that God's will may be done, as we progress along the Christian way. On the other hand we do well also not to neglect bodily weaknesses in view of the fact that we do not expect the Lord to heal by miracles. We must exercise the spirit of a sound mind and keep as well as reasonably possible, and correct habits of eating and drinking, etc., bring their own rewards. Those people who would not curb their appetites for food or drink which are injurious just because they appeal to the palate are not likely to progress very well in spiritual things either. (See 1 Cor. 9:26,27.)

While, then, we see that the time has not yet arrived for the dead to be raised, neither is it the time for miraculous healings, etc., and while God permits Satan to deceive certain ones by false claims, yet we rejoice that the time is not far distant when the Lord's prayer will be answered—"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven"—and the resurrection and blessing of all mankind will be accomplished as they obey the laws of the kingdom. (See John 5:28,29 [Rev. Version] ; 1 Cor. 15:22,23.)

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## **Not Holding the Head.**

*(Col. E:18,19.)*

THE Apostle warns us all against a wrong attitude which at all times has more or less threatened the body of Christ, in its larger gatherings as well as in its little handfuls ;— he warns against the danger of looking too much to ourselves or to other men in the Church and not enough toward the Lord, who is indeed "the Head of the Church, which is His Body." Some members he represents as taking a head position, forgetful of the fact that "one is the Head of the Church, even Christ," and inclined, in consequence of this forgetfulness, to think too highly of themselves, to imagine

that the whole weight and importance of the Lord's cause devolves upon them, and to assume too much leadership.

The Apostle warns other less prominent members of the Church against a recognition and support of such wrong position, assuring them that their condescension is extreme, prejudicial to themselves and to the interests they would serve ; that the angels, that is the messengers, the representatives of the Church (Rev. 1:20; 2:1) are not to be worshipped, though they are to be highly esteemed in proportion to their faithfulness, good works and humility. He warns other members that such a humiliation as would ignore themselves entirely and cast all the weight and responsibility and influence upon these angels and elders would appear improper, and would indicate an unfaithfulness to Christ and a failure to rightly appreciate His arrangements.

Thus reproving two classes because of taking opposite extremes, the Apostle proceeds to explain that the difficulty with both parties is a failure to hold the Head in proper esteem—Christ, the only true Head of the Church. Whether by exalting ourselves, usurping our Lord's place in the Church, and ignoring His words and arrangements and being puffed up as His servants, or whether, on the other hand, quietly submitting to such things and doing reverence to those who usurp the Lord's place in His body, in either case the difficulty is the same—a failure to rightly recognise the true Head.

If we accept the fact that Christ is the Head of the Church, let us rest every argument on that basis ; let us not feel for a moment that everything will go to pieces unless we steady the ark—that we are main spokes in the divine programme in any little quarter of Zion (1 Chron. 13:10). All such self-conceited ideas are traitorous as respects the Captain of our salvation, for He has told us, and we believe His word—"Without Me, ye can do nothing." Every member of the body of Christ, whom the Lord has in any sense of the word set in the Church to serve His cause, should realise that he is not at all essential to the development of the divine plan, that it is a favour, pure and simple, that he has been granted a share in connection with it, that his blessings, day by day, more than compensate any little service and sacrifice he may be able to render. So far from feeling heady he should feel humbled by the thought that he is permitted to have any part in the great plan of God as a servant amongst his brethren, and he should realise distinctly that, so surely as the Lord is the Head of His Church, any who cease to occupy positions of trust in a humble manner will be debased, will lose privileges and opportunities, perhaps with injury to themselves and to others.

In 2 Tim. :3, the Apostle assures us that, in the last days, grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents (and higher authority in general), unthankful, unholy . . . traducers, heady, high-minded . . . having a form of godliness, but ignoring the power thereof.

This picture certainly fits well to our day throughout nominal Christendom, and it is not strange, therefore, that something of the same general spirit at times seeks to invade the camp of the saints—the little company of the consecrated who are striving to be overcomers of the world and its spirit. The fact that the Apostle writes thus forcefully on this question does not prove any lack of sympathy on his part, but the trouble is a grievous one and especially injurious to the brethren who may yield to such headiness ; nothing is surer to sap spiritual vitality and to lead us into darkness, both doctrinal and spiritual.

It would be well for all whom the Lord hath set in the body, either in a humble position or in a conspicuous place, to have the Apostle's words well in mind—that as our Lord humbled himself and was subsequently exalted, it demonstrates a principle at work in the Father's programme under which all of His Royal Priesthood must humble themselves if they would in due time be exalted. The Apostle Peter's argument also is, "Humble yourselves therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Now is not the proper time for exaltation ; to elevate ourselves or others under present conditions is to incur the greater danger of a fall. Hence, all who are earnest and of humble heart, should both watch and pray lest they enter into temptation along this line, which, from the very beginning of the Gospel Age, has been the most serious stumbling block in the pathway of this class. We remember that it was amongst the apostles themselves that the argument took place as to which would be the greatest in the Kingdom. Let us all remember our Lord's words of reproof to them, "Except ye humble yourselves and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter into the Kingdom."

Thus our Lord marks humility as one of the prime essentials of a place in the Kingdom. It will not be very long—let us have patience. Let us have faith, too ; not be doubters. Much of the endeavour to grasp and wield authority in the Church is at first undertaken with the best of intentions, with the desire to do and be in the highest interests of the Church. In such cases, faith is not strong enough to realise how unnecessary we are to the divine plans and how able the Lord is to overrule every incident and circumstance according to the divine will. More faith in the Lord's power to regulate the affairs of the Church will counteract largely the efforts of some of His people to run the Church's interests along lines of their own wisdom and ability. Let us remember that He is able, He is willing, to work all things according to the counsel of His own will. Let us remember that our highest place is lying low, that the greatest mastery is self-mastery, and that whatever success we might have in usurping the place and authority of our Lord and His Word would undoubtedly react unfavourably to us in the end. Hence, in self-preservation, as well as in the interest of the Church and in honor of the Lord, we need to keep self under. Let us remember the words of the poet and apply them daily :—

"O! to be nothing, nothing,  
Painful the humbling may be;  
Yet low in the dust I'd lay me  
That the world my Saviour might see.  
Rather be nothing, nothing

To Him let their voices be raised  
He is the fountain of blessing,  
Yes, worthy is He to be praised.”

Let us keep ever in memory the Apostles’ example and words: “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus, our Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.” (2 Cor. 4:5.)

## **When the Nations will Seek God.**

*“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though he be not far from every one of us.”—Acts 17:27.*

NEW TESTAMENT evidences on this subject of seeking the Lord give the thought that not very many are in the condition of heart to seek Him at the present time. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ” and the faith of Jesus should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Nevertheless, as the Apostle puts it, God is “not far from every one of us,” and every one who will seek or feel after Him, He will be pleased to bless by a manifestation of Himself. In fact, this is the very object of this present Gospel Age — to find, to enlighten, to bless and to gather into a special class those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Those of us who thus seek after the Lord He guides, draws, influences. He leads them to the Lord Jesus Christ, pointing to Him as the necessary way by which they may approach Himself and assuring them that there is no other name given whereby they can be saved (Acts 4:12), and that all who will come unto Him through Christ will be accepted.

Such as do come in this way, we have proven from our own experiences and the experiences of others, as well as from the Word, are met half way by the Lord. “Draw nigh unto me, and I will draw nigh unto you.” (Jas. 4:8.) And as they draw nigh and continue to approach closer by God’s grace, they are brought by and by to a full realization that God is willing to accept them as sacrificers, as “members of the Body of Christ.” If they fall into line with the Divine provision and present their bodies a living sacrifice, they will be looked upon as holy, acceptable to God (Rom. 12:1); they will recognize the “high calling” to “glory and honor and immortality” with Christ. But if they fail to go on, they will thus receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. 6:1)

The Apostle intimates, not only in the text under consideration, but also in his Epistle to Timothy (1 Tim. 2:4), that God wills that all men shall be saved; wills it in the sense that He will awaken them all from Adamic death and “bring them to a knowledge of the Truth;” that they may be recovered entirely from all imperfections that belong to Adam’s condemnation, and thus brought fully into harmony with Him. Because this is His will, He has made ample provisions — not only in the arrangement by which our Lord died on behalf of all mankind, that He might be the Ransomer of all, but also in the provision that all shall have the opportunity of coming to this knowledge and of benefitting thereby.

In this sermon on Mars Hill, the Apostle Paul pointed out to the men of Athens that this “unknown God,” this God who was unknown to them, is the great God who has divided unto men their habitation and determined their bounds; that He is the supervisor of the nations; that he determines how long and under what conditions the nations may prosper and what liberties and opportunities they may have. Then he proceeds to point out that while God has for a long time left men in ignorance and winked at many of their imperfections and flagrant wrong-doings, as though He did not notice them at all, nevertheless another step has now been taken in His great Plan: “Now he commands all men everywhere to repent.”

The Apostle further declares, I, Paul, have something to tell you about this great God and about His message—that all men everywhere should repent. Do you ask me why they should repent? I answer, for the reason that God is prepared to forgive them their sins, on this condition: He was not prepared to do this a short time ago; He was not prepared to do this until Christ died; but since Christ has died and ascended up on high and “appeared in the Presence of God for us”—for believers—God is now willing to accept any who come unto Him through Jesus. It is proper, therefore, that I should tell you that there is to be an opportunity of future life through Him.

And, furthermore, it is proper that I should tell you also that “God has appointed a Day (the great Millennial period) in which He will judge (try) the world in righteousness.” The whole world will then have a trial, a righteous trial, a fair, impartial trial, a full opportunity to come unto the knowledge of the “Truth;” to come to a knowledge of right and wrong, a full opportunity to come to perfection of human life and to attain all that was lost in the fall of man. (Luke 19:10) This message should, as far as possible, be made known to all men everywhere, because every act of their lives will have a bearing on the future; it will either uplift them to some extent out of the depths of degradation into which the world has been plunged through ignorance and superstition and bring a development of character, or it will condemn them and bring a measure of retribution, and thus make the conditions of the future more difficult than they would be if righteousness were sought.

*Speak only when you have anything to say which it is desirable to communicate. You do not know what a great gift of God it is not to be obliged to speak, and to know when to hold your tongue.—St. Gregory.*

## **WATCH AND PRAY.**

Communion with the Lord in prayer brings:

1st:—Increased confidence in the Lord’s supervision of our affairs.

2nd :—Increased faith in all the great and precious promises of His Word.

3rd :—Increased realization of His leadings, past and present.

4th :—Increased love for all the brethren in Christ.

5th :—Increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress.

The Divine object, then, in answering prayer is that we may have a stimulation of faith in connection with our receiving daily blessing—both temporal and spiritual.

## HIS CHILD'S PICTURE.

Bishop Thoburn tells a beautiful story about a picture of his deceased child. It seemed a very imperfect photograph, so blurred that scarcely a trace of the loved features could be seen in it. But one day he took the picture to a photographer, and asked him if he could do anything to improve it.

In three weeks the Bishop returned, and as he saw the picture in its frame on the wall he was startled. It seemed as if his child were living again before him. The image had been in the old picture, but was concealed beneath the blurs and mists that were there also.

In every true disciple there is the image of the Master. It may be very dim. Its features are overlaid by blurs and blemishes, and are almost unrecognisable by human eyes. It is the work of Christ in our lives to bring out this likeness. This is what He is doing in many of His ways with us.—"Sunday Pictorial."

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## The Witness and Seal of the Holy Spirit.

(Continued from last issue.)

Each should ask himself whether or not he has this witness of the spirit, this testimony to his growth as a new creature in Christ Jesus, and whether or not he is developing and maturing the kind of fruit here specified. Let us remember also that our growth in love and in all the fruits of the spirit is dependent largely upon our growth in knowledge; and our growth in knowledge of divine things is dependent also upon our growth in the fruits of the spirit. Each step of knowledge brings a corresponding step of duty and obedience, and each step of duty and obedience taken will be followed by a further step in knowledge, for so the spirit witnesseth, shall be the experience of all those who shall be taught of God in the school of Christ. If we have this witness of the spirit of growth, both in grace and in knowledge, let us rejoice therein, and let us follow on in the same pathway until it shall bring us, under divine guidance, to that which is perfect, both in knowledge and in grace.

Having learned how the holy spirit "witnesses" and what are some of its testimonies through God's holy Word, we do indeed find these very much more satisfactory than all the doubts and fears inspired by mental and physical conditions—feelings, falsely called by some the witness of the holy spirit. At the same time we cannot overlook the fact that all Christians cannot have the same witnessings from the spirit of God with their spirits or minds. All Christians of large experience and development should have testimony or witness on all these points, and on other points set forth in the Scriptures; but there are young Christians who have not yet progressed far enough to have all of these witnessings.; \_\_\_\_\_ some, perhaps, may be truly begotten of the Lord, and yet have but few of them. The great Husbandman does not expect fruitage, neither green nor yet developed and ripe fruit, from the fresh and tender sprouts of a branch.

The first witness that the newly begotten may have is, that they are accepted with the Lord; that they are young branches in the true Vine: and the spirit of the Vine is in them—the desire to grow and to be like the Vine, and to bring forth fruitage. Nor should it be long after the branch first shoots forth, before the sign of leaves and the buds of promise for fruit will be discernible. The new-born babe in the spiritual family manifests its relationship to the older and more developed members of the family, not by its eating of the strong meat, which might strangle it, but by desires for the strengthening milk, to grow thereby.—1 Pet. 2:2.

Those who find themselves possessed of any of the witnessings of the spirit should rejoice correspondingly; and every particular they are lacking they should endeavour to cultivate and develop, so that they may ultimately have the witness of the spirit in their favor on every point of the Scriptural testimony respecting the pathway and experiences of the Lord's faithful people. Such will no longer be in doubt and perplexity. On the contrary, they will know, will





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## The Witness and Seal of the Holy Spirit.

(Convention Address)

*“The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”—Rom 8:16.*

AMONG Christian people there is a good deal of misunderstanding in regard to the meaning of the expression “witness of the spirit.” How does the holy spirit witness to us respecting our acceptance with the Father—that we have become sons of God, and that under divine providence we are being prepared to be associated with our Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennial Kingdom? Not knowing what the witness of the spirit is, many of the Lord’s people are uncertain whether they have it or not. Others claim that they have the witness of the holy spirit, and refer to their happy feelings as the evidence. But the “witness” of feelings is a most unsatisfactory one; it fails those who rely upon it in the times of greatest need. When all men speak well of them, when health is favorable, when they are financially prosperous, when friends are numerous, they feel happy; but in proportion as some or all of these conditions are reversed, they feel unhappy, and lose what they had supposed was the “witness of the spirit.”

Such are deceived and misled by their feelings; they feel themselves happier and think themselves drawing nearer to God at times when really they are, under the Adversary’s leading, going straight into temptations. Again the blessings associated with the trials and disappointments of life which are designed of the Lord to draw us nearer to Himself, and to make us most appreciative of the Saviour’s loving sympathy and care, are partially lost upon this class; because, losing the witness of their feelings, which they falsely consider the witness of the spirit, they feel so bereft, and so hungry and thirsty for a return of the good feelings, that they lose many precious lessons which can only be obtained when leaning confidently on the Lord’s arm and communing with Him amidst the trials and perplexities and disappointments of life.

Another class of Christians learning the unreliability of the “witness” of feelings seem to conclude that God has denied (to them at least) any reliable evidence of His favor—any sure “witness” on the subject of their acceptance as “sons” into His family. Their doubts and uncertainty arise in part from a misapprehension of the doctrine of election; and yet these friends are quite correct in concluding that their changeable feelings could not be a proper criterion by which to judge of their sonship. Others, because the Scriptures declare, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee,” judge of their sonship by peace of mind; but when they look at the people of the world around them, and see that many of them have peace of mind too, their view of the spirit’s witness proves insufficient to sustain their hopes, or to give them assurance. Then the dark hour of tribulation and distress comes, and they say, How easy a matter to be deceived, and are in torment lest they have grieved the spirit—for “fear hath torment.”

Persons of large credulity (misnamed faith) will imagine they hear the spirit’s “whisper” to an inner ear and they congratulate themselves accordingly,—even though they should subsequently ascertain that the information “whispered” was absolutely untrue. Other Christians of more logical mind, who cannot thus delude themselves, are perplexed that their friends should so confidently assert the witness of the spirit, while they themselves have no such assurance.

The difficulty lies largely in the erroneous view that the spirit is a person, and which seeks to apply personality to its witnessings. When the fact is realised that the spirit of God is the power or influence which God may be pleased to exercise, the subject is clarified and the “witness of the spirit” becomes a matter easy of distinguishment. It will be a blessing to those who have this witness to know it of a surety; and it will be a blessing to those who have not this witness to ascertain their lack, so that they may fulfil the conditions and obtain the witness, without which none are authorised to consider themselves sons of God, in acceptable standing with the Father.

But what a joy and peace comes to those who have the true witness—to those who have the correct experiences and who have learned how to read them. It is to them indeed joy in sorrow, light in darkness, comfort in affliction, strength in weakness. And the full and explicit directions on this subject, as on all subjects, are found in that wonderful book, our Father’s Word, the Bible. In it and through its testimonies God’s spirit witnesseth with our spirits.

### How To Know The Spirit’s Witness

A man’s mind or spirit may be known by his words and conduct; and so we may know God’s mind or spirit by His words and dealings. The testimony of His Word is that whosoever cometh unto Him (by faith, and reformation from

bad works and dead works, through Jesus) is accepted. (Heb. 7:25.). Hence, the questions to be asked of themselves by those who are seeking a witness of the spirit respecting their sonship are:

Was I ever drawn to Christ?—to recognise Him as my Redeemer, through whose righteousness alone I could have access to the heavenly Father, and be acceptable with Him?

If this can be answered in the affirmative, the next question would

Did I ever fully consecrate myself—my life, my time, my talents, my influence, my all—to God?

If this question also can be answered in the affirmative, the inquirer may rest fully assured that he has been accepted with the Father, in the Beloved One, and recognised of Him as a son. And if scrutinising his own heart's desires and sentiments he finds it still trusting in the merit of Jesus, and still consecrated to do the Lord's will, he may allow the sweet confidence and peace which this thought of harmony and relationship to divinity brings, to fully possess his heart. This conviction of the Lord's grace toward us in Christ constructed from facts of our own experience, built upon the unalterable character and Word of God, is not mutative, not changeable, as it would be if built on the shifting sands of feelings. If doubts or fears intrude in some dark hour, we have only to take ourselves to the Word of the Lord and examine afresh the facts and the foundation, and if our hearts are still loyal to the Lord, faith, joy and peace will instantly return to us; if we find our faith in "the precious blood" crumbling, or our consecration slipping away, we know the true condition of affairs, and can at once make the proper repairs and thus re-establish our "full assurance of faith." (Heb. 10:22.) . But be it noticed that each one who would have this assurance must "set to his seal that God is true," that our Lord changeth not, but is "the same yesterday, today and forever." The Lord's consecrated people may therefore rest assured that having once come into the conditions of divine favor, they may continue under those conditions so long as their hearts are loyal to God and their desires in harmony with His will; so long as they are at heart obedient to the divine commands—briefly comprehended in the word love—to God and men.—Heb. 11:6: 13:8.

Whoever has taken the specified steps has the assurance, the "witness" of the Word of God, that he is a child of God; and this, during the Gospel Age, signifies that he is a branch of the true vine, a probationary member of the true Church. (John 15:1.) To such the word of God witnesses that they have joined the true Church, which is Christ's body. The witness is given to their spirit, their mind, by God's spirit, which testifies through His Word. And the same spirit of truth assures such that if their hearts continue faithful to the Lord to the close of their probation,—if they willingly and gladly take up the cross daily, seeking as best they are able to follow in the Master's footsteps. their probationary membership in the Church of Christ will shortly be changed to actual membership—after they have finished their course, and been made sharers in His resurrection, the first resurrection.—Phil. 3:10.

However, the spirit of God, through His Word, witnesses with equal clearness that it is possible for those who have already become branches of the true Vine to be cut off, if unfaithful—if they fail to bring forth the proper fruits of the spirit of love. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit he (the Father) taketh away, and every branch that bringeth forth fruit he purgeth (pruneth) it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The spirit of God, through His Word, thus testifies or witnesses to us the rule of our heavenly Father's dealing with His sons,—chastisements, pruning, taking away of the dross, and a development of the fruit-bearing qualities. Hence, to have these experiences, after having become identified with the "Vine," is to have the witness of the spirit that we are still in the "Vine," and still recognised as branches of it,—still under our Lord's care and discipline. On the contrary, if anyone lack these disciplines, prunings, etc., after having become identified with the Vine, he lacks this "witness of the spirit," and correspondingly has reason to doubt his acceptance with the Lord.—Heb. 12:7.

If we were all perfect, absolutely perfect, and had been proven so by tests, the case would be different; God would then love us for our perfection and harmony with Himself; then chastisement and bitter experiences would be signs of His disfavor. But as it is, we all know that all are imperfect, that we all come far short of the divine standard; and that our new hearts, our new wills, our transformed minds or spirits, alone are acceptable with God,—and that through the merit of Christ, and in probationary sense, with a view to our testing, development and final perfecting. Only in proportion as we learn to appreciate the divine perfections and our own deficiencies, can we appreciate the many and important lessons to be learned, and the necessity for the trying experiences we are required to undergo in order to develop in us the divine likeness.

The Scriptures inform us that the heavenly Father is preparing a glorious spiritual Temple, in and through which the world of mankind is to have the privilege of coming to at-one-ment, reconciliation with Himself. We see in the Scriptures the great Architect's ideal in respect of this Temple,—that the ideal of the whole was represented in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, its chief corner stone, and "top-stone," "laid in heaven." We can see the better what is required of all those who will be acceptable to God as the "living stones" of that Temple;—to be builded together with Christ the Head, "for an habitation of God through the spirit." And we discern our own roughness by nature, our inharmony with the graceful lines of the Temple, delineated in its "top-stone." We can readily discern that much chiseling and much polishing are absolutely necessary for us, if we would be fitted and prepared for the place in this Temple to which, by the grace of God, we aspire. And hence those who find that they are not receiving the blows from the Lord's hammer and chisel, lack this "witness" which the spirit of God through His Word testifies must come to all the living stones of His Temple, and which even the grand Topstone did not escape. If divine providence does not mark out for us a "narrow way" with a certain amount of difficulty and adversity,—if we are simply permitted to rest without difficulties, afflictions, trials, etc., then we may know of a surety that God is not dealing with us as with the living stones which shall form part of the Temple,—the sons—because we lack this "witness" of our acceptance and preparation. A realisation that such is our condition ought to send us promptly to the Lord to inquire why we have no tribulations and adversities, and to "examine ourselves" whether or not we be still in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5.); and

whether or not we are still endeavouring to walk faithfully in the footsteps of our Master, in fulness of consecration to the Father's will. But if we have this "witness" of chiselings, polishings, prunings, disciplines, chastisements, let us take them patiently, joyfully, appreciatively, as evidence of our Father's love essential to our attainment to our high-calling;—in full accord with the spirit's testimony or witness,—that we are sons of God, "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, (only) if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

The humble and obedient children of God will co-operate with the Lord in the development of their own characters, they will note their own defects and seek earnestly to correct them,—hearkening for the Father's voice of direction, instruction or loving reproof, and ever seeking His approving smile. This is the class of whom the Apostle writes, who judge themselves, and who, therefore, need less chastening of the Lord. (1 Cor. 11:31.) To be of this class requires fulness of consecration; and these are and will be the overcomers, who shall be deemed worthy of joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord in His kingdom. To this class, obedient and watchful, the Lord says, "I will guide thee with mine eye,"—"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory." Those who can be guided only by continual scourging are not of the overcoming class, and will not be accounted worthy to be of the Lord's Bride.

### **What The Holy Spirit Witnesses**

It would seem to be important that each one of the Lord's professing children shall examine himself whether or not he have "the witness of the spirit," that he is one of the children of God: and we need to repeat the examination frequently, and thus "watch" and keep ourselves in the love of God, rejoicing in the witness of His spirit.

Are we being pruned continually? Are we passing through such experiences, great or small, as are removing from us more or less rapidly the fleshly tendencies, which war against the soul—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, selfishness, rudeness, and all things contrary to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus—the spirit of love? If so, to the extent that we can realise this pruning work in progress, we will no doubt be able to recognise growth in the proper direction—in meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. Whoever, after a careful, examination along these lines, marked out in the Lord's Word, can realise such experiences in progress may know of his continued acceptance with God, because he has this witness of the spirit.

Again, the spirit witnesses that "Whosoever is born (begotten) of God, sinneth not." (1 John 5:18.) The child of God may be overpowered by his old nature (reckoned dead, but not fully, actually so); he may be overtaken in a fault, may err in judgment or in word, but he will never willingly transgress the divine law. So then, if our hearts can respond that we delight to do God's will, and would not willingly violate or in any manner oppose it,—that we would rather have God's will done, and His plan fulfilled, even though it should dash our fondest hopes and break every tender tie,—then we have this witness that our spirit or mind agrees with the witness of the spirit of the Truth here recorded; and this is a witness, not only that we were once accepted into God's family, but that we are there still.

The spirit witnesses, through the Word of God, that those who are the Lord's people are separate from the world—that their hopes and aims and general spirit, disposition, are different. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Yea, mad all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—John 15:19; 2 Tim. 3:12.

Can our hearts testify that these words properly represent our experience in life? If so, the spirit (mind) of God is thus again witnessing with our spirit (mind) that we are His. The holy spirit witnesses that, "Whosoever is born (begotten) of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." (1 John 5:4.) Let us examine our hearts, our spirits, our minds, in the light of this testimony of the holy spirit. Are we overcomers, according to this standard? The standard is that to be the Lord's we must be out of harmony with the world, in conflict with it—its aims, its hopes, its ambitions. The thought of conflict is contained in the expression "overcometh the world." And we can readily see that no one can be an overcomer of the world who is in sympathy and affiliation with it, and its general spirit of selfishness, pride, ambition, etc.

Again, the holy spirit witnesses, through our Lord's testimony, that whosoever is ashamed of the Redeemer and of His Truth which He taught, of him will the Lord be ashamed when He comes to make up His jewels. (Mark 8:38.) Whoever, therefore, finds his heart so in love with the Lord and His Word that he takes pleasure, on every suitable occasion, in acknowledging Jesus as His Redeemer and Master, and to faithfully present the Word of His testimony, so long does such an one have this as another witness of the holy spirit that he is a child of God, and an heir of the kingdom. Such have reason to rejoice in the Master's promise that they are just the kind whom He will be glad to confess before his Father and before the holy angels. But if any have not this witness—if, on the contrary, their hearts witness that they are ashamed of the Lord, ashamed to confess themselves His followers, ashamed to own His "brethren," the members of His body, and ashamed to confess the doctrines which He taught—any who have these experiences have the witness of the spirit that if this condition of things be not altered the Lord will be ashamed of them at His second coming, and will not confess them before the Father and His holy messengers.

Furthermore, the holy spirit witnesses to us, through the Word, that if we are the children of God we will not be ignorant of things present nor of "things to come," because we will be enlightened and taught of God, through the Word of His grace—the Word of His spirit. As we mature, "grow in grace," we will desire and seek and obtain, in addition to the milk of the Word, the "strong meat" which the Apostle declares is for those of fuller development. (Heb. 5:13,14.) The development of the graces of the spirit, faith, fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, piety, brotherly-kindness, love, will bring us into closer fellowship with the Father and with the Lord Jesus, so that the Lord will be able and willing to communicate to us more and more clearly a knowledge of His gracious plans, as well as of His gracious character.

Referring to this growth, the Apostle Peter says,—”If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off. . . . For if ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”-2 Pet. 1:5-11.

(To be continued.)

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## **Convention at Adelaide.**

THE Adelaide Class had been planning and praying for the Lord’s blessing upon their arrangements for the Convention at the Easter season, and now that this happy occasion is once more in the past it is felt that our prayers were most abundantly answered, and a blessing beyond our capacity fully to retain was poured out upon our hearts and minds, making us rejoice, and giving us renewed courage to press with vigor along in the narrow way which leads to life.

There remains in our hearts a spirit of thankfulness to our loving Heavenly Father for giving us the very special blessing at this Convention season. It was a very great pleasure to meet and greet brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, also some brethren from Queensland, and a Sister from Perth, W.A. We trust that the dear friends who have sacrificed time and means to attend this Convention will be richly blessed and recompensed in mind and heart, by being granted still clearer insight into the glorious attributes of our Heavenly Father, as well as a deeper understanding of His wonderful Plan of the Ages, and that we may all be led to a more fervent zeal to cooperate with the Lord in the great work of our character development, and thus, by His grace, “make our calling and election sure.”

From the opening session and words of welcome on Good Friday to the closing feature on the Monday evening, the various meetings provided a succession of rich and very profitable spiritual refreshment and blessing. Words of praise to God and thankfulness for the privilege of being present to enjoy the uplifting and inspiring provision were echoed freely by those present.

Following the address of welcome on Good Friday, a Bible Study was taken in Eph. 3:14-21. These verses contain one of the Apostle Paul’s inspired prayers. The main petition in the prayer is that God, in the great riches of His glory, may cause the believers to be mightily strengthened in the inner man (See Col. 1:11.) ; that Christ, (the spirit of Christ), may dwell in their hearts in such large and copious measure, that they may be so transformed in mind that they will come to appreciate the various dimensions of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with God’s holy spirit of truth and grace to the fulness of their capacity. The mighty power of God which works in us by faith is able abundantly to accomplish things far above our highest thought or expectation. To Him be all the glory in the Church by Jesus Christ throughout the ages to come.

The Bible Study in Ezek. 37:1-14 was also found interesting and timely. The vision of the “valley of dry bones” was given to Israel to encourage the people during their period of captivity in Babylon. Their hopes of ever becoming an organised nation had reached a very low ebb. The Lord’s Message to the Prophet was that the dry bones represented the whole house of Israel. As a people they had lost heart and said, “Our strength is dried, our hope is lost, we are cut off from our parts”—from all tribal and national union. After asking the question “Can these bones live,” the Lord explained that His purpose was to revive and restore the nation and bring them again to their own land. Instead of allowing them to remain a scattered people in Babylonia—in national oblivion—God would, in the out-working of His gracious designs, bring them again to their own land; and this was accomplished by the Lord who “stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus and caused him to make a proclamation—Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.” (2 Chron. 36: 22, 23.) This is the primary fulfilment.

There is also a secondary fulfilment on a much larger scale, and it takes place at the end of the Gospel Age. It had its beginning in the aims and aspirations of the Zionist movement. But the “bones” were very dry and withered, and there seemed little hope that the ideals of a few Jewish zealots would ever be realised. “Can these bones live?” would seem to express how humanly impossible it was, and the sentiments of many were echoed in the words of verse 11—”Dried are our bones, and lost is our hope; we are quite cut off.” (Leeser) .

In the year 1914 there was a “shaking,” or as one rendering of verse 7 states--”There was a noise, and behold a commotion, and the bones came together, bone to its. bone.” Yes, in 1917, during this “commotion” when Palestine was freed from the Turkish oppression, there began a great regathering of Jews which has never ceased to this day. Bone joins to bone, as Jews from 74 nations of the earth have gathered together until the Jewish population of Israel has swelled from 56,000 in 1914 to about 2,000,000 today.

In his vision the Prophet saw a further development—the skeleton took shape . . . “the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above,” (verse 8.) This is the point of time to which we have reached today. Looking away from the prophecy to the land of Israel, we see not a skeleton, but a nation, for in May, 1948, the “bones” took shape and form and for the first time for 2,500 years Israel is a sovereign and independent nation.

Another has said, commenting on the “great noise” and the “earthquake” (Rev. Ver.) and its application to our day—”The great noise is the ‘seventh trumpet’ which has begun to sound; the earthquake is the coming great revolution in which mystic Babylon will fall before the great ‘Prince of Peace’ whom Cyrus in a measure prefigured.” Verse 8 continues—”But there was no breath in them.” What, then, is the next step in Israel’s revival? The prophecy indicates that it is the “loosing of the four winds,” which is to bring life to the nation. Then it is that God’s spirit will be poured out upon the nation, and He will make with them a New Covenant, putting His law “in their inward parts, and writing it in their hearts.” (See Rom. 11:15, 25-27.)

Another very helpful Bible Study was taken up with consideration of 1 John 3:13-21. In these verses it was noted that the Apostle is holding up before us the necessity of maintaining in our hearts the spirit of the Lord—the spirit of love for the brethren. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the supreme example; He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. The Apostle urges that our love shall be sincere, and practical—not just in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. It is by yielding our hearts in sincere obedience to the Father’s law of love for God and for the brethren that we will know “that we are of the truth,” and shall “assure (margin, persuade) our hearts before him.”

It seems important that we shall have hearts which bear witness to us that we are sincerely striving to serve the Lord wholeheartedly. If our hearts condemn us that we are not living fully up to the requirements of the “law of love,” then we may be sure that our condemning conscience is but an echo of the Lord’s disapproval; and this should cause us to examine ourselves prayerfully with the object of removing the hindrance to our fuller fellowship with the Lord. On the other hand, an enlightened, approving conscience gives us confidence before God, especially as to the fulfilment of our prayers. (Verse 22.)

The portion for study on Easter Monday was taken in Rev. 22:10-21. In verse 10, John is told not to seal the sayings of the prophecy which had been given to him. The reason for this would be that the visions and sayings of the book were intended for the benefit of the Church during the time of her persecution. From verse 11 the thought may be taken that marvellous and meaningful as are the visions that John beheld, they were not intended to especially affect degenerate humanity; the visions would have little or no effect upon the world in all its sin and depravity. These words may be an expansion of Dan. 12:10 and contain a statement in respect of the condition of the ungodly: also an encouragement to the godly to persevere, in the hope of speedy salvation. for “Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me,” etc. The Church will receive her reward early in the morning of the New Day. “I will give him (the overcomer) the morning star—Rev. 2:28. Mankind in general will have their trial, retribution and reward during the Millennial Day. (See 1 Cor. 15:23; John 5:28, 29.)

In verse 14 the best manuscripts read—”Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree (grove) of life.” The application of the words “wash their robes,” to the world during the Millennial Age would mean their making use of the cleansing process of the Millennial River, the Word of God, then provided; thus being brought gradually to human perfection—restitution. The “dogs, sorcerers and whoremongers,” etc., --could correspond with those “who will not hear that Prophet” and who are “destroyed from among the people.”—Acts 3:23; Rev. 21:7, 8.

Christ is the “root and offspring of David”; the offspring is that He “was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” (Rom. 1:3). The “root of David” applies to our Lord after His glorification to the Divine nature. It applies to Him as the Life-giver, the One who is to give eternal life, not only to David, but to all who will receive it under the conditions of the New Covenant. Christ is the “bright and morning star,” the One who brings cheer and comfort to His persecuted Church, helping her in the “dawning of her morning.”

The invitation of verse 17 will not be in order until the Bride hath made herself ready and the “marriage of the Lamb” takes place. The called out ones of this Age have been prospectively only of the Bride; this class when complete in the end of this Age will share in the first resurrection. Then the Bride will be complete, and then the message—”And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come,” will be due to be proclaimed. Then “whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely.”

In the further verses follows the solemn warning designed to deter anyone from either adding to or taking away from, the “words of this prophecy.” “Surely I come quickly” is the assurance of our blessed Saviour. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus,” is the fervent response of the beloved John, and this is surely the desire of all those who also love the Lord’s appearing.

In addition to the Bible Studies, two of the brethren addressed the Convention each day, and their words and exhortation were helpful and encouraging. The topics of the various addresses were as follows:— “The Restitution of All Things”; “The Witness and Seal of the Holy Spirit”; “What can Separate Us From the Love of Christ”; “Spiritual Stocktaking”; “Why are the Dead not Raised to Life in Healing Campaigns Today?”; “Love Triumphs Over Justice”; “The Good Paymaster” and “From Candlelight to Sunlight.”

The Praise and Testimony meetings, and the “Hymns We Like and Why” session were helpful and uplifting to our “new minds.” Many messages of Christian love and greeting were received from various Classes and brethren, and these were much appreciated, and the message sent by the Convention to the Classes and brethren is found in 1 John 3:1-3.

As usual the Convention came to a close with the Love Feast, at which the brethren bade each other farewell and sang “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian Love,” and “God be with you till we meet again.” Then the final prayer of thanks to God for blessings received, requesting His blessing upon each one present, and upon the Israel of God in every place, with the desire that the many lessons provided by His goodness during the Convention may be more impressed upon our hearts and minds and go with us in the days ahead. So ended another very helpful and happy season of spiritual fellowship. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

## Memorial Observances

### *Melbourne.*

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered on the evening of 14th of April to celebrate the Memorial of Christ’s death, this being the anniversary of the Lord’s Supper which Jesus instituted on “the same night in which he was betrayed,” and left for His followers to observe each year at the appropriate time, in harmony with His request—“This do in remembrance of me.”

In previous studies the passage in Luke 22:1-20 had been examined with much benefit to the brethren, as we meditated upon the preparation for, and the institution of this Memorial Supper which our Lord was so desirous of performing before He suffered, even unto death, as “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

The attendance at our service was very good, though some brethren were also prevented, through various causes, from joining the assembly. The appropriate hymns sang from Bible Students Hymnal were, numbers 437, 345, 280, 2 and 414. Bible readings by four brethren were Isa. 53; Matt. 26:17-53; John 18:28-40 and John 19:1-30, and the prayers of the brethren were lifted up in thanksgiving to God for the gift of His dear Son to be our Redeemer, and also on behalf of all fellow members who were observing the Lord’s Memorial and walking in the steps of the Master in spirit and in truth. An address which covered both the type and antitype of the Memorial was also very helpful in preparing our hearts to partake of the emblems, which all did with gratitude to God and our Lord Jesus Christ after a blessing had been asked upon the bread and the wine, as representing our Lord’s body broken for our sake, and His blood poured out in sacrifice for us all. So doing, we also signified our willingness to share in our Lord’s sacrifice (Phil. 1:29), if so be that we may share in His glorious resurrection.

### **Geelong, Vic.**

In the evening of April 14th the brethren in this area gathered together to appreciatively obey our Lord’s request, “Do this in remembrance of Me.” The simple service consisted of the singing of suitable hymns, the reading by four brethren in turn of passages of Scripture found in Exod. 12; Matt. 26, 27 and Isaiah 53; also an address at the close of which we reverently partook of the emblems.

In our prior Memorial studies together our hearts were filled with delight at the realisation that our “little all” we can lay down beside our Saviour’s sacrifice is made “holy and acceptable to God” (Rom. 12:1) through the merit of Jesus imputed to us. As we remembered the cost and extent of our Saviour’s giving for us, we sought to remember also the privilege it affords us of giving something in which our Heavenly Father delights. Our meditations on Matt. 26:30 suggested that the words of the hymn or psalm sung to conclude that first Memorial must have been such to increase confidence in the heavenly Father’s care, particularly to our Saviour who knew what immediately lay before Him. We are glad to know our Saviour will help us all the way as we seek to follow Him here below, and our closing hymn was as a prayer in each consecrated heart —132 B. S. Hymnal.

### **Adelaide.**

The Memorial of our Saviour’s death was kept by the Adelaide Class on Sunday evening, April 14th. We are grateful to our Lord for having provided this simple remembrance of His death. because it reminds us that all our hopes of future life and blessing depend completely upon His gracious provision. “He is the satisfaction for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” What a privilege is ours, “not only to believe on Christ but also to suffer for his sake.”

After appropriate Scripture readings and hymns, the meaning of the Memorial was explained and prayers were offered for God’s blessing upon the friends present and upon the Israel of God everywhere. Then we partook of the emblems with thankful hearts and with the prayer that the year before us may, by the Lord’s grace, be one of steady and continuous progress as we each one seek to follow in the Master’s steps, in the narrow way that leads to life. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”

### **Perth.**

On the evening of the 14th of April the W.A., brethren commemorated the death of our dear Lord and Saviour. Having studied Isaiah 53 the week preceding we had in mind much of what the man Christ Jesus endured for our sakes. “He that was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.”-2 Cor. 8:9.

There were fourteen adults assembled for the Lord’s Supper. We recalled His 31- years of sacrificial laying down of His humanity, culminating at Calvary, after being unjustly condemned to death. Gladly would His followers remember His death as proof of His perfect love and perfect human sacrifice (ransom) , and so we partook of the emblems representing His body and blood. Also we renewed again our pledge to be co-sacrificers with our Lord, appreciating that great offer of “so great salvation” to be able to be accepted in the Beloved. With sincere hearts we showed by symbol that we had that communion with our Lord, being ready at all times to be dead with Christ, and alive in the spirit.

### **Tasmania.**





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### “Showing the Lord’s Death.”

AS we again approach another anniversary of the great sacrifice of Christ, and the holding of the precious Memorial of His death which our Lord instituted for His followers to keep year by year throughout this Gospel Age, our minds go back to God’s mighty deliverance of Israel from Egypt, as the basis of our service.

In Exod. 12:1-15 we have a wonderful account of the instructions given by God to Moses and Aaron to instruct the Israelites, the carrying out of which meant deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Verse 2 states — “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months ; it shall be the first month of the year to you.” It seems as though the Lord wished to especially impress Israel with the importance of their first Passover, as it would mean for them a new life of liberty under the care of His loving providence as they obeyed the instructions and especially valued the protection afforded by the blood of the lamb. Likewise, there is a very important “beginning” for Christians who also acknowledge the blood of the Lamb of God as their only means of deliverance from sin and death.

In verse 3 we read—”In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house.” This seemed to picture the time when Jesus, as the anti-typical Lamb, presented Himself to God at Jordan in full consecration. The instructions in verses 5 and 6 were —”Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats. And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month ; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening, (between the two evenings—margin).” These directions undoubtedly portrayed our Lord Jesus as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” — giving Himself a ransom for all at Calvary, 35 years after His consecration. In the type the literal lamb was kept four days prior to sacrifice as the Passover lamb, so Jesus completed his sacrifice within four years (the antitype being larger than the type) from the time he presented His human life to minister to Israel and give Himself a ransom for all.

Following the instructions given in verses 7-11 of this 12th chapter of Exodus, where we see the importance of marking the doors of the houses of the Israelites with the blood of the Passover lamb, we read in verses 12-14—“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast ; and against all the gods (princes) of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are ; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord through your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” Verses 21-27 give further details as Moses communicated the Lord’s instructions to the elders of Israel. We read in verses 25-27—”And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service ? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.” It is very evident that the Lord intended Israel to keep the Passover service as a reminder of His great deliverance and care over them, but that nation as a whole did not adhere to God’s instructions and “keep the feast” in spirit and in truth.

We know of Israel’s failure to observe God’s requirements by the nature of John the Baptist’s ministry, it being noteworthy that John the Baptist commenced his ministry at the Passover season, and our Lord began His ministry six months later, at the time of Israel’s Day of Atonement. We read in Matthew 3,—”In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ... I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear ; he shall baptize you with the holy spirit.” (Verses 1,2,11.)

Six months later, at the time of our Lord’s baptism, we read in John 1:29, 35-37—”The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the

two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” How fitting it was for John, the Baptist to refer to Jesus in this way—”Behold the Lamb of God.”

Throughout our Lord’s earthly life He would keep three annual Jewish Passovers, and knowing that the fourth Passover after beginning His ministry would complete His sacrifice as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,” we can understand to some extent His words as recorded by Luke 22:14, 15—”And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.”

For 31 years Jesus had devoted His ministry to calling, teaching and sanctifying the dear followers who really felt that they wanted nothing else in life but to walk in the steps of their Master—this Messiah—this Jesus—whom God had sent, as His Lamb, to take away the sins of the whole world. We are well aware, also, dear friends, that ever since our Lord’s first advent He has been seeking only the same devoted followers who are willing; yes, really willing to go through the same experiences, the same contradictions of sinners, the same ignominy and shame, the same sacrificial death, that all these faithful ones may share in the same glorious inheritance, by the power and favor of God.

As the hour approached for the last Jewish Passover that God could accept, our Lord knew that He was to be the Lamb of God. The preparations were complete; Jesus and His twelve disciples went to the appointed place for the Passover service, and as we have noted, our Lord declared—”With desire, I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” No doubt these words were intended to impress His little band of followers with the solemnity of this occasion, for He was about to institute the Memorial of His death, which was to serve as a sacred remembrance of His sacrifice to all true followers throughout the Gospel Age.

Upon arrival at the prearranged place for the Passover service, the disciples forgot the privilege of serving in the custom of the feet washing, and Jesus performed this lowly, but all important service, and used the occasion to impart a most effective impression and lesson upon all who would seek to be His disciples. From John 13:12-17 we read—”So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord ; and ye say well ; so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord ; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.”

“And as they were eating (the Jewish Passover feast), Jesus took bread (unleavened, picturing purity, free from sin), and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body.” (Matt. 26: 26.) Our Lord was here instituting the Memorial of His death ; the unleavened bread representing His sinless flesh, and eating this bread would mean appropriating the value of Christ’s perfection by faith ; hence, justification by faith in the sight of God. (See Rom. 5:1.) “And he took the cup (the fruit of the vine, the contents of the cup), and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matt. 26:27, 28.) Drinking of the wine, which represented the blood of Jesus, pictured also appropriating the merit of Christ’s perfect humanity by faith, resulting in justification by faith for all who partake of His merit in full faith and trust.

In Luke 22:19 the words of Jesus are added—”This do in remembrance of me.” And how significant ! Jesus was instructing His disciples in this institution of the Memorial of His death to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover. So, He would imply—No longer keep the Jewish ceremony with the slaying of the literal lamb, but, “This do in remembrance of me.” Yes, indeed, this was to be an annual remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice as the true Lamb of God by ail who could accept Him as such for their sins wid for the sins of the whole world.

It seems that Jesus did not impart the deeper significance of the Memorial to His little band of followers on the night of its institution, as apparently they could not have grasped it at that time. However, with the outpouring of Ole spirit at Pentecost the minds of the apostles and disciples generally were illuminated by the spirit on this important matter. How clearly and beautifully did the Apostle Paul reveal the secondary and deeper truth respecting our Lord’s Memorial, when, by inspiration, he related the exact procedure of Jesus’ institution of this remembrance, and then declared—”For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

And how do the followers of Jesus “show the Lord’s death?” The same Apostle states—”The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (common participation) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body ; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. 10:16,17.) These words reveal that true disciples of Christ participate in the sacrifice of the Christ, following their justification by faith, and thus “show the Lord’s death” as members of His body, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”; “for as the body is one, and hath many members, all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” (Col. 1:24; 1 Cor. 12:12.) Thus we see that full consecration “to be dead with Christ” is clearly defined in partaking of the Memorial of our Lord’s death.

In referring to those who may participate in the Lord’s Supper the Apostle Paul declared—”Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.” (1 Cor. 11:28,29). These words from the Apostle are not intended to intimidate any of the Lord’s people who may keenly feel their shortcomings, and are seeking to overcome these, by the Lord’s grace, but rather are to guard against a careless observance. All who have accepted the Lord as their personal Saviour, and have yielded their lives in consecration to walk in the steps of Christ, even unto death, surely should rejoice to participate in the Memorial Supper, either with other brethren, or alone if needs be, that

they may “show the Lord’s death till he come,” —till the last members of His body are taken to be with Him, and see Him as He is.

Following the institution of the Memorial of His death by Jesus, came quickly the Gethsemane experiences, the betrayal by Judas, the Judgment Hall treatment, the denial by Peter, the trial before Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again, and finally the cross, the most ignominious and painful experience to which our Lord was subjected. However, even under these most humiliating experiences Jesus did not forget His earthly mother, but commended her to the care of John, and this loving thoughtfulness, even when in extreme suffering, surely shines out as a lasting example of self-forgetfulness on the part of our dear Lord, as He was paying the penalty on behalf of the human race.

The Lord’s disciples shall have some of His experiences also, as they walk in His steps of sacrifice, and the example of Paul is always a great encouragement to us today, as we meditate upon his life of full devotion to the Lord and His cause—”Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” (2 Cor. 4:10,11.) May all the Lord’s dear people who gladly partake of His Memorial this year experience His blessing, and ever rejoice in being counted worthy of His calling, and seek His grace and strength daily to continue in the narrow way which leads to life.

Lord, I would follow Thee  
In all the way  
Thy weary feet have trod;  
Yes, if I may.  
Help me the cross to bear,  
All Thy fair .graces wear.  
Close watching unto prayer,  
Following Thee.

-- —

### ***Passover Memorial. 1957***

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 14th April; after sundown on this daze will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord’s Supper by the true followers of the Master.

#### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne.—Sunday, 14th April at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Builders and Contractors’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6 p.m., at No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House), Perth.

Sydney.—Sunday, 14th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

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*Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia*

## ***Review of New Covenant.***

SOME expressions have been made respecting the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31), to the effect that it is “the only covenant under which provision is made for the forgiveness of sins.” There is, however, no such statement in the Scriptures, but there appears much to the contrary. In fact, it seems only when speaking or writing to the Jews, that there is any mention of the “New Covenant.” It is only to those who had been under the old “Law Covenant” that the New Covenant is promised. In Romans, chapters 3 and 4, Paul speaks of a righteousness attained by faith—”Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,” etc. —then goes on to show how Abraham was accounted righteous because of faith and also that David speaks of the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered,” etc.

While Jesus said, “This is my blood of the New Testament,” He was speaking to Israelites, who, being in bondage of the Law Covenant, needed to be redeemed so that in due time the New Covenant may be established, and it will be through the operation of the New Covenant that salvation will come first to restore Israel and then through them to the whole world.

During the Gospel Age, however, God is taking out the full number for the Church from Gentiles, and these are not dealt with in the way of a collective covenant, but each needs to enter into a personal consecration—a cove-

nant by sacrifice—and so they become members in. Christ. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:16,29.) They thus come into the “blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness,” under the original Abrahamic Promise (to which the Law was added but did not disannul). See Heb. 6:13-19; Gal. 3:3-8, 17, 18; Acts 3:25; Gal. 4.

It would seem strange if the New Covenant had been established and by it only could sins be forgiven, that the Apostles should have so omitted mention of it in their preaching either to Jews or Gentiles. Note Paul’s noble address before Agrippa, yet no mention is made of any New Covenant, Acts 26 (note verse 18). Jer. 31:31,32 distinctly states that it is to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, who were under the old Law Covenant, that the New Covenant is promised. How foolish, then, is the statement that is made, “If it (the New Covenant) did not go into operation at Calvary, then no one’s sins have been forgiven.”

Another expression is that Paul tells us that “Jesus set aside the first old Law Covenant that He might establish the second,” inferring, here, that the New Covenant must be at once in operation. What the Apostle appears to have in mind in this verse is, that Jesus was the great antitype of the Aaronic priest, and that the typical arrangement had now passed away and the antitype was being established. The antitypical sacrifices had begun. Christ, as typified by the bullock, was slain, and the Church, as typified by the Lord’s goat, was following “in His steps.” See Heb. 13:12,13, which sacrifice must be offered in the spirit of praise as indicated in the sweet incense that burned on the typical altar. So says the Apostle, Rom. 8:36, “For thy sake we are killed all the day long” (all down the Gospel Day). “This is the day of salvation, this is the acceptable time” (for such offerings). So the Body of Christ must be complete and each member be conformed to the great Head, “filling up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake.” (Col. 1:24.)

We are referred to 2 Cor. 3:6, “Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament,” and it is suggested that this means that the New Covenant is being operated by these able ministers. The failure to understand this expression seems to be in regard to the largeness of the antitype in comparison with the type. The type is spoken of as a shadow compared to the reality. The selecting and anointing of the Aaronic priesthood occupied a very brief time, but it shadowed or typified the Gospel Age of about 2000 years. The ministers of the New Covenant are being chosen; Paul was one, and others have been selected all down the age, but not until all are ready will the New Covenant be established with Israel and the blessing of all the families of the earth begin.

It would be indeed a sad thing to think of the New Covenant as having been in operation all down the age, for under it everyone is to be personally responsible, and if he dies, he will die for his own sin (not Adam’s), and there would be no resurrection for any who had died apart from Christ during the past 1900 years.

When the “prophet like unto Moses” (Acts 3:22) begins His work, He will rewrite God’s Law in the inward parts and write it in their hearts. That is, all mankind will be led up the highway, and taught not only to do, but to love righteousness, so that it will become their nature to do right, and to abhor that which is evil.

With the Church it is different; while we learn to love righteousness and to hate iniquity, yet our human nature is not led up to perfection. It still remains, as says the Apostle, “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.” We are granted the holy spirit to help our infirmities and have to continually keep our bodies under restraint. We do not have God’s law written in these fleshly hearts, but we receive a new mind—the mind of Christ—and have to conquer all the tendencies of the human nature that would hinder our progress as new creatures.

There will not be that continual, personal fight under the New Covenant, when all difficulties will be removed. No lion will be in the path, the stones (of temptation) will be taken out of the way, and everything made easy. All environments will encourage righteousness, which will have its happy rewards of health and prosperity. Evil and its consequences will gradually be blotted out and human hearts of the obedient will be brought into happy accord with likeness to God. Then the law of God will have been rewritten in the hearts of the human family.

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**A gossip is like a blotter—soaks up everything, and gets it all backwards.**

# Unto a Perfect Man.

(Eph. 4:13)

(Convention Address)

OFTEN in the apostles' writings we find the use of the analogy of the natural growth of a child up to manhood to illustrate the desired spiritual growth of the "new creature." Children are endeared to their elders by their guilelessness; they live, speak and act "just as they are." Unfortunately, in these days of child delinquency, many do not retain this lovely characteristic as long as in former times.

However, despite all the endearing qualities of young children, they all have traits that need correction. At tender ages they need training and attention, and if left without a parent or guardian they can quickly bring injury to themselves and cause damage to property. Many a parent doubtless heaves a sigh of relief in the contemplation that some day their children will grow up and require less continual oversight. Yet, as parents have confessed, when the children grow up it does not always mean that they prove to be of less concern; though they progress in certain respects to be less bother, youth is still quite often very self-willed, and enters other fields of temptation and foolishness. Therefore, it is very understandable that parents should be very pleased to see their children grow up to manhood and womanhood with really good qualities and characters, and that they should feel pained if that is not the case. To quote from Proverbs—"A wise son maketh a glad father . . . but a foolish son is a grief to his father . . . and the sorrow of his mother." (Prov.10:1 ;17:25.)

Now it is just as essential and pleasing to the Heavenly Father above that His spiritual children or "sons" of this Gospel Age should progress well too, and blossom forth unto a "perfect man."

The thought of the word "perfect," as used in our text and other places in the Scriptures, is not that of sinless perfection in the same sense as that in which our Lord was born unto this world—"harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"—but the thought is rather of spiritual adulthood, a fully developed Christian.

In 1 Pet.1 :14 we have a verse that helps us to discern how to make this desirable progress. One hardly knows which end of the verse to take first; the latter portion refers to ignorance as playing a large part in the fashioning of our former life. Young children are apt to play with fire, and things of like danger are detrimental to their well being and safety, because of their ignorance, lack of knowledge. The same applies to spiritual "children." Because of lack of knowledge of God's requirements for us, we sometimes "burn our fingers."

The child that touches the hot stove has its ignorance removed, but the better and less painful way is to listen to the parents' instruction. Addressing the Christians to whom he wrote (and this includes all Christians), the apostle says, "as obedient children."

We note that he refers to all Christians as "children." We must all grow from spiritual childhood to that which is referred to "as the stature of a perfect (or fully developed) Christian." There is no short cut.

Next, we would stress "obedient." By obedient children only will the required progress be made. The very best instruction that can be given will not profit the child who refuses to obey it. A magistrate recently commented—"I do not like to hear this term 'child delinquency' • it appears to me rather a lack of parental ability to control." It is not our desire to enter into debate on this question of prominence in our day, but in fairness to a parent it is right to recognise that if a child or youth refuses to profit from instruction properly given, then it is the child that errs and must receive the blame. As spiritual children also, we may hear the voice of the Lord and thus to a good degree have our ignorance removed, but it is only if we are obedient children that we will fashion (form or model) our lives aright.

This lesson is taught again in our Lord's words in Matt. 7:24,26—the one who heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them is a wise man ; the one who hears only and doeth not is a foolish man,—he will never progress to a perfect man in the sense of our text. (Read also James 1:22,25.) If we are dutiful, obedient children we have nothing to fear from any consciousness of lack of knowledge or understanding, for the Lord will see to it that we receive the needed instruction and revelation in good time. What we should fear is that ignorance of our own making referred to in Eph.4:17,18. (Note margin, "hardness of their heart.")

In Heb. , 5:14 we find this word "perfect" rendered "full age." (Read first portion of verse). A moment's reflection makes it clear that the Apostle Paul is alluding there to those more advanced and mature who have reached spiritual adulthood, the very ones whom our text refers to as "unto a perfect man, unto the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Referring to the concordance it is interesting and helpful to note some meanings of the word "full" as it is used in the Scripture, and which meaning seems embodied in the word "perfect" in the text. The meaning is "replete, or stored full." It seems another way of saying, We are what we are. We think of the Psalmist,—"As a man is in heart so is he." Whatever we are "replete" in, or "stored full of" makes the person or being. Quoting a Scripture or two where this exact word "full" is used will help us to grasp the point. See Matt.23 :28. You see, they were replete, "stored full" of hypocrisy and iniquity so that there was no room for any good thing to enter. In Rom. 1:29, we find the word again; note verses 28,29. They were full to overflowing with evil propensities. We find the word again in the Apostle Peter's description of the class that once knew the truth, but wilfully turned from it. (Read 2 Pet.2:14.) Alternately, we look at Rom.15:14, and here we see the apostle's hope expressed that these Christians were replete, "stored full" of the good things. In James 3:17 we have it again. How good, indeed, to be "stored full" of this wisdom that comes down from above.

This repleteness or storing is not to be in the selfish sense, merely to retain or hold, but means that every man is stored full of something. James gives us the thought in Chapter 3:11, which please note. The fountain will pour forth

only what it is “stored full of” and men will do the same. If it is evil that is stored within, it will manifest itself in word and act ; if it is good it will overflow in gracious words and deeds. In James’ discourse the tongue comes into the discussion, and in chapter 3:8 he admits that the tongue is an unruly evil, and reminds us that so often out of the same mouth proceeds words that bless God and at other times words that curse or slander our fellows. Seeing that the tongue is such an unruly member “which no man can tame,” does the apostle allow this as any excuse for a professing Christian? Certainly not! The apostle says in verse 10, “My brethren, these things ought not so to be.” No man, of himself, can control the tongue, but with God all things are possible, and the more replete, or stored full, or filled with the holy spirit we become, the more the tongue will be controlled. In verse 2 the apostle says—“If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man,” a developed or mature Christian, a child no longer, but one who is approaching close to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

It is recorded of Jesus that He was full of the holy spirit, and that being so, it was only natural that men should note and wonder at “the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.” Here we have the perfect Exemplar, the One who will teach us daily how to progress “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,” but it is essential that we continue as obedient children and grow thereby. Our Lord left nothing to be desired so far as proper provision was concerned for our spiritual welfare. Notable such provision was the giving of the apostles and their wonderful messages preserved down the age to this day, as well as all the helping pastors and teachers of which the church of God has had need.

Read a verse or two prior to our text—See Eph.4:11,12. “For the perfecting of the saints” this provision was made, not to found large sectarian organisations now commonly referred to as the churches ; for the perfecting of the saints it was all given, not to convert the world in this age. And those whom God gave or provided have been faithful in their mission; it has been emissaries from another source who have sought to convert the world before the time, who have played flatterer to the world and begotten multitudes of “tares” whose claim to Christian discipleship lies in name only, who know little of, and are concerned less with, growing in the knowledge of God and in the grace and favor of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, to whom, by the grace of God, the torch of truth has been preserved to this day, continue ourselves to grow (for it is fatal for any to conclude that they have fully attained the measure of perfection called for ; note Phil. 3:12), and labor and preach faithfully as did the apostles of old ; to proclaim “Christ in you, the hope of glory . . . warning and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man ‘perfect’ in Christ Jesus,” (Co1.1:27,28) ; as also did Epaphras mentioned in Col. 4:12 — “always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete (stored full to overflowing) in all the will of God.”

### **Adelaide Easter Convention.**

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., over the Easter period, in the Builders and Contractors’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Ave., Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

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## **The Power of God**

*“Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high,” —Luke 24:49.*

POWER is one of the attributes of the Heavenly Father, all of which are equally essential in the carrying out of His great plan of redemption. Without power to act, wisdom would fail to accomplish its designs, justice could not be enforced, and love would be helpless.

There appears to be two words in the New Testament both of which are rendered by our word “power.” The one refers to power in the sense of rule or authority ; the other speaks of ability, strength of will, power of character. It is the latter of these two words which is used in this passage,—“Ye shall receive power, the holy spirit coming upon you.” Thus we see the connection between the baptism of the holy spirit and the promised power.

The Apostles had been with Christ, had seen His work, His miracles, and had been taught by Him. They had seen Him in His passion, His death, and resurrection, and were yet to witness His ascension. Yet with all this experience the Master said, “Wait until ye be endued with power.” Our Lord has said, “It is expedient that I go away, for if I go not away the holy spirit will not come.”

Thus they were to tarry for the promise of the Father ; they did not wait in vain. They were gathered together, a body of men, like ourselves, no doubt, in great expectation, wondering what was going to happen. There was the sound of a rushing, mighty wind (Acts 2: 1-3), and these fishermen and others had received the holy spirit—the power of God. They went forth endued with power, as the Apostles of Christ, and faced the world with courage. How useless it would be to start out in Christian work, or as a follower of Christ without the baptism of the holy spirit. Jesus Himself did not

begin His ministry until He had received this promise of the Father.

“I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.”—Phil. 4:13.

“I cannot do it alone;  
I change with the changing sky;  
To-day, so glad and bright,  
To-morrow, too weak to try;  
But He never gives in,  
So we two shall win,  
Jesus and I.”

This gift of the holy spirit of power (2 Tim. 1:7), is a constant one (John 14:16,17). Like the disciples we shall find that by tarrying together and waiting on God and in study of His word we shall be renewed in spirit and in power, and enabled to keep clear of the world and its snares.

Having received this power, Acts 1:8 informs us as to the use to be made of it—“Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” So each one who comes under the same anointing, through our Lord Jesus Christ, has a responsibility to witness to the truth according to opportunity.

## **Matthew 5:41,42.**

THESE injunctions are not generally understood: it does not mean that we should be turned aside from the duties and affairs of life at anybody's bidding. In olden times certain magistrates, governors, etc., had the authority of law to press the service of the people for governmental work. For instance, note how Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus a certain distance. The word “compel” in our lesson is from the same Greek word, and refers to a legal compulsion; “commandeered” would be the modern way of referring to such matter. Our Lord's injunction is that His followers should be so broadminded, so liberal, so generous, that they would not only obey the legal commands but be ready to go further—to do more than had been required.

In thus doing heartily, joyfully, and agreeably all and more than would be commanded they would be exemplifying the generous spirit which represents our Lord and His teachings. By such breadth of sentiment they would be known as Jesus' disciples, who had learned of Him. Indeed, we may say that the whole trend of the teachings of the Lord and the Apostles is in line with this, and opposed to stinginess and narrowness and selfishness—in accord with generosity, full measure, pressed down, heaped up and running over. The Christian measure would be nothing short, though it might be a little more. A Christian measure of anything must be full, never skimp. This is an element of the higher law, the law of love, and its spirit of generosity in our hearts.

In similar strain the great Teacher enjoins that we should give and lend to those requesting. We cannot suppose that He meant that a parent should give anything harmful to a child which cries for it; we cannot suppose that the Lord meant that our loans or gifts would be such as would be injurious to the recipients. Love must be the basis of our conduct, as it is the very essence of the Master's law. We cannot think either that He meant that we should neglect the interests of our own homes and families in giving to others or loaning to them.

We are bound to suppose that our Lord in this, as in all things, wished His followers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. What He wished to enjoin evidently was the spirit or disposition which would have pleasure in loaning or giving to the needy, and which is so circumstanced as to be able to comply with such requests and would be glad to do so. using the proper discretion and judgment, as to time, place, and persons. In other words, the spirit of Christ is a benevolent spirit and not a mean or stingy one, and all the Lord's people, more or less selfish, need to learn this. There are few perhaps who would be in any danger of injuring themselves or others immediately dependent upon them by any acts of benevolence.

## **Be Like the Spring.**

Up in the mountains there is a spring. Day and night, year in and year out, for years this spring has been running continuously. Long before there were homes about it, people came from afar to quench their thirst with its cool flow. The spring's waters are pure and health-giving, for nothing is allowed to accumulate in the waters. Sieved through rocks and gravel for miles, all impurities are washed away before its sparkling waters are offered to whomsoever may take and drink.

About a mile from this spring is a pond. It is still and stagnant. If you were to drink from it you might die from its accumulated poison. It gives nothing.

But the little spring is always giving. Always it is made and kept clean by moving.

Let us keep our hearts like the little spring. Keep the kind and thoughtful deeds flowing all the time. The only satisfactory life is the one that is continually giving away and renewing itself by acts of service and devotion for others.

*Be true to God, and to the thought of His presence all day long; let self occupy as little as possible of our thoughts; care much for His approval, and comparatively little for the impression we are making on others; feed the inward light with oil, and then freely allow it to shine.*

—Goulburn.



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**Price—Five pence**

## **The Lord Your God Proveth You.**

*“The Lord your God proveth you, whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”  
(Deut. 13:3).*

THE words of this text were uttered to Natural Israel, but they are certainly applicable to Spiritual Israel—to all of God’s people. The thought is manifest that the Lord’s children are all under testing, that the Lord is proving our devotion. It is not sufficient that God should have called us with a Heavenly Calling, that He should have sent a Message through His Son, speaking peace and declaring that He will forgive the sins of those who surrender themselves to Him. It is not sufficient that we should be informed as to how we may gain these blessings through a full consecration to God through the Saviour. It is not sufficient even that we should accept these to do the will of God. Something more is necessary.

The making of the consecration, according to the Scriptures, would mean the giving up of our lives to do the will of God. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice,” as the Apostle Paul expresses it. (Rom. 12:1). We have seen this privilege. We have accepted the terms. We have given our little all to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. We rejoice that He has received our little offering through our great Redeemer, who has imputed of His merit to cover our blemishes, thus making us acceptable to God. We have now been received into the family of God in the highest sense and are New Creatures in Christ, members of the Anointed company, sons of God, called to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to the great inheritance of glory, honor, immortality and the Divine nature—2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Cor. 12:12; John 1:12; Rom. 8:17.

It is not enough that God has accepted our consecration. He purposes to prove us, to *see* whether we mean all that we said. Consecration is more easily made than fulfilled. Having made the surrender to God, we received an enlightenment. As the Apostle says, we were illuminated. (Heb. 10 :32). This illumination came to us as it came to our Saviour, through the holy spirit and through the Word of God, enabling us to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge, giving us an insight into the Plan of God, helping us to appreciate what we have done, what it means to us now, and what it will mean to us hereafter.

All these things become clearer day by day; and we realise more and more the glorious things which our God has in reservation for His faithful children—things which “eye hath not seen nor ear heard,” but which the Lord has “revealed unto us by His spirit.” (1 Cor. 2:9, 10). While all this work is going on within us, there is a testing, a proving, a disciplinary training.

Every day we are receiving added blessings. God’s mercies are indeed “new every morning and fresh every evening.” His providences are shaping all our affairs. How are we responding to all these blessings coming from the Lord? This is the question. God has indeed entered into a Covenant with us, as He says : “Gather together My saints unto Me, those who have made, a Covenant with Me by sacrifice.” (Psalm 50 :5). You agreed to give up yourself, your own will, all your own preference in every matter, not only in word and action, but in thought. It was on this condition that you and I were received. It was on this same condition that our Lord Jesus was accepted and became the Head of the Church.

Jesus was our Guarantor. Therefore the Father entered into this contract with us and gave us the holy spirit, the first fruits of our inheritance. This He would not give without a definite contract; for it is the advance payment, the earnest of the glory to come. So we see that the blessing which has come to us from God through Christ is only a foretaste of what is in store for us. Our Father waits to give us all the riches of His grace, of His loving kindness, through our Lord Jesus, in the coming Age and in the Ages to follow. In those future ages of glory He will continue to show to the Church the glorious riches of His grace and of His love.—Eph. 2:7.

“The Lord your God proveth you.” The Lord does not wish to disprove us. Our Heavenly Father has great love for all His children, and He has exceeding great blessings in store for them when their loyalty has been demonstrated. The word Love has in it the thought of honoring the one who is loved. “Surely we are not worthy of God’s love!” you say. Very true, my brother ; but we remember that our Lord Jesus said, “The Father Himself loveth you.” (John 16:27).

The Word tells us about God's deep interest in those who have become His children. It tells us that the Church are as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. (Zech. 2:8). What tender love and care is here expressed. All things permitted by the Lord to come to any of this class are for their good, for their preparation for the Kingdom, that they may be to the glory of God, members of the Divine family.

According to the Bible, our Heavenly Father alone had originally this great thing, the Divine nature, with its quality of immortality, incorruptibility. He has given it to His First-begotten Son since His resurrection from the dead, that He might have this same nature, this inherent life ; and through the Son the Father has offered it to the Bride class that they also might inherit the same glory as our Lord, though He will always remain the Head of His Church (John 5:26; 1 Tim. 6:16; 2 Pet. 1 :4). This is the sum total, as we understand the Word—that nevermore will any others attain the Divine nature—only the Father, the Son and “the Bride, the Lamb's Wife”—no more.

Then will come the other natures on the spirit plane —cherubim, seraphim, those who will constitute “the great multitude,” and then the lower order of angels. We do not know how wonderful some of these orders may be; but none will be so great as those on the Divine plane. Then, to complete the picture, we shall have mankind restored to perfection—“a little lower than the angels.”—Psalm 8:5; Heb. 2 : 6-9.

This is the glorious outlook before us. Those of the Divine nature will reign over all others. Theirs will be “the glory that excelleth.” The Father loves us and wishes us to attain this glory. If we fail, it will not be because of His unfaithfulness. “Faithful is He that hath called you, who also will do it.” (1 Thes, 5:24). The whole responsibility is with us. No one can take our responsibility. Each must stand for himself. We cannot go into the Kingdom by classes. There is no other way to get into the Kingdom except as individuals, personally related to the Lord Jesus. Therefore it is for each of us to “make our calling and election sure.”

“Is God proving my imperfect flesh, to see whether I will use it perfectly?” some one may inquire. No. Long ago God knew that we could not do perfect works. He would not try our fallen flesh. In the Bible he tells us that all mankind are imperfect, fallen. (Rom. 3:10, 20). He is proving what your spirit is of, your mind, your will. What kind of mind ought we to have? The Lord tells us, “Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:5). “But,” you say, “I have not the same body that Jesus had.” Very true ; but you can have the same mind, disposition, will, that He had. You can WILL for truth, for righteousness, for faithfulness to your covenant with God. You are to come as nearly to the line as you are able. God looks to see how you rule your mortal body, to what extent you crucify the flesh and its desires.—Gal. 5 :24.

You are the one in charge now. The Lord says, “I will let you work with that poor body which you have ; and if I see you doing your best with that body, in due time I will give you a perfect body. If you prove your loyalty of heart now, with all your imperfections, I will cover those imperfections with the merit of Jesus. I know that if you are faithful in this blemished body, you will be entirely satisfactory in the glorious body I will give you by and by.”

This is a very reasonable proposition, dear friends; and everything about God's Plan, when we come to understand it, is so beautiful, so reasonable, that we could not ask Him to change even one feature. How would it be if we could get glory, honor and immortality without living up to our promises, while another who did not promise would do better. We would say that the one who did not promise would be better than the one who promised and did not fulfil his promise, that the one who did not promise would be more deserving of the reward. If the Lord sees that you mean all that you said in consecration, no matter how poor the body you have, the blood of Jesus Christ will cover all your defects ; and you will be acceptable to God and will thus be counted worthy.

The Bible says, “Worthy is the Lamb,” and His Bride will be worthy too. You say, “We know that Jesus is worthy.” Yes ; and those who have His spirit have a measure of worthiness also. There must be character if we are approved of God. Unless we develop the necessary character we shall never reach the Kingdom. If you have something to do with developing that character, it will be counted real worth in God's sight; and Jesus' righteousness will make up the rest. If you are found wholly loyal to Him, then you will be accounted worthy.

“To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne,” declared the Master. (Rev. 3:21). If we do not overcome, we shall not be seated there. “But there are special tests, are there not?” asks some one; “Is one test how to keep the Sabbath day?” Not especially, we reply. Such a test would be but a poor proof of character. If you thought that God wished you to keep a certain day as the Sabbath day, you would be injuring your conscience if you did not keep it. It is not keeping a Sabbath day or wearing clothes of a certain style, or having your hair cut in a special way that proves character such as God requires.

What are God's conditions? For what is He especially looking? First, God is looking for faith—faith in Him. This is an important requisite. “Without faith it is impossible to please him.” (Heb. 11 :6). If you have no faith in God, you might just as well stop where you are. The Lord has a glorious arrangement for those who cannot exercise faith, but He is not calling them during this Age. He will deal with them by and by. But he requires faith of those who would have His favour now. Only such can be of the Bride of Christ.

There is a great difference between faith and credulity. We have learned this lesson from the experiences of the Dark Ages. There was comparatively little faith then. We are not to have faith in things that nobody can understand. That is not God's plan. It may be the creeds of men, but it is not the Word of God. He expects us to have faith in what He has declared ; and He says, “Come now, let us reason together.” (Isa. 1 :18). To-day all over the world, you will find people saying, “I believe in the Trinity, but I cannot understand it.” here is no credit in believing what you cannot understand. “I thought that if I did not believe in the Trinity, I would go to eternal torment,” says one. My dear brother, there is nothing about the Trinity in the Bible. The Bible is all straight and reasonable.

What the Bible says is this : “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one—Jehovah.” (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:6). Have

faith in what the Bible says. Attend to what God has declared. "To us there is one God, the Father." Have faith in this Scriptural statement. We are to believe what the Word of God declares, and not what men have said that is not in the Bible.

Another thing which God requires of us is loyalty. We are to stand for all that God stands for, and to be opposed to all that God opposes. God is opposed to everything dishonourable, evil and false. There are only two sides. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." You cannot serve Truth and error. Watch where you are standing. There is great danger of being deceived. Thousands of people are standing to-day where they should not stand, and would not, if their eyes were not blinded. (2 Cor. 4 :4). "His servants ye are to whom ye render service."

Whom are you serving? Are you serving Christ or the system? We must know what we are serving. Only as we are faithful in serving God and in turning our talents to use in His service shall we be acceptable to Him. He is not looking for those who are loyal to sects or systems. This is a part of the test upon us.

"The Lord y our God proveth you"—your faith, your loyalty, your meekness, your love of the brethren. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20). If any man or woman has made a covenant of consecration to the Lord, and has been begotten of His spirit ; that fact is a notice to me from the Lord that He has accepted that one. Suppose I say, "He is not my style," would that be loyalty to God? If we were in an earthly army, there might be some next to whom we would prefer not to march ; but we would say, "He is my comrade; he is loyal to my government." So it is with the army of the Lord. We are fighting "the good fight of faith"; and all who are on our side are our brethren, no matter how ungainly or unattractive they may be according to the flesh. The fact that they belong to our King settles it. If He accepts them, I accept them; if He rejects them, I reject them.

This is the cue which the Lord gives me as to the ones for whom I shall lay down my life. He is looking on with loving eyes to see how you and I are carrying out our covenant as to loyalty in faith, word, act and thought,

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Out of the heart are the issues of life. If our hearts are right, then loyalty will be manifest by our doing the best we know how for the brethren and in doing our duty towards all. It is not sufficient, however, to love the Lord with part of your heart and to say, "Next to my, wife (or my husband) I love the Lord." God must have the first place. It is GOD FIRST, the Lord Jesus second, and everything else after them.

It is all a matter of the heart. It is not mere Law, although it may begin as such. I may say, "I have accepted God's terms. It is now a law to me to do His will." But as I progress and come into fuller sympathy with God, then comes a love for the principles for which He stands. It is my heart that is to serve God. This is the highest attainment of a Christian—that with his whole heart he should love and serve the Lord.

### **Adelaide Easter Convention. •**

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., over the Easter period, in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Weymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Ave., Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

### **Passover Memorial, 1957**

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 14th April; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by the true followers of the Master.

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably before the end of March, and please state the number of persons to be served.

### **Memorial Services.**

Melbourne.—Sunday, 14th April at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Builders and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Weymouth Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6 p.m., at No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House), Perth.

Sydney.—Sunday, 14th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

*Of all the things you wear, your expression is most important.*

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM. (Monthly) 5/- (60 cents) per annum, rest paid.

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

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

## **Melchisedec and Aaron as Types**

THERE was really but one priest—the High Priest. The under-priests were merely representatives of the High Priest. So with Christ, the Great Priest of the future. The association of the under-priests with the Lord recognises Him as the Head and the under-priests as His members, and the "great company" as the servants of this great priest.

God's work for the world is future. The only work yet accomplished is the providing of the priesthood and the qualification of the Great Priest and His members and His servants for the work of instructing, healing and uplifting mankind during the thousand years of Messiah's reign.

During the Gospel Age the getting ready of the Great Priest, Head and members, has required of them sacrifice. As the Apostle declares, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable." The sacrifice of the Head was acceptable because of His perfection. And all the sacrifices which He subsequently offers, represented in His members, are likewise acceptable to the Father, because the merit of the Head Priest is imputed to the other sacrifices.

Two priesthoods are set before us in the Scriptures, the Aaronic and the Melchisedec. Both typify The Christ—Head and Body. The Aaronic pictures the sufferings of Christ, but shows nothing of the glory and reign, except as these were symbolized in the garments of glory and beauty. The Melchisedec Priest represents merely the future of The Christ, after the sacrificing shall have been finished and all the members of the Body completed.

The work of the Priest may be viewed from these two standpoints. His sacrificing is the most important in one sense, because all of his future work is based upon these sacrifices. But in another sense the sacrificings are merely a preparation for the great work which will follow. The Priest must first offer sacrifice, in order to become worthy of his own exaltation to the Priestly Office and glory ; and, secondly, he must have the merit of that sacrifice wherewith to satisfy Justice on behalf of the sins of the world, in order that, as the Glorified Priest, he may have the full right to stand as Mediator between God and mankind—to bless the latter and uplift them during the thousand years of His reign as the Melchisedec Priest—a priest upon His Throne.

The Apostle declares that Messiah is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron (Heb. 7:21) ; for if He were on earth, He could not be a priest. The significance here is that Jesus, being of the Tribe of Judah, and not of the Tribe of Levi, could not have served as a priest under the Mosaic Law, which gave this office to Aaron and his sons forever. Aaron and his sons, however, as a priesthood typified the preparatory feature of Messiah's priesthood—the sacrificial preparation. Messiah's claim to priestly functions is not, therefore, to be expected from the Aaronic line, for the Scriptures expressly declare, "I have sworn; I will not, repent ; Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 7:21.) The Priest here referred to is the glorified Messiah, Head and Body, at the conclusion of this Gospel Age, when the consecrating and sacrificing will be at an end and the glorious Priestly Office, serving the world of mankind, will begin.

## Little Opportunities.

"We all might do good where we often do ill;  
There is always a way, if we have but the will;  
For even a word, kindly breathed or suppressed,  
May guard off some pain, or give peace to some breast.

"We all might do good, in a thousand small ways;  
In spurning ill rumour, reproving wrong done,  
Forbearing to flatter, yet giving due praise;  
And treating but kindly the heart we have won.

"We all might do good whether lowly or great—  
A deed is not judged by the purse or estate;  
If only a cup of cold water is given,  
Like the mite of the widow, 'tis something for heav'n." —Selected.

**"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."**—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

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# Knowledge & Understanding

(Convention Address)

EVERYBODY can acquire knowledge, a great number can acquire wisdom, but comparatively few can acquire understanding. As an example, take the atom bomb; everybody has a knowledge of the atom bomb, even the man in the street has that. The man who makes the component parts must have a certain amount of wisdom, but it requires scientists and professors to have the understanding of it.

However, the knowledge and understanding we are concerned about is the knowledge and understanding of the Bible. The Bible was written for a specific people; namely, the chosen in the Old Testament—"Ye only have I known as a nation"—the children of Israel. That lasted till Christ's time; then they were cast off, because of their rejection of Him. Then came the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles down through the Gospel Age, or as the Scriptures put it—"Taking out a people for His name." And in this connection we know Christ's statement—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

We will examine now what the Scriptures have to say about knowledge and understanding; let us look at Prov. 1:1-7, especially verse 7—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Also Psalm 111 :10 confirms this. Even this statement, "The fear of the Lord" has been misunderstood. The fear of God has been, and still is being taught, in some cases, to hold people to certain beliefs, instead of the love of God. We do not fear in the sense above quoted, but we do have a reverential fear of God, in case we should do something to displease Him who is Love.

There are other things which are essential for the child of God, as seen in 2 Pet. 1:1-10, quoting from verses 3 to 7—"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Note again it is the called that are being addressed. Then follows the requirements—faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. Confirming this is James 3 :17—"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

So much for knowledge and wisdom; what about understanding? We are given a warning in Prov. 3 :5—"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding." Then, how do we get understanding? The only way is through the Scriptures. We remember how the Bereans were commended for their diligence in studying the Scriptures to prove all things for themselves.

Let us examine a few Scriptures and see how we may get this understanding. From Job 32:8 we read—"But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." So we can see how essential it is that man's spirit be kept in tune with the spirit of God, to get our understanding. Romans 8:4, 6, 16 will also help us in this direction—"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit . . . For to be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace . . . The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." It is only the called of God who can attain to this blessed condition.

Let us note a few examples of how the spirit operated in the past, such as Luke 2:25, 26, showing how the man, Simeon, beheld the infant Jesus—"The holy spirit was upon him, and it was revealed unto him by the holy spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Also on the same occasion, as shown in verse 38, regarding Anna, we read—"And she coming in at that instant gave thanks likewise." Further, in the case of Peter's response to the Master in Matt. 16 :15- 17, we read—"But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." This example of the operation of the spirit is one of the most striking. This was no dream or vision, but an instantaneous transmission of thought to Peter by God's holy spirit. One more quotation on this particular line is found in 1 Cor. 3:6, where Paul states, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." The act of planting was giving knowledge ; the act of watering was giving further knowledge amounting to wisdom, but God only gives the understanding.

We have often thought that the operation of the holy spirit is like radar. To illustrate—A group of young men is being trained to become pilots in the air force. They do not get into a plane and start flying right away, but are taken collectively and shown a plane and instructed in its functions, including the reading and understanding of its instrument board, or panel, as it is called, on which are the necessary guides as to how to pilot a plane, such as oil pressure, petrol gauge, wind drift, altimeter, etc. A knowledge of these is essential to travel from one given point to another, but we must not forget radar, which is an instrument which can give out and receive signals from the proposed destination. Now, as children, we were taken collectively and told simple little stories. of the Bible ; then we were introduced to reading of the Bible, like the air force trainee reading the panel on the plane. Our next step was, as individuals, reading our Bible for guidance in the ways of life, just as the pilot gets his guidance from reading his panel. We now bring our radar into operation by tuning in to our landing field, and we must keep on the wave length, as we know by tuning in on our radio—if we want a certain station we get on the correct wave length.

So, the Christian must have his mind and heart tuned to the holy spirit of God at all times and not deviate, because that is our safeguard. Let us at all times watch our panel (Bible), and keep our ear open to the radar signals (the prompting of the holy spirit), and as we hear the signal getting louder we realise we are getting near our destination and our journey is nearly over. So, with the spiritual *signal* getting louder we know that time is now a governing factor, such as we see in Daniel 12:4, which is a prophetic utterance due to be understood—"But thou, O Daniel, shut

up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end.” Here is a case of understanding being withheld at that particular time, but which would be released when the due time came, which is now ; for we read further, “Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase.” No doubt we all realise that this is taking place today, showing that we are still on that spiritual beam. Nahum 2:4 has this to say corroborating the times in which we live—”The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways ; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.” This is surely what we witness every day and night in the streets of our big cities.

All these things have happened in the last 75 to 100 years, and we are privileged to see them; and as we realise prophecy can be understood only when it is in course of fulfilment, or has already been fulfilled, so let us heed the instructions, watch and pray, that we may be aware of what is going on around us, and keep our thoughts, minds and hearts tuned to the holy spirit.

In this connection we wish to draw your attention to the Jews, especially as we see the prediction for God’s holy nation as shown in Ezekiel 37, which deals in prophetic picture with the “dry bones” of the whole household of Israel. Verses 4-6 state—”Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live : and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.” (Please read this whole chapter).

We are seeing this prophecy being fulfilled. Take the beginning of this case when Dr. Wiseman inaugurated the Zionist movement sometime in the 1890’s. Then came World War 1 during which the Turks were ousted from Palestine by General Allenby, which was followed by the Balfour declaration giving access for the Jews to Palestine. Then Israel became a nation in 1948: surely, marvellous are the works of our God. We know that the Jews have gone back in unbelief, but the day is at hand when God will take away their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh, and write laws thereon and pour upon them His holy spirit.

We thank God for the knowledge we have obtained from His Word, the Bible, and the understanding through His holy spirit. “Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not . . . Therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding.” (Prov. 4:5, 7).

## Correspondence.

Dear Brethren in Christ—Loving Greetings in His precious Name. Ever since I read the article “The Treasure of the Humble”, in the “Peoples Paper” November, 1955, I have intended to write a line to you to ask if the book written by Maurice Maeterlinck, bearing the above named title, was procurable, as I have been unable to get it here in England. This book was referred to in the article mentioned above, and the latter was very short and sweet to my taste, and I thought that perhaps I might glean some further “gem” from a book bearing such a title.

In January I usually send my sub., for the “Peoples Paper” to Welling, Kent, together with that for the “Bible Study Monthly.” Some of the articles in your little “Paper” are very much appreciated, and I do also love to feel that measure of contact and fellowship with our brethren, who, whilst separated by earthly distances, are still very close to us spiritually. In fact, dear brethren, one is apt to hear so frequently of the very dear and generous brethren of the U.S.A., that I personally make a point of reminding friends of the Lord’s dear brethren in the still more distant lands (speaking of our natural way of viewing distances) and especially the Australasian countries, as also in my prayers.

As I have now received and read the October and November 1956 “Peoples Papers”, and seeing the passing of Brother Bray of Sydney to his Home-call, I thought that I will make the endeavour to write to you, as I had the pleasure of the fellowship of this dear Brother during his visit to England referred to in your paper . . . . This blessed experience and privilege was a reminder to us of the Blest Tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. I have thought of him many times since . . . . While we do not mourn, as others, the loss of dear ones, be they natural or spiritual friends, we naturally do not like the parting, even though it be “until the day break, and the shadows flee away,” but we are grateful to our glorious Heavenly Father for all the comfort and assurances which He has given to us through His most precious Word of Truth, and that at such times we are able to recall, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth.” (Rev. 14:13.) How true has become that promise, “The wise shall understand.” Praise God that worldly wisdom has been superseded.

With fervent Christian love to you all. Pray for us, as we do for you dear ones. Your brother, by kind favor, in His service.

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Dear Brother.—Thank you for your nice letter and Convention Notes. I read them very carefully and I thought I had never read anything nicer ; it must have been good to be there to listen to the different speakers as they spoke of their findings from the Scriptures. I like the address showing that the Jews are God’s Witnesses, and so they are I find in Isa. 43:10, 12. Fancy the followers of Judge Rutherford calling themselves Jehovah’s Witnesses ; all the false religionists cannot deceive the Lord’s people, because they pay close attention to His Word. We have the truth and we are given God’s holy spirit to guide us into all Truth and show us things to come. How lovely it is to be on the right side and to follow our dear Master who is leading us in the narrow way.

Your programmes always have sessions on “Hymns we love and why.” I never hear hymns here, but I have read through different books—”Dawn”, “Christian Hymns” and “Bible Students’ Hymnal”, and they contain many beautiful hymns. I don’t know many tunes but what I do know I love to sing and make melody in my heart to the Lord. I

John 1:7 carries my thought to that beautiful hymn "Walk in the Light", and verse 3 takes my thought to John 14:21 . . . Although my eyes are very weak I can still read, but it is not easy to do, and I write very slowly to make it plain for people to read. I will close, dear Brother, wishing you continued blessing from our Father. Your Brother in Christ.-

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Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brothers.—I wish to thank you for the second parcel of literature including Biblical Dialogues, "The Voice," "Peoples Papers" and two booklets "God and Reason", and "The Plan of God in Brief", which arrived recently.

In my reading of the booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave", I was greatly impressed by the explanation of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. It is a new thought to me, and clearly elucidates the Master's thoughts. The churches are fond of quoting this parable in support of their hell fire theory.

Every Sunday I listen to your broadcasts and find them very interesting and instructive, and pray the Lord's blessing on your radio messages and many publications. Yours in Christ Jesus.

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Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends—We listen in every Sunday morning. to Frank and Ernest, and enjoy them in doing so, and our many friends in . . . and surrounding districts . . . and . . . I would like you to send me a volume of "Our most Holy Faith," for which I have enclosed Money Order, and hope and trust our faith will hold strong in our Lord and Saviour. Sincerely.

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Dear Brother—Thank you for sending "Frank and Ernest" and the "Peoples Paper" so regularly to me ; I find them very helpful and interesting. "Frank and Ernest" I find very useful for passing on to other people as they are clear and simple for them to understand.

Please find enclosed a cheque for £10; take what I owe for the "Peoples Paper" and the remainder for Frank and Ernest, unless of course you need it more for any other part of the work. I take this opportunity of wishing you a very happy year, full of God's blessing for yourself and also for the good work you are doing. With Christian love; Yours in His service.

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Dear Brother in Christ Jesus—I have much pleasure in acknowledging your letter, together with another parcel of literature.

I wish to sincerely thank you for the interest you have taken in my spiritual welfare, in sending me the booklets, including Parables of the Kingdom, etc., and the Biblical Dialogues.

The "Peoples Paper" arrives regularly and I find it very helpful in my studies. The December issue was very interesting, especially the article—"Before Zion Travailed She Brought Forth," which very clearly explanation number of difficult verses. I am also grateful for the booklet entitled—"Our Bible Translated." I knew the New Testament contained a number of mistranslations, but was, not familiar with them all. The elimination of these passages often makes a difference in the meaning . . . May the Lord bountifully bless you and your Society and the good work you are doing. Your Brother in Christ Jesus.

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Dear Brethren in the Lord—Please find enclosed cheque for £5 which kindly place to the work where you think best. I trust you are finding much encouragement in spreading the good news of the Kingdom. It does seem as if there is much reason for lifting up our heads now, doesn't there? While disturbing in one sense, it is reassuring to see things going along in such accord with what has been pointed out to us so long. We have been fortunate in having such faithful watchmen who brought these things to our notice, for I suppose most of us would never have seen them for ourselves. It gives such a feeling of comfort that the dear Lord has the situation well in hand, and will intervene at just the right moment. I pray the Lord's blessing on you and His guidance. With Kindest Christian regards ; Yours sincerely.

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Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was interested in this morning's discussion on "The Seed of Blessing," but as I am old and deaf, it is difficult for me to follow all that is said. Enclosed is £1 note, and I should appreciate a copy of each Sunday's talk, as I try to listen in regularly. Thanking you in anticipation. Yours faithfully.

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To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I very much enjoy "listening in" to the 10 a.m. session on Sunday mornings. I wonder if you could send me the lines "Beyond the Sunset" which you used yesterday morning. I alai among the shut-ins, on account of arthritis, and depend so much on the radio for fellowship. Thank you for your interesting address. With best wishes for 1957; yours sincerely.-